Doyouunderstandme? How learners break into foreign language word segmentation and recognition

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While listening to the speech stream of an unknown language, what information is available to the naïve listener? In my Habilitation, I investigate two streams of evidence. The first stream studies the speech modifications made in learner-directed registers and whether these modifications influence word segmentation and recognition in adults. The second stream studies whether preschool- and primary school-aged learners can use sublexical (e.g. phonotactic) and lexical (e.g., lexical transparency) cues from their L1 to segment and recognize words in a new language. The results show mixed evidence, depending on task demand and design as well as extramural language experience. This suggests that the learning context plays a role in successful initial foreign language word segmentation and recognition.