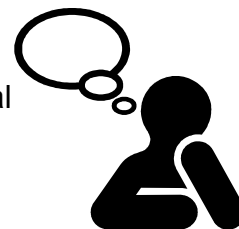


## ***Lipreading Theory - What is lipreading?***

Lipreading does not fully describe what is happening when you use visual speech: speechreading is a much better description as it implies that there is more involved than simply reading someone's lips.



About 30 - 40% of speech sounds can be lipread, and that's under the best conditions, and on a clear speaker. The rest of the information you need to be able to follow what is being said comes from other sources. These help you to work out what you cannot see on the lips, and 'fill in' missing letters/words. Most of the time you will be able to do this without even thinking about it, especially as you practise your lipreading.

You can get this extra information you need from:

### ***Gestures***

Movements of the body, especially the hands and arms.

Examples: A nod of the head means 'yes'.

A point of finger means 'there', or 'that'.

### ***Body language***

How people move, sit or stand.

Examples: Someone slumped in a chair may be bored or tired.

Someone who can't sit still may be nervous.

### ***Facial expression***

What you can see from looking at someone's face.

Examples: Someone who is smiling is likely to be telling you good news.

If someone speaks to you and their eyebrows raise they are likely to be asking you a question.

### ***Visual clues***

Things people are doing, or holding.

Example: Holding a kettle - would you like a cup of tea?

### ***Situational clues***

The type of things people say depending on the time, place and situation.

Example: Things said at the doctor's - What's wrong? How do you feel? Where does it hurt? Cough! Etc.

### ***Lipreading***

The speech sounds you can see on someone's lips

## *Linguistics*

What you know about English: how we put words, sentences and phrases together; grammar; rhythm; emphasis; colloquial expressions.

There are several important things that a lipreader can use to help them lipread better.

**a) The context** - does it make sense? Is it possible? Is it likely? For example, if you were having a conversation about what to have for Sunday dinner, you wouldn't expect to lipread the word 'computer'.

**b) Anticipation** - this helps you narrow down the possibilities when lipreading, so you have more idea what you are looking for.

Example: I have a \_\_\_\_\_ brother.

There are a limited number of words which would fit in the sentence above: little, big, younger, older, elder, ....

**c) Putting 2 + 2 together** - this helps you to work out what you could not fully lipread. If you lipread part of a sentence then you may be able to work out what the other part is likely to be.

Example: I had roast beef and \_\_\_\_\_ for dinner

The missing bit might be Yorkshire Pudding, but is unlikely to be custard!

**d) The language** - if you don't know the language you can't lipread it. This doesn't just mean you wouldn't be able to lipread Dutch (unless you were fluent in Dutch), the same problem exists with unfamiliar technical language. You need to have some idea of the words to expect; what to look for. If someone was talking about chemistry, and using unfamiliar long chemical names and terms, you would find it very, very difficult to lipread them.

The English language is changing all the time. New words are being added, the way in which we use words (their meanings) alters, and some words fall out of general use. This can cause a problem for lipreaders as you can come across words you have never heard or never seen before. If you've never heard a word you don't know how it is pronounced, and if you don't know how it is pronounced you don't know what it looks like on the lips. You also wouldn't be expecting that word, and might be frantically trying to find some other word to fit the context. This is one of the reasons why it is important to keep up-to-date with what is happening

in the news.