Consonant Death and the Teaching of Listening Perception

Richard Cauldwell – Speech in Action
www.speechinaction.com
Home to ...
It is important for teachers to achieve a greater understanding of the nature of the speech signal (Field, 2008: 140-141)

The purpose is ... To equip teachers of listening with sufficient information for them to be able to identify the areas which are most likely to give rise to decoding problems (Field, 2008: 141)
The same words in a wide range of context and voices (Field, 2008: 166)

Words take their shapes from the intonation group as a whole and may not be identifiable until the whole group has been heard (Field, 2008: 196)
I believe students need training in identifying the often important words in-between the stressed syllables.
Consonant death

So then I couldn’t play any more
My parents wouldn’t let me have one
The syllables ‘you have a lot of’ go at 6.7 sps
Consonant death then- δ

01 || and then THAT was THAT ||
02 || and WE ||
03 || didn’t get THROUGH ||

‘The Book’ Chapter 8
Consonant death - ð

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>speed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and then they</td>
<td>Fl</td>
<td>nally bought a</td>
<td>BIG</td>
<td>house</td>
<td>7.5-340</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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word cluster: and then they 14.3 sps
Consonant death – ð – ELF

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<tr>
<td>and then we were</td>
<td>AL</td>
<td>so</td>
<td>TALK</td>
<td>ing about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the</td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>ent</td>
<td>8.0 - 330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.1 - 160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hungarian L1

word cluster: and then we were 9.5
were also 98.0
Consonant death – ð – ELF

Brazilian L1

01 || we HAVE FRIENDS ||
02 || on the INternet || onny
Consonant death $\delta$ – indeterminacy of ‘in the'

|| MAson is actually in the VEry CENter of TEXas ||
Consonant death $\delta$ – indeterminacy of ‘in the'

and he
lent
me a
a couple of
fascin
-ating
books
**on the subject**

anti
lem
mere
coupler
fasten
eighteen
books
**on a subject**

Timesaver for exams
Listening for First (FCE) – Tom Bradbury
I am going to be looking at in …
Garden

I'm gonna be looking at in …
Jungle

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<td>this is</td>
<td>ONE</td>
<td>i’m going to be looking at in slightly more</td>
<td>DE</td>
<td>tail in fact</td>
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</table>

This is ONE i’m going to be looking at in slightly more detail in fact
# Speech models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greenhouse &amp; Garden</th>
<th>Jungle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acted speech</td>
<td>Spontaneous speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule-governed, tidy</td>
<td>Unruly, messy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful, but ‘wrong’</td>
<td>Unpredictable, but ‘true’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careful Speech Model</td>
<td>Spontaneous Speech Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>‘The real world’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Pronunciation</td>
<td>For Listening</td>
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The sound substance is the stream which,

[1] after exiting the mouth of the speaker,
[2] travels through the air (Field’s ‘speech signal’)
[3] and arrives at the ear of the listener
The level of meaning

The sound substance is the stream which,

[1] after exiting the mouth of the speaker,
[2] travels through the air
[3] and arrives at the ear of the listener
The Blur Gap

Expert and Native Speakers instantly garden/greenhouse the word-forms in [2]. They are almost always unaware of the gap that exists between the traces in [2] and their perceptions at [3].
Garden rules deafen us

these are /r/ enormous sums of money for people to /w/ actually /j/ invest in cough cold remedies

01 || these are eNORMous || 6.9
02 || SUMS of MONey || 7.7
03 || for PEOPLe to actually inVEST in || 5.8
04 || in COUGH cold Remedies || 3.7
Teachers and learners have different experiences at [3].

Distracted by meaning, expert listeners hear Greenhouse and Garden.

Struggling with meaning and perception, learners have to deal with the jungle.
The Decoding Gap: an example

Jane’s ‘married’

That was the job I’d set my sights on when I first joined the bank as a junior secretary. I thought I’d know I’ve made it when I’ve become the chairman’s PA and all the years I worked towards that.
There is something to teach

All words have many sound shapes

The stream of speech has multi-word rhythmic bursts, trickles and seeps

THERE IS SOMETHING TO TEACH

Consonant death is one such thing
Why bother? Different goals

Listening and Pronunciation
‘the goals for mastery are different’

…

‘… our goal as teachers of listening is to help our learners understand **fast, messy, authentic speech** … [which] … is much more varied and unpredictable than what they need to produce in order to be intelligible’

Celce-Murcia et al 2010

we therefore need a model of spontaneous speech
Survival Tip 04

Extract 4.1

01 A: HAVE you got any CHANGE
02 B: NO SOrry
03 A: i’ll have to PAY with a FIFty pound NOTE then
04 B: no I’VE got a TEN pound note
05 B: let ME pay
### Survival Tip 04

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<td>you got any</td>
<td>CHANGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>SOR</td>
<td>ry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>i’ll have to</td>
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<td>with a</td>
<td>FIF</td>
<td>ty pound</td>
<td>NOTE</td>
<td>then</td>
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<td>got a</td>
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Thank you

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