Pronunciation and Listening – The Case for Divorce

A Syllabus for Listening – Decoding

Richard Cauldwell

speech in action

Jungle Listening - Survival Tips for Fast Speech

Pilot materials – student's book, teacher's guide A4 pdfs plus audio files

PHONOLOGY FOR LISTENING

Teaching the stream of speech

BRITISH COUNCIL

2014 ELTons nominated

Innovation in teacher resources

speech in action
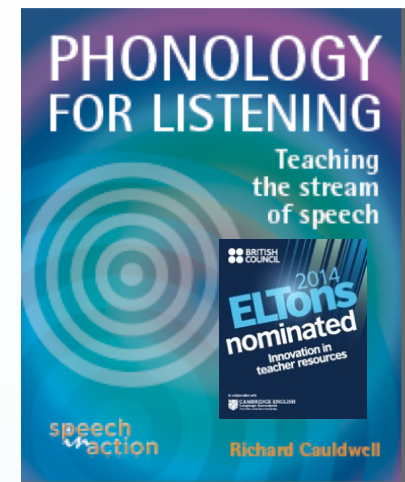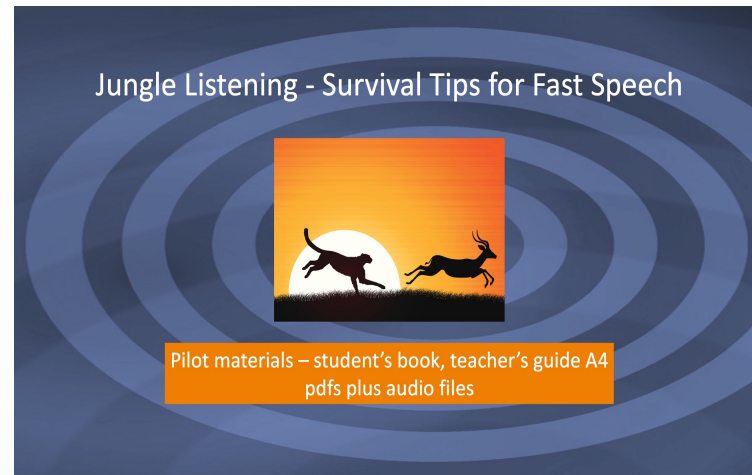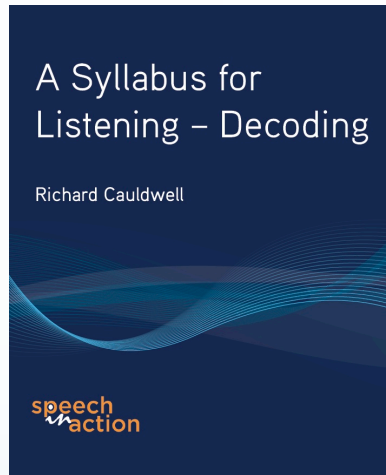
Richard Cauldwell

Richard Cauldwell – Speech in Action – Birmingham, UK

1

Outline

- Learners are telling us something
- Goals
- Sight substance, sound substance
- Meaning, words, sound substance
- Mondegreens and alternative hearings
- Beware the logic of meaning
- Careful Speech Model, versus Spontaneous Speech Model
- Word clusters
- Streamlining processes – metalanguage
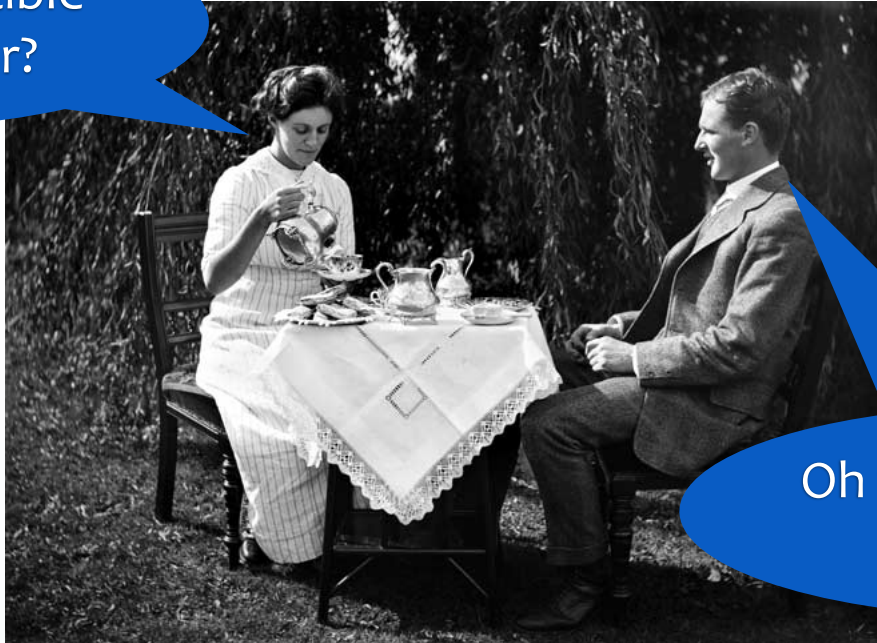- Grounds for divorce – but …

2

Are we incompatible?

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

Are we incompatible?

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

4

Learners telling us ...

Olya, after getting an 'A' at CPE,
and being at C2 level, still had some 'can't do' statements in relation to listening. And crucially, she 'did not know why she herself could not understand everyday speech.' 'I've learned the hard way that Advanced Learners cannot understand …'

Learners telling us ...

Image by Marcos Severi (www.mseveri.com).
Supplied by Daniela Martino. Used with permission.

6

We are using the wrong tools

What's great for clarity and intelligibility is not great for teaching listening.

Image by Marcos Severi (www.mseveri.com).
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Incompatibility I – 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

Incompatibility – I

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

9

Incompatibility – I

I value clarity and intelligibility above all.

And I've got to deal with the mess.

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10

Beyond coping

Blah blah blah MAN blah blah blah blah CHEST uh blah blah blah off SIDE blah LIVer blah blah uh blah blah off SIDE blah SIDE

Beyond coping

There was this **man** who came for a **chest**-wall uh operation and we used nitrous o**xide** and then we had a **liver** **p**rocedure when we also used nitrous oxide.

Substances

Decoding = handling the relationship between substance and words

- Sight substance – the units of writing
- Sound substance – the units of speech

Often, there is little recognition that there is a sound substance to be learned. The acoustic substance of the recording is regarded as a vehicle for carrying meanings, but the physical features of the vehicle itself are given little attention.

13

Sound substance

Decoding = handling the relationship between sound substance and words

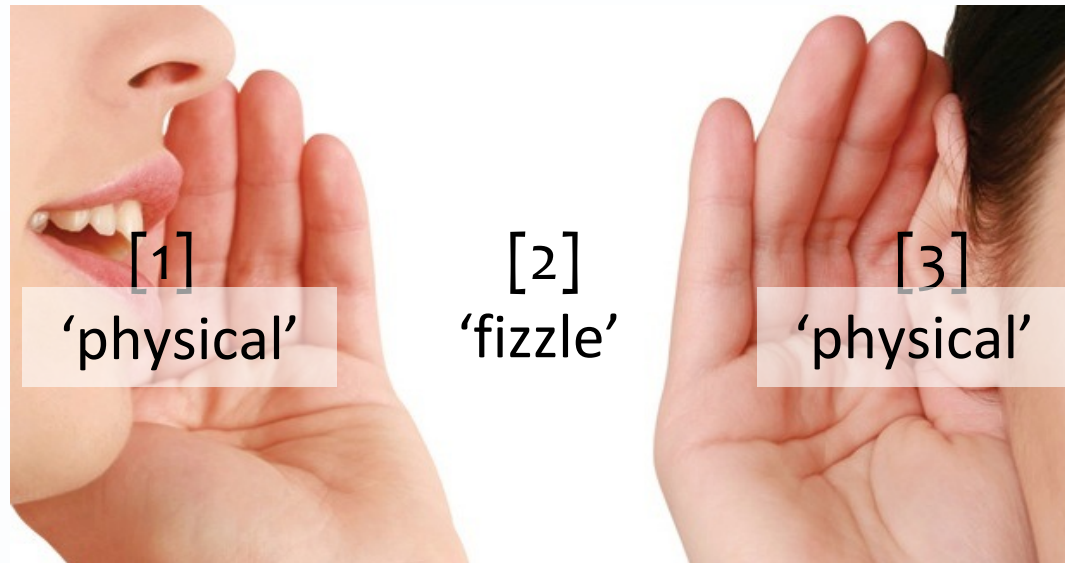|	LEVEL
1	meaning
2	words
3	sound substance

Sound substance

[1]   [2]   [3]
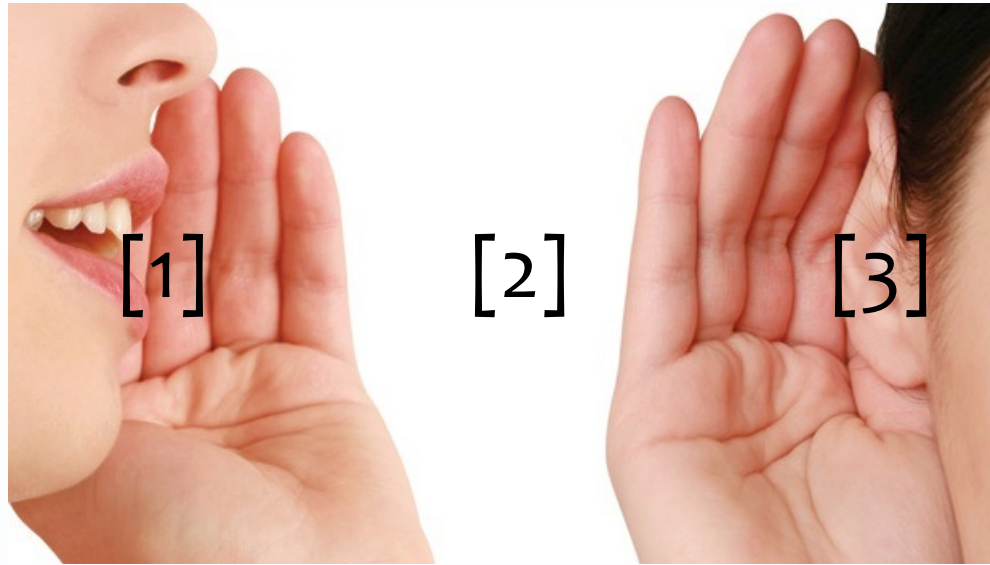
The sound substance is the stream which,

[1] after exiting the mouth of the speaker,
[2] travels through the air …
[3] and arrives at the ear of the listener
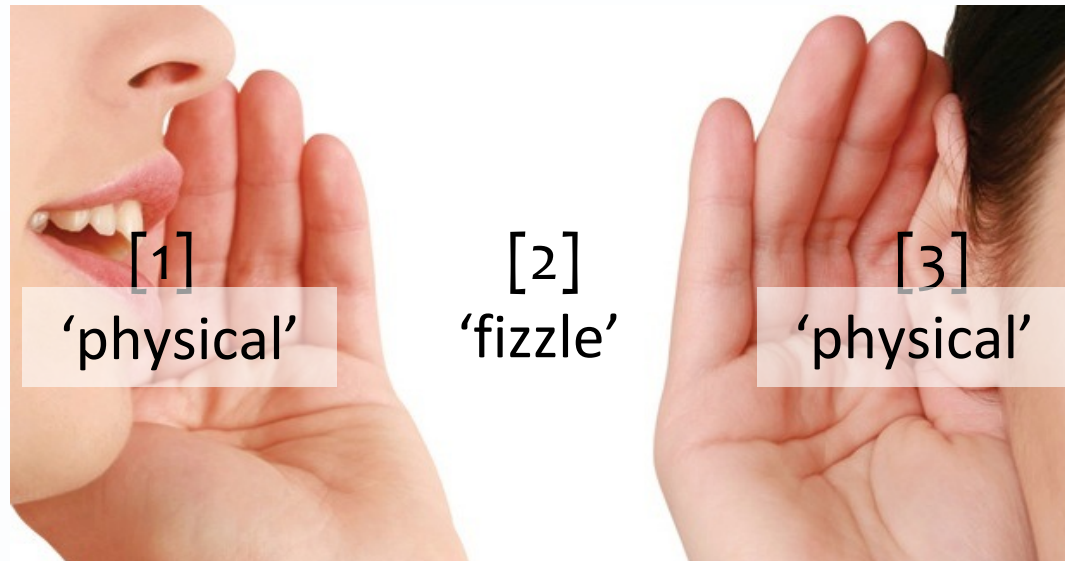
15

Sound substance

[1]
'physical'

[2]
'fizzle'

[3]
'physical'

Expert listeners leap to meaning, and give no attention to the raw sound substance in [2] Understanding deafens us to the realities of the sound substance

16

Sound substance

[1]
'physical'

[2]
'fizzle'

[3]
'physical'

5	4	3	2	1
it was a	VE	ry fizzle en	COUN	ter

Expert hearers hear full words but what happens is mush

Substances compared

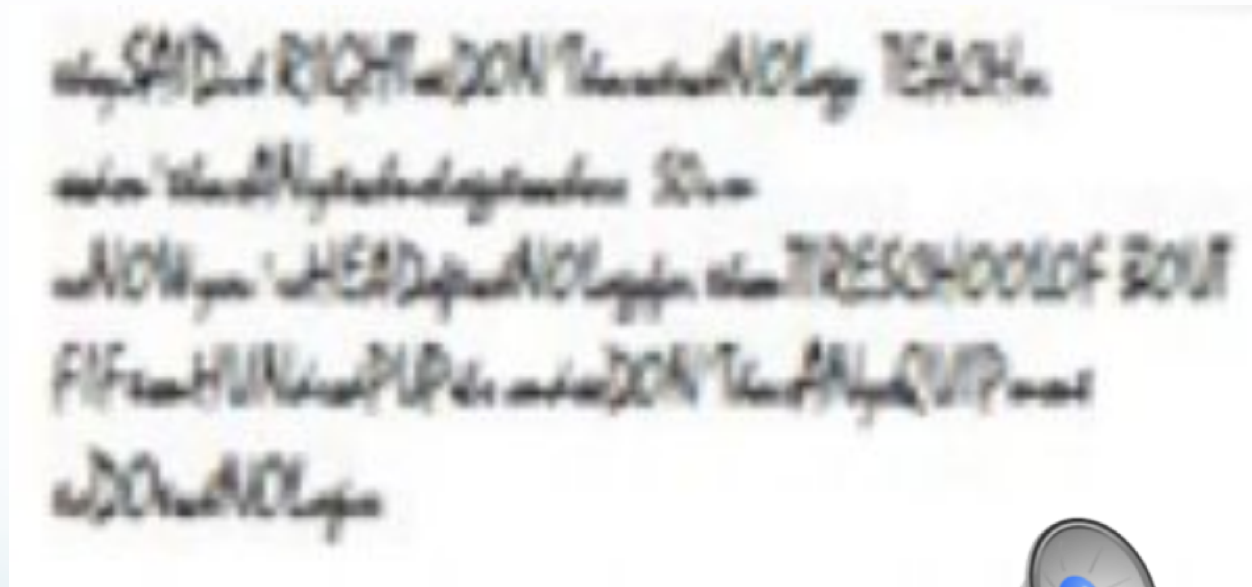| Sight substance	Sound substance
Visible	Invisible
Stays in place	Disappears
Goes at reader's pace	Goes at speaker's pace
Inspectable	Uninspectable
Editing invisible	Editing is audible
Forms are easy	Forms not so easy

18

Imagining sound substance

Imagine that every time you see a word written down it looks different:

- letters in a different order,
- letters missing,
- different fonts,
- different sizes,
- different use of caps and lower case
- spacing varies with speed
- fast crushed up
- slow, widely spaced

Meaning, words, and sound substance

If it could hang around it might look like this

Meaning, words, and sound substance

- *we don't have any* was heard as *we have many*
- *fifteen hundred* was heard as *fifty hundred*
- *pupils* was heard as *peoples*

Understanding deafens us

Emily's peoples pupils

	LEVEL
1	meaning
2	words
3	sound substance

Sound substance

It is possible, and indeed common to have success at the level of sound substance but not at the level of words

- 'Married'
- 'Big bang'
- Mondegreens

23

Sound substance

3 🎧 [1.29] **Listen to 12 more word groups. Write the missing words and syllables in the gaps. The numbers in brackets indicate the number of unstressed syllables between the stressed syllables.**

1 we were **UP** .... **WEEK**
2 **DID**n't .... **OF** it
3 **I** .... **RED** planet
4 we **REAL**ly .... **THIS** summe
5 I im**PLORE** .... **SKY** tonight
6 **COULD** .... ha**RASS**ing you
7 I've **AL**ways .... **ART**ist
8 I've **ENT**ered .... **COULD**
9 I **DID**n't .... **CHANCE**
10 I **KNEW** .... **SOUND** like
11 **TELL** .... **THAT**
12 **TRY**ing .... **NOW**

COULD ....haRASSing you

Are we incompatible?
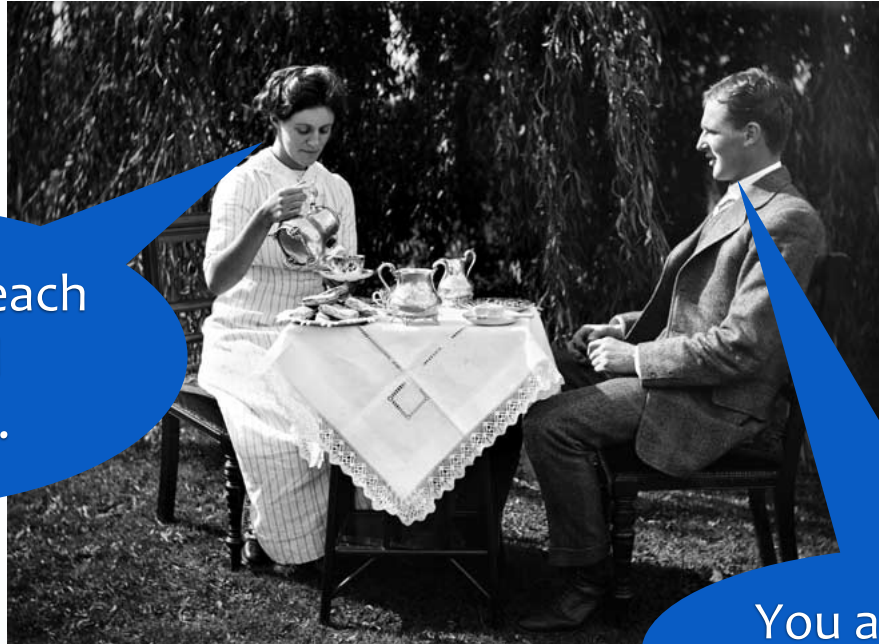
We need to teach the sound substance.

You are pouring. You are boring.

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

25

The land of in-between – mondegreen land

Expert hearers hear full words but what happens is mush

	LEVEL
1	I'll complete this over
2	xxxxxxxxx
3	I'm completely sober

Alternative hearing

Expert hearers hear full words but what happens is mush

	1	2	3	4	5	6
A	I'll	com	plete	thi(s)	(s)o	ver
B	i	com	PLEE	iss	SO	er
C	I'm	com	plete	ly	so	ber

The land of in-between – mondegreen land

Expert hearers hear full words but what happens is mush

	LEVEL
1	it's not me
2	xxxxxxxxx
3	if you know what i mean

Beware the logic of meaning

So you need to beware of the dangers of

this 'logical' three-stage argument:

- because of the context, the speakers must have meant 'x'
- because they meant 'x', they must have said word 'y'
- because they said word 'y' it must have sounded like a clearly articulated 'y'

Beware the logic of meaning

This can lead to an insistence, for example, that because someone is talking about the past and the places where they used to live, that they therefore:

- used past tenses such as *lived* and *settled*; and noun phrases such as *the move*
- they expressed these meanings with these words:
    - ◦ 'I lived there for a while' not 'I live there for a while'
    - ◦ 'I never settled down' not 'I never sell down'
    - ◦ 'The move was difficult' not 'Mmove was difficult'

Beware the logic of meaning

Whereas in fact the speakers may well have actually said:

- *I live there for a while* (the $|d|$ of $|lɪvd|$ being inaudible)
- *I never sell down* (the $|t|$ of $|sɛtld|$ being inaudible, final $|d|$ merges with *down*)
- *Mmove was difficult* (the article *the* is replaced by a longer $|m|$ – *mmove*)

Are we incompatible?

We need some new metalanguage.

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

32

Are we incompatible?

We need some new metalanguage.

New mental anguish? Surely not.

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

Metalanguage: Greenhouse

5	4	3	2	1
		I am going to be looking at in …		

Metalanguage: Garden

5	4	3	2	1
		I'm gonna be looking at in …		

Metalanguage: Jungle

5	4	3	2	1
this is	ONE	i'm going to be looking at in slightly more	DE	tail in fact

Careful Speech Model

The CSM is the assortment of the statements, rules and guidelines about speech that is used in ELT. The CSM is a means of mapping the sound substance on to the sight substance of the written language so that it provides answers to questions such as 'What is the correct way to pronounce this word?' and 'What is the correct way to say this sentence?' It is valued because it can be referred to as a set of rules, or guidelines for learners to make their speech clear, intelligible and easy to listen to.

37

Spontaneous Speech Model

For listening purposes we need a separate model of speech – a Spontaneous Speech Model (SSM). The SSM needs to be a description of the sound substance of the Jungle which captures the wildness, messiness and unruliness of the sound substance of everyday speech – captures it, tames it and makes it teachable and learnable.

38

CSM vs SSM

Careful Speech Model	Spontaneous Speech Model
The language shapes speech	The speaker shapes speech
Greenhouse & Garden	Jungle
Sentences and clauses	Rhythmic bursts
Disfluencies	Drafting phenomena
Citation form	Multiple soundshapes

39

CSM vs SSM

Greenhouse & Garden	Jungle
Acted speech Rule-governed, tidy Useful, but 'wrong'	Spontaneous speech Unruly, messy Unpredictable, but 'true'
Careful Speech Model	**Spontaneous Speech Model**
ELT	**'The real world'**
For Pronunciation	**For Listening**

32

Incompatibility – II – models

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41

Incompatibility – II – models

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

42

Spontaneous Speech Model

All words have multiple soundshapes
All words are flexiforms
Word clusters are key
Streamlining processes
Every sound can drop, blur or blend

43

Word cloud: *and*

01 || and I just STARTed ||
02 || and my VOICE just went AAAH ||
03 || and NOTHing came OUT ||
04 || and EVeryone just WENT ||
05 || [sigh] ||
06 || oh POOR YOU ||
07 || and then THAT was THAT ||
08 || and WE ||
09 || didn't get THROUGH ||
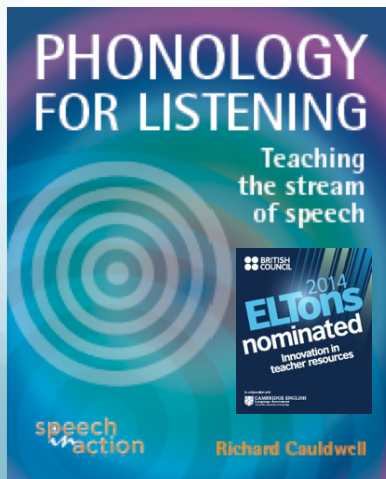
'The Book' Chapter 8

Word cloud *and*

01 || and I just STARTed ||
02 || and my VOICE just went AAAH ||
03 || and NOTHing came OUT ||
04 || and EVeryone just WENT ||
05 || [sigh] ||
06 || oh POOR YOU ||
07 || and then THAT was THAT ||
08 || and WE ||
09 || didn't get THROUGH ||

'The Book' Chapter 8

45
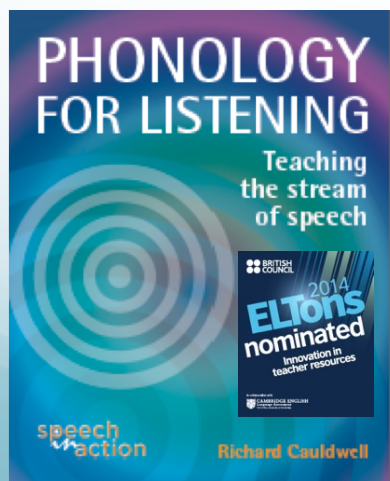
Syllabus: Word clusters – The un-de-blendable

5	4	3	2	1	speed
and then they	FI	nally bought a	BIG	house	7.5-340

word cluster: and then they 14.3 sps

46

Are we incompatible?

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

47

Are we incompatible?

'Undependable?'

He actually said 'un-de-blendable'.

Are we incompatible?
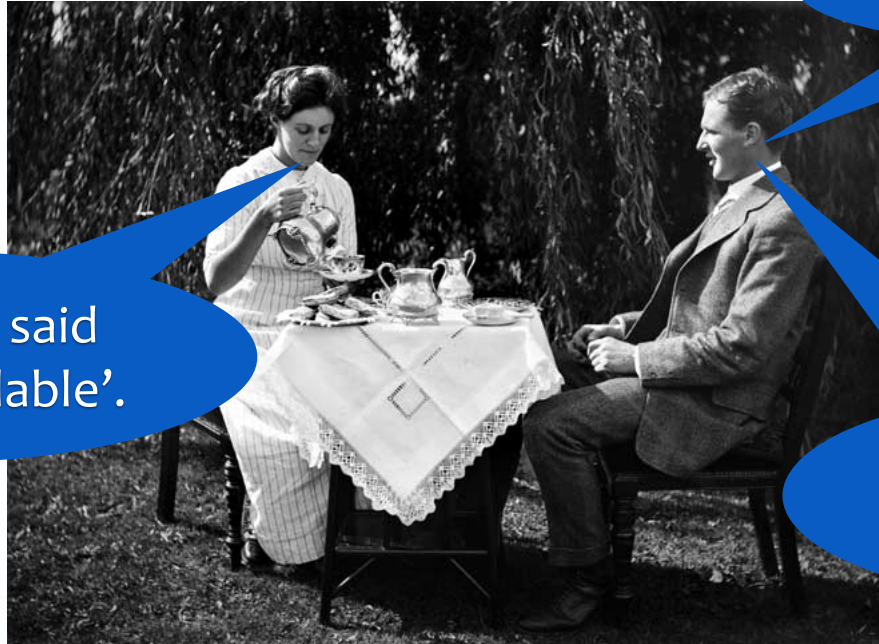
'Undependable?'

He actually said 'un-de-blendable'.

What the heck does he mean?

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

49

D'eth-drop

07 || and ~~then~~ ~~TH~~AT was THAT ||
08 || and WE ||
09 || di~~dn't~~ get THROUGH ||

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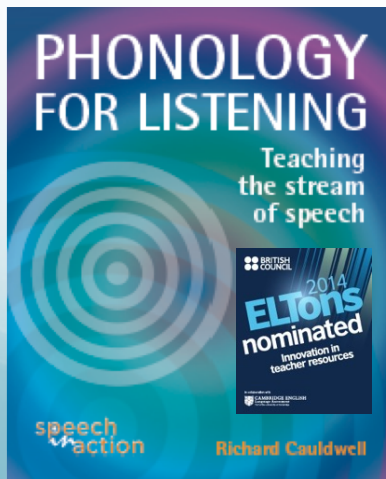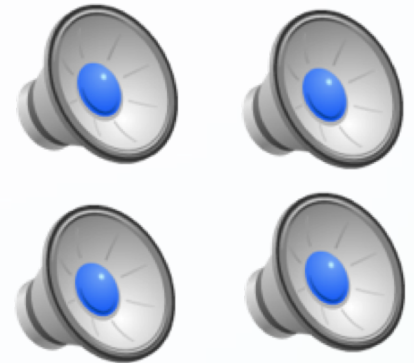
'The Book' Chapter 8

Metalanguage: Consonant death

Greenhouse	Jungle
then/that	|| anen AT was AT ||
settle	|| take some TIME to sell DOWN ||
middle	|| IN the mill of the ROAD ||

Metalanguage: Sylldrop

Greenhouse	Jungle
e.vi.dence	|| there's NO evuns of MURder ||
ac.ci.dent	|| a BAD accent on the MOtorway ||
cer.tain.ly	|| they SAID he'd surnly do WELL ||
ac.tu.a.lly	|| i WON'T ashley ASK them ||
ob.vi.ous.ly	|| she's VEry ovsli the BEST of them||

52

Streamlining processes
D'eth-drop

ð

ænd̵ ðen

æn ð̵en

ænen

and t̵h̵en

Streamlining processes B-drop B-blur

$$b - w$$

|| probably ||

Streamlining processes
B-drop, B-blur

$$\mathbf{b} - \mathbf{w}$$

5	4	3	2	1
to be	A	ble to	LIVE	in

|| to be ABle to LIVE in ||

55

Streamlining processes
B-drop, B-blur

b - w

able zoo

Streamlining processes polarisk

Extract 18.6

```
01 || that WASn't FILMED ||
```

```
02 || that WAS FILMED ||
```

Voice: Dan UK. 01 gives the original version; 02 has *-n't* edited out.

Streamlining processes polarisk

Randy Newman

Can or can't?

Streamlining processes polarisk

- Eleven people 'voted' for can
- Six people 'voted' for can't
- One person 'voted' for don't know ('stumped')

Randy Newman

Can or can't?

Streamlining processes
T-drop T-blur

t

|| you're PREtty much aLLOWED to do ANything ||

|| i THOUGHT i MIGHT ||

Streamlining processes
D-drop D-blur

d

|| it's a LOT HARDer ||
|| than PEOPle THINK ||

Streamlining processes
D-drop D-blur

d

|| produced by GUY MIEGE ||

Streamlining processes
Vow-ell

weɫ weʊ

|| it was POP idol ||

63

Streamlining processes
Smoothie

əʊ ɜː

aʊ - ɑː

eɪ - e

|| WANTed to GO to||
|| SOUTH east Asia ||

64

Streamlining processes Smoothie

aɪ - æ

|| i like GOing to the GYM ||

Streamlining processes
Hiss effect, Buzz effect

s z ʃ ʒ ʧ ʤ

|| i used to play rugby ||

Streamlining processes
D.R.Y

Do not Repeat Yourself

|| and my VOICE just WENT ||

67

Incompatibilities

- Goals
- Models
- One partner values clarity
- The other partner relishes the mess

- Handling the sound substance

Reconciliation

I will walk with you in the Garden. And greet you on you return from the Jungle

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Reconciliation

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917

70

Reconciliation

https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/40375/taking-tea-on-the-lawn-1917
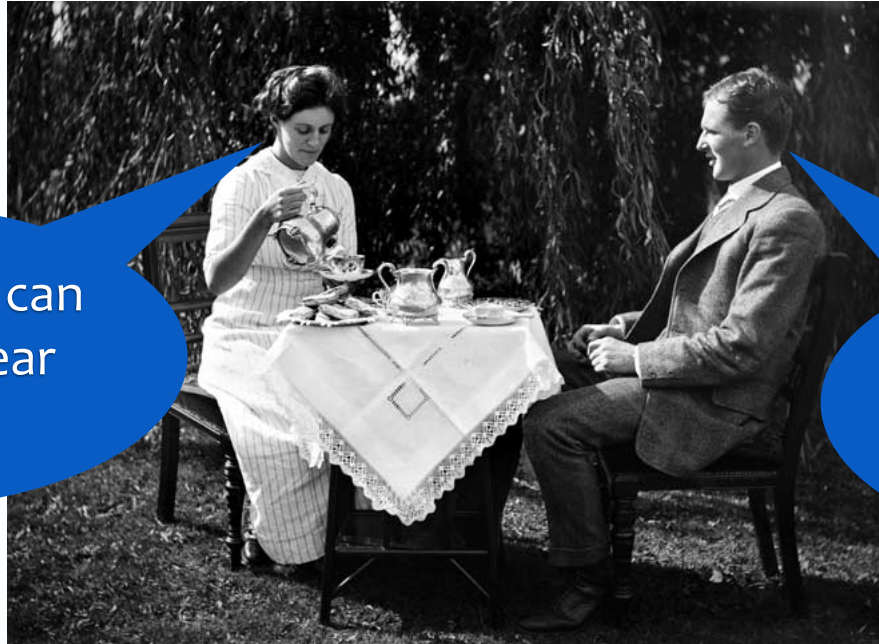
71

Sometime later …

Thank you
www.speechinaction.com

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74