

Coaching Chinese Students on Word Stress



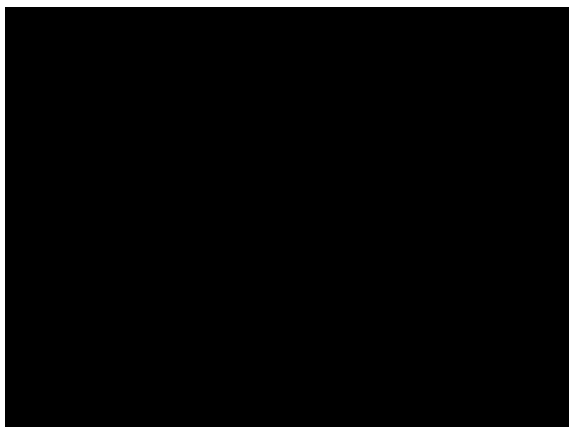
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Pronunciation Coach - PronSIG,
Glasgow, 26 Oct 2019

What may unclear syllables lead to?



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How could key words sound?



Does being intelligible mean a lot?

understood

Percentages ↓ big step

	Present	Future	
Wu	40%	80%	Good presentations meetings
Chen	30%	70%	① express myself everywhere
Siem	60%	99%	① announcer, broad-caster
X	50%	95%	① vlogger on campus
Shi	70%	100%	① no misunderstandings
			① good meetings
			① collaboration
			① friendship
			① job app.

future research opp.

Ke

Wu

Chen

Siem

Xin

Shen

Which unis in the Netherlands?



Who have been my tutors & mentors?



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Learning Pronunciation Different



Marieke van der Meer | The English Pronunciation Coach, inspired by Adrian Underhill (Sound Foundations), Piers Messum & Roslyn Young (Pronunciation Science)

'Listen & Repeat'?

Most students learn how to pronounce a foreign language (L2) by listening to their teachers and repeating them (auditory approach). However, a lot of students keep struggling with their L2 speaking skills. They suffer from mother tongue (L1) interference and lack confidence. So, is there a better way of mastering pronunciation?

The articulatory way: why so easy?

- o a physical approach, sensitising the mouth ('Sense & Say')
- o activating the 4 'muscle buttons' (voice, lips, tongue & jaw)
- o addressing the total respiratory system (breath & abdominals)
- o representing the way children learn their L1
- o very much exploratory and a lot of fun 😊

The articulatory way: why so effective?

- o a systematic approach based on the complete set of L2 sounds
- o training students to get behind their 'L1 grip' (internal discovery)
- o enabling them to remember sound postures (muscle memory)
- o eliciting sounds rather than teaching or modelling them
- o practising connected speech (sound simplifications)
- o visualising stress patterns in words & sentences by using symbols:
e du ca tion
 - = reduced vowel
 - du + tion
 - = full vowel but not stressed e
 - / = full vowel and stressed ca
- o aiming at comfortable intelligibility:
Speaker: 'I can express myself'
Listener: 'I get your message'



Which techniques are supportive?

Tools & Techniques	Pronunciation Level	Practical Use
Miming	Sounds	Sensing articulatory settings
Arm & Hand Gesturing	Sounds	Supporting articulation
Pointing at body parts	Sounds	Remembering sound cues
Positioning Cuisenaire rods	Words	Visualising syllable stress
Rising from a chair	Words	Internalising syllable stress
Pulling out rubber bands	Words	Marking stress & reduction
Moving beads on an Abacus	Sentences	Chunking & slowing down
Parroting	Sentences	Chunking & slowing down
Group story telling	Sentences	Chunking & using intonation

Which Sound Chart to use?



- o Top Row Single & Double Full Vowels
- o Middle Row Semi-vowels, Voiceless & Voiced Consonants
- o Bottom row Reduced Vowels (schwi, schwa & schwu)



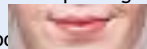
What is the role of the teacher?

- o Creating a learning environment of exploration & experimentation
- o Stimulating students to experience the 'physicality' of pronunciation



- o Giving feedback on students' exploratory activities
- o Allowing students to listen to their inner ear & speak silently

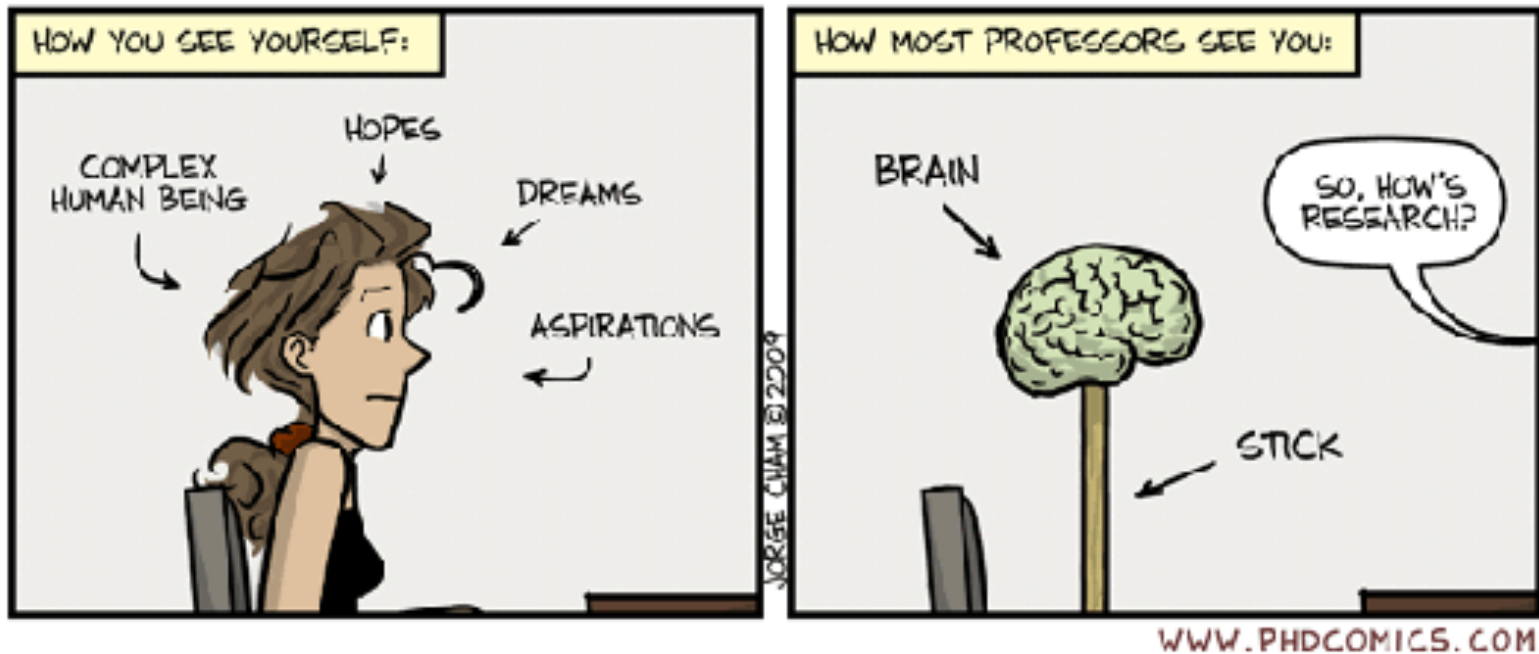
What results do students achieve?

- 'I'm more confident when I communicate with other people, and they can understand me much more easily compared to the past'.
☞
- 'I solved a lot of my pronunciation problems, got lots of tips and methods for practising and improving myself; I also got to know a really new speaker "a"'.


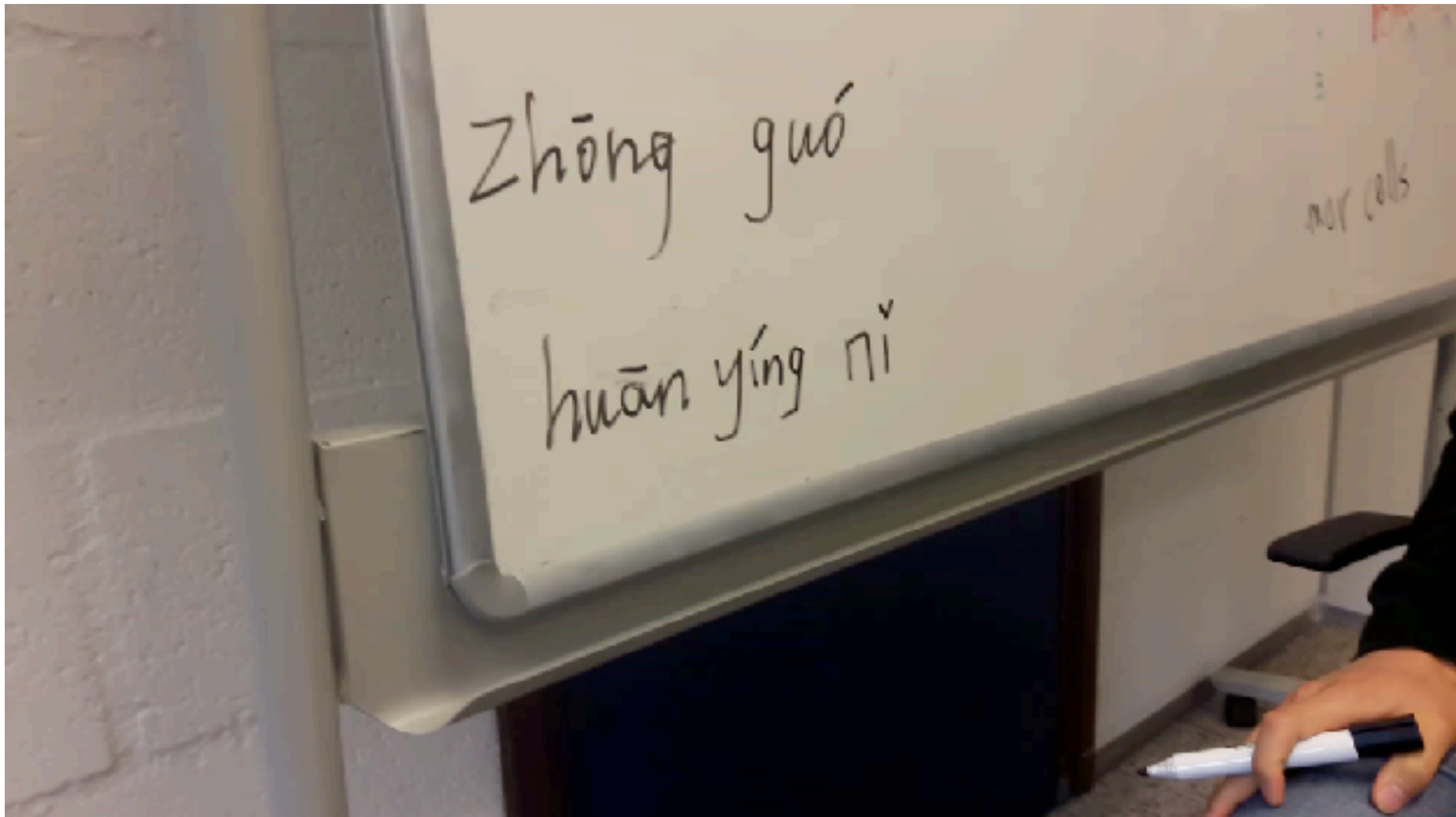
Useful links & websites

- o https://corpus.linguistics.berkeley.edu/acip/appendix/vocal_tracts/usc/
- o MRI scan of tongue movement in English
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezOwCf835YA>
- o MRI scan of tongue movement in Chinese
<https://www.seeingsspeech.ac.uk/ipachart/display.php?chart=1&datatype=3&speaker=1>
- o Animated articulatory settings for/MRI scans of individual sounds
<http://adrianunderhill.com>
- o Adrian Underhill's site (with blogs)
<https://www.pronunciationscience.com/>
- o Piers Messum's and Roslyn Young's site (where the chart can be found)

Which word is usually mispronounced?



Are English & Chinese word stress systems similar?



What are typical challenges?

- Full syllables may be too short (no voiced consonants)
- Diphthongs: 2 component vowels may be unclear
- *Reduced syllables in Chinese*
 - *Less frequent*
 - *Pronounced more prominently*
 - *Undergoing fewer changes*
- Lacking awareness of reduction
- Stressing too many syllables in English
- Pronouncing reduced syllables fully ('confusing'?)
- Omitting / 'swallowing' reduced syllables

Have you heard....
of the story
of the
swallowed syllable?

Some key words with omitted syllables

Ability
Graduation
Materials
PhD
Pollutant
Strategies
Support

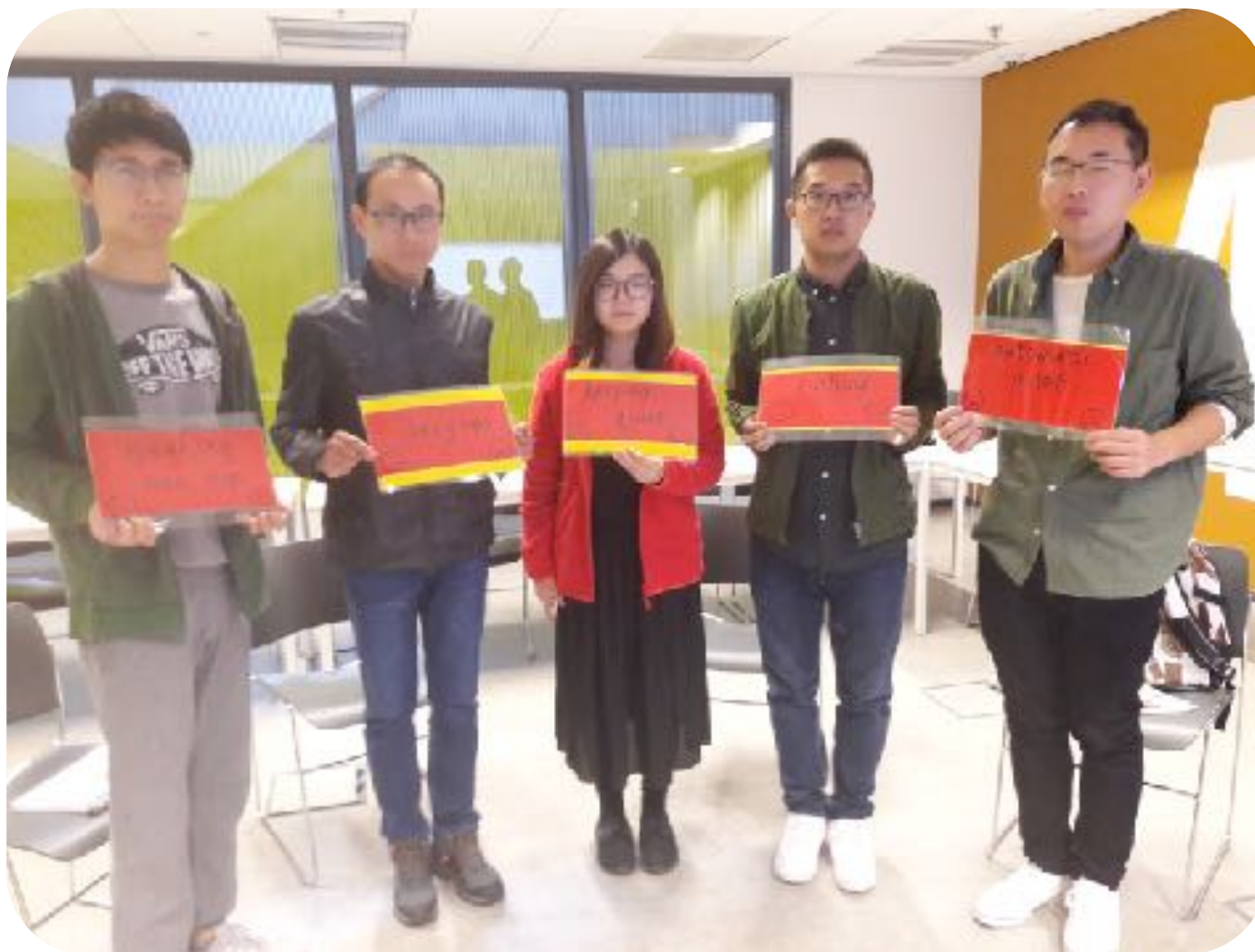
So...

we need

to train word accent

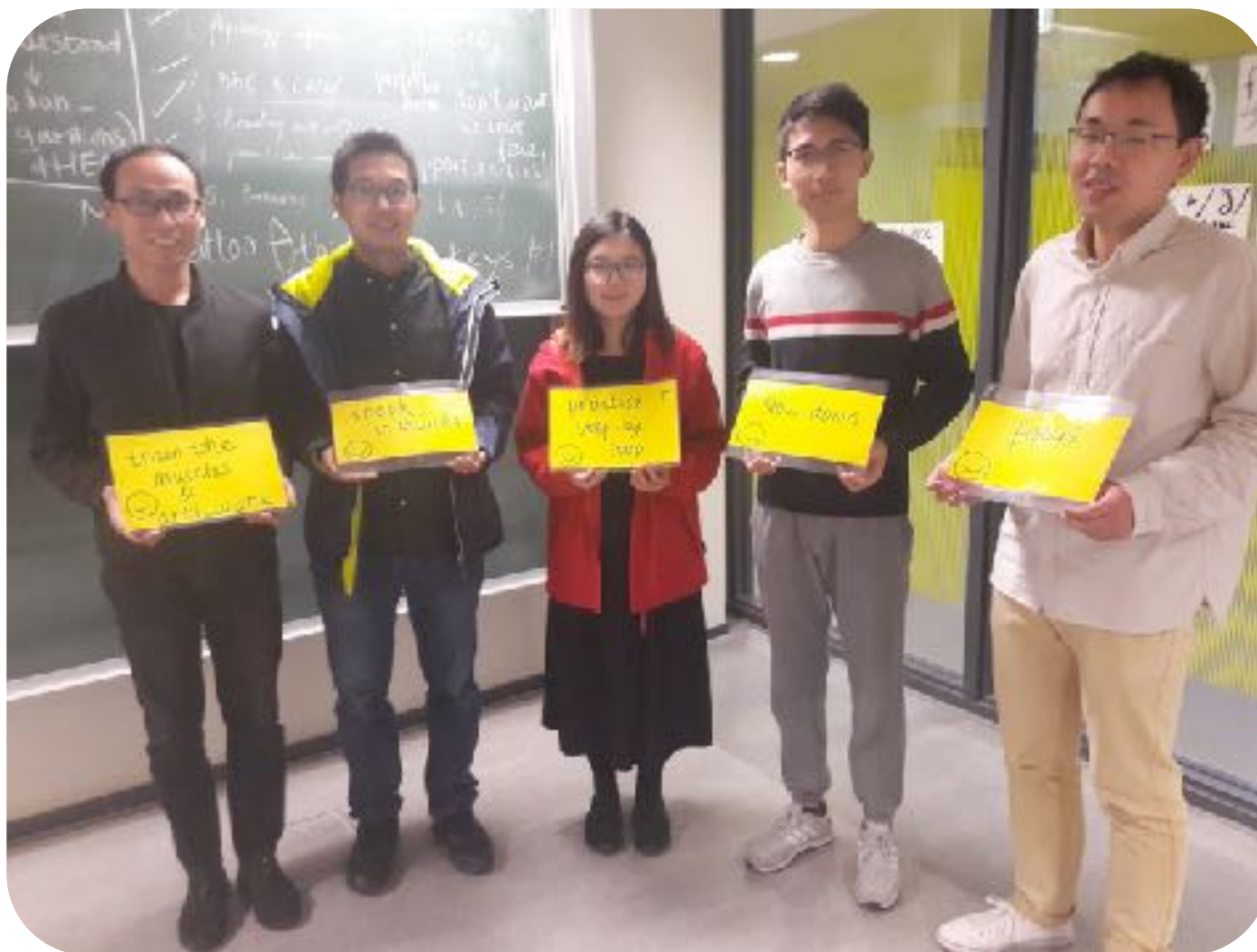
... but where to start?

What needs to go before?



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What needs to go before?

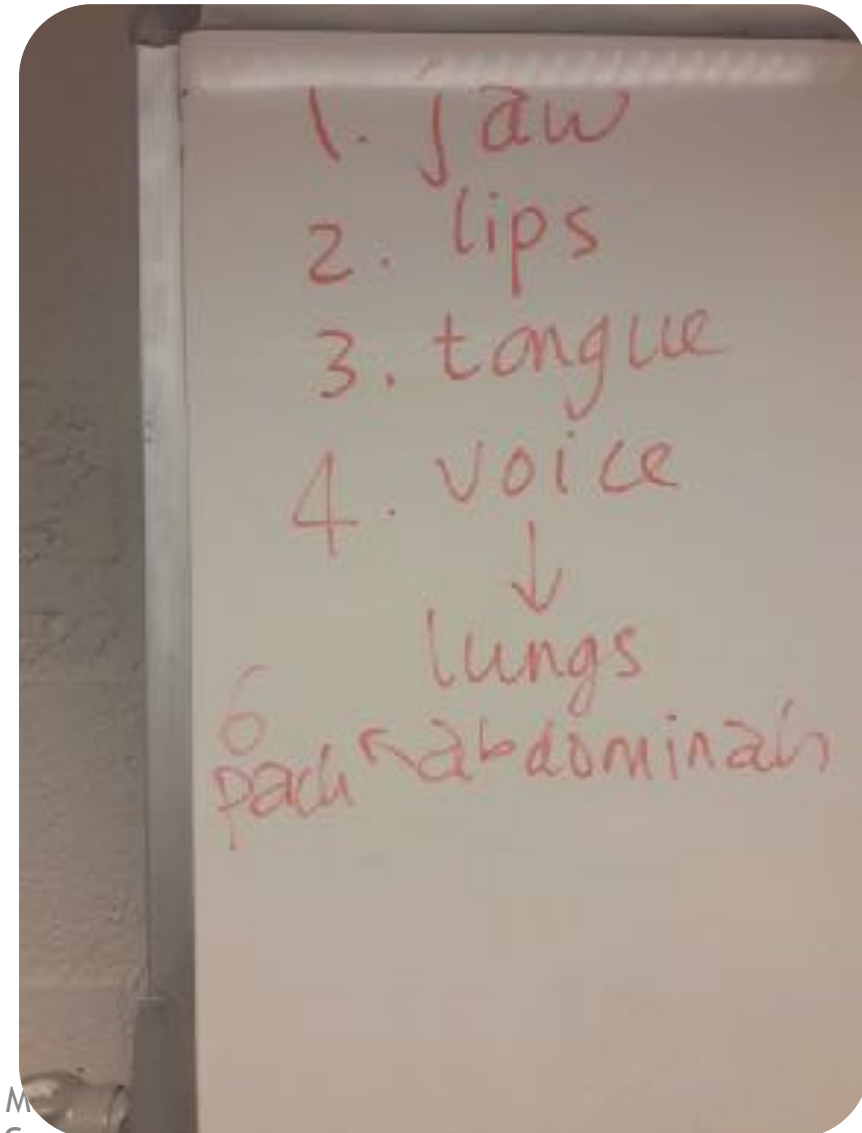
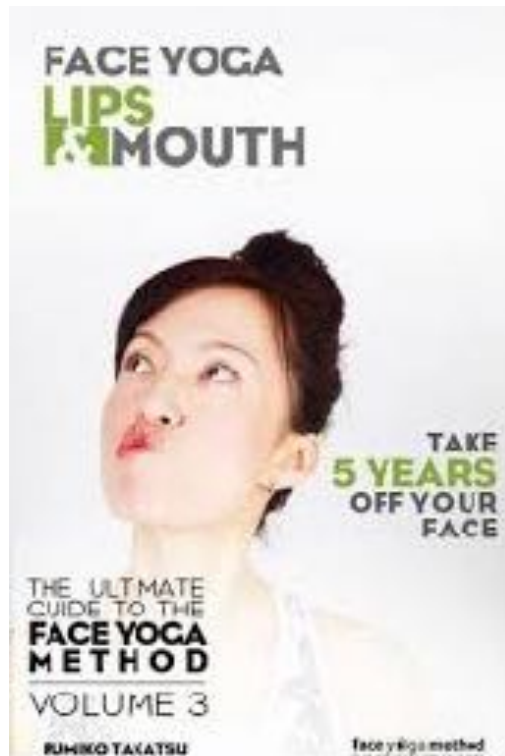


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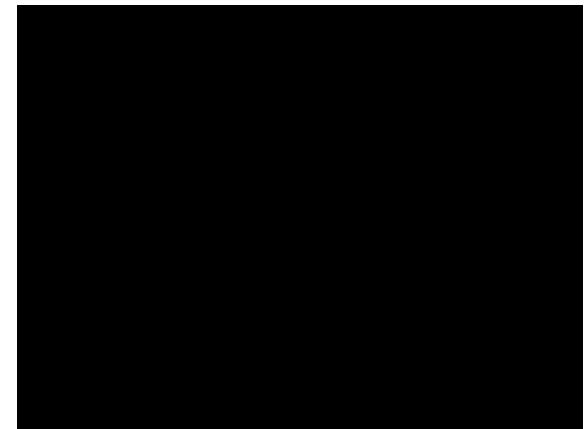
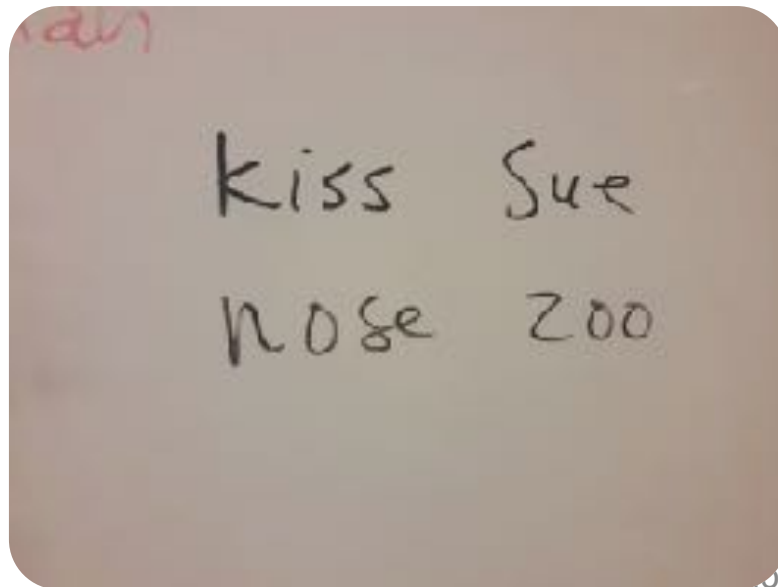
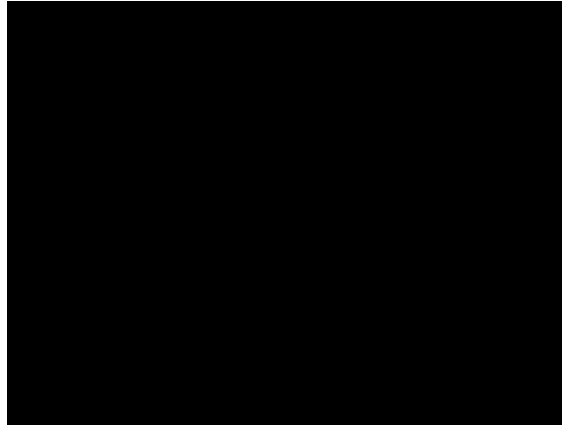
How to activate the respiratory system?

- ROBOTS ('soldiers')
- FLEXIBLE & RELAXED
- HUMAN BEINGS
- ABLE TO LEARN, REMEMBER & IMPLEMENT

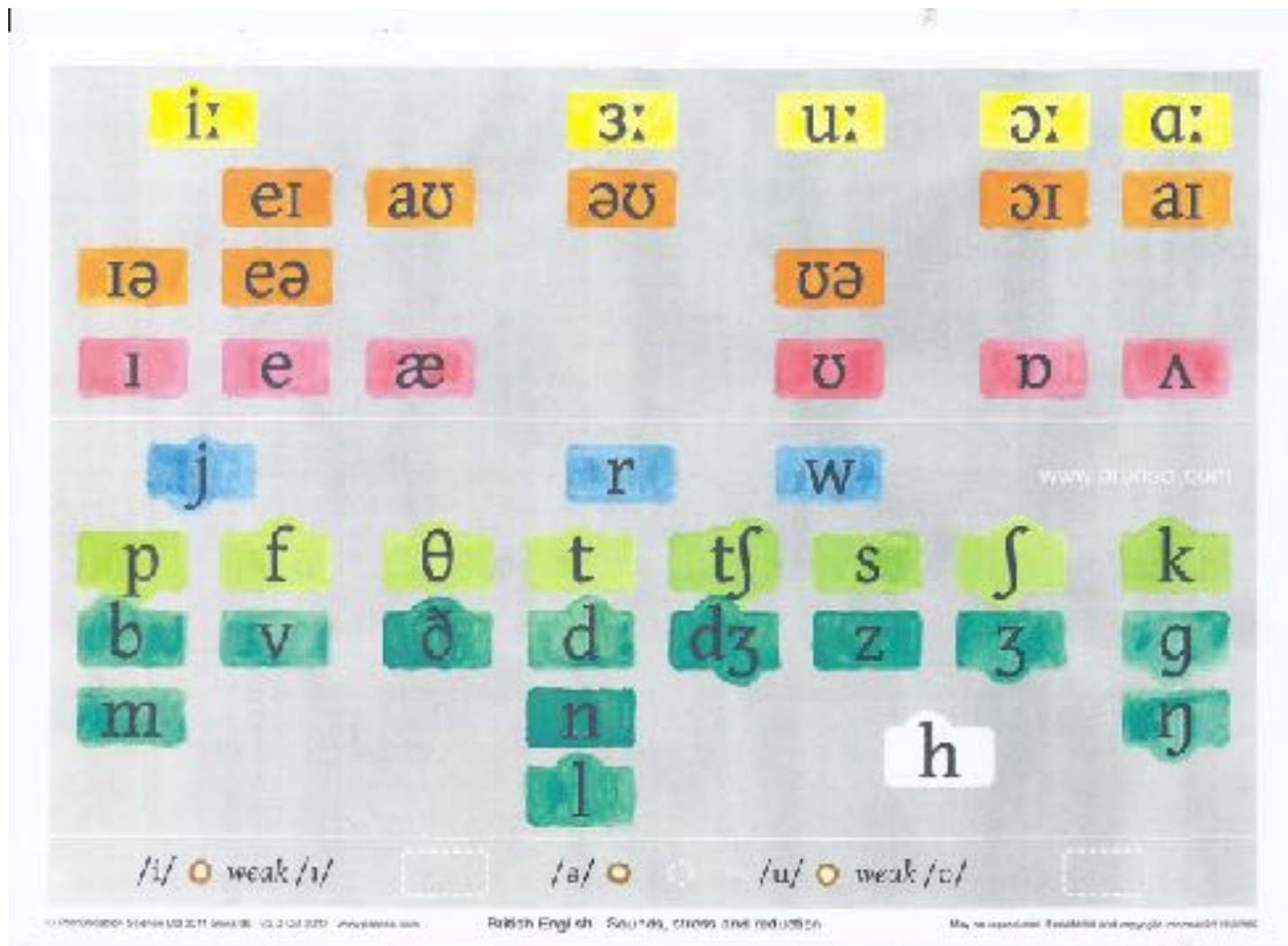
How to activate the respiratory system?



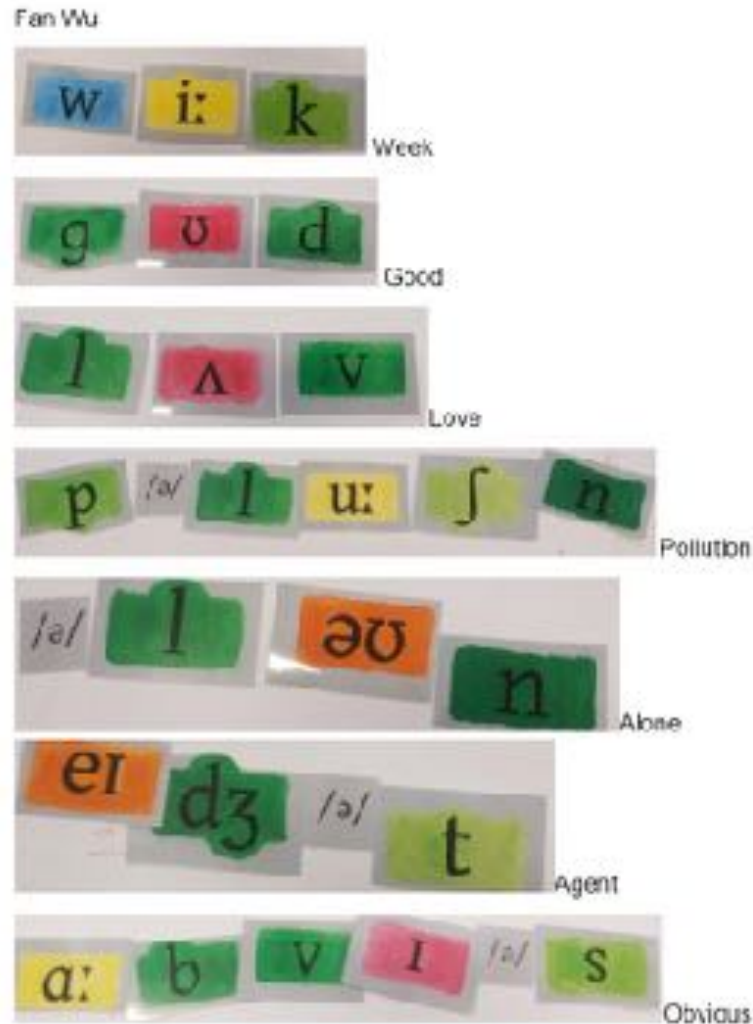
How to activate the respiratory system?



How to raise syllable awareness?



How to raise syllable awareness?



How to raise syllable awareness?

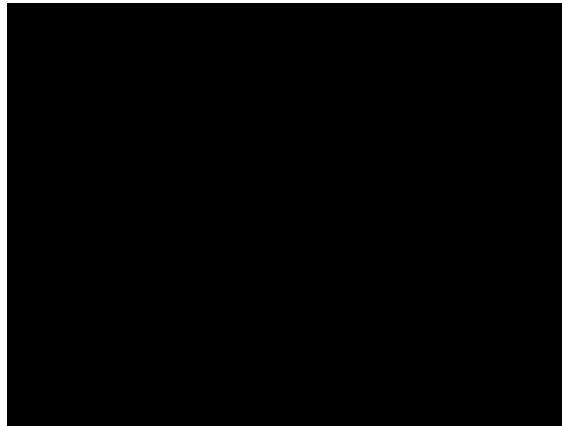
REDUCTION

- Bananas and cream,
- Bananas and cream:
- All we could say was
- Bananas and cream.

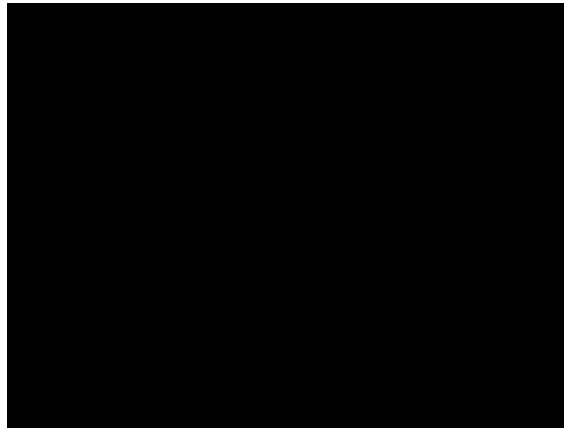
- B.'nan.s .n 'cream,
- B.'nan.s .n 'cream,
- All wi c.d 'say w.s
- B.'nan.s .n 'cream.

How to raise syllable awareness?

- Syllabification



How to raise syllable awareness?



How to raise syllable awareness?

- Red | green | white
- Cards
- Rods

Some key words with omitted syllables

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PhD
Pollutant
Strategies
Support

How to raise syllable awareness?

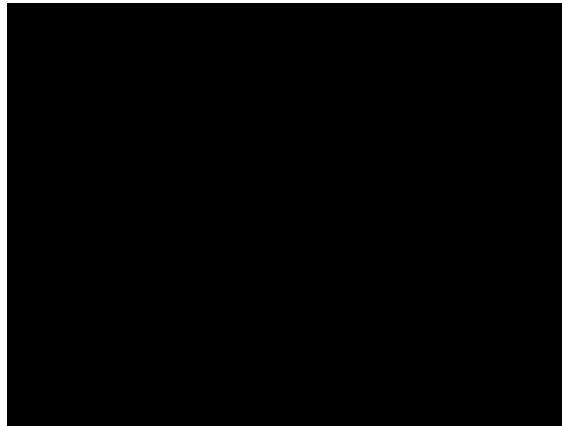
- Total body activity



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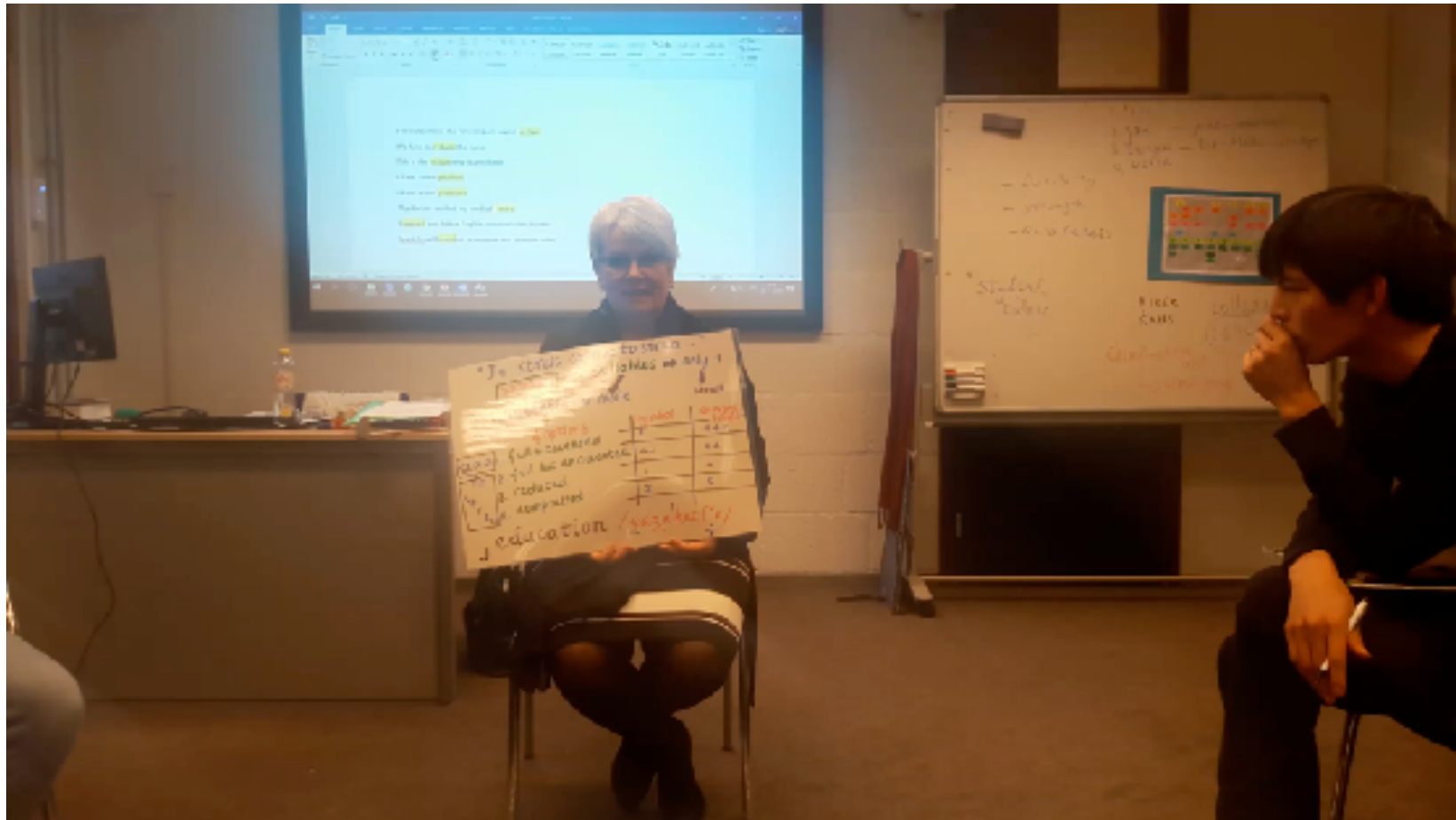
How to raise syllable awareness?

- Communication



How to integrate it all?

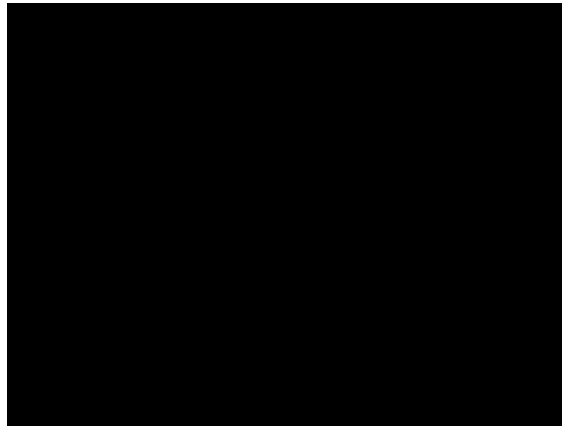
3 tips + summary



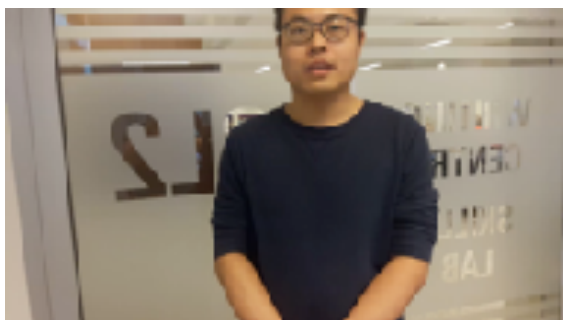
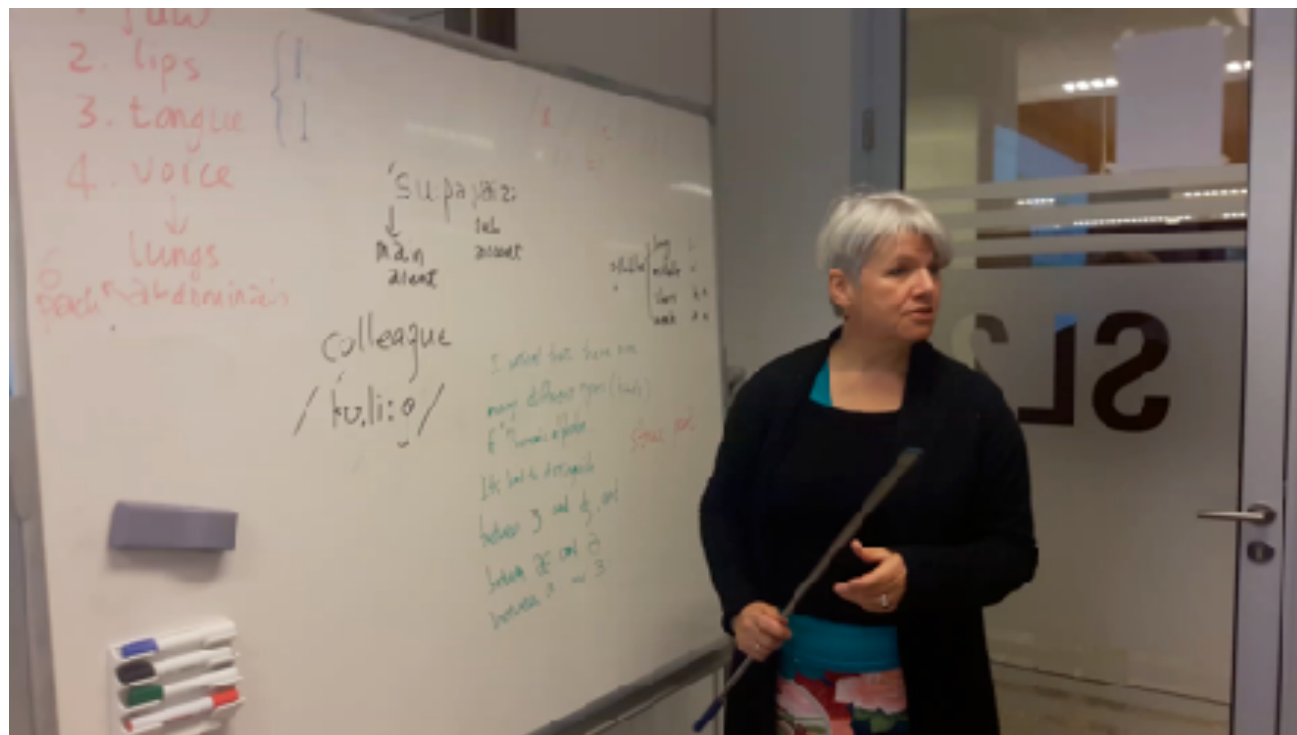
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How to integrate it all?

- Colleague(s) | Sound & Syllable Length

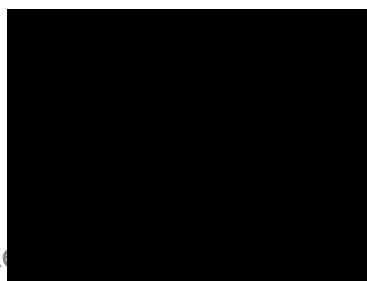
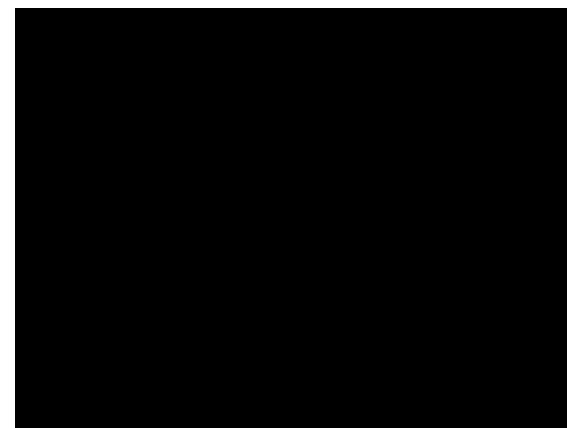
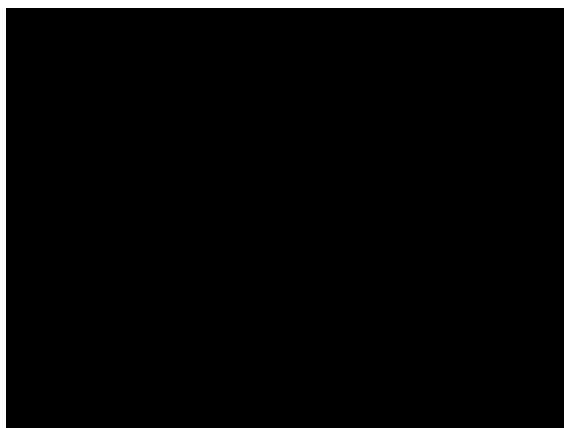
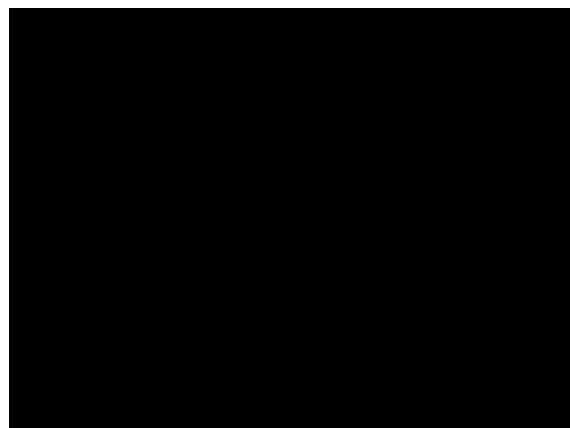
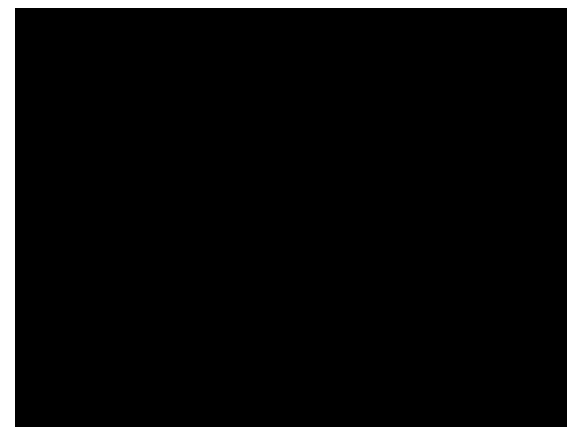
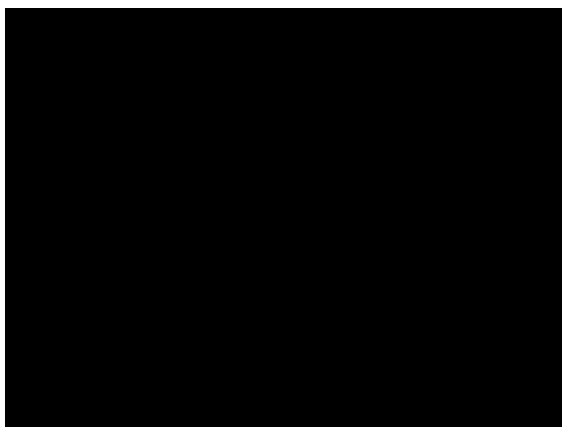


How to integrate it all?



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Glasgow, 26 Oct 2019

How to integrate it all?



How to integrate it all?

- Haikus

How to contact me?

when people enjoy listening to you
e:
really get your message

Marieke van der Meer MA
The English Pronunciation Coach

find me on We Chat :-)

register for our free seminar:

marieke.vandermeer@chello.nl