

Introduction

You are going to listen to an interview with Dorah, a black South African, talking about a traditional South African wedding. Dorah moved to London several years ago and she works as a senior nurse in a London hospital. Her mother tongue is Sotho, one of the six South African languages she speaks, including Afrikaans and South African English. Dorah speaks slowly and clearly.



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Stage 1: Pre-listening - activating schema

A Key lexis

How many wedding-related words can you think of, or find in your dictionaries?

B Discussion questions

1. Are you married? If so, describe your wedding day.
2. Would you like to get married? Why?/Why not?
3. Describe a typical wedding in your country.
4. Have you ever been to a wedding in another country? If so, what was different from weddings in your country?
5. What do you know about weddings in the UK or the USA?
6. Can gay people (i.e. two men or two women) get married in your country?

Stage 2: Natural listening comprehension practice

Track 1

Listen to the recording. How much do you understand as a percentage

0% _____ 100%?

Stage 3: Decoding and building meaning

Track 1

Listen to the recording again and write down as many words as you can. Compare your list with the lists of other students, in pairs or in groups. How much more of the recording can you understand now? Can you use these words to build meaning?

Stage 4: Traditional listening comprehension practice

Track 1

Elementary Level: Questions

Sometimes part of the answer is given in italics to help you.

1. When did Dorah's cousin get married?
2. Where did she get married? *in her* _____
3. How far is the wedding location from Pretoria by car? *1½* _____
4. How is the bride related to Dorah? *She's her* _____
_____.
5. Which two of these activities had people been practising before the wedding day? *cycling, shouting, running, dancing, shooting, cooking, singing, cleaning, painting*

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6. How long had the bridesmaids been practising their 'steps' and 'moves'? *for two or* _____
7. What time do the bridegroom's family have to be at the bride's home on the wedding day? *at* _____ *or* _____ *in the* _____
8. What does the bride's family give the groom's family? *a live* _____ *or* _____

Intermediate Level: Gap-fill

1. Dorah's cousin got married _____.
2. The wedding took place in a _____ about _____ hours by car from Pretoria.
3. The bride was Dorah's _____ sister's daughter.
4. The interviewer says weddings in South Africa are very _____ to weddings in the UK.
5. Before the wedding people practise special dances and _____ to sing.
6. The bridesmaids practise their dance _____ and moves for two or three _____ before the wedding.
7. The groom's _____ have to arrive at the bride's place _____ in the morning on the day of the wedding.
8. They have to be there at _____ or _____ o'clock.
9. In the old days it used to be _____ o'clock.
10. The bride's family give the bridegroom's family a live _____ or _____.

Advanced Level: Correct the mistake in each sentence

Dorah's niece got married yesterday in South Africa.

She got married in a township.

The wedding location is about 1½ miles from Pretoria.

The bride was Dorah's uncle's daughter.

People practise songs and dances for a couple of weeks before a traditional wedding in South Africa.

Dorah says the preparations are quite 'strange'.

The bridegroom's family have to arrive the night before the wedding.

Sometimes the bride's family offer the groom's family a coat.

The groom's family have to look after the animal until it dies naturally.



Stage 5: Interesting language points

A Explaining where you live

When the interviewer asks Dorah where the bride's village is, Dorah replies:

'It's **about one and a half hours from** Pretoria.'

The interviewer knows she means by car because of previous conversations. This way of explaining where you live is very useful, particularly if you live in a small place which no one has ever heard of. You just describe the location relative to the nearest town or city. Look at these examples:

I come from Southampton. It's **about an hour from** London by car./It's about 80 miles from London.

I come from Trollhättan. It's **about 40 minutes from** Gothenburg by train./It's **about 75 kilometres from** Gothenburg.

We live in Walthamstow. It's **about 20 minutes from** Oxford Circus by tube.

Now describe where you come from, using the models above.

B Speaker responses - showing the speaker that you're paying attention

The interviewer shows that she is listening and following what Dorah is saying by using these words and sounds:

Yeah.

OK.

Right.

Uh, huh.

Mmm, hmm.

Now practise short conversations using these responses.

C Checking understanding

During the interview the interviewer checks with Dorah to make sure that she understands what Dorah has just said:

Dorah: The family from the bridegroom have to come to the bride's place early in the morning.
Interviewer: When you say 'early', what, 10 o'clock?

Here are some more examples:

Sarah: I went to bed really late last night.
Dan: When you say 'late', what, midnight?

Patrick: Sorry I'm late. I had to wait ages for the bus.
Claire: When you say 'ages', what, five minutes?

Now practise short conversations using this format.

D Making deductions

Later in the interview we get this exchange:

Dorah: They will give them a sheep or a goat. It's for them and then they have to slaughter it.
Interviewer: So they give them a live sheep?

Because she hears the word 'slaughter' the interviewer deduces that the sheep is alive. Here are some more examples of this use of **So**:

Katie: I'll meet Patrick at the station and bring him back here.
Sam: So Patrick's coming by train?

Harry: I really need to study tonight.
Jill: So you're not coming out with us?

Practise short conversations where the listener has to make a deduction. Here are some examples to help you:

I'm really tired!
I'm starving!
I saw him out last night with Sarah.
I have to be at work at 7 tomorrow.
Mark is so annoying!

E Have to do something

Dorah says the bridegroom's family 'have to come to the bride's place early in the morning'.

The meaning of **have to do something** is that there is external obligation or pressure to do something. Here are some more examples from the interview:

There'll be some dance that they **have to practise** and some songs to sing.

There will be some steps, some moves that **they have to do**.

And on the day of the wedding... the family from the bride's groom **have to come** to the bride's place early in the morning.

They will give them a sheep or a goat... and then they **have to** slaughter it.

Here are some more examples of **have to do something**:

When it snows we **have to clear** the snow off the pavement outside our house.

I **have to cook** dinner tonight because it's my turn.

I **have to be** at work at 8 tomorrow morning.

My grandmother **has to take** 28 tablets a day.

Now make up your own examples.

F Four features of Dorah's South African accent

Dorah has a wonderful South African accent. Her mother tongue is Sotho, but she speaks a number of other South African languages, including Afrikaans and South African English. These all influence the way she speaks.

Many features of her accent show up in this short extract. Look at the words in the extract, and repeat them to yourself. Then listen to the original extract, and repeat what you hear. What differences do you notice between Dorah's accent and standard UK or US English?

Track 2 practise dance, singing, you know, just to make the day

1. Look at the clauses and phrases below and say them to yourself, paying particular attention to the underlined syllables. Then listen to Dorah. What do you notice about her pronunciation of the underlined syllables?

Track 3 they have to practise so they can practice...
the family from the bride's groom the girl's family
There'll be some dance...

Remember, a good language learner will realise that when a speaker produces one non-standard pronunciation feature, the speaker is likely to produce this feature in all other words in English containing that sound. How might a South African say these words? **map, tap, lack, crack, sat, flap**

2. Look at the clauses and phrases below and say them to yourself, paying particular attention to the underlined syllables. Then listen to Dorah. What do you notice about her pronunciation of the underlined syllables?

Track 4 and then there is (um) singing to sing
they have to practise

How might a South African say these words? **thin, win, kiss, miss, tin, twin**

3. Look at the clauses and phrases below and say them to yourself, paying particular attention to the underlined syllables. Then listen to Dorah. What do you notice about her pronunciation of the underlined syllables?

Track 5 It's one of our tradition(s)... and then they have to slaughter it

How might a South African say these words? **cave, love, move, shove, over, cover**

4. Look at the clauses and phrases below and say them to yourself, paying particular attention to the underlined letters. Then listen to Dorah. What do you notice about her pronunciation of the underlined letters?

Track 6 around um around four serious

How might a South African say these words? **tree, fridge, transport, trade, cried**

Stage 6: Further listening practice

Exercise 1 Dictation

First decide in pairs or groups how many words you can hear in each track, then listen again and write down the words that you hear.

- Track 7 1. _____.
- Track 8 2. _____.
- Track 9 3. _____.
- Track 10 4. _____.

Exercise 2: Weak forms

The expression 'weak forms' refers to the grammatical or function words between the stressed lexical, or content, words in an utterance which tend to be unstressed and assume a weak form. This makes it difficult for students to recognise them in a stream of speech.

Fill in the missing words in the following extracts from the recording.

Track 11

1. _____ getting married in a township?
2. All _____ the special day.
3. So they _____ practise for maybe two or three months before.
4. So _____ the bride and the groom.
5. Special songs _____ the day.
6. There _____ be days _____ they _____ prepare the goat.

Exercise 3: Linking

Linking occurs when the end of one word runs into the start of the next word. It is very common in informal spoken English. It occurs if a word ends in a consonant and the next word starts with a vowel, or if one word ends with the same letter as at the beginning of

the next word. However, it also occurs frequently with the final letter -s of one word linking with a consonant at the start of the next word. Linking makes it difficult for students to distinguish individual words in the stream of speech.

Listen to these extracts from the recording and fill in the missing words which are linked together.

Track 12 1. Um, Dorah, you said your cousin _____ married yesterday.

Track 13 2. _____ near Johannesburg?

Track 14 3. Tell me about _____.

Track 15 4. ... _____ people will be singing...

Track 16 5. _____ them and then they have to slaughter it.

Track 17 6. Who _____ sheep or the goat?

Exercise 4 Recognising different intonation patterns

There are traditionally some classic intonation patterns in spoken English, for example a falling tone at the end of a statement and a rising tone at the end of some questions. However, very often you can find examples of speakers breaking 'the rules'. This exercise is simply designed to train you to recognise rising, falling and level tones.

In the recording, some words and phrases are repeated with different intonation. These are:

in the morning

and some songs

the bridesmaids

Listen to the pairs of phrases and words and underline the description of the tone that you hear on the underlined syllable. You will hear each pair twice. First at the original speed and then slowed-down.

Track 18 1a and some songs (rising or level) 1b and some songs (rising or level)

Track 19 2a the bridesmaids (rising or falling) 2b the bridesmaids (rising or falling)

Track 20 3a in the morning (rising or falling) 3b in the morning (rising or falling)

Exercise 5 Recognising two different accents

You will hear the words 'early' spoken five times at original speed. As you listen to each excerpt, underline 'D' if you hear Dorah's voice, or 'S' if you hear Sheila's voice. The first one has been done for you. **Warning** - the words come very fast!

Track 21	early	1	2	3	4	5
		<u>D</u> /S	<u>D</u> /S	D/ <u>S</u>	D/ <u>S</u>	<u>D</u> /S

Now do the same for the words 'about', 'wedding', 'the' and 'bridesmaids'.

Track 22	about	1	2	3	4	5
		D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S
Track 23	wedding	1	2	3	4	5
		D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S
Track 24	the	1	2	3	4	5
		D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S
Track 25	bridesmaids	1	2	3	4	5
		D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S	D/S

Exercise 6 Working with speech units, or rhythmic groups

Sheila and Dorah say the words 'for ... a long time' in quick succession, each in rhythmic groups (speech units) with five syllables in each group. Sheila adds the word 'quite' in her speech unit, and Dorah adds 'yeah' to the beginning of her unit. Sheila speaks first.

Listen to Richard saying 'for quite a long time' (Sheila's words, but not her voice) in three different rhythmic patterns, shown below. The capital letters mean that the words are prominent (or stressed). Repeat patterns 1, 2 and 3 after Richard

- Track 26 Rhythmic pattern 1 for QUITE a LONG TIME (repeat)
 Rhythmic pattern 2 for QUITE a long TIME (repeat)
 Rhythmic pattern 3 for quite a LONG TIME (repeat)

Now listen to Sheila. Which rhythmic pattern best matches Sheila's version - 1, 2 or 3? Listen and repeat to yourself what Sheila says, and then decide. (*NB Dorah says 'Yeah' while Sheila is saying these words.*)

Track 27 for quite a long time

Now listen to Richard saying 'yeah for a long time' (Dorah's words, but not her voice) in these different rhythmic patterns shown below. The capital letters mean that the words are prominent (or stressed). Repeat patterns 1, 2 and 3 after Richard.

Track 28 Rhythmic pattern 1 yeah for a LONG TIME

Rhythmic pattern 2 yeah FOR a long TIME

Rhythmic pattern 3 YEAH for a LONG time

Now listen to Dorah. Which rhythmic pattern best matches Dorah's version: 1, 2 or 3?

Track 29 yeah for a long time

Stage 7: Further language development

Exercise 1: Gap-fill

Fill in the blanks in these new sentences with words which you heard during the recording. The words are listed in the box to help you.

bride	bridegroom	bridesmaids	early	place
present	serious	songs	village	

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1. I'm really sad. My best friend is moving out of London to a _____ in the country.
2. I'd rather work _____ in the morning than late at night.
3. The _____ wore a long ivory satin dress, the _____ wore a top hat and tails and the _____ looked beautiful in pink dresses with pink bows in their hair.
4. When he was younger, my brother got into some very _____ trouble.
5. Would you like to come back to my _____?
6. I hope you'll like your _____. I wanted to get you something special because you've had such a difficult year.
7. I think Robbie Williams is great, but he's better when he's performing his own _____, rather than other people's.

Exercise 2: Transformations

Change the word in each bracket that appeared in the recording to form a word that fits the gap.

1. When is our next (practising) _____ session?
2. Who's your favourite (singing) _____?
3. It's (traditions) _____ in the UK to have a roast dinner on Sundays.
4. What's the (different) _____ between hamburgers and beefburgers?
5. Are you (serious) _____ telling me you won't be coming on Friday? I don't believe it!
6. I'm not (prepare) _____ to pay £100 for that. It's way too expensive.
7. A lot of young people nowadays no longer believe in (married) _____.

1.5 Interview with Dorah about a traditional South African wedding: Part 1 transcript

Track 1 3 minutes, 18 seconds

S: Sheila D: Dorah

S: Um, Dorah, you said your cousin was getting married yesterday...

D: Yeah.

S: ...in South Africa.

D: Yeah.

S: OK. Is she getting married in a township or...?

D: No, it's in a, in a village.

S: In a village. OK.

D: Yeah, it's in a village.

S: Right. Is that near Johannesburg?

D: No, it's about um, one and a half hours from Pretoria.

S: OK. Right.

D: In a village.

S: And so she's your cousin. Is she your mother's sister's daughter, or...?

D: Yeah.

S: Right. OK.

D: It's my mother's sister's daughter.

S: OK. Now, I think weddings in South Africa are very different to weddings over here.

D: Yeah. Yeah, they are.

S: Yeah, so tell, tell me about this wedding.

D: OK. Um... *(clears throat)* Like er... yesterday, which was the wedding day...

S: Mmm, hmm.

D: ...um, at the bride's place.

S: Right.

D: So what happens is, prior to, to, to, to the wedding...

S: Mmm, hmm.

D: ...the wedding, the preparation... some of the preparations um, it's like people will be singing, practising their, their... There'll be some dance...

S: Mmm, hmm.

D: ...that they have to practise and some songs to sing.

S: All, all for the special day.

D: Yes.

S: So they've been, they've been practising for quite a long time.

D: Yeah, yeah, for a long time.

S: OK.

D: The.... What do you call the...?

S: So you've got the bride and the groom.

D: And the other ones – what do you call?

S: The bridesmaids.

D: The bridesmaids. The, the bridemaids and the... the bridesmaids and the...

S: Groom and the...

D: Yeah, they will practise. There will be some, some steps, some moves that they have to do.

S: Uh, huh.

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D: So they will practise for maybe two or three months before.

S: Really?

D: And some songs.

S: Uh, huh. Special songs for the day.

D: Yeah. For the, for the... yeah.

S: OK.

D: And it's, it's quite serious.

S: Mmm.

D: You know, there, there will be days that they will prepare the goat, prepare... practice dance, singing, you know, just to make the day...

S: ...really special.

D: Yeah.

S: And on the day of the, of the wedding on the bride's side in the morning the, the family from the bride's groom...

S: Mmm, hmm.

D: ...have to come to the bride's place early in the morning.

S: Well, when you say 'early', what, 10 o'clock or...?

D: No, around um, 5, 6.

S: 6? In the morning.

D: In the morning, yeah. And in the olden days they say it used to be around 4. It's our tradition in, in my... people.

S: Uh, huh.

D: They would come in the morning and then there is um... Um, I won't say it's, it's a present, but, it's um... It's one of our tradition(s). There will be... an offering – if I may call it?

S: Mmm, mm.

D: ...they will give them – a sheep or a goat.

S: Right.

D: It's for them and then they have to slaughter it.

S: So they give them a live sheep?

D: Yeah, a live sheep or a live goat.

S: To the... Who, who brings the sheep or the goat? Is it the...

D: It's there. It's, it's there. The, the, the, the girl's family.

S: Yeah.

D: They've, they've got this to give to the bri... husband's-to-be.

S: OK.