

## Re: Substitutes for English /T/ and /D/

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- *From:* "Peter T. Daniels" <[grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:grammatim@xxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Tue, 17 Jul 2007 08:25:27 -0700
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On Jul 17, 8:20 am, Seán O'Leathlóbhair <[jwlaw...@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:jwlaw...@xxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

On 17 Jul, 12:46, "Peter T. Daniels" <[gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

It depends on your objective. If you wish to sound native then consider using [f] and [v] but an argument against is that these dialects are not very prestigious. To conform to them you may need to also drop [h]. I don't know if all dialects which replace [T] with [f] also drop [h] but the ones that I am familiar with do. If you can't do [T] and don't want to substitute [f] then I would also recommend [t], ditto [D] to [d]. Some Irish do that. (Hard to know which brackets I should be using here.)

The reason for choosing [f v] is that they are acoustically almost indistinguishable from [T D]. As for non-prestigious dialect, *\_if\_* the hearer hears the difference, that non-prestigiousness holds for only a very small and localized audience.

Why a small and localised audience? Do you just mean that at any one time probably only a few people are listening? That may be true but over many conversations that few could add up to many.

I mean that most of the world's English-speakers do not have a negative opinion of Cockney dialect. Nor, of course, do they know that [f] for /T/ is a feature of it.

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Speakers of a dialect which uses [T D] usually notice when they hear the [f v] variety.

Only because the (almost inaudible) distinction is fetishized in Britain. Most people do not (almost, \_cannot\_) hear the difference.

Howie Aronson (teaching phonology many years ago) turned his back, said the name of a putative local restaurant, and asked us to write it down. Half the class wrote "Cafe' Mandarin," half wrote "Cathay Mandarin."

My impression is that many [T D] speakers regard [f v] and also dropped [h] forms as undesirable.

"Many" of a very small pool -- socially conscious Brits. (I was just given a DVD of extras from "Are You Being Served," which included a biography of Mollie Sugden, which attributed her great success in comedies of class to her ability to switch among super-posh and gutter-common within a single sentence, accompanied by numerous examples over the decades. Evidently this is far, far, far more hilarious over there than to the American audience, which is sufficiently entertained by the absurdly broad spectacle of Eliza Doolittle doing the same at Ascot in the movie.)

Maybe they should not but that does not mean that they do not. I would rarely use my [f v] accent in a business context though I am tempted when I speak to one customer who is in the area in which I grew up.

If you don't "succumb to the temptation," then you're suppressing a hundred thousand years of linguistic socialization. \_People prefer to talk like their surroundings\_, so when the boy I saw at Cambridge talking RP to his Cockney parents (who were kvelling at every syllable) goes home on holiday (US: vacation), he dam' well doesn't talk RP to his old mates!

Would you recommend a learner to consider [f v] rather than [t d] or [s z] if he cannot manage [T D]?

Yes, because [t d s z] have considerably higher functional load so there's more opportunity for confusion.

(It also might help them conceal their native language, which might sometimes be desirable, as we have a pretty good idea who says "zis"

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and who says "dis.")

Are there any [f v] accents in the US?

I don't think so.

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