Introduction to Connected Speech

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Overview of today’s lecture

- Connected speech defined
- Is connected speech casual?
- Key features of connected speech
  - Contractions, blends, and reductions
  - Linking and juncture
  - Assimilation, deletion, and epenthesis
- Student learning challenges
- Teaching strategies
Introduction

- In spoken discourse, English words typically “run together.”
- They aren’t pronounced in an isolated fashion within the stream of speech.
Connected speech defined

- Connected speech, also commonly referred to as reduced speech or sandhi-variation, involves the contracted forms, reductions, elisions, and liaisons used by native speakers in their oral speech.

- Connected speech features reinforce the regularity of English rhythm and help preserve its stress-timed rhythm.
The law of economy

β All languages exhibit some type of sandhi-variation in spoken utterances.

β According to Clarey & Dixson (1963), this “…results from a simple law of economy, whereby the organs of speech, instead of taking a new position for each sound, tend to draw sounds together with the purpose of saving time and energy.”

Rogerson (2006)
Is connected speech casual?

Some researchers classify connected speech as something that occurs in “fast,“ “informal,“ “relaxed.“ or “casual” speech.

See, for example, Henrichsen, 1984; Hill & Beebe, 1980; Norris, 1995; Rogerson, 2006; Weinstein, 2001.
Others characterize connected speech as “naturally occurring talk” or “real” spoken English.

See, for example, Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Brown & Hilferty, 1989; Buck, 1995; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, in press; Gimson, 2001; Guillot, 1999; Marks, 1999; Moh-Kim, 1997; Norris, 1995; Pennington & Richards, 1986; Richards, 1983; Rogerson, 2006.
Possible conclusions

Kaisse (1985) argues that connected speech and reduced forms are neither informal nor due to the rate of speech.

Similarly, Rogerson (2006) states that...

- Connected speech is found in all registers and all rates of speech; it is characteristic of spoken English.
- Register and rate may contribute to some rules of appropriateness or production.
- However, in general, reduced forms affect all areas and all types of spoken English.
Overview

Adjustments in connected speech include:

-**Contractions, blends, and reductions** – the written and/or oral distortions of word boundaries

-**Linking** – the smooth connection of speech
Overview, cont’d.

Adjustments in connected speech also include:

β Assimilation - The change in adjacent sounds to resemble each other more closely

β Epenthesis - The addition of a sound

β Deletion - The disappearance of a sound
Contractions, blends, and reductions
Contractions and blends

Blending refers to any two-word sequences where the word boundary is blurred.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."
Blending

Typically, blending consists of contractions and blends.

Contractions are those word boundaries that have a conventionalized written form:

we’ve, he’s, I’m

Blends are typically contracted spoken forms that do not have a conventional written form:

there are ‘there’re
who will ‘who’ll
Linking

Herman by Jim Unger

"Keep out! Keep out! K-E-E-P O-U-T."
Overview

Linking in NAE takes the following forms:

- V + V: insertion of /y/ and /w/ glides
- VC + V: the consonant is shared by both syllables ð V ñC ñV
- CC + V: Resyllabification ð C + CV
- Identical consonants: articulation as one, lengthened consonant
- C (stop) + C (stop or affricate): The initial stop consonant is unreleased
Linking with a /w/ glide

Play on words: The lesser of two evils.
‡ two weevils
Linking: Vowel to vowel

Insertion of a /y/ glide following /iy/, /ey/, /ay/, and /çy/, either word internally or between words

- Word internally
  being; staying; crying; toying

- Between words
  be ìable; stay ì up; try ì out; Roy ì Adams
Linking: Vowel to vowel, cont’d.

β Insertion of a /w/ glide following /uw/, /ow/, and /aw/, either word internally or between words
- Word internally
  blueish; going; however
- Between words
  do it; go away; now is
In VC + V linking sequences, the consonant “straddles” both syllables or words:
- keep out ʟɛ keɪ ñp ïout
- dream on ʟɛ drea ñm ïon
- bend over ʟɛ ben ñd ïover
- drag on ʟɛ dra ñɡ ïon
Linking: Consonant to vowel

In CC + V linking sequences, resyllabification typically occurs:

- **find out** θ /faynɾdawt/
  \[\text{CC} \uparrow \text{V} \quad \text{C} \uparrow \text{CV}\]

- **pulled over** θ /pUɾdəwνˈr/\n  \[\text{CC} \uparrow \text{V} \quad \text{C} \uparrow \text{CV}\]

- **jump up** θ /dZ̃mɾ̝p̥p/
  \[\text{CC} \uparrow \text{V} \quad \text{C} \uparrow \text{CV}\]
Consonant linking, cont’d.

Across word boundaries...

Gemination - two identical consonants are articulated as one, lengthened consonant:

- stop pushing bad dog handsome man
  \[p:] \[d:] \[m:]\]
Across word boundaries...

**in stop + stop or stop + affricate sequences, the first stop consonant is unreleased:**

- pep talk  pet cat  black bag
  \([p^\circ]\) \([t^\circ]\) \([k^\circ]\)
- bad check  fat judge
  \([d^\circ]\) \([t^\circ]\)
Spoken English is full of reduced forms, e.g., wanna, hafta, ‘cuz, and kinda.

These are just a few examples of reduced forms in spoken English.

These reduced forms are one aspect of NAE “connected speech.”
I don’t hafta...

I don’t hafta go but
I kinda wanna go ‘cuz
it sounds like fun!
Linking with /r/

Many dialects of British and Colonial Englishes (e.g., Australia, New Zealand) use /r/ to link vowel to vowel.

- This use of /r/ to link is often referred to as intrusive /r/.

Examples from popular culture:

- "I saw(r) a film today, oh boy" (The Beatles “A Day in the Life”)
- "Vodka(r) and tonics" (Elton John “Goodbye Yellow Brick Road)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linking_R
More on “intrusive r”

Although many claim that “intrusive r” is not a feature of RP, the eminent British linguists Peter Roach and J.C. Wells both note that it is widespread in RP. Some examples:

- the idea(r) of
- Formula(r) A
- a media(r) event

“Intrusive r” is not typical of NAE.
Juncture

“Intrusive r” and other forms of linking are related to the linguistic phenomenon of juncture.

Juncture is defined as the relationship between one sound and the sounds that immediately precede and follow it.

Roach (2001)
Juncture, cont’d.

Compare:

Ice cream

I scream!
Juncture, cont’d.

External open juncture (usually just called juncture) is characterized by a pause between the two sounds:

Fetch me the **paper, boy!** vs. Fetch me the **paper boy**.
Juncture, cont’d.

 réussi Additional examples:
- ice cream vs. I scream
- nitrate vs. night rate
- my train vs. might rain
- keeps ticking vs. keep sticking

 réuss Note: Other phenomena (such as aspiration and vowel length) may also help distinguish these pairs.

Roach (2000)
Assimilation

In assimilation, a sound (the assimilated sound, or AS) takes on characteristics of another sound (the conditioning sound, or CS).

There are three types of assimilation:
- progressive assimilation (CS → AS)
- regressive assimilation (AS ← CS)
- coalescent assimilation (two adjacent sounds combine to form a new sound)
Progressive assimilation

Progressive (or preservative) assimilation occurs in plural and past tense endings, since the voiced or voiceless quality of the verb stem “conditions” the morphological ending:

- **bite** + -s = /bayts/
  - voiceless /t/ ō vl. ending /s/
- **tag** + -s = /tQgz/
  - voiced /g/ ō vd. ending /z/
Progressive assimilation, cont’d.

This form of assimilation also occurs in contractions with *is*. Compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>/s/</th>
<th>/z/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It’s exciting.</td>
<td>Karl’s waiting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat’s late.</td>
<td>He’s nervous.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack’s happy.</td>
<td>Sam’s relaxing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regressive assimilation

Regressive or anticipatory assimilation is a relatively pervasive phenomenon in NAE.

Many native speakers are unaware of the adjustments they make as a result, e.g.:

- grandpa: /ndp/ ð /mp/
- pancake /nk/ ð /Nk/
Regressive assimilation, cont’d.

- Regressive assimilation helps explain the forms of the negative prefix
  - in {-im, -ir, il}:
    - insignificant; indecent; invalid but…
    - impossible; irreproachable; illogical

- Final nasal consonants are often conditioned by the following consonant:
  - in pain [m]; in Canada [N]; on guard [N]
Regressive assimilation, cont’d.

- Other examples of regressive assimilation are found in rapid speech, where the assimilated sound often becomes identical to the following conditioning sound:

  - /s/ or /z/ + /$\$
    - Swiss chalet [S]; his shoes [S]
  - final /t/ or /d/ + /p,k/ or /b,g/
    - good boy [b:]; good girl [g:];
    - at peace [p:]; pet kitten [k:]
Coalescent assimilation

Coalescent assimilation occurs when the juxtaposition of two conditioning sounds (A + B) results in a third, assimilated sound (C).
Coalescent assimilation, cont’d.

The most frequent example of coalescent assimilation is the **palatalization** that occurs with alveolar consonants when followed by /y/. 

![Diagram of the human mouth and throat](image)
## Palatalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>issue</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He’s coming this year.</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>pleasure</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does your mother know?</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>stature</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is that your dog?</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ts/</td>
<td>He hates your guts.</td>
<td>/ts/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She lets you do your thing.</td>
<td>/ts/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>procedure</td>
<td>/d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Would you mind moving?</td>
<td>/d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dz/</td>
<td>She needs your help.</td>
<td>/dz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He never heeds your advice.</td>
<td>/dz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deletion

Deletion (also known as elision or ellipsis) entails the potential loss of a sound, as in the following contexts:

- Disappearing “t” in intervocalic /nt/ clusters
  - win\(^{(t)}\)er, Toron\(^{(t)}\)o, en\(^{(t)}\)er, man\(^{(t)}\)le

- Disappearing /t/ and /d/ in clusters
  - res\(^{(t)}\)less, Eas\(^{(t)}\)side
  - wil\(^{(d)}\) boar, blin\(^{(d)}\) man
Deletion, cont’d.

More instances of deletion:

§ Syncope (unstressed medial vowel loss)
  - choc\(^{(o)}\)late, diff\(^{(e)}\)rent, ev\(^{(e)}\)ning, int\(^{(e)}\)resting

§ Unstressed vowel + /n, l, p, t, r/
  - t\(^{(o)}\)night, p\(^{(o)}\)lice, s\(^{(u)}\)ppose, p\(^{(a)}\)rade

§ Disappearing “r”
  - Feb\(^{(r)}\)uary, gove\(^{(r)}\)nor, tempe\(^{(r)}\)ature, su\(^{(r)}\)prise
Deletion, cont’d.

More instances of deletion:

- Disappearing /v/ in of before a consonant
  - lots o\(^{(f)}\) money, waste o\(^{(f)}\) time, tons o\(^{(f)}\) homework

- Disappearing initial /h/ and /D/ in pronoun forms
  - ask \((h)\)im, tell \((h)\)er, help \((th)\)em
Deletion, cont’d.

More instances of deletion:

**Aphesis** (loss of the unstressed initial vowel or syllable in informal speech)
- (be)’cause, (a)’bout, (a)’round

**Loss of an unstressed vowel following initial aspirated [pʰ,tʰ,kʰ]:**
- p(o)tato, t(o)morrow, c(a)reer
A important caveat....

The above examples represent *tendencies* only. The degree of deletion will depend on the speaker, the dialect, the context, etc.
Deletion, cont’d.

Listen to the following utterance:

_______________________
Which one did you hear?

a) She made a mistake.

b) She made him a steak.

Ooops!
Epenthesis

Epenthesis involves the insertion of a vowel or consonant into an existing sequence to break up difficult to pronounce sequences.

- nuclear \[\text{nuc}^{(u)}\text{lear}\]
- warmth \[\text{warm}^{(p)}\text{th}\]
- responsibility \[\text{respon}^{(t)}\text{sibility}\]

It often occurs as the result of the addition of the morphological endings.
Epenthesis, cont’d.

Examples:

 lança /ˈ/ used to break sibilant clusters
   with  –s
     - classes, buzzes, britches, judges
 lança /ˈ/ used to break alveolar stop clusters
   with  –ed
     - patted, granted, graded, branded
Consonant epenthesis

Consonants are also sometimes added to facilitate the pronunciation of a phoneme sequence, for example:
- prince ð /prɪnts/; comfort ð /kəmfort/; comfort /kəmfort/;

Task: Circle the one you hear:
a) Some day my prince will come!
b) Some day my prints will come!
Epenthesis as a NNS strategy

Non-native speakers, especially those from languages with restricted clustering, often use epenthesis as a strategy to break up difficult clusters.

- Word internally: English ð /INg \Il$;
- Word externally: school ð /Eskuwl/

This habit is very hard for students to break, especially as they may be unaware of their use of the strategy.
Student learning challenges

- Classroom teachers often overarticulate to facilitate learner comprehension.
- Listening materials are full of clearly pronounced and articulated speech.
- Language learners often develop their listening and speaking skills based on these false premises.
- When they encounter authentic NS discourse, learners are often shocked to find that NSs don’t speak in the ways they expect.
Learning challenges, cont’d.

- The language outside of the classroom seems unfamiliar and fast. Students are unable to decipher word boundaries or recognize words or phrases.

- Students who do not receive instruction or exposure to authentic discourse are “going to have a very rude awakening when [they try] to understand native speech in natural communicative situations.”

Ur (1987, p. 10)
When Fishermen Meet:

“Hiyamac”
“Lobuddy”
“Binearlong?”
“Coplours”
“Cetchanenny?”
“Goddafew”
“Kindarthay?”
“Bassencarp”
“Ennysizetoom?”
“Cuplapowns”
“Hittinhard?”
“Sordalike”
“Wahchoozin?”
“Gobbawurms”
“Fishanonaboddum?”
“Rydononaboddum”
“Whatchadrinkin?”
“Jugajimbeam”
“Igoddago”
“Tubad”
“Seeyaroun”
“Yeaktakideezy”
“Guluk.”
Knock, knock.

Donna.

Who's there?

Donna.

Dont't know why you're asking!
Knock knock joke: Scott

Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Scott.

Scott who?

Scott nothing to do with you.
Knock knock joke: Stu

Knock, knock.

Who’s there?

Stu.

Stu who?

Stu late for that now.
Knock knock joke: Anita

Knock, knock.
Knock, knock.
Who’s there?
Who’s there?
Anita.
Anita who?
Anita break.
Knock, knock. Who's there?
Juana. Who's who?
Juana come out and play?
Write your own!

Knock, Knock
Who’s there?
______________
__________who?
__________________.

Suggested Names

Ida    Andy
Izzy   Justin
Willy  Jamaica
Adam   Lemmy

Knock, knock.
Who’s there?
Justin.
Justin who?
Justin time for class!
Jokes

A nun asks a young Mexican immigrant girl, “Who is God?” Nervously, the girl replies: “God is a string bean.” The class erupts in laughter as the nun gasps in horror. Armed with a ruler, she whacks the girl’s hand. Only some time later does she realize that the girl has said “God is a supreme being.”
Don't it Make My Brown Eyes Blue
Crystal Gayle

Tell me no secrets, tell me some lies
Don't know when I've been so blue

Give me no reasons, give me alibis
Tell me you love me and don't make

You've found someone new
And don't make my brown eyes blue

Say anything but don't say goodbye
And don't make my brown eyes blue

I'll be fine when you're gone
I'll just cry all night long
And don't make my brown eyes blue
Say it isn't true
And don't make my brown eyes blue

Leigh (1978)
“I think that a clear enunciation is awfully necessary, don’t you?”

Thank you!
Selected sources


Selected sources

Selected sources


Selected sources


Song lyrics: Don’t it make...

Don't it Make My Brown Eyes Blue
Crystal Gayle

Don't I know when I've been so blue
Don't I know what's come over you
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And don't it make my brown eyes blue

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Tell me no secrets, tell me some lies
Give me no reasons, give me alibis
Tell me you love me and don't make me cry
Say anything but don't say goodbye

I didn't mean to treat you bad
Didn't know just what I had
But, honey, now I do
And don't it make my brown eyes blue
Don't it make my brown eyes blue

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Leigh (1978)