

# STUDENTS' REALIZATION OF CONNECTED SPEECH ASPECTS

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## **Abstract**

This research focuses on three aspects of connected speech. They are assimilation, linking and elision. The objective of the research are to find out the students' realization of connected speech aspects which covers assimilation, linking and elision, and to know the students' knowledge about those three connected speech aspects. The instruments of the research are reading text and questionnaire. The result of the research shows that in assimilation there are 23 tokens pronouncing correctly and there are 334 tokens which are mispronounced. In linking, 103 tokens are pronounced correctly and 254 tokens are mispronounced. In the last aspect of connected speech, that is elision, it is found that there are 244 tokens which are pronounced correctly by the students, while there are 113 which are mispronounced by the students. It shows that the most mispronounced aspect of connected speech is assimilation. Based on the questionnaire, it is found that the students have good knowledge related to aspect of connected speech. It means that the students still need practicing in order to make them accustomed to pronounce the aspects of connected speech.

*Keywords: Realization, Connected Speech.*

## **A. Introduction**

Phonetics and phonology are part of English which need to be understood as the speaker of English. They cover the things related to English pronunciation and all the speaker of English would like to have a good skill in pronunciation in order they are easy to communicate with native speaker. Unfortunately having a good skill in pronunciation is not easy, so that is why, as the speaker of English we have to know the things related to English spoken.

Learning spoken English is really hard for many students of English. They have got a lot of problem related to pronunciation such as they do not pronounce the word correctly and do not speak spontaneously. The most problem which the students have faced is applying of connected speech in order the students can speak as the lecturer's hopes. It indicates that they need to know the procedures of pronouncing the word correctly in order they can speak fluently.

By having a good knowledge in phonetics and phonology, it can help us to know how to pronounce the word in English correctly. As researcher has stated previously that phonetics and phonology cover the things related to pronunciation, such as connected speech. Connected speech is a part of phonetics and phonology which is focused to the way of how the native speaker's pronounce the words.

Connected speech consists of some features, but this research just focused on three features. They are assimilation, linking and elision. Assimilation are changes in pronunciation that take place under certain circumstances at the ends and the beginnings of words (that is, changes at word boundaries), when those words occur in connected speech, or in compounds for example *good girl* instead of /gʊg gɜ:l/. Linking is a process in continuous speech which joins the final sound of one word or syllable with the initial sound of the next one for example "*blue ink*" instead of /blu:wɪŋk/. Elision is very simply the omission of certain sounds in certain contexts for example *The next day* instead of /ðə 'neks 'deɪ/. They are the features of

connected speech which the researcher is going to analysis to students of Cokroaminoto Palopo University.

The researcher has found similar case at Cokroaminoto Palopo University, where the students cannot speak naturally in English. They speak word by word. There are some of them is hard to understand when talking with the native speaker for example: Go on! /*go on*/ instead of /*gəʊwɒn*/. It indicates that they may not understand about the aspects of connected speech, in this case assimilation, linking and elision. Speech is on-going stream of sounds, with no borderlines between each word. In spoken English, we speak maximal economy of movement rather than maximal clarity. As a result, some words are lost, and some phonemes are linked together.

## **B. Research Question**

Concerning to the explanation above, the researcher is interested to find out (1) How is the students' realization of connected speech aspects which covers assimilation, linking and elision?, (2) How is the students knowledge about those three connected speech aspects?.

## **C. Definition of Connected Speech**

According to Seong (2008:1), connected speech is a phenomenon in spoken language that collectively includes phonological processes such as reduction, elision, intrusion, assimilation, and contraction. Several research studies have shown that connected speech instruction can help learners to more easily comprehend rapid speech used by native speakers. According to Acosta (2012:1), 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. According to Tyrode (2008:5), connected speech is a term used in linguistics to refer to spoken language when analyzed as a continuous sequence, as in normal utterances and conversations.

Kondo in Seong (2008:3) states that connected speech makes up "a very real part" of the spoken language and occurs in "all levels of speech" from casual to even very formal levels. The naturally occurring speech of native speakers is mostly rapid and continuous with frequent linking, sound alteration, or reduction at word boundaries, which may cause comprehension difficulty when non-native speakers listen to it. Connected speech is increasingly regarded as an important matter in English classes as well Lee & Jung in Seong (2008).

## **D. Assimilation**

According to Tyrode (2008:1), assimilations are changes in pronunciation that take place under certain circumstances at the ends and the beginnings of words (that is, changes at word boundaries), when those words occur in connected speech, or in compounds. Assimilation is something that varies in extent, according to speaking rate and style; it is more likely to be found in rapid, casual speech than in slow, careful speech. Sometimes the difference caused by assimilation is very noticeable, and sometimes it is very slight. Generally speaking, the most common assimilations occur with consonants, that is, when a word ends in a consonant and is immediately followed by a word that starts with a consonant.

According to Robert (2012:1), assimilation is when the sound at the end of one word changes to make it easier to say the next word. For example: 'ten boys'

sounds like ‘tem boys’ (the /n/ sound changes to the bilabial /m/ to make it easier to transition to the also bilabial /b/). According to Lass (1984:172) assimilation is so common an important that various types are worth being discussed as such. Roach in Doleželová (2008:35) states that sounds in isolation sound different from sounds in connected speech. Sounds in natural connected speech cause changes in sounds belong to neighbouring words. This phenomenon is called assimilation. Underhill in Doleželová (2008:36) states that assimilation varies according to the speed and style of speech. Rapid colloquial speech, for instance, contains more extensive simplifications, and individual words may be further from their dictionary pronunciation than with careful speech. Two types of assimilation have been described: regressive and progressive. It is regressive when a phoneme that comes first is affected by the one following it Roach in Doleželová (2008:36) as in *Could you pass that book, please?* When /t/ in *that* becomes /p/ because of the following /b/ Kelly in Doleželová (2008:36).

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### **E. Linking**

According to Roach in Ameer (2007:2) linking is one of the aspects of connected speech. When English speakers talk they produce a number of phonemes that belong to the words they are using in a more or less continuous stream, the listener in turn recognizes them (or most of them) and receives the message. However, phoneticians have felt that it is necessary to draw attention to the way the end of one word is joined to the beginning of the next word. While, according to Crystal in Ameer (2007:3) linking is a term used in phonology to denote a sound which appears between two syllables or words, for ease of pronunciation, as in the English linking *r* in *car* and *lorry*.

Furthermore, Crystal states that it is a process in continuous speech which joins the final sound of one word or syllable with the initial sound of the next one. In English, words ending in a tense vowel and the next word or syllable begins with a vowel are usually linked with a glide. Therefore, a phrase like “*be able*” sounds as /bi:jeɪbl/. In other words, we feel that there is a sound /j/ which joins the two words “*blue ink*” /blu:wɪŋk/ sounds as though there is /w/ between ‘blue’ and ‘ink’. In some varieties of English, an intrusive /r/ is inserted between two words. The first word ends with a vowel sound and the next one begins with a vowel, as in “*saw Ann*” or “*media event*”. When a word or syllable ends in a consonant cluster and the next word launches with a vowel, the final consonant of the cluster is often pronounced as part of the following syllable. For instance, “*left arm*” is usually enunciated as if it were “*left arm*”. In English, the linking *r* is the most common example of this process, as when the *r* in *guitar* is pronounced before a word or syllable beginning with a vowel.

## **F. Elision**

Dalton and Seidlhofer in Doleželová (2008:38) states that elision is another simplification process in connected speech. It occurs when a consonant or a vowel which would be present in a carefully pronounced version of the word is left out. It is mostly /t/ and /d/ that are elided in English, particularly when they are between two consonants Underhill in Doleželová (2008:36). Hewings in Doleželová (2008:36) demonstrate this on the following examples: Last night.

## **G. Methodology**

In this research, the researcher applied descriptive method. This research conducted at Cokroaminoto Palopo University, especially in the sixth semester students of English Education Study Program. This research conducted in January until May 2014. It is used to record the students' voice when they read the texts orally. The instruments which are used are reading texts and questionnaire. Reading text is used to know the students' realization of connected speech aspects while questionnaire is used to find out the students' understanding in aspect of connected speech (assimilation, linking, and elision) in pronunciation.

## **H. Findings and Discussion**

### **a. Data from the transcription**

#### **1. Assimilation**

According to Robert (2012:1), assimilation is when the sound at the end of one word changes to make it easier to say the next word. The /n/ sound changes to the bilabial /m/ to make it easier to transition to the also bilabial /b/, for example "main branch" instead to /meim bræntʃ/. Underhill in Doleželová (2008:36) states that assimilation varies according to the speed and style of speech. When /t/ becomes /p/ because of the following /b/ for example "wait person" instead of /weɪp pɜːsɒn/. The phonemes /t/ assimilates to /k/ before /k/ or /g/, example "it can" instead of /ɪk kʌn/. the phonemes /d/ assimilates to /g/ before /k/ or /g/ example "side cannot" instead of /saɪd kæn:nɒt/. The result of this research is, there are 23 tokens pronouncing correctly and there are 334 tokens which are mispronounced.

#### **2. Linking**

According to Roach in Ameer (2007:6) there some rulers in linking, such as consonant to vowel and vowel to vowel. In rule consonant to vowel, he also states that another aspect of linking in English is the movement of a single consonant at the end of an unstressed word to the beginning of the next if that is strongly stressed. The /t/ becomes initial (and therefore strongly aspirated) in the final syllable for many speakers, for example "but if" become /bʌ dɪf/, "tip of" become /tɪ pɒf/. In rule vowel to vowel there are linking /j/, for example "be able" becomes /biːeɪ:bl/, end then linking /w/, for example "you about" becomes /juwə'baʊt/. The result of this research is there are 103 tokens are pronounced correctly and 254 tokens are mispronounced.

#### **3. Elision**

Dalton and Seidlhofer in Doleželová (2008:38) states that elision is another simplification process in connected speech. It occurs when a consonant or a vowel which would be present in a carefully pronounced version of the word is left out. It is mostly /t/ and /d/ that are elided in English, particularly when they are between two consonants, and then the most common elision in English are /t/ and /d/ when they appear within a consonant cluster. for example "last week" becomes /læs wi:k/, "and

how” becomes /æn haʊ/, “pruned” becomes /pru:n/, “often” becomes /ɔ:fən/. the result of this research is there are 244 tokens which are pronounced correctly by the students, while there are 113 which are mispronounced by the students.

In this point, some information of the data related to students’ pronunciation of the words related to aspects of connected speech

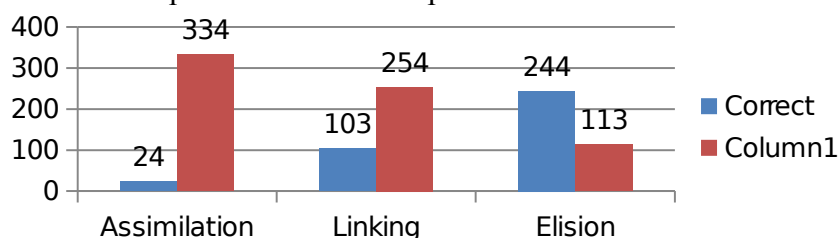


Chart 18. The students’ correct pronunciation in aspect of connected speech

. There are many variation of pronunciation happened in pronouncing words. Thereby, the description of variation pronunciation of the students can be shown in the following table 1.

Table 1. Variation Pronunciation in Assimilation

Target sound	Variation of students pronunciation	Right pronunciation
Prune plants	/prʌn ple:nt/	/prum
Main branch	/meɪn bræntʃ/	pla:nts/
On buds	/æn bʌds/	/meɪm
Prevent	/prɪven brən/	bræntʃ/
branching	/rɒd kraʊ.dɪd/	/ðm bʌds/
Road crowded	/kraʊd meɪn/	/prɪ'vem
Crowded main	/saɪd kæn.dɪt/	bræntʃɪŋ/
Side cannot	/dət meɪn/	/rɒʊg
That main	/nɒt bɪkəʊz/	kraʊ.dɪd/
It can	/bʌt moʊ.li/	/kraʊ.dɪp
Not because	/ɪt gɒt/	meɪn/
But mostly	/bʌt kəɪk/	/saɪg kæn.dɪt/
It got	/ə wəɪte pɜrsən/	/ ðæp meɪn/
But Coke	/fɪn maɪ'self/	/ɪk kʌn/
Wait person	/bɪstuwɪd baɪ/	/na:p bɪkəz/
Find myself	/ə'baʊt maɪ'self/	/bʌp
Bestowed by		moʊst.li/
About myself		/ɪk gʌt/
		/bʌk Coke/
		/weɪp pɜ:sən/
		/faɪm
		maɪ'self/
		/bɪ'strəʊp
		baɪ/

/ə'baʊp  
maɪ'self/

Table 2. Variation Pronunciation in Linking

Target sound	Variation of students pronunciation	Right pronunciation
You about	/yu 'baʊt/	/yuwə'baʊt/
The actively	/də ev:tiv:li/	/ðiyæk:tiv:li/
Tip of	/tip of/	/ti pɒf/
The auxin	/aʊksin/	/ðiyaksin/
Side of	/səd ɒf/	/sai dɒf/
Be able	/bi ɑ:bl/	/biyei:bl/
To eksport	/də ek:spɔ:rt/	/
Find out	/fain ɑʊt/	təwek:spɔ:rt/
But if	/bʌt ɪf/	/fain daʊt
They are	/ðe rɑ/	/bʌ dɪf/
May be on	/meɪ bi wən/	/ðeya:r/
The other	/də ʌðə/	/meɪ beyɒn/
Get up	/dɛt ʌp/	/ðɪyʌðə/
Some of	/səm ɒf/	/ge dʌp/
I appeared	/saɪm ɒf/	/sʌmɒf/
I always	/aɪ ə'præt/	/ɪyə'pɪə/
My expense	/aɪwɔ:lweɪz/	/ɪya:lweɪz/
	/maɪ ekspens/	/
		maɪɪk'spens/

Table 3. Variation Pronunciation in Elision

Target sound	Variation of students pronunciation	Right pronunciation
Last week	/læs wi:k/	/læs wi:k/
And how	/ænd haʊ/	/ænd haʊ/
Called	/kɔ:l/	/kɔ:l/
But he pruned	/bʌt hi/	/bʌt i/
Likely	/lɪkəli/	/lɪkəli/
Remarked	/rɪ'mɑ:rkəd/	/rɪ'mɑ:rk/
About some	/ə'baʊt sʌm/	/ə'baʊ sʌm/
Appeared	/ə'pɪr/	/ə'pɪr/
But self	/bʌt self/	/bʌ self/
Found that	/faʊnd ðæt/	/faʊnd ðæt/
Often	/ɒftən/	/ɒftən/
And all	/ænd ɔ:l/	/ænd ɔ:l/
Contest	/kɒntest/	/kɒntest/
Frequently	/frɪkwəntli/	/frɪkwəntli/
And make	/ænd meɪk/	/ænd meɪk/
Preferred	Fre:kwəntli/	/prɪ'fɜ:ʃ/
	/ænd meɪk/	
	/prɛfɜ:ntɪd/	

Based on the table above, there are many variation of pronunciation of the students when they pronouncing words such as /not bikoʊz/, /yu 'baʊt/, /səd ɒf/, /kɑ:n.tek/. So that is why, the variation of students pronunciation above because most of the students didn't understand about aspects of connected speech especially assimilation, linking, and elision. The students didn't pay attention about aspects of connected speech when the students speak.

b. Data from the Questionnaire

The second is data from the questionnaire. In this point, the researcher has prepared 10 questions related to aspect of connected speech and it was used to investigate the students' knowledge and experience in learning aspects of connected speech. Each question was only needed to be answered by yes or no. Below is the table of comparison of students answered yes and no for each question

Table 4. Students' response in questionnaire

No	Statement	Yes		No	
		F	P	F	P
1.	Have you ever learn aspects of connected speech in phonetics and phonology?	1	1	3	1
		8	5		4
			.		.
			7		2
			1		8
			%		%
2.	Did you like to learn about aspects of connected speech?		8		1
		1	0		9
		1	.		.
		7	9	4	0
			5		4
			%		&
3.	Have do you understood about?	1	7	5	2
a.	Assimilation?	6	6	3	3
b.	Linking?	1	.	12	.
c.	Elision?	8	1		8
		9	9		0
			%		%
			1		1
			5		4
			.		.
			7		2
			1		8
			%		%
			4		5
			2		7

				.	.
				8	1
				5	4
				%	%
4.	Did you really interest learning aspects of connected speech to improve your pronunciation skill?	1		7	2
		5		1	8
				.	.
			6	4	5
				2	7
				%	%
5.	When you are reading, do you pay attention to :			2	7
	a. Assimilation?			8	1
	b. Linking?			.	.
	c. Elision?			5	4
				7	2
				%	%
				4	5
		6		2	7
		9		.	.
		5		8	1
			15	5	4
			12	%	%
			16	2	7
				3	6
				.	.
				8	1
				0	9
				%	%
6.	Did aspects of connected speech help you to increase your pronunciation skill?			9	4
		2		5	.
		0		.	7
			1	2	6
				5	%
				%	%
7.	Did aspects of connected speech need learn in pronunciation learning?			1	
		2		0	
		1		0	-
				%	%
8.	Did you get the difficulties in learning			1	-
	a. Assimilation?	1		0	3
		1		0	7
					4





answered yes than no. Contrast with question number 5, 9 and 10 had many negative responses from the students. We could see many of them have answered no than yes. It actually appoints that many of them had a good knowledge related to aspect of connected speech.

### **I. Conclusion**

Based on the findings and discussions at the previous chapter, the researcher concluded that in assimilation, there are 23 tokens pronouncing correctly and there are 334 tokens which are mispronounced. In linking, 103 tokens are pronounced correctly and 254 tokens are mispronounced. In the last aspect of connected speech, that is elision, it is found that there are 244 tokens which are pronounced correctly by the students, while there are 113 which are mispronounced by the students. It shows that the most mispronounced aspect of connected is assimilation. Based on the questionnaire, it is found that the students have good knowledge related to aspect of connected speech. It means that the students still need practicing in order to make them accustomed to pronounce the aspects of connected speech.

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