

AAE103

L12 : Linking / Assimilation

David Deterding

various things can happen at word boundaries

- linking
- deletion
- coalescence
- assimilation

linking

if a word begins with a vowel, it is linked to the previous word:

- one egg
- two eggs
- three eggs
- four eggs

linking consonant

previous word ends in a consonant

- one egg
- five apples
- sit up

linking /w/

previous word ends in close back vowel

/u:, ʊ, əʊ, aʊ/

- two eggs
- how are you
- too easy
- go out

linking /j/

previous word ends in close front vowel

/i:, ɪ, eɪ, aɪ, ɔɪ/

- three eggs
- we are
- they always
- high above

linking /r/

previous word ends in central or open vowel

/ə, ɜ:, ɔ: ɑ:/

- four eggs
- her answer
- far away
- where is it

intrusive /r/

- linking /r/ usually occurs with an 'r'
- occasionally occurs with no 'r'
- the linking /r/ is then intrusive
- some teachers frown on this

- data analysis
- Asia and Africa
- comma insertion

deletion

- initial /h/ can be deleted from unstressed syllables after a consonant
- final /t, d/ can also be deleted sometimes

deletion of /d/

syllable-final /d/ can be deleted if it is surrounded by two consonants

- hindsight
- handgun
- Gold Coast
- Cold Storage

deletion of /t/

syllable-final /t/ can be deleted if it is surrounded by two consonants and the first is voiceless

- restless
- costly
- best man
- craft shop
- next month

voiceless previous sound

/t/ is not deleted in:

- felt good (≠ fell good)
- pint glass (≠ pine glass)

sometimes deletion is lexicalised

- Christmas
- handkerchief

- ice cream (formerly *iced cream*)
- mince meat (should be *minced meat*)

/t, d/ + /j/

- /t/ and /d/ assimilate with a following /j/
- /t/ + /j/ → /tʃ/
- /d/ + /j/ → /dʒ/

- bet you
- did you
- education

sometimes this is lexicalised

- nature
- actually

- *orchard* was originally *ort yard*

assimilation

alveolar /t, d, n/ become similar to next sound

ten boys

ten girls

that boy

that girl

they become:

- bilabial /p, b, m/ before bilabials
- velar /k, g, ŋ/ before velars

two processes

deletion can be followed by assimilation

- handbag
- handgun

Reading

- SoE 132 – 129
- Deterding, D (2005) 'Deletion of final /t/ and /d/ in BBC English: implications for teachers in Singapore', *STETS Communication and Language Review*, Vol 4 No 2.