STUDY NOTES   **EPISODE 5: VIRTUAL DOCTOR**

FLUENCY IN SPOKEN ENGLISH

When speaking English naturally our words flow together forming a continuous stream of speech. Final sounds are joined with initial sounds of following words to produce connected speech. This is essential for speaking English fluently and communicating efficiently.

There are various kinds of pronunciation changes, which occur in connected speech. For example, in the expression 'would you mind', when uttered as a continuous stream of speech, the final sound /d/ in 'would' joins with the initial sound /j/ in 'you'.

STUDY TIPS

To speak English fluently and communicate efficiently it is important to link your words together. Be aware of how the native speaker joins words or syllables between vowels, and listen for the /j/ and /w/ sounds when linking occurs between vowels. Smoothness in connected speech can only come with practice. Model your pronunciation on a native speaker.

 These two sounds assimilate and become a /ʤ/ sound. The expression is pronounced /wʊʤu ˈmaɪnd/, rather than /wʊd ju maɪnd/. This sounds unnatural when each word is pronounced separately. Another common sound modification, which occurs in connected speech, and is important for fluent and efficient communication is **linking between vowels**.

Linking Between Vowel Sounds

Linking between vowels refers to a pronunciation change when a word, which ends in a vowel is followed by a word beginning with a vowel sound, and a semi-vowel is used to join the two words or sounds. This modification allows your speech to flow more smoothly, and produces continuous connected speech. Incorporating linking into your speech is important because it will make your speech sound more natural, and make it easier for the listener to understand your oral communication.

There are two types of linking which join vowel-vowel combinations using semi-vowels, namely /j/ and /w/.

- **Linking type 1**
  vowel + /j/ + vowel
  e.g.   'my   aunt'
                  ‿
                 /j/

- **Linking type 2**
  vowel + /w/ + vowel
  e.g.   'you   are'
                   ‿
                  /w/

Knowing when to use /j/ or /w/ depends on the end vowel of the first word, but with practice linking becomes second nature as it is for a native speaker.

Linking type 1
        vowel + /j/ + vowel

This type of linking occurs when the final sound of the first word ends in a high front vowel. These are sounds which are produced with the highest part of the tongue and close to the front of the mouth, namely /i/ and diphthongs formed with the short high front vowel /ɪ/, which are /aɪ/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/.

For example:
        thr**ee** **a**nd two
                 ‿
                /j/
        /Ɵri j ænd tu/ → /Ɵrijænd tu/
                 ‿   ‿

Explanation:
vowel + /j/ + vowel
'three' ends in the high front vowel /i/ and the following word 'and' begins with the vowel /æ/, therefore the semi-vowel /j/ is used to link the two words.

Pronunciation notebook

The best possible way to develop fluency and smoothness in your speech is to be aware of the pronunciation changes, which occur in speech. Listen for them in the speech of native speakers, model the pronunciation and practise saying phrases and groups of words in context. Having a pronunciation notebook such as the one below is helpful.

Here is a list of examples where linking is commonly heard.

PRONUNCIATION NOTEBOOK		
Linking	**vowel + /j/ + vowel** /ɪ/, /aɪ/, /eɪ/ or /ɔɪ/	
Use	**Example**	**Pronounced**
abbreviations & acronyms	DNA	/di jɛn'eɪ/
		/ju ti 'jɛs/
	UTS	/si 'jeɪ/
	CA	
	CIA	/si jaɪ'jeɪ/
	CEO	/si ji'joʊ/
	CNN	/si jɛn'ɛn/
	DA	/di 'jeɪ/
	IELTS	/aɪ'jɛlts/
	AS**EA**N	/'æzijæn/
	BMW	/bi jɛm 'dʌblju/

PRONUNCIATION NOTEBOOK		
Linking	**vowel + /j/ + vowel** /ɪ/, /aɪ/, /eɪ/ or /ɔɪ/	
Use	**Example**	**Pronounced**
spelling out names	Ann	/**eɪ** jɛn ɛn/
	Tim	/ti jaɪ jɛm/
	Daniel	/di jeɪ jɛn aɪ ji jɛl/
	Carmel	/keɪ jeɪ ja ɛm i jɛl/
semi-vowel within words	Austral**i**ana	/ɒs'treɪli'janə/
phrases	Saturd**ay** **e**vening	/'sætədeɪ 'jivnɪŋ/
	I **a**gree	/aɪ jə'gri/
	t**ea** **o**r coffee	/ti jɔ 'kɒfi/
	coff**ee** **a**nd tea	/'kɒfi jænd ti/
	h**e** **a**rrived	/hi jə 'raɪvd/
	p**ay** **a**bout	/peɪ jə 'baʊt/
	tr**y** **a**gain	/traɪ jə 'geɪn/
	th**e** **ea**rs	/ði 'jiəz/

	give m**e a** ring	/gɪv mi jə 'rɪŋ/

Linking type 2
vowel + /w/ + vowel

This type of linking occurs when the final sound of the first word ends in a high back vowel. These are sounds which are produced with the highest part of the tongue, but close to the back of the mouth, and include /u/ and diphthongs formed with the short high back vowel /ʊ/, which are /aʊ/, /oʊ/.

For example:

two   and three

/w/

/tu w ænd Ɵri/ → /tuwænd Ɵri/

Explanation:

vowel + /w/ + vowel

'two' ends in the high back vowel /u/ and the following word 'and' begins with the vowel /æ/, therefore the semi-vowel /w/ is used to link the two words.

PRONUNCIATION NOTEBOOK		
Linking	**vowel + /w/ + vowel** /ʊ/, /aʊ/ or /oʊ/	
Use	**Example**	**Pronounced**
abbreviations and acronyms	**UN** **UR**L **UF**O	/ju 'wɛn/ /ju wa'ɛl/ /ju wɛf'oʊ/
spelling out names	Susan Ron Russell	/ɛs **ju wɛ**s eɪ jɛn/ /a **oʊ wɛ**n/ /a **ju wɛ**s ɛs i jɛl/
semi-vowel within words	k**oa**la **oa**sis cooperation	/k**oʊ'wa**lə/ /**oʊ'we**ɪsɪs/ /k**oʊwɒ**pə'reɪʃən/

phrases	y**ou a**re here	/j**u wa** 'hɪə/
	wh**o a**re you	/h**u wa** 'ju/
	tr**ue or** false	/tr**u wɔ** 'fɒls/
	g**o a**head	/g**oʊ wə** 'hɛd/
	y**ou a**nd me	/j**u wæ**nd 'mi/
	Hell**o, E**rin	/hʌ'l**oʊ wɛ**əjɪn/
	t**o E**ngland	/t**u 'wɪ**ŋglənd/
	d**o e**very task	/d**u wɛ**vri 'task/
	tw**o hou**rs	/t**u 'wa**ʊəz/