

MASTERING STRESS AND RHYTHM IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION TO HAVE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF NATIVE AMERICANS IN EVERYDAY CONNECTED FLUENT SPEECH

A. K. BALAGOZIAN

GSU Lecturer, Assistant

Many students think that learning English is about learning Grammar, Consonants, Vowels, and Vocabulary. These form the basic foundation of the language. However, if you want to be understood when speaking English and if you want to understand native speakers it is essential that you improve your stress and rhythm.

Stressing means that speakers of English make certain syllables and words louder, longer and higher in pitch. Basically, stressing means to emphasize the sound. Every word in English has just one word primary in stress or emphasis. However, it is not only essential to stress central syllables and word but we also should destress other syllables and words. Destressing means that certain syllables and words more relaxed and weaker. Stressing and destressing syllable and words gives us Rhythm in English. Rhythm is musicality in English, ups and downs and connected speech and linking of words in English which together change how we say sentences. So speaking with correct rhythm musicality is essential to be understood when you speak. Rhythm is a combination of two types of stress in English

- a. Syllable stress in words
- b. Word stress in sentences

American stressed words and sentences that are important in the meaning of the sentence, they carry the content of the sentence and basically if you take the content words out of the sentence, you would not understand the meaning of that sentence. Content words include

- a. Main verbs
- b. Nouns
- c. Adjectives
- d. Adverbs
- e. Negatives
- f. “wh” words
- g. Interjections

Function words mean that rhythm and musicality in your speech is not about stress but also requiring destressing weakening. In English we destressing non-essential, non-content words in a sentence called the function words; these function words are made weaker and sometime practically disappear from the sentences. Function words include

- a. Articles
- b. Conjunctions (and, but)
- c. Prepositions (of, to, from)
- d. Auxiliary verbs (has)

Function words become part of the content words that follow them. If we leave out the part of function words we'll still understand the general idea of the sentence.

Connected speech allows us to speak efficiently and speak with flow and music which is called Rhythm. In fluent speech native speakers link words together. It is vital to understand the rules of connected speech in order not only speak better using correct stress, pitch and pronunciation but also to understand native speakers easily. The following rules of sound transformation will help you to understand connected speech better. There are three ways to link the sounds /C+C/, /C+V/, /V+V/

Consonant + Vowel (C+V)

When a word ends in a consonant sound and is followed by a word that starts with a vowel sound, the speaker should push that consonant sound forward and connect it to the vowel in the next word. Example C +V,

Stop it ! Becomes /sto pit /

I need it! Becomes /I nee dit/

Play a song! Becomes /Pla ya song/

Read a book! Becomes /Rea da book/

Consonant + consonant (C+C)

When a word ends in a consonant sound and is followed by a word begins in the same or similar consonant sound, you will only pronounce that sound once lengthening or holding the sound, you do not need to say the consonant twice. For Example (C+C)

Book club - /Boo klub/

Best time-/bes time/

Big grape—/bi grape/

Good day -/goo day/

Sit down-/si down/

Using these rules of connected speech along with rhythm and musicality to your speech will help you to be understood by native English speakers. Transforming is also an important tool to understand native English speakers when /t/ + /r/ makes into the sound /CH/, Example:

I need to catch my train! You will listen -/I nee ta catch my chrain/

Contract-/conchraht/

Train-/chrain/

Truly-/chruly/

Trouble-/chroubl/

The next transformation is when /d/ sound is followed by the word beginning by the /y/ sound and touching these sounds we get /dz/

Example: Where did you go? Becomes /Wheredzago/

Here we destress the function word you so that did you becomes /didza/

Would you do that for me? - /woudzja dotha fome/

Could you go now --- /coudzja gonow/

Another transformation of native English is /t+/y/ becomes /ch/

Example: Don't you want a dog? /doncha wanadog/

That's what you asked for. /that's whachya askdfo/

You don't always get what you want. /you don always ge whachya want/

Linking consonants to vowels /C+V/, example: when Anna together they are pronounced /we nana/, you can do this when one word ends with consonant sound and the next word begins with vowel. /I ate an apple and two pears-/ /I ay tan app land two pears/.

Linking vowel to vowel /V+V/ you should add /j/ or /w/ between them depending on them. Example: He asked /Hijaskd/ we link the vowels with /j/, or two apples /twapls/ here we use /w/ to make it to speak easily.

Using connected speech and deleting /h/ sound at the beginning of words is an essential part of being understood when you speak.

Example Did he get it? /Didij ged it/

/he/- /iy/, /him/-/im/, /his/-/iz/, /Her/-/er/, /has/-/as/, /have/-/av/

Did he get the new car? /did iy gedanewcar/

I want him to call me. /I wan im ta call me/

It has eight legs. /itaz eight legz/

To understand Native American Speakers better it is essential to focus on transforming verbs in everyday phrases with connected speech. The English studying in class doesn't prepare what you will listen out of class; this is because when Americans speak they transform words by connecting and deleting sounds

so that they could speak more efficiently. For Example instead of saying /Give me a minute/ Americans combine the words in direct object then they leave /v/ sound to say /gimmi aminit/.

Commonly transferred verbs include:

Give me -/gimmi/

Let me -/lemme/, Have to -/ hafta/, Has to - /hasta/, Used to /usta/

Example:

Give me a sec. /gimmi a sec/

Let me see it. /lemme see it/

We have to get out of here. /we hafta ge dauf of here/

It has to be real. /it hasta be real/

However, it is not essential that you speak like this. In some cases this relaxed speech can sound too informal, but the better you understand these rules of pronunciation the more you will be able to understand native speakers when they speak.

Even Native speakers need clarification when they speak to one another; this can especially happen when they say /can/ and /can't/. The Native English speakers don't always clearly pronounce the negative can't /nt/ at the end and this can make it difficult for the listener to understand if the speaker speaks positive /can/ or negative /can't/. However to hear the difference between can and can't one does not need to hear those consonant sounds. Content words carry the meaning and information in a sentence and are stressed in English making them to be pronounced longer, louder, higher in pitch, therefore the content word can't is pronounced with longer vowel sound /can't/. For Example /I can't go/. Function words do not carry the meaning of the sentence, and are merely grammatical and functional in nature, function words are therefore unstressed and pronounced shorter, quicker and more relaxed than content words, this causes the auxiliary verb /can/ to be unstressed and sound like /kin/, we don't say /we can go/ but we say /we kin go/. So if you don't hear the difference between /can/ and /can't/ listen to the length of the vowel sound to distinguish the two words. Example /I can be there by twelve/-/I kin be there by twelve/. /I can't make it on Saturday, but I can definitely go on Sunday/. Here we have /kan/ and /kin/.

To sum up we understood that every language has its own music or rhythm, so if you speak English with the music of your first language others may have hard time understanding you. So the Rhythm of English is created by stressing some words /content words carrying meanings/and de-stressing others /function words/, in order to sound more natural like Native English speaker the

above discussed sound transformations are essential for everyday speech, therefore learning about linking can help your English listening and improve your spoken English.

Key words: *Rhythm, sounds, linking sounds, transformation of sounds, consonant, vowel, Native American Speakers, content words, function words, connected speech, stress, de-stress.*

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ԳՊՀ դասախոս

Հոդվածը ներկայացնում է անգլերեն խոսքի արտասանության ռիթմը, վանկի և նախադասության ճիշտ շեշտադրումը, ինչպես նաև հնչյունների փոխակերպման կանոնները ոչ միայն բնիկ ամերիկացիների սահուն առօրյա խոսքը ճիշտ և հեշտ հասկանալու համար, այլ նաև ընկալելի լինել նրանց կողմից:

РОЛЬ РИТМА И УДАРЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА В ПОВСЕДНЕВНОЙ АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ РЕЧИ

А. К. БАЛАГОЗЯН

Преподаватель ГГУ

В статье рассматривается ритм английского произношения, навыки правильного акцентирования слога и предложения, а также правила трансформации звуков не только для того, чтобы легко и правильно понимать сложенную повседневную речь коренных американцев, но также и быть воспринимаемым с их стороны.