

## *The Liaison of English*

### *Part One*

#### 英語の連声

#### 第1部

A. Stephen Gibbs

アントニー・スティーヴン・ギブズ

外国語としてのフランス語に対する伝来の教授法をさておかせてもらえば、日本で行われてきている外国語教育における liaison [連声] に対する注目度が未だに極めて低くいままである。英語の実際の発声方法に頻繁に見られる連声があまりに無視されてきているゆえに、いわゆる「カタカナ英語」という、英語らしくない発音様式が、日本での中等英語教育を音声の面では、逆効果をもたらせてきている。

では、拙稿は、十年余りに様々な教室で応用しながら、著者が徐々に改善してきたつもりで、連声中心の教材の第一部を提示する。内容は、連声の必要性から、英語の連声の根底に働く音素の事実の発見を通過してから、英語の連声を決める法則の直接発見・言語的表示を催促する学習課題の提示を済ませた後、それぞれの法則の詳細を解き明かせておけば、当該の法則の能動的応用課題を列挙する。

(それぞれの正解については、拙稿末の注釈を参照にしてもらうように願う。)

この第一部の学習課題では、連声においての音素同士の連結や挿入的補助を中心としている。第2部の大部分は、子音同士の連結が齟齬問題に対する解決法を細かく明らかにしていく。

#### Key words

① word-linking ② phoneme-substitution ③ phoneme-insertion ④ glottal stop

#### キー・ワード

①語同士の連結 ②音素の置換 ③音素の挿入 ④声門閉鎖音

## Step One: Discovering Liaison

### 1.1. Chunks in speech

What is a '**chunk**'?

Let us take the following example of an English utterance:

When I got home, the letter you had sent was waiting for me.

This will normally be spoken with two distinct **pauses**:

||When I got home ||<sup>①</sup> the letter you had sent ||<sup>②</sup> was waiting for me.||

Pause ① is used to mark the end of the **subordinate clause**, *when I got home*, and the start of the **main clause** *the letter you had sent me was waiting for me*; and pause ② is used to mark the end of the **subject noun-phrase** of the main clause, *the letter you had sent*, and the start of its **predicate**, *was waiting for me*; as it is an intra-clause pause, it will usually be much shorter than pause ①.

So, the single utterance

When I got home, the letter you had sent was waiting for me.

is made up of three 'chunks':

||When I got home||,

||the letter you had sent||,

and

||was waiting for me||.

As you can see, the limits of a 'natural' 'chunk' are determined by **syntactical structure**: on one hand, a single 'chunk' of **minimum** size will be a **clause**, or some kind of **phrase**, or – occasionally – a single word (*yes*, *no*, **clause-adverbs** such as *well*, or *luckily*), or an

**exclamation** or **interjection**); and, on the other, a single chunk of *maximum* size can contain plural **main clauses**, one or more **defining**<sup>1)</sup> **relative clauses**, and/or a **non-relative subordinate clause** given **utterance-final place**.

Why, however, do we have to become aware of ‘**chunks**’? This is because every **syllable** of an English utterance is pronounced as part of one particular **chunk**.

Although (if your **intonation** is appropriate) you *can* pause – should you need to, and also do so for as long as you need to do so – *between* any two syntactically-determined chunks, what does sound highly unnatural – if it does not make sense as **special emphasis** – is to insert a silence *into* what would normally be uttered as a single chunk. Every chunk that happens to be made up of more than one syllable (*i.e.* that is **polysyllabic**) is normally produced as *a continuous stream of sound*.

## 1.2. Liaison

So, what is ‘**liaison**’?

**Liaison** means the various ‘tricks’ that competent speakers – of whatever language – constantly use, to ensure that they produce each chunk that they utter as a smooth, uninterrupted stream of sound. These tricks are basically of three kinds:

- 1) Pronouncing a phoneme in a way that *differs from its ‘normal’ pronunciation*;
- 2) *Not pronouncing* a phoneme that would be represented in writing;
- 3) Pronouncing the *final* consonant of the *previous* word *as though it were* the *initial* consonant of the *next* word.

(We shall consider examples of all these later.)

The only **silences** that are produced while uttering are (1) those *normally* used to **mark syntactical boundaries** (as *shown* in written English by commas, periods, question-marks, exclamation-marks, semicolons, colons, dashes and brackets, all of which are indications of chunk-boundaries); (2) those silences *especially* employed for particular emphasis of what precedes or follows them (as *represented* in written English by rows of three periods: /.../); and (3) the very brief silence produced by a **glottal stop**.

### 1.2.1. Japanese liaison and English liaison – a brief comparison

If, as is customary, we use /V/ to indicate a vowel, and /C/ to indicate a consonant – and if we disregard for the moment the single exception of the Japanese consonant /ɲ/, which normally occurs only after a V – we can show the dominant **phonemic structure** of the

Japanese language like this:

...[V]CVCVCVCVCVCV....

As (still ignoring /ン/) what this structure does **not** include is such combinations as CV $\dot{C}\dot{C}$ CV, or  $\dot{C}\dot{C}$ VC, or CV $\dot{C}\dot{C}\dot{C}$ VC, producing each chunk of Japanese as a smooth stream of sound is extremely easy, and so natural utterance of Japanese chunks as smooth, uninterrupted streams of sound requires **relatively few** of the tricks that are called 'liaison'.

I have just written 'relatively few' because Japanese does – as also do many, many other languages – require **some** liaison. For example, if the consonant /ン/ is followed by [b], [m], or [p], as in /オシブ/ [=V $\dot{C}$ CV], /テシマバシ/ [= CV $\dot{C}$ CVCVCV], or /チシピラ/ [= CV $\dot{C}$ CVCV], instead of the normal pronunciation of /ン/, the consonant [m] is used, resulting in [o $\dot{m}$ bu], [te $\dot{m}$ mabashi], and [chi $\dot{m}$ pira].

Again, as the combination VV may be difficult to pronounce distinctly, particularly when the same vowel is to be repeated, as in /バアイ/[場合], /イイダバシ/[飯田橋], /ホンケエ/[本家へ], or /コノオオキナ/[この大きな], some speakers will pronounce /場合/ as [ba $\dot{a}$ i], /飯田橋/ as [i $\dot{i}$ dabashi], /本家へ/ as [honk $\dot{e}$ e], and /この大きな/ as [kon $\dot{o}$ okina].

Other examples of the liaison used in Japanese can be found in such pronunciations as [u $\dot{w}$ o] for /ウオ/ and [i $\dot{i}$ e] for /イイエ/.

(I should like here to point out that this tendency is extremely strong in the pronunciation used in the traditions of *nô*, *kyôgen*, *jôruri* and *kabuki*: e.g. /この辺り/ becomes [コノ $\dot{w}$ タリ]. I do not know whether this was characteristic of ordinary spoken Japanese in the Muromachi period, or whether it developed from the need to pronounce distinctly despite (in the case of *sarugaku-no-nô*) wearing a mask, and to project the voice, from an outdoor stage, clearly enough to be audible to the important members of the audience, who sat in boxes astonishingly far from that stage.)

In one sense, we can say that all liaison results from the constant human tendency to **laziness**, and preference for **what is easy**, rather than what is difficult; it is hard to say [ni $\dot{t}$ son] [日本], and much easier to say [ni $\dot{p}$ on]<sup>2)</sup>; it is hard to say [ni $\dot{p}$ on $\dot{b}$ ashi], and much easier to say [ni $\dot{p}$ on $\dot{m}$ ashi]; and it is easier to say [boku $\dot{n}$ chi] or [boku $\dot{n}$ ok $\dot{o}$ e] than [boku $\dot{n}$ chi] or [boku $\dot{n}$ ok $\dot{o}$ e]. All these are just a few examples of the liaison that is used in speaking Japanese.

As you know, and unlike the Japanese language, English certainly **does** very frequently produce such phonemic patterns as CV $\dot{C}\dot{C}$ VC [e.g. /wha $\dot{t}$ ime/], or  $\dot{C}\dot{C}$ VC [e.g. / $\dot{t}$ rap/] or

V $\overline{\text{CCC}}$ V [e.g. /e $\overline{\text{ntri}}$ y/]. In all three cases, smooth transition to the following C makes using the ‘normal’ pronunciation of [t] very difficult; and so one or another of the ‘tricks’ of English liaison is used instead: /wha $\overline{\text{t}}$ ime/ becomes [wə $\overline{\text{t}}$ aim], /trap/ becomes [ $\overline{\text{t}}$ ræp], and /entry/ becomes [ɛn $\overline{\text{t}}$ rɪ]. (The details of these patterns will be explained later.)

### 1.2.2. Liaison and katakana English

It is an unfortunate fact that – partly due both to **backwash** from the basic phonemic pattern of their native language [that being [V]CVCVCVCV...], and also to the high frequency of **loanwords** that were originally adopted from English, yet are now naturalized to that patterning – one problem that often besets Japanophone speakers of English is the tendency to convert what, in spoken English, should be a **single**,  $\overline{\text{CVC}}$ -syllable into **two** syllables,  $\overline{\text{CVv}}$  +  $\overline{\text{CV}}$  [for example, /take/ → [ $\overline{\text{テ}}$ イ]- $\overline{\text{ク}}$ ]/; or, again, due to a misunderstanding of the function, in the relation between spelling and pronunciation, of a **double consonant**, into four syllables,  $\overline{\text{CV}}$ - $\overline{\text{?}}$ - $\overline{\text{CV}}$  [/lucky/ → [ $\overline{\text{ラ}}$ ]- $\overline{\text{ッ}}$ - $\overline{\text{キ}}$ - $\overline{\text{イ}}$ ]]. This manner of pronouncing English is frequently called ‘**katakana English**’.

This tendency may or may not impede successful communication in English. Be that as it may, *katakana* English is certainly something that any learner that wishes to become a **competent speaker of English** – or intends to become a teacher of English, and therefore a provider of **model pronunciation** for her learners – needs to work on eradicating from her own oral English production.

In present-day English-language education in Japan, a great deal of attention is paid to **pronunciation**; and yet this appears to be taught with **hardly any attention to liaison** – which, as you now know – requires pronunciations **that differ from what is indicated in dictionaries**<sup>3)</sup>. In other words, at the present, in Japan the pronunciation of English is usually taught only concerning **discrete words**, and not those words as forming elements combined into continuous **chunks**.

This unfortunate neglect of liaison as a very important part of English pronunciation seems to me to be another cause of *katakana* English. That is to say, Japanophone learners are – as is only natural to the speaking human being – **trying** to produce **some kind of liaison** in their spoken English; yet, having never ever been taught how to do this **competently** with regard to English, it is all too understandable that they should resort to the liaison-methods offered by their native language.

And it has certainly been my experience that working with Japanophone learners to help them improve their English liaison can make a great contribution to **ridding their oral**

***production of katakata-based pronunciation.***

So this is what the present teaching-material is designed to do – slowly, and step-by-step.

***1.2.3. Liaison and listening-comprehension***

It seems to be very often the case that, if a learner begins to incorporate into her own **oral production** some features of ‘natural’ utterance such as appropriate **prosody**, appropriate **intonation**, or appropriate **liaison**, this incorporation frequently **also** leads to improvement her **listening comprehension**.

For any learner of English, if she habitually uses **appropriate liaison**, or is at least very familiar with its rules, will help her to distinguish and recognize at least important words, in a chunk that would, before, have sounded to her like a puzzling stream of blurred-together sounds; or at least that blurring will not disconcert her as much as it may once have done; or, at the **very** least, she will know **why it is happening**.

Doing this, it seems, can contribute to both her listening skills and, as importantly, her **confidence** in these. And gaining confidence is one aspect of the appropriate **self-management** that can make such an important contribution to becoming **a more successful language-learner**.

***Applying liaison is not merely one option: its constant application is the Default Choice<sup>4)</sup> concerning the pronunciation of chunks***

One more point that I want you to grasp, and – if you come to teach other people, yourself – that I suggest that you emphasize to your own learners, is that **normal** oral production of English uses the various features of English liaison **constantly**. That is to say, to speak applying liaison is the **norm** (or **Default Choice**) of English oral production, and therefore **not** applying it, and instead pronouncing **each word** as its pronunciation **is shown in a dictionary**, is **exceptional** (or a **Special-needs Choice**).

Such **exceptional** pronunciation may indeed be used when speaking at on very **formal** occasions – when the speaker wishes to **show respect**, by making very great efforts (for speaking **without** liaison is physically more demanding)<sup>5)</sup>; again, it may be used when the speaker is **angry** with another person because that other person does not seem to have listened to what she has previously said; and it may also be used to index that the speaker is using **irony**. Yet another situation in which a speaker will cease to use liaison is one in which she wants the person she is addressing to **specially notice** one particular word that she is using.

But speech on very **formal** occasions, speech expressing **emotional disturbance** (such

as the experience of *anger*), *ironic* utterances, and speech containing **special emphasis** of a particular word, are all examples of speech that is **adapted to exceptional** situations; and therefore **no longer using liaison** is a **Special-needs choice**, and **not** the **norm** of English speech.

When, instead, the situation is a **normal** one, and the speaker is in a **normal** state of emotional equilibrium, and therefore feels no need to make her spoken English sound unusual, she will use every feature of liaison, in order to make of each of her chunks a smooth, continuous stream of sound.

### 2.1. Paired Consonants

Among the **consonants** of English, there are eight **pairs** of consonants that differ from one another only in one respect, but are otherwise pronounced in exactly the same way.

Look at the following list of consonants shown on the left-hand side, and decide which **other** consonant should be, on the right-hand side, paired with each of them.

- 1) [ p ] ↔ [   ]
- 2) [ t ] ↔ [   ]
- 3) [ f ] ↔ [   ]
- 4) [ʃ](sh) ↔ [   ]
- 5) [tʃ](ch) ↔ [   ]
- 6) [ s ] ↔ [   ]
- 7) [ k ] ↔ [   ]
- 8) [ θ ] ↔ [   ]<sup>6)</sup>

Many of the features of English liaison are caused by **physically-awkward combinations of consonants**, one ending the **previous** word, and the other beginning the **following** word in a chunk; such difficulties are solved by changing one or both of the consonants in particular ways. In the case of the above paired consonants, as they are both pronounced **almost** identically, when following or preceding a given phoneme, both of the consonants will always require application of the same liaison-feature.

Please keep this in mind while completing the learning activity presented in section 3. 2., below.

### 2.2. Two different groups of consonants

Below, you will see most of the consonants of English shown again, but this time divided into just two groups: A-B. This division is based on a characteristic of the way in which each

consonant so grouped is produced, physically (that is to say, by the lips and tongue); characteristic **(a)** is shared by all of the consonants in Group A, but is possessed by none of those in Group B, while all of those in Group B share a characteristic that is possessed by none of those in group B: characteristic **(b)**. So, what are characteristics **(a)** and **(b)**?

In order to answer this question, I suggest that you experiment physically, by actually pronouncing, and several times, each of the consonants shown below. (Whenever we need to **pronounce** a single **consonant**, such as [p] or [s] – rather than merely **naming a letter of the alphabet**, such as /p/ ([pi:]) or /s/ ([ɛs]) – it is customary (because it is convenient) to add a short neutral vowel [ə] to that consonant: [pə]; [sə].) As you pronounce each of them, try to make each consonant **last (or sound) for as long as possible**. As a result of doing this, do you notice any differences between the two groups?<sup>7)</sup>

**Group A:** [b] [d] [dʒ] [g] [k] [p] [t] [tʃ]

**Group B:** [f] [ʒ] [as in /pleasure/] [ʃ] [m] [n] [s] [ʃ] [ʃh/] [θ] [as in /thin/] [ð] [as in /this/] [v] [z]

### 3.1. Let us identify the most important of the features of English liaison

When a learner has to acquire new knowledge, the more **active** (that is to say, less **passive**) she is allowed (or caused) to be, the more **quickly** her learning will happen, and the less **stress** she will experience. So, before I explain to you the various features of English liaison, it may be a good idea for you to try to identify the most important of these, for yourself – that is to say, on your own.

Therefore, below you will find some chunks of English, both in **(a)** their normal **written** form, and also in **(b)** a form that shows the changes in **pronunciation** that English liaison requires.

What your teacher wants you next to do is to **compare** each of the pairs of examples, **(a)** and **(b)**, and to pick out, and then decide how to express each of **the changes** necessary in pronouncing words **as parts of chunks**.

Below is one example:

**a)** ||What | time is | it?||      ||Would | Tom | like | this?||      ||Did | David | sit | down?||  
**b)** ||Wɔ̃[ʔt]am^is^it||                      ||Wə[ʔt]əm^laɪk^ðɪs||                      ||Dɪ[ʔd]eɪvɪ[ʔs]ɪ[ʔd]aʊn||

Here, your explanation of /Wɔ̃[ʔt]am/, etc., should say something like

When one [t/d] ends the **previous** word, and another [t/d] begins the **following** word, then the **first [t/d]** is **replaced** by [ʔ] – a **glottal stop**.

This is merely **one** example of an expression of a **liaison-rule**. So do not assume that you can merely change **a few** parts in order to express **every** other liaison-rule. But what you **should** copy from this example are the facts that **(1)** the clause beginning with */when/* (shown with single underlining) explains some **combination of phonemes** that creates a special problem for smooth, continuous pronunciation, and **(2)** the main clause (shown with double underlining) expresses a **change** that results from this combination.

What, however, you **should** copy from this example are the facts that **(1)** the clause beginning with */when/* (shown with single underlining) explains some **combination of phonemes** that creates a special problem in producing smooth, continuous pronunciation, and **(2)** the main clause (shown with double underlining) expresses a **change** that results from this combination.

Important **adjectives** are

**previous**  
**following**  
**first**  
**second**  
**both**  
**final**  
**initial**  
**silent**

and important verbs are the following (P = **phoneme** (C/V/?)):

**pronounce**  
**add** = P<sup>1</sup> | P<sup>2</sup> → P<sup>1</sup>P<sup>2</sup>  
**insert before P<sup>2</sup>** = P<sup>1</sup> | P<sup>2</sup> → P<sup>1</sup>P<sup>3</sup>P<sup>2</sup>  
**replace** = P<sup>1</sup>→P<sup>2</sup> (This is used when P<sup>2</sup> is **quite different from** P<sup>1</sup>; e.g. [t/d] and [ʔ])  
**merge, to produce** ~ = P<sup>1</sup> + P<sup>2</sup> → P<sup>3</sup>  
**change to** ~ = P<sup>1</sup>→P<sup>2</sup> (This is used when P<sup>2</sup> is **very close to** P<sup>1</sup>; e.g. [n] and [ŋ])  
**omit**

**join, to produce a long consonant** = P<sup>1</sup> + P<sup>1</sup> → P<sup>1</sup>

So, now, please (1) **examine** each of the following, paired examples; and next (2) try to **distinguish** and then (3) **express** (in **English**) the liaison-feature/s that is/are being used.

Before you do this, please note the following six points:

- 1) Each example (b) shows only **one** liaison-feature, and does not show any others that would **normally** also be applied.
- 2) Liaison concerns **pronunciation**, and **not** spelling. For example, in the word */nicel*, the final */el* is not itself pronounced (it merely gives information about the pronunciation of the **previous vowel**). In terms of **pronunciation**, this word ends with a **consonant**, [s], and **not** the vowel [e] (*/nais/*). So **no** liaison-rule will refer to changes in spelling.
- 3) ‘**One** [x] ... **another** [x]’ will **only** be necessary when ‘[x]’ is **the same phoneme**. The same is true of ‘the **first** [x] ... the **second** [x].’
- 4) Each of these examples (1~11) exemplifies a **different** liaison-rule.
- 5) Please think carefully about whether your expression of a rule should concern only one or more **specific** phonemes (as the example used two pages previously **happens** to do), or whether the rule should be expressed **at a more general level**, e.g. by using ‘vowel’ and/or ‘consonant’.
- 6) When you need to use one or more letters to show a **phoneme**, it/they should be written within **square brackets**: [ ~ ]. But, when you need to show a **letter of the alphabet**, it should be written within **slashes**: / ~ /.

### 3.2. Learning Activity

- 1) a) ||Good | evening | everybody!!| |What time | is | it? || |Fill | up | and kick | off!!|

b) ||Gʊ<sup>g</sup>i:vni<sup>g</sup>vrɪbɔ:dɪl|| |Wɒt^tʌ<sup>g</sup>mɪzɪtɪl|| |Fɪ<sup>g</sup>lʌ<sup>g</sup>nd^kɪ<sup>g</sup>fl||

*Liaison-feature:*

When \_\_\_\_\_ ends the previous word, and \_\_\_\_\_ begins the following word, then<sup>8)</sup> ...

- 2) a) ||Care[kæə:] | under[ʌndə:] | everything | where[wɛə:] | each | tear[tɪə:] | is shed.||

b) ||Kæə<sup>g</sup>ndə<sup>g</sup>vrɪθɪŋ^wɛə<sup>g</sup>tɪf^tɪə<sup>g</sup>z^fɛd.||

While all other liaison-rules concern **pronunciation only**, this one also concerns **spelling**.

*Liaison-feature:*

When a[n] \_\_\_\_\_ / / ends the previous word, and \_\_\_\_\_ begins the following word, then<sup>9)</sup> ...

- 3) a) ||A | fee | is | due | and | a | woe | is | felt,|| high | up where they | weigh | out | seed  
| and plough | on.||

b) ||θ^f: [f]z^dju: [w]nd^ə ^wəu: [w]z^fɛlt,|| haɪ [h]p^wɛə^ðeɪ^weɪ [j]t^si:d^ənd^plʌ [w]n.||

In this case, you need to identify **two** liaison features (i~ii), which have similar but not identical causes.

*Liaison-features:*

i) When

then<sup>10)</sup>

ii) When

then<sup>11)</sup>

- 4) a) ||What | would | you | like | to | do?|| ||Do | what | you'd | like | to | do.||

b) ||Wɔt wʊl [dʒ]u:ˈlaɪk^tə^du:|| ||Du^wɔ [d]u:d^laɪk^tə^du:||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>12)</sup> ...

- 5) a) ||Which | yesterday | do | you | mean?|| ||Disposing | of | sewage | is | difficult.||

b) ||Wɪ [tʃ]stədeɪ^də^yə^mi:n|| ||Dɪspəuzɪŋ^ɔv^suw [d]z^dɪf\_ kəlt<sup>13)</sup>.||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>14)</sup> ...

- 6) a) ||Dead | persons | are | hot | business.||

b) ||De [p]ə:sənz^ ə^hɔ [b]ɪznɪs||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>15)</sup> ...

- 7) a) ||Keen | boys | win | pretty | girls.||

b) ||Ki: [m]ɔz^wɪ [p]rɪtɪ^gə:lz||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>16)</sup> ...

- 8) a) ||Fine | coins | will | be | gone | quite | soon | wherever | you | look.||

b) ||Faɪ [k]ɔɪnz^wɪl^bɪ^gɔ [k]waɪt^soʊ [w]ɛərevə:ˈju^lʊk||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>17)</sup> ...

- 9) a) ||This | shows | that | fish | shrink.||  
 b) ||θ<sub>1</sub> s<sub>2</sub> əuz<sup>^</sup>θət<sup>^</sup>fɪ rɪŋk|| [[ʃ:] = a long (or double) consonant]

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>18)</sup> ...

- 10) a) ||Face | yet | matters,|| while cows | yawn.||  
 b) ||F<sub>e1</sub> f<sub>2</sub> et<sup>^</sup>mætəz,|| wai<sup>^</sup>kəʊ s<sub>2</sub>ɔ:n [[ʒ] is the same consonant as in /pleasure/].||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>19)</sup> ...

- 11) a) ||Nice | sons | raise | nice | zebras,|| while rose | seeds | choose | xylophones.||  
 b) ||Nai s<sub>1</sub> ʌnz<sup>^</sup>reɪz<sup>^</sup>nai s<sub>2</sub> ɛbrəz|| wai<sup>^</sup>rəʊ z<sub>2</sub> i:dz<sup>^</sup>tʃu: z<sub>2</sub> aɪləfəʊnz||

*Liaison-feature:*

When [ ] ends the previous word, and [ ] begins the following word, then<sup>20)</sup> ...

## Step Two: Verifying and Applying the Features that Determine the Liaison of English

### 4.1. So, what are the features of English liaison?

Basically, the liaison of English is produced by **six** different means:

- (a) **linking final phonemes to initial vowels**: this means the **joining** of two phonemes, the second of which is an initial vowel (and which are both, of course, **written** separated by a space), in some cases by **pronouncing a consonant** that is not normally pronounced<sup>21)</sup>;
- (b) by **merging** consecutive but differing **consonants** ([wɔ<sub>1</sub> ŋ<sub>2</sub> u:] = /what you/), or **extending** consecutive and identical consonants ([fə<sub>1</sub> m<sub>2</sub> aʊntənz] = /firm mountains/);
- (c) by **omitting consonants**, often replacing them with glottal stops [ʔ];
- (d) by **substituting one vowel** for another ([ð<sub>1</sub> ɹ<sub>2</sub> i:ə:] = /the air/);
- (e) by **inserting a consonant** that is never written ([tu: w<sub>2</sub> ɔfen] = /too often/; [ð<sub>1</sub> ɹ<sub>2</sub> i:ə:]);

- (f) by **changing** the first of two consecutive but differing **consonants**, so as to make the transition to the second physically easier ( $[\theta_1 \square \text{p} \text{ɪ} \text{g} \text{z}] = /thin \text{ pigs}/$ )<sup>2 2)</sup>

Let us now examine each of these methods in detail.

#### 4.2. Actual application of liaison

Before we do so, however, I need again to emphasize that the **degree** to which some features of liaison are actually employed **may differ**, according to how **fast** a speaker is uttering, and how **formal** she wishes to make her utterance sound. These are two parameters that often prove related: for formal utterance is usually slower than informal, and requires a demonstration of attention to both **comprehensibility** and various forms of **correctness**, doing both of which may involve using **less** liaison than is **normal**; on the other hand, informal speech is often uttered very quickly; and, above all, since liaison makes speaking easier, it of course contributes to the speed of production.

Therefore, in presenting each of the many examples of liaison that follow, I shall first offer a normal way of writing that example, which I want you – as an experiment – to try to pronounce **as fully as possible** (yet always thinking about avoiding *katakana* English), as though you were saying it very formally, at a ceremony held in front of two hundred people. (The mark // shows the boundaries of a single chunk, and the mark /| marks transitions from word to word that are inevitably physically troublesome to produce.) And I then shall offer a second version, which represents the various tricks of liaison that are used by speakers that are uttering at normal or higher speeds.

In all cases – and if you manage to avoid using *katakana*-based liaison – you will find the first version very difficult to pronounce **completely**, and yet without introducing unnatural silence into the middle of a ‘chunk’; and – though you **may** find the second version, which shows liaison, not to be what you have so far been used to saying – yet, **if** you pronounce it faithfully, you will probably find it much easier to pronounce (your teacher will give you further guidance concerning this, in class). But, on your own, you can experiment, by first pronouncing each formal version, trying both to pronounce the phonemes on either side of each mark [ ] separately, and yet to speak as quickly as possible. Doing this will help you to become even more aware of exactly why competent English speakers actually and constantly use liaison, in order to make speaking **easier**.

### 4.3. The function, delivery, and cultural significance of the glottal stop [ʔ]

As you by now know, the **glottal stop** [ʔ] is a very short silence made in speaking, by abruptly and momentarily closing the ‘door’ to your windpipe (*ie.* your **glottis**). In *kana*, it is represented by /っ//ツ/. In both English and Japanese, wherever it is normally used, this tiny silence cannot be omitted, for omitting it will **change the word that is heard** by the person listening to you. For example, /ソト/ and /ソツト/ mean different things; and the same is true of the glottal stop as used in English liaison: [we<sup>i</sup>ʔo](= /way to/) and [wei<sup>ʔ</sup>t<sup>o</sup>](= /wait to/) will (as I have shown) inevitably communicate different word-strings.

The short silence produced by employing a glottal stop **must continue for at least as long as it would take to pronounce the consonant that it replaces**. If the glottal stop is just long enough, and if the person listening to you is a competent user of English, it will give that person the **illusion** that s/he has actually **heard** the consonant that it has replaced.

In the previous paragraph, I have used the adverbial-phrase /at least/. This is because, for a learner of English that may wish to sound as natural as possible to the ears of competent users of that language, she can do no better than **slightly to lengthen** the interval of silence of her glottal stops: she should stop boldly, definitely, and confidently. For any hesitance or vagueness in the handling of glottal stops risks generating misunderstanding.

Concerning **intra-verbal** glottal stops, should she happen to wish to seem to be speaking some form of “Standard” English, she should employ – and boldly extend – only those used by representative speakers of such forms of English; thus, in such a case, [kəmpli:ʔli](= /completely/) will be found entirely acceptable, whereas, by anyone that does not themselves employ such a variation of English, [liʔli](= /little/), and even more so [liʔuʔ], are liable to be judged as substandard. On the other hand, if the learner conversely desires to adjust her pronunciation so as to cause it to blend in within a targeted micro-culture that does employ “substandard” placing of glottal stops, then, again, somewhat exaggerating the lengths of her stops will be far more effective than timidly shortening them.

## 5. The features of English liaison, in detail

### 5.1. Word-linking

5.1.1. A final consonant is linked to an initial vowel: ~CVC[VC~ → ~CV[C^V]C~

**Examples:**

**Formal version:** ||I've gót | a lót | of wórk | on | my pláte.||

**Full liaison:** ||Ariv^gɔ<sup>ʔ</sup>lɔ<sup>ʔ</sup>v^wə:k<sup>ʔ</sup>m:ar^pleit.||

**Formal version:** ||Wóuld | you | líke | an | ápple | or | an | órange?||

**Full liaison:** ||Wu<sup>ds</sup>u:ˆˈlaɪ<sup>k</sup>æ<sup>n</sup>æpə<sup>l</sup>ɔː<sup>r</sup>æ<sup>n</sup>ɔːrɪndʒ||

**Formal version:** ||Gét | it | dóne lor | shove | óff!||

**Full liaison:** ||Gε<sup>ɪ</sup>?dΛ<sup>n</sup>ɔː<sup>^</sup>ʃΛ<sup>v</sup>ɔ<sup>f</sup>||

(A **colon**, /:/, shows that the preceding phoneme is lengthened to some degree.)

**Exercise (1):**

||Bád as he ís I stíll álways accépt ónly a líttle of whát I héar of him.||<sup>23)</sup>

[This exercise may require the application of liaison not only **between** words, but also **within** one or more words.]

**Liaison-version:**<sup>24)</sup>

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**5.1.2. A final /r/ is pronounced before an initial vowel:**

In many of the kinds of English used outside the Northern American continent, a written final /r/ is either represented by a lengthening (longer for New Information content-words) of the previous vowel [ɪ], or by the neutral vowel, [ə], (as in /the/ used before an initial consonant – the ‘completely-relaxed-throat’ vowel). But, if the **pronunciation** of the next word (and **not** its spelling) begins with a vowel, the written final /r/ is pronounced as though it were an initial/medial [r]. This practice is obviously an extension of **5.1.1.**, above.

**Example:**

**Formal version:** ||The sínger | of the fínér | of the báre | and bítter | énds.||

**Full liaison:** ||ðəˆsɪŋə<sup>r</sup>v<sup>^</sup>ðəˆfaɪnə<sup>r</sup>v<sup>^</sup>ðəˆbeɪ<sup>r</sup>mbɪtə<sup>r</sup>ɛnz.||

**Exercise (2):**

||Get your ánger óut of a bétter and quícker áctívator if you wánt to soar ón.||<sup>25)</sup>

[This exercise may require the application of liaison not only **between** words, but also **within** one or more words.]

**Liaison-version:**<sup>26)</sup>

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**5.1.3. A final vowel is linked to an initial vowel**, with (according to lip-shape) [w] or [j] (*i.e.* [y]), or, when an [ə] (most often written /a/) is followed by certain vowels, with [r].

5.1.3.1. [w] is inserted after final vowels requiring a **rounded** lip-position; *e.g.*

true [tʃru:] no [nəu:] jaw [dʒɔə] plough [plʌu:]

**Examples:**

**Formal version:** ||Dó | énter **tóo** | and | hall**óo** | at | him.||

**Full liaison:** ||D u:wɛntətu:wən<sup>h</sup>əllu:wətɪm.||

**Formal version:** ||Go | óut | and | sh**ów** | us how to **rów** | a b**óat**.||

**Full liaison:** ||Gə u:wʌʔan<sup>h</sup>shə u:wəs<sup>h</sup>hʌʌ<sup>h</sup>tə<sup>h</sup>rə u:wə<sup>h</sup>bəu:t.||

**Formal version:** ||P**áw** | ónly what | you **sáw** | us | éating **ráw** | on | M**ón**day.||

**Full liaison:** ||P ɔəwəu:nli<sup>h</sup>wɔʔu:<sup>h</sup>s ɔəwʌs<sup>z</sup>i:tɪŋ<sup>h</sup>r ɔəwɔ<sup>m</sup>:ʌndɪ.||

**Formal version:** ||The **bóugh** | ups**ét** | the **ców** | and | **nów** | al**á**rmed her **cálf**.||

**Full liaison:** || ðə<sup>h</sup>b ʌwʌpse<sup>?</sup>ðə<sup>h</sup>c ʌwə<sup>m</sup>: ʌwəlɑ:md<sup>h</sup>hə:<sup>h</sup>ka:f.||

5.1.3.2. [ɸ] is inserted after final vowels requiring or ending in a **slight lateral spreading** of the lips: *e.g.*

sigh [saɪ:] sky [skaɪ:] say [seɪ:] see [si:] toy [tɔɪ]

**Examples:**

**Formal version:** ||High | úp they **rálly** | and | cry | óut,|| **nígh** | on w**é**eeping.||

**Full liaison:** ||H aɪʌ?p<sup>h</sup>ðeɪ<sup>h</sup>ræɪ ɪə<sup>m</sup>kraɪ ɪʌ?|| n aɪɔ<sup>m</sup>wi:pɪŋ.||

**Formal version:** ||P**áy** | on the sp**ót** | and | **sáy** | ónly what | **may** | ánger him.||

**Full liaison:** ||P eɪɔn<sup>h</sup>ðə<sup>h</sup>spɔ<sup>h</sup>tə<sup>h</sup>s eɪəunli<sup>h</sup>wɔʔm eɪ<sup>m</sup>æŋgə:<sup>h</sup>hɪm.||

**Formal version:** ||S**ée** | áll | the **téa** | and | **bríe** | on | the | táble | by | **the** | ócean!!!

**Full liaison:** ||S ɪ:é<sup>h</sup>ðə<sup>h</sup>t ɪ:ə<sup>m</sup>br ɪ:é<sup>h</sup>n<sup>h</sup>ðə<sup>h</sup>teɪbəl<sup>h</sup>baɪ<sup>h</sup>ð ɪəuʃən!!!

**Formal version:** ||J**óy** | and | her **bóy** | **are** | ch**ó**osing | a **tóy** | in a h**ú**rry.||

**Full liaison:** ||Dʒ ɔɪʌ<sup>h</sup>hə:<sup>h</sup>b ɔɪʌ<sup>h</sup>tʃu:zɪ<sup>h</sup>ə<sup>h</sup>t ɔɪ<sup>m</sup>ə<sup>h</sup>hʌrɪ.||

5.1.3.3. [r] is inserted between a **final** [ə] (most often written /a/) however this may be pronounced and a **following** initial [a], [a], [ə], [ʌ] (as in /up/), [æ], [ɛ], [e], [ɪ], [ɔ], or [u]

**Example:**

**Formal version:** ||Área | idéas | allów | dáta | advánces | since media | árteries |  
shrink | quietly.||

**Full liaison:** ||ɛəriə [aɪ] dɪəˈɛləuˈdeɪə [ə] ?vɑːnsɪˈmɪˈmiːdiə [ə] tʃriˈrɪˈkwaiə?l.||

**Exercise (3a):**

||Whó am I álways háppy about || though I shów him ónly impátience?||<sup>27)</sup>

**Liaison-version:**<sup>28)</sup>

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**Exercise (3b):**

||A trée and a cóy ótter are únder a ský all lów and dréary and dárk.||<sup>29)</sup>

**Liaison-version:**<sup>30)</sup>

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**Exercise (3c):**

||Álpha awáreness shóws some Atlánta archery,|| while Amériica and Dénmark chóose  
a sófa áll to themséives.||<sup>31)</sup>

[This exercise may require the application of liaison not only **between** words, but also **within** one or more words.]

**Liaison-version:**<sup>32)</sup>

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**Notes**

- 1) **defining relative clauses:** this is one of the several terms for a relative clause that employs a relative pronoun, and that, because it supplements the information provided by the head noun of a noun-phrase, is not an insertion into, but instead **an extension of**, that noun-phrase, and is therefore not separated from it by commas; e.g. */You see the woman that is holding a little dog on her lap?/*.
- 2) [ʔ] is, of course, the accepted symbol for a glottal stop – a brief stopping of the breath mid-utterance, produced by abruptly closing the glottis for a very brief interval, and producing a moment of silence. (I have always felt that, intuitively, [ʔ] would have been a choice more appropriate.)
- 3) This chiefly (but not exclusively) concerns the pronunciation of **consecutive consonants**, and (to a lesser degree) the vowels of weak syllables; what remain unchanged by the application of liaison are the vowels of **strong syllables**.
- 4) By a [linguistic] “**Default Choice**”, I mean a choice that competent speakers will (pre-consciously) make in the absence of **special** communicative **needs**. For example, one says, */I*

*adore* [ **cats** ], and not *\*I adore a cat* because one has no special need to limit the quantity of /*cat*[s]/ to one unit; on the other hand, in the case of */My daughter wants me to buy her a cat*, the Addresser does indeed have such special needs; '1 child :: 1 cat'; and *?/My daughter wants me to buy her [ **cats** ]* would not express the child's actual desire; thus, in the case of English count-nouns, the **plural** form is, semantically, the Default Choice. Again, in expressing a change that has been completed at the time of utterance, the Default Choice of tense is the Simple Past: */I sent you an e-mail*; it is only when the Addresser has a **Special Need** – to express not just the completion of the change, but also that the new state-of-affairs resulting from that change is (as far as she knows) continuing at the time of utterance – that she will instead opt for the Present Perfect tense: */I have sent you an e-mail*.

- 5) Yet, even then, unimportant segments of theme, or strings of function-words will still be pronounced using a modicum of liaison.
- 6) (1) [ **b** ]; (2) [ **d** ]; (3) [ **v** ]; (4) [ **ʒ** ]; (5) [ **dʒ** ]; (6) [ **z** ]; (7) [ **g** ]; (8) [ **ð** ].
- 7) While pronunciation of each of the consonants in Group B can at need be prolonged, that of those in Group A cannot.
- 8) When **a consonant** ends the previous word, and **a vowel** begins the following word, then **the consonant is added to the vowel**.
- 9) When **a final (almost) silent /r/** ends the previous word, and **a vowel** begins the following word, then **a [r] is added to the vowel, and pronounced as an initial [r]**.
- 10) When **a wide-lipped vowel** ends the previous word, and **another vowel** begins the following word, then **a [ʷ] is inserted before the second vowel**.
- 11) When **a round-lipped vowel** ends the previous word, and **another vowel** begins the following word, then **a [ʷ] is inserted before the second vowel**.
- 12) When [ **t/d** ] ends the previous word, and [ **j** ] begins the following word, then **the two consonants are merged, to produce [ʰdʃ]**.
- 13) In very fast utterance, the second vowel will be omitted, thus reducing the syllable-number to two. This phenomenon will be dealt with in Part Two of this article.
- 14) When [ʰdʃ] ends the previous word, and [ **j** ] begins the following word, then **the [j] is omitted**.
- 15) When [ **t/d** ] ends the previous word, and [ **p/b** ] begins the following word, then **the [t/d] will be replaced by a glottal stop ([ʔ])**.
- 16) When [ **n** ] ends the previous word, and [ **p/b** ] begins the following word, then **the [n] is changed to [m]**.
- 17) When [ **n** ] ends the previous word, and [ **k/g** ] begins the following word, then **the [n] is changed to [ŋ]**.
- 18) When [ **s/ʃ** ] ends the previous word, and [ **ʃ** ] begins the following word, then **the two consonants are joined**.
- 19) When [ **s/z** ] ends the previous word, and [ **j** ] begins the following word, then **the two consonants are merged, to produce [ʃːʒ]**.
- 20) When [ **s/z** ] ends the previous word, and [ **s/z** ] begins the following word, then **the two consonants are joined; [s+s], or [z+z], will produce a double consonant**.
- 21) One exception is the /a/an/ alternation: /a^act/ ↔ /an^act/ [= a<sup>n</sup>act]; here, one liaison-feature

**is** shown in writing; and, in the case of /another/ [= /an/ + /other/], the smooth joining of what were originally two separate words is shown by writing those two words as **one** word.)

22) It may be useful here to note that this aspect of liaison was already incorporated into not just the pronunciation but even the spelling of Latin, which then influenced the spelling of English words derived from that language. For example, the negating prefix /in~/ remains unchanged before some consonants (e.g. /independent/, /innocent/) and before vowels (e.g. /inaccurate/), but changes before others (e.g. /imbalance/, /illegal/, /immediate/, /impossible/, and /irrlevant/.)

23) **Teaching point:** Although the use of the glottal stop **within** English words is rare, and while, for example, the same spelling as found in /accuse/ indicates the pronunciation [əkjuz], rather than [eɪkjuz] (cf. /acorn/ [eɪkən]), and certainly not [æ?kjuz], on the other hand, in the case of /accept/, the doubled /c/ indicates the consonant-cluster [ks], and this, in speedy utterance, is not easy to manage smoothly, and is therefore changed to [ə?ksɛpt]. The [ks] indicates a consonant begun but not completed before the next is smoothly begun.

24) **Liaison-version:** ||Bæ<sup>4</sup>əz<sup>4</sup> hɪ<sup>1</sup>fa<sup>1</sup> stɪ<sup>1</sup>ʃn: wɪ<sup>1</sup>ə<sup>1</sup>?ksep<sup>1</sup>ʃu:nlɪ<sup>1</sup>ə<sup>1</sup> lɪtə<sup>1</sup>əv<sup>1</sup> wɔ<sup>1</sup>ə<sup>1</sup> hɪ<sup>1</sup>əv<sup>1</sup> hʌm. ||

25) **Teaching points:** 1) Contemporary learners need to be reminded (or told, apparently for the first time,) that the doubled consonants found in the spelling of words like /better/, /quicker/, and also /lucky/, /happy/, /little/, etc., have nothing whatever to do with the pronunciation of those **consonants**, themselves, and function only to indicate that the immediately-preceding **vowel** is being used to indicate a short vowel, and not a long one or a diphthong. Useful in demonstrating this are the pairs /lucy/[lu:si] and /lucky/[lʌki], and /biter/[bɪtə:] and /bitter/[bɪtə:]. Due to the unfortunate incorporation of at least /lucky/ and /happy/ into learners' native vocabularies, but as pronounced with completely inappropriate glottal stops inserted (i.e. as, respectively, [ラッキー], and [ハッピー]), this point cannot be overemphasized.

2) /soar on/ is a **phrase-verb**; in the case of such verbs the adverb cannot be abbreviated without changing the meaning of the verb (/get/ vs. /get **up**/, /get **on**/ provide very clear examples); and therefore, since the adverb is semantically determinant, it receives the **primary stress** of the **entire** phrase-verb.

3) Most learners will pronounce (a) /anger/ as [ʌŋgə:], and (b) /active/ as [ʌktɪvɪ:]; (a) they will not have yet realized (or been sufficiently reminded that the vowel [æ] (i) differs from [ʌ], and (ii) the difference lies solely in the definite **rictus** (or "smile-movement") of the lips that is required to produce [æ]; (b) by inappropriately applying the **CVCV**...-structure of their native tongue, learners will tend to solve the pronunciation-problem posed by [kt] with [kt], where as [ʔ<sup>k</sup>t] is the solution that English **actually** [æ?ktɪʃ] employs; (c) the use of the lips and teeth that distinguish [v] from [b] will almost certainly have to be once more stressed.

26) **Liaison-version:** ||Gɛ<sup>1</sup>ʃ<sup>1</sup>æŋgə<sup>1</sup> ʌtə<sup>1</sup>əbətə<sup>1</sup>ə<sup>1</sup>kwɪkə<sup>1</sup>æ<sup>1</sup>tɪvətə<sup>1</sup>ɪf<sup>1</sup> ju: wɔn<sup>1</sup>?tə[OR wɔnnə<sup>1</sup>] sɔ<sup>1</sup>ʃn. ||

27) **Teaching points:** 1) It will prove necessary once more to str ess that the spelling /happy/ indicates the pronunciation [hæpi], and not [hʌ?pɪ]; 2) by first bring to mind the relation between the pronunciation and the spelling of /station/, and also /nation/, (not to speak of /pronunciation/), it will prove necessary to point out that /impatience/ indicates not the pronunciation [ɪmpætɪnɛns] but, rather, [ɪmpɛiʃəns].

28) **Liaison-version:** ||Hu: wə<sup>1</sup> ʌrɪə: weɪz<sup>1</sup> hæpɪ<sup>1</sup>əbətə<sup>1</sup>? || ðəu<sup>1</sup> wə<sup>1</sup> ʌrɪ<sup>1</sup> fəu<sup>1</sup> hɪ<sup>1</sup> ɪmpæɪʃəns ||

29) **Teaching points:** 1) Whatever the most respected dictionaries may indicate quite to the contrary, in modern and not too slovenly utterance of English at speed, for */tree/*, the dictionary-indication of [tri:] is entirely ludicrous – for what this really means is uttering [t<sub>h</sub>ri:]; [t<sub>h</sub>ri:] for */tree/*, and [dʒrɪn] for */dreary/* just have to be taught – and not just once. 2) */otter/* is pronounced not [ɔʔta:], but [ɔtə].

30) **Liaison-version:** ||ð<sup>^</sup>tʃri:|ə<sup>n</sup>^kɔ:|s<sup>t</sup>ə<sup>r</sup>Λndə<sup>r</sup>ə<sup>^</sup>skɑ:|b<sup>ə</sup>ʊ<sup>w</sup>əndʒrɪr<sup>r</sup>ɪən<sup>^</sup>dɑ:k.||

31) **Teaching points:** 1) */alpha/* and */Atlanta/* require the vowel [æ];

2) */Denmark/* actually requires not the pronunciation [dɛnma:k], as supplied by the dictionaries, but, rather, [dɛ<sup>m</sup>:a:k].

32) **Liaison-version:** ||fɪfə<sup>r</sup>əwɛə:nə<sup>f</sup>ə<sup>z</sup>ə<sup>m</sup>ə<sup>?</sup>læntə<sup>r</sup>ːa:|tʃ<sub>0</sub>rɪ|| wə<sup>l</sup>ə<sup>m</sup>ɪrɪcə<sup>r</sup>ːə<sup>n</sup>:Dɛ<sup>m</sup>:a:ʔtʃu:ə<sup>^</sup>səufə<sup>r</sup>ə<sup>^</sup>tə<sup>^</sup>ðəmsɛlvz.||