



Lecture 5 — R liaison

1. Alternation between [r] and zero

1.1. <i>better</i>	'betə	<i>star</i>	stɑ:	<i>score</i>	skɔ:
<i>bettered</i>	'betəd	<i>starred</i>	stɑ:d	<i>scored</i>	skɔ:d
<i>better not</i>	'betə nɒt	<i>star quality</i>	'stɑ: k...	<i>scorecard</i>	'skɔ: kɑ:d
<i>bettering</i>	'betəriŋ	<i>starring</i>	'stɑ:riŋ	<i>scoring</i>	'skɔ:riŋ
<i>better if</i>	'betər ɪf	<i>star attraction</i>	'stɑ:r ə...	<i>score again</i>	'skɔ:r ə'gen

1.2. *nearest, fear of; bearing, pair of; referring, stir up; curing, pure and simple*

1.3. Only after /ə ɑ: ɔ: ɪə eə ɜ: ʊə/. 'Linking r' is generally categorical within a word, but variable across a word boundary. (Abbreviatory convention with 'r' in EPD-15.)

2. Hypotheses to account for the alternation

2.1 **Two-allomorph hypothesis** (implausible, because uneconomic). These words are stored each with two phonological representations: one with /r/, and one without. Speakers select by rule the one appropriate to any given environment.

2.2 **R dropping hypothesis**. These words have an underlying representation which ends in /r/. This /r/ is deleted (dropped) by rule whenever the following segment is not a vowel.

		$r \rightarrow \emptyset / _ \#_0 \{C, \ \}$		
	<i>starring</i>	<i>stars</i>	<i>gathering</i>	<i>gathers</i>
Underlying	stɑ:r#iŋ	stɑ:r#z	gæðər#iŋ	gæðər#z
R dropping	—	stɑ:#z	—	gæðə#z
Surface	stɑ:riŋ	stɑ:z	gæðəriŋ	gæðəz

3. Further data: unhistorical (unetymological) [r]

vodka and coke 'vɒdkər ən... *Libya and Egypt* 'lɪbiər ən...

Shah of Iran 'ʃɑ:r əv... *grandma always* 'grænma:r 'ɔ:lwɪz

law of the land 'lɔ:r əv... *drawing* 'drɔ:riŋ

idea of death aɪ'diər əv... *Korea and Japan* kə'riər ən...

3.1 **Orthographic/historical r hypothesis**: Words are stored with or without /r/ according to the presence/absence of /r/ historically or in other accents, or of *r* in spelling. Cannot explain the new data.

3.2 **R insertion hypothesis**. No morpheme has a phonological representation ending in /r/. Before a vowel in continuous speech, /r/ is inserted by rule after any non-high vowel.

		$\emptyset \rightarrow r / [-hi V] _ \#_0 V$		
	<i>starring</i>	<i>stars</i>	<i>gathering</i>	<i>vodka and</i>
Underlying	stɑ:#iŋ	stɑ:#z	gæðə#iŋ	vɒdkə#ən
R insertion	stɑ:r#iŋ	--	gæðər#iŋ	vɒdkər#ən
Surface	stɑ:riŋ	stɑ:z	gæðəriŋ	vɒdkərən

3.3 **Phonotactic hypothesis**. All words with phonetic final [-hi V] have underlying final /r/. Thus *vodka* is /#vɒdkər#/, *law* is /#lɔ:r#/. Then the r dropping rule (2.2) applies.

3.4 Do speakers in practice treat 'intrusive' r (unhistorical) differently from 'linking' r (historical)? (Most speakers seem not to.) 3.5 *Error analysis, mirror image, extra entry*.

3.6 *avec moi et mon ami da ist er ¡viva España! Yamaha and Kawasaki*

3.7 Non-contrastiveness of liaison [r] vs. zero. *There's a Mr ʃɔ:r outside*.

Advanced students: see also J. Harris, 1994, English Sound Structure, chapter 5 (Floating Sounds).