Conquering ESL Students' English Listening Barriers

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University of San Francisco

Conquering ESL Students’ English Listening Barriers

A Field Project Proposal Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language

By
Dan Wu
December 2019
Conquering ESL Students’ English Listening Barriers

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

by

Dan Wu

December 2019

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project (or thesis) has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

Dr. Luz Navarrette García
Instructor/Chairperson

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ABSTRACT

Many students learning English as a Second Language (ESL) have some English pronunciation barriers in their listening and speaking, consisting of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words. The project aims to help ESL students find effective ways to conquer these common English pronunciation barriers in listening comprehension. At the same time, ESL students will learn the standard pronunciation habits of English sentences. This project is designed to use specific listening practice to assist in conquering ESL students’ English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. By using the materials in this project, ESL students can learn to find their English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms by dictating English sentences, songs, movies and news. They will learn to conquer their English listening barriers by imitating the standard pronunciation of English sentences, singing songs after the singers, and reading film dialogues aloud. After using the handbook created for this project, ESL students can conquer their English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms efficiently and effectively. This project assists ESL teachers to evaluate ESL students' listening ability, and find appropriate English listening materials, correct English listening procedures and strategies to improve ESL students' listening abilities.

Keywords: ESL, English listening barriers, incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms, pronunciation, dictation, imitation
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

A large number of students who are learning English as a Second Language (ESL) are good at English reading and writing, however, they have some pronunciation barriers in English speaking and listening. For many ESL students, English listening is the thing that they feel most frustrated with. A large proportion of ESL students have difficulty recognizing the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms in English sentences (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Systematic teaching of English liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms has been ignored. Furthermore, a great number of students have never been taught liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms, which makes it difficult for ESL students to speak English comprehensibly and to comprehend the speech of native and other fluent speakers of English (Liang, 2003). Therefore, English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms are ubiquitous in ESL students’ speaking and listening.

1) Incomplete explosion: There are six plosive consonants in English:/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/. Incomplete explosion refers to the two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with a plosive consonant, the latter begins with a consonant. The airflow of the former plosive consonant is blocked for a short while, and break through the second consonant. As a result, the sound of the former plosive consonants is omitted. Incomplete explosion is the natural result of rapid speech flow. Incomplete explosion can occur either inside words, such as blackboard, postcard, doctor, or between two adjacent words, such as fast food restaurant, first step, make progress.
2) Liaison: Generally speaking, it refers to two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with consonants, and the latter begins with vowels. The consonant of the first word and the vowel of the second word should be linked together, regarding them as they are in the same syllable. In liaison, syllables are generally not stressed. They just need to pass by naturally. Liaison can make a group of words connected and become a series of syllable combinations, which make the internal connection of coherent language closer and the language more fluent.

3) Weak forms of functional words: In English sentences, notional words (n, v, adj, adv, number) need to be stressed, while functional words (conj, prep, pron, auxiliary verbs, articles, conjunctions) need to be spoken weakly. Weak forms of functional words in sentences is reflected in the weakening of vowels. The faster the speech speed is, the more frequent the phenomenon of reduction is, and the more difficult it is to understand. Weak forms of functional words is an important cause of listening difficulties. Whether we can master reduction of vowels of functional words is the key to improve listening.

Because many ESL students are used to speaking English sentences word by word, it is hard for them to understand English sentences spoken in standard way consisting of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. English news, movies, talk shows, and songs are spoken in a standard way, so it is difficult for ESL students to understand these real English listening materials with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. Because ESL students can't recognize the pronunciation combination of words in English sentences, they can't understand a lot of English sentences which have the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms when they listen to English news, songs, movies, talk shows, and so on.
In my experience, I taught English listening comprehension classes in the Training College of Beijing Foreign Studies University for 9 years when I was in Beijing. I taught English listening comprehension classes for many times and met a great number of ESL students. Most of the ESL students have the English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms, which are the main reasons that they cannot understand the real English materials, such as English songs, movies, news, talk shows. Therefore, it is important for them to find correct ways to conquer these pronunciation barriers to improve their English listening comprehension effectively and efficiently.

**Purpose of the Project**

This project has five aims: 1) to let ESL students realize that they have some barriers in some pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms in English sentences. 2) to help ESL teachers find appropriate English listening materials such as English songs and movies for practicing ESL students' intensive and extensive listening comprehension to conquer ESL students listening barriers and arouse ESL students’ interest in English listening. 3) to design three English listening procedures including before listening, during listening and after listening which are connected with one another to improve ESL students' listening abilities gradually. 4) to help ESL students to find correct ways to conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms by dictating English movies and news at home. and 5) to improve ESL students’ listening and speaking abilities efficiently by using effective ways to practice and consolidate the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.
This project is designed to make the ESL students realize their pronunciation problems by dictating English sentences, to use specific listening practice to teach ESL students correct pronunciation knowledge, and to conquer ESL students’ pronunciation barriers by imitating standard English sentences so that they can eventually understand English standard sentences with the combined pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. After using this handbook created for this project, ESL students can utilize this pronunciation knowledge correctly in sentences, speak English sentences more confidently, and better imitate the correct combination pronunciation of sentences which have the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. This skill practice will help ESL student remember correct pronunciation and understand real English listening materials, such as English news, movies, songs and talk shows.

The project will give ESL teachers helpful strategies to teach English listening and speaking as a second language accurately, to improve the students’ abilities of acquiring English listening and speaking efficiently, and to use advanced techniques to reinforce the development of the students’ English listening and speaking skills effectively. At the same time, the project assists ESL teachers to evaluate ESL students' listening ability, and find appropriate English listening materials, correct English listening procedures and strategies to improve ESL students' listening abilities. English listening and speaking are the basic skills in daily communication and formal speeches. Therefore, it is necessary to find efficient ways to improve ESL students' listening and speaking competence.
Theoretical Framework

The concept of “communicative competence” was firstly put forward by Dell Hymes (USA famous sociolinguist) in his book named “On Communicative Competence” in 1972. The book has defined the “communicative competence” from four aspects: 1. “Grammaticality”, namely the words and phrases, grammar and other linguistic skills. 2. “Feasibility”, namely the acceptability of the communicative language. 3. “Appropriateness”, namely the proper communicative language. 4. “Reality”, namely the communicative language is suitable for actual conditions (Hymes, 1972). All of the above-mentioned information shows that the English communication is a kind of skill which requires certain linguistic insight, language knowledge and comprehensive competences. If ESL students don’t understand the English-speaking countries’ cultural knowledge and backgrounds, and are short of linguistic competence, external exchange and communication awareness, powerful listening as well as speaking abilities, they will be unable to communicate freely in English. Under the traditional teaching mode, the training of communicative competence of English listening and speaking lags far behind the training of English reading and writing skills. Therefore, the current “dumb English” is common in some ESL students (Nation & Newton, 2009). Dumb English means that Some ESL students can read and write English accurately, but they do not know how to listen and speak English correctly (Nation & Newton, 2009). Therefore, they are reluctant to communicate in English. At the same time, they cannot understand English songs, movies, news, and English native speakers. Communicative competence refers to a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately (Hymes, 1972).
Significance of the Project

Through learning this project, ESL students can realize that they have pronunciation barriers in English speaking and listening, learn to dictate English sentences to find their pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms in English sentences, imitate the standard pronunciation of English sentences, follow the correct ways to conquer the pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms, and learn to pronounce English sentences accurately. After learning English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, ESL students know why English native speakers can speak so fast in some situations. If ESL students want to make breakthroughs in English listening, they must break through these difficulties and conquer these barriers. The method is to repeat imitating the phonetic materials with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms until ESL students can speak these standard sentences naturally and fluently, and remember the standard pronunciation of English sentences clearly. After a period of practice, ESL students can speak English in the correct way, and make improvement in understanding lots of standard sentences with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms when they listen to English news, movies, songs and talk shows. ESL students can also learn how to freely communicate with others in English. Therefore, they can improve their English communicative competence efficiently.

ESL teachers also benefit from this project. Through using this project, ESL teachers can utilize these teaching strategies which are introduced in the field project to conquer ESL students’ English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms effectively. In the pre-listening activities, ESL teachers should instruct English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and lead ESL students to read
English phrases and sentences aloud to let ESL students be familiar with the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms so that ESL students can have a good preparation when they listen to authentic listening materials. In the while-listening activities, ESL teachers can require ESL students to dictate the authentic English listening materials and do some related exercises like identifying English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms to find out ESL students’ listening problems and help them conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak form. ESL teachers can use these vivid and interesting songs and movies which are provided in this field project to increase ESL students’ interest to conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. English movies and songs are excellent authentic materials for ESL students to improve their English speaking and listening ability. Using YouTube clips in the classroom will give ESL learners the chance to study authentic English vividly and assist them in understanding English effectively (Almurashi, 2016). In the after-listening activities, ESL teachers can ask ESL students to read English sentences after them, sing English songs after the singers, and read the movie dialogues aloud after the actors. Furthermore, ESL teachers can organize ESL students to do some summary, group discussion, imitation, and role-playing to conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. In addition, ESL teachers can assign ESL students to dictate more English songs, movies and news to consolidate what they have learned in classes, and recommend them to use some good English website, such as YouTube. Dictation can be an effective way to improve ELS student's pronunciation distinguishing ability and strengthen their English listening comprehension ability. After ESL teachers required ESL students to do the intensive and
extensive listening practice which are introduced in this field project, ESL students’ English pronunciation barriers will be conquered effectively and efficiently.

**Definition of Terms**

Liaison: Generally speaking, it refers to two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with consonants, and the latter begins with vowels. The consonant of the first word and the vowel of the second word should be linked together, regarding them as they are in the same syllable. In liaison, syllables are generally not stressed. They just need to pass by naturally. They cannot be pronounced too heavily. Liaison can make a group of words connected and become a series of syllable combinations, which make the internal connection of coherent language closer and the language more fluent (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2014).

Incomplete explosion: There are six plosive consonants in English: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/. The pronunciation process of plosive consonants is divided into three steps: 1. The airflow channel is blocked when the pronunciation organ is in the correct pronunciation position, that is to say, it is blocked. 2. The blocked airflow makes a very short pause to hold back. 3. Airflow breaks through obstacles and produces explosive sound to remove obstruction. Incomplete explosion refers to the two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with a plosive consonant, the latter begins with a consonant. The airflow of the former plosive consonant is blocked for a short while, and break through the second consonant. As a result, the sound of the former plosive consonants is omitted. Incomplete explosion is the natural result of rapid speech flow. Incomplete explosion can occur either inside words, such as blackboard,
postcard, doctor, or between two adjacent words, such as fast food restaurant, first step, make progress (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2014).

Weak forms: In English sentences, notional words (n, v, adj, adv, number) need to be stressed, while functional words (conj, prep, pron, auxiliary verbs, articles, conjunctions) need to be spoken weakly. Weak forms of functional words in sentences is reflected in the weakening of vowels. The faster the speech speed is, the more frequent the phenomenon of reduction is, and the more difficult it is to understand. Weak forms of functional words is an important cause of listening difficulties. Whether we can master reduction of vowels is the key to improve listening. To master the weak forms of functional words requires a lot of imitation, practice and memory. It is important that ESL students recognize reductions of functional words when they hear them, so that they can understand better what native speakers are saying (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 2014).

Dumb English: Some ESL students can read and write English accurately, however, they do not know how to listen and speak English correctly. Therefore, they are reluctant to communicate in English. At the same time, they cannot understand English songs, movies, news, and English native speakers (Nation & Newton, 2009).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review focuses on analyzing ESL students’ English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms when they listen to English songs, movies, news and so on, preparing for proper English listening materials for ESL students, carrying out the right procedures and effective strategies to improve ESL students’ English listening ability efficiently. It is necessary to find correct ways to conquer ESL students' barriers in English listening comprehension. ESL teachers should find effective ways to help ESL students conquer the English listening barriers of liaison, incomplete explosion, and weak forms of functional words. ESL students should be instructed to be familiar with the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in pre-listening section, listen to English songs and movies to find their own English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms in during-listening section, read sentences aloud after ESL teachers and the movie actors, sing after the singers, dictate English news to consolidate the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in after-listening section. ESL students need to catch up with the speed of English native speakers, grasp the purpose of the listening materials, and conquer English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms effectively and efficiently.
ESL Students' English Listening Problems

English listening is a communication method that requires the listener to understand, interpret, and assess what they hear (Sharma, 2011). For many ESL students, English listening is the thing that they feel most frustrated with. A large proportion of ESL students have difficulty recognizing the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms in English sentences (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Systematic teaching of English liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms has been ignored. Furthermore, a large number of ESL students have never been taught liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms, which makes it difficult for ESL students to speak English comprehensibly and to comprehend the speech of native and other fluent speakers of English (Liang, 2003). The pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms lacks clear guidelines. It seems to represent an area that everybody plays lip service to without quite having established how important it is. Non-native learners of English seemed to lag far behind native speakers in the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in English sentences. Incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms are considered big obstacles for ESL learners in spoken English acquisition and English listening comprehension (Alameen, 2007).

ESL learners have many difficulties with English listening comprehension. Firstly, it is very challenging to keep up with the speed of English speech and recognize the sounds that do not exist in their first language (Wei, 2009). Secondly, they have for too long been accustomed to speak word by word without incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms and so on which are quite common in English native speakers’ ordinary speech (Shen, 2009). For example, English native speakers say: “I__am no(t) the one hanging of the back__of__a shi(p) here.” However, ESL students would like to read the sentence aloud word by word without paying attention to the
pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Thirdly, ESL students have interpretation problems because of insufficient English vocabulary and cultural backgrounds (Wei, 2009). Fourthly, ESL students are not familiar with the pronunciation of certain words or the accent of the speaker (Aiyun, 2006). Incorrect pronunciation hinders at least many ESL students from listening comprehension, so teachers need to help ESL students expose themselves and get familiar with precise pronunciation of native English speakers, as well as many accents they will encounter (Hamouda, 2013).

The Choice of English Listening Materials

Listening materials should be selected properly and arranged from easy to difficult with different tasks. Real language materials are advocated (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Real language materials refer to those spoken by native speakers and related to the realistic life which students should be familiar with. Real language materials could help restore real contexts, contributing to solve problems of weak forms of functional words, incomplete explosion, and liaison (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Authentic materials are good for increasing language skills. For example, English songs, movies, and news are very good authentic English listening materials. According to Rodgers and Medley(1988), ‘authentic’ in the sense of language means samples that reflect a natural form accompanied by appropriate cultural and situation context as if used by native speakers (Kim & Kang, 2015).

ESL Teachers should also provide ESL students with different kinds of input, such as lectures, radio news, films, TV plays, announcements, everyday conversation, interviews, storytelling, English songs, and so on (Hamouda, 2013). As many researchers have observed,
learners can gain positive indicators when they watch authentic and real-life clips (Maness 2004). English pop songs can increased ESL students’ English listening interest and motivation (Kim & Kang, 2015). With beautiful melody and highly memorable lyrics, introducing English songs to ESL listening classroom not only can creates a relaxed atmosphere, but also provides enough input to college ESL students (Wang, 2013). Using English songs in ESL classrooms can successfully bring about effective learning through providing a harmonious classroom atmosphere, reducing students’ anxiety, fostering their interests and motivating them to learn the target language (Shen, 2009). Using English pop songs in the English classroom is a very effective way of teaching and learning English by motivating them to pay comparatively more attention to the songs and lyrics (Kim & Kang, 2015). The use of songs in the classes can help ESL teachers to motivate ESL students’ learning into the foreign language, even with unwilling students (Borland, 2015). Neurologists find that music and language occur in the same area of the brain. Accordingly, using English songs in ESL classrooms improves students’ linguistic competence (Wang, 2013). For teaching and learning English listening skills, English pop songs have been considered as a very popular and effective way, and useful pattern practices related to the songs can be very helpful. English pop songs can help students feel more confident and enjoy learning English at home as well as in the classroom (Kim & Kang, 2015). Listening to English songs will prepare ESL learners to the genuine English language they are to be faced with. Songs can be used to teach natural pronunciation efficiently. For linguistic reasons, songs have strong and typical rhythms, which are easy for students to memorize and enhance the effect of teaching (Wang, 2013). Music cultivates esteem and motivation to young people (Whyte & Mould, 2011). Native singers’ pronunciation provides a model for ESL learners (Shen, 2009). Songs could be an effective tool for teaching pronunciation, which can help ESL students improve their English
communicative competence (Borland, 2015). Demirel (2004) makes the claim that the most useful way to teach listening comprehension, pronunciation, and dictation to young listeners is through songs.

To attract students’ interest in practicing English listening, audio-visual media such as movies can be effective and give students authentic examples of spoken language. YouTube is a free, easy to access source of material which includes ordinary people talking videos, music, documentaries and movies produced by the entertainment industry (Damronglaohapan & Stevenson, 2013). YouTube can provide students with everyday videos and authentic situations that may help them improve their understanding and performance in English language lessons (Almurashi, 2016). Video is a particularly powerful tool. Commercially produced video and teacher-created video can greatly enhance classroom instruction. There are many software programs that make video production easy and fun, such as Animoto, Microsoft Movie Maker, and Apple iMovie. To help students learn as much as possible, teachers need to fully and creatively use what advances in technology have to offer (Brozek & Duckworth, 2017). YouTube is an effective tool that can build learners’ knowledge and help them improve their English fluency (Almurashi, 2016). In addition, teachers should encourage students to explore possible on-line learning (Wei, 2009). YouTube can be a creative and innovative help in the field of studying the English language. YouTube in teaching the English language plays a leading role in helping learners understand their English lessons. It can improve the performance of students and upgrade their levels in English courses. In other words, YouTube presented a substantial influence on students’ understanding of English (Almurashi, 2016). YouTube could be a good material to incorporate English lessons and it can help with understanding the lesson as well.
YouTube is conceived to be more effective and successful than textbook-based English courses in promoting better learning of English (Almurashi, 2016).

As mobile technologies become more affordable and more advanced in function, researchers suggest that using mobile apps to assist English language learning are appropriate (Chen, 2016). Computer assisted pronunciation training proves to be effective in improving pronunciation, as well as providing effective feedback (Chen, 2016).

**The Listening Process and Effective Strategies for Each Stage**

The typical listening process should include “pre” activities, “while” activities and “after” activities, which can guide ESL students through the mental processes for successful listening comprehension (Wei, 2009). Because successful listening skills are acquired over time and with lots of practice, cultivating students listening skills is very important.

Pre-Listening

In the pre-listening activities, ESL teachers should provide related information of the listening materials, such as English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At the same time, ESL teachers ask ESL students to predict the listening materials and know the definite purpose for each listening (Wei, 2009). ESL teachers should give students clear instructions of English pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and lead ESL students to read English phrases and sentences aloud after them to have a good preparation of listening to English songs and movies (Aiyun, 2006). Teachers can provide the outline for the listening text and teach cultural key concepts (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011).
ESL students should figure out the purpose in advance and know what kind of listening barriers should be focused on. Students should be instructed to focus on the words and phrases that English pronunciation barriers exist in (Sharma, 2011). Teachers should let students be interested in the topic, and warm them up by showing them related pictures or stories. Teachers can write new vocabulary on blackboard and explain them (Sevik, 2012).

In pre-listening process, the task of ESL teachers is to inform ESL students about the distinctive features of English liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms of functional words at any time convenient so that the students do not feel stressful and surprised when they listen to authentic listening materials (Hamouda, 2013). For beginners, the most important listening skill is to discriminate English liaison, incomplete explosion, weak forms of functional words, tone and intonation (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Based on the results that indicate much less incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms frequencies in non-native English speakers when compared to English native speakers’ speech, teachers and textbook developers should pay more attention to incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms (Alameen, 2007). At the same time, ESL teachers should instruct cultural knowledge and break down the cultural barriers in teaching listening (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). For ESL teachers, they need to provide enough input, concern and guide students’ learning behavior and create a relaxing atmosphere for ESL classes (Wang, 2013). ESL students who receive systematic instruction in incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms over a period of time show a significant improvement in English listening comprehension and spoken English (Liang, 2003).

During listening

In the while-listening activities, students are required to take notes, dictate the listening material and do some related exercises like identifying English pronunciation barriers of
incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms (Wei, 2009). Active students are more likely to construct clear and accurate meaning as they interpret the speaker's verbal message and nonverbal cues. Students can verify and revise the previous predictions, then they can make correct judgement (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). ESL students should pay attention to liaison, incomplete explosion, weak forms, and the language signals including linking words, pronouns, and references. According to the listening context, Students should deduce the meaning of an unknown word. They should infer the speakers' opinions and attitudes according to the intonations and stresses she/he is performing or what the second speaker says, because this information provides clues to the meaning and social settings. Students should write down the words in the blanks while listening, especially paying attention to English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms (Aiyun, 2006). Students should confirm prediction and check for inaccurate guesses. Students should make a decision of what is important to understand and what is not important to understand. Then they should listen again to ensure listening comprehension and ask for help if needed (Sharma, 2011). The aim of during listening stage is for ESL teachers to find out ESL students’ listening problems and help them cultivate listening skills and strategies (Pan, 2008).

In the process of during listening teaching, audio-visual combination could be adopted to arouse students’ learning interest and listening materials could be authentic videos, such as English songs, voice bands, movie fragments, etc (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Besides using textbooks, a wide range of listening materials (e.g. English songs and movies) should be selected to increase students' interest (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). ESL teachers can present videos three to four times to students. Some useful websites which offer authentic English listening materials are recommended to students (Wei, 2009). There are a significant number of
online materials that can be integrated into traditional English lessons, such as the YouTube website. YouTube is considered a source of online material that can play a key role in the teaching and learning field (Almurashi, 2016). YouTube website can be an effective method in dealing with students’ difficulties and barriers in understanding English (Almurashi, 2016). Using YouTube videos to teach English classes as supplementary material will provide learners with good understanding and knowledge of their lectures. In addition, it is likely to make the learning process more fun and meaningful. Furthermore, it gives students the opportunity to memorize their lessons more easily (Almurashi, 2016). YouTube assists ESL learners to remember the content of the lesson in an efficient manner, which helps them discuss the content of the lesson with their classmates and teachers in an active way (Almurashi, 2016). Across the world, it is common that young students love listening to English pop songs, which also have very useful words and expressions with basic structures used in everyday routines. Even many of multicultural learners having trouble following normal English lessons at school have been reported to have improved their listening skills by listening to authentic and natural pronunciation in English pop songs (Kim & Kang, 2015). ESL teachers can choose English songs with pure pronunciation and let ESL students imitate or sing. Pop songs with pure intonation and positive themes can be a good choice for ESL teachers to use for it is the authentic material to learn and bring students good feelings (Wang, 2013). The activities with songs can take ESL students into a friendlier world in which they feel an emotional connection (Borland, 2015).

In during listening stage, ESL students should identify and outline the purpose of the listening materials. They should check what kind of pronunciation knowledge should be focused on in listening exercises (Sharma, 2011). ESL students should listen for the main idea and
details. Listening and making inferences can help students know the purpose of the listening and use appropriate skills to listen better (Wei, 2009). Teachers can devise special exercises to assist students in improving their listening comprehension. A gap-fill task as follows can be used to help students notice and absorb the phonetic reality in native English speakers’ speech (Shen, 2009). For the while-listening stage, target exercises such as true/false question and gap-filling task helps teacher to testify students’ understandings (Wang, 2013). Rules of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms are followed by a few exercises that ask the learners to listen to recorded sentences and mark incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms inside them (Alameen, 2007). ESL teachers can use YouTube videos in teaching English and add them as supplementary materials to courses (Almurashi, 2016). Using YouTube clips in the classroom will give ESL learners the chance to study authentic English vividly and assist them in understanding English effectively (Almurashi, 2016). ESL Teachers and curriculum planners should further foster the positive beliefs such as a high level of motivation and implementation of popular activities such as listening to English songs and watching English films (Wu, 2012).

After listening

In the post-listening activities, ESL teachers check ESL students’ listening comprehension. Summary, group discussion, imitating, and role-playing are suggested in this process (Wei, 2009). Reading English novels and watching English movies after class can help learn the cultural background. Input of cultural background ahead of time could gradually solve the intellectual problem of listening comprehension (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). Post-listening activities are most effective when it is done immediately after the listening experience, which can extend students' listening skills (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Students should repeat and reproduce a certain number of useful language models and summarize the listening material
orally or retell the story which they have just heard. Students are suggested to do role-play in pairs/groups. At the same time, teachers should supply relative words if it is necessary to activate students' interest in speaking (Aiyun, 2006). Teachers can guide students to sing English songs, such as singing competition, playing games and doing simple drama activities related to the song (Sevik, 2012). Students should access listening comprehension and evaluate overall progress in different listening tasks. Students should decide if the strategies used were appropriate for various listening purposes and modify strategies if necessary (Sharma, 2011). For some extensive listening, students' self-study is a must. Students are asked to keep a listening log, diary or journal which summarize the self-selected listening materials and make comments on their listening skills. Speaking and listening should be paired. Some Internet-based resources are recommended to students for their extensive listening practice (Wei, 2009). ESL students who always listen to English songs, movies, and news pay more deliberate attention to liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms of functional words, phonological rules, stress, and intonation than the others, thus pronounce more correctly, and speak English more fluently (Shen, 2009).

Intensive listening and extensive listening should be combined together. The purpose of intensive listening is to cultivate listening basic skill, and the purpose of extensive listening is to consolidate and enlarge the effect of intensive listening (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). At the same time, students should combine listening with reading, writing and speaking (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). It is important to strengthen listening through other language skills and to improve other language skills through listening (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). It is beneficial for students to sing the English songs for a number of days after they are taught. Repetition of English songs can build the long-term memory of pronunciation knowledge of incomplete
explosion, liaison, and weak forms (Sevik, 2012). To sing an English song well demands familiarity with a number of above-mentioned phonological rules. For instance, liaison, incomplete explosion, and weak forms of functional words are the most common phenomena that occur nearly in every English song (Shen, 2009). After free listening of a song, teachers can ask students to look at the lyrics of the song and read the lyrics of the song aloud. Then teachers can teach students to sing the song (Sevik, 2012). By repeatedly listening to and learning English songs and movies, students will gradually correct their errors and achieve a more native-like pronunciation (Shen, 2009). Genuine listening materials and situations can let students be familiar with the types of listening which is outside the classroom. To improve students' enthusiasm in English listening and speaking, oral assessment is recommended. Students can give a speech, make a dialogue, retell or summarize after listening one passage. Teachers should teach English for communication (Aiyun, 2006). After listening, students can share what he has heard with the other students, discuss the listening content or tell stories to the others (Sharma, 2011). Group discussions and debates could also make class atmosphere more active (Liu & Bai & Han & Gao, 2016). At this stage, students can strengthen the listening skills or strategies they have learned and give responses to comprehension (Richards, 2005). Many activities may be applied into this stage, such as problem solving, summarizing (Pan, 2008), group discussion and writing (Richards, 2005). Group discussion needs to be included if the classes have enough time. Group discussion gives an opportunity for everyone to share their opinions and improve their sense of cooperation. Group discussion also needs to be included if the classes have enough time. Teachers can assign the task to let students have a discussion on the themes or singers of the song, which helps improve the classrooms atmosphere (Wang, 2013). For problem solving activities teachers can assign the tasks to let students do some researches or surveys on relative
topics, which is a good opportunity for students to improve their communicative competence and gain more knowledge. Summarizing is an advanced-level activity compared to gap-filling task or true/false question from the while-listening level. Summarizing puts forward more requirements on ESL students’ ability, not only to understand the materials, but also to interpret it with their own words briefly (Wang, 2013). ESL students should read English phrases and sentences aloud after ESL teachers (Alameen, 2007). ESL teachers can let students recompose the songs’ lyrics with some of their own words or write a reflection on the song or teachers’ activities used in the class. From that teachers can know more about students’ thoughts and the effectiveness of the instruction. It will be helpful for teachers to make improvements in future teaching (Wang, 2013). The post-listening stage is important for teachers to get the valuable feedback of current teaching and make improvements for the future (Wang, 2013).

After classes, ESL students can write down listening journals or diaries (Sharma, 2011). ESL learners will get familiar with and internalize liaison, incomplete explosion, and weak forms through repetition and imitation (Shen, 2009). It will be valuable to help ESL students find and use mobile apps that can address their specific English learning needs linguistically and culturally to improve their English language abilities and acquire English skills (Chen, 2016). Watching films and television, reading, listening to English songs, music and radio channels, formal learning and practising speaking with others can be the out-of-class language learning activities (Wu, 2012). Watching films, television channels in English, listening to English songs and playing computer games in English are self-directed naturalistic language-learning activities (Benson, 2001). Only when the natural pronunciation and all the phonological rules of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms become internalized in ESL learners can they gradually catch up with the native speakers’ speech (Shen, 2009).
Summary

Because systematic teaching of English liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms has been ignored, a large proportion of ESL students have difficulty recognizing the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms in English sentences, which makes it difficult for ESL students to speak English correctly and to comprehend English native speakers clearly.

To conquer ESL students’ English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms, it is very important to find suitable listening materials. Authentic listening materials are effective for conquering English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. According to different listening purposes and ESL students' listening level, ESL teachers can use English movies, songs, news, and talk shows which are very good authentic English listening materials. YouTube can provide lots of authentic English listening materials. ESL teachers should encourage ESL students to explore possible on-line learning or use mobile apps to conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

In the pre-listening activities, ESL teachers should instruct English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and lead ESL students to read English phrases and sentences aloud to let ESL students be familiar with the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms so that ESL students can have a good preparation when they listen to authentic listening materials. In the while-listening activities, ESL students are required to dictate the listening material and do some related exercises like identifying English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. The gap-filling
task can help ESL teachers to testify ESL students’ English listening barriers. The aim of during listening stage is for ESL teachers to find out ESL students’ listening problems and help them conquer English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak form.

YouTube website can be an effective method in dealing with students’ difficulties and barriers in understanding English. Using YouTube clips in the classroom will give ESL learners the chance to study authentic English vividly and assist them in understanding English effectively. English songs and movies should be selected to increase students' interest. ESL teachers can devise special exercises to assist students in improving their listening comprehension. In the post-listening activities, ESL teachers check ESL students’ listening comprehension to find out ESL students’ English listening barriers, and guide ESL students to sing English songs after the singers and imitate the movie actors. It is beneficial for students to sing the English songs and imitate the movie actors for a number of times after they are taught. Repetition of English songs and movies can build the long-term memory of pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms. To improve ESL students' enthusiasm in English listening and speaking, oral assessment is recommended. Summary, group discussion, imitating, and role-playing are suggested in this process. Intensive listening and extensive listening should be combined together. For some extensive listening, ESL students' self-study is necessary. ESL students need to dictate English songs, movies and news at home. Some Internet-based resources are recommended to students for their extensive listening practice. ESL students are asked to keep a listening log, diary or journal which summarize the self-selected listening materials and make comments on their listening skills. By repeatedly dictating and imitating authentic English materials like English songs and movies, students will gradually correct their errors and achieve a more native-like pronunciation. Only when the natural pronunciation and all the phonological
rules of incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms become internalized in ESL learners can they gradually catch up with the native speakers’ speech. Through right procedures and strategies, ESL students’ can conquer their English pronunciation barriers of liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms, and their English communicative competence can be greatly improved.
CHAPTER III
THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Brief Description of the Project

This project aims to use right and effective ways to conquer ESL students’ listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. There are four sections in the project of Conquering English Listening Barriers. Each section is divided into pre-listening, during listening and after listening. From Section One to Section Three, ESL teachers have one week to solve one of ESL students’ listening barriers. In the fourth section, ESL teachers solve ESL students listening barriers comprehensively. Every week, ESL teachers will have one lesson lasting for two and a half hours, which has three parts, including pre-listening, during listening and after listening. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students read the materials of the pre-listening parts aloud after the teacher. When ESL students are familiar with the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, they should get ready for the during-listening parts. In the during listening part, ESL students listen to the English songs, stories, movies, phrases and sentences, and complete listening exercises according to the requirements. In the after listening part, ESL students analyze why they can't understand, summarize and find out the reasons. After that, ESL students should read phrases and sentences after ESL teachers aloud, sing the songs after the recording, imitate the actors of the movies aloud, and memorize the pronunciation combination of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After classes, ESL students need to listen to more English songs and movies, finding incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At home, ESL students should dictate English news, finding the reasons why they cannot
understand the movies and the news. Then ESL students need to sing after the songs, read after the movies and the news aloud. Through all of these processes, ESL students can conquer their English listening barriers effectively and efficiently.

In the first lesson “Incomplete Explosion”, the English listening barrier of incomplete explosion is planned to be solved. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers teach the knowledge of incomplete explosion, using the PPT. There are six plosive consonants in English: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/. Incomplete explosion refers to the two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with a plosive consonant, the latter begins with a consonant. The airflow of the former plosive consonant is blocked for a short while, and break through the second consonant. As a result, the sound of the former plosive consonants is omitted. Incomplete explosion is the natural result of rapid speech flow. Incomplete explosion can occur either inside words, such as blackboard, postcard, doctor, or between two adjacent words, such as fast food restaurant, first step, make progress. Then ESL students read the words and phrases which contain incomplete explosions aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the incomplete explosion. In the during-listening part, ESL students listen to the song “Right Here Waiting”, and find the incomplete explosions. Then ESL students listen, write the words and phrases they hear, and complete the sentences, focusing on the incomplete explosions. After that, ESL students listen to the movie “Home Alone,” and write down the words they hear in the blanks, paying attention to the incomplete explosions. In the after listening part, ESL students sing the song “Right Here Waiting” after the recording, read the words, phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion. After that, ESL students read after the actors of the movie “Home Alone” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “Home Alone” in groups, paying attention to the
pronunciation of incomplete explosion. Then ESL students discuss about the pronunciation of incomplete explosion in groups, and find more examples of incomplete explosion. After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find incomplete explosion parts of the song and the movie, and sing after the song and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of the incomplete explosion. At home, ESL students dictate a piece of English news, find the barriers where incomplete explosions exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.

In the second lesson “Liaison,” the English listening barrier of liaison is planned to be solved. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers teach the knowledge of liaison, using the PPT. Generally speaking, liaison refers to two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with consonants, and the latter begins with vowels. The consonant of the first word and the vowel of the second word should be linked together, regarding them as they are in the same syllable. In liaison, syllables are generally not stressed. They just need to pass by naturally. They cannot be pronounced too loudly. Liaison can make a group of words connected and become a series of syllable combinations, which make the internal connection of coherent language closer and the language more fluent. Liaison can be divided into the situations as shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of Liaison</th>
<th>The Method of Liaison</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with a consonant phoneme, and the second word begins with a vowel phoneme.</td>
<td>Spell vowels and consonants together.</td>
<td>stand up, get up, in it good idea, love it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with r or re, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>R or re should pronounce /r/, and spell with the vowel phoneme after it.</td>
<td>far away, for it, bear it, after all, for example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /iː/, /ɪ/, /ɛɪ/, /aɪ/ or /ɔɪ/, and the second word begins with a vowel. Add /j/ between two vowels, and spell with the second vowel.

say it, lie awake, the other, stay up, fly away, the end

There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /uː/, /u/, /əu/ or /au/, and the second word begins with a vowel. Add /w/ between two vowels and spell with the second vowel.

go on, how old, do it, how often, how about, know us

Table 1: Conditions and Methods of Liaison

ESL students read 20 phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the liaison. In the during-listening part, ESL students listen to the song “My Heart Will Go On”, and find the liaisons. Then ESL students listen to ten sentences, and mark the liaisons of the sentences, paying attention to the division of meaning group. After that, ESL students listen to twenty sentences, a humorous story and the movie “Titanic,” and fill in the blanks, paying attention to the liaisons. In the after listening part, ESL students sing the song “My Heart Will Go On” after the recording, read the phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of liaison. After that, ESL students read after the actors of the movie “Titanic” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “Titanic” in groups, paying attention to the pronunciation of liaison. Then ESL students discuss about the pronunciation of liaison in groups, and find more examples of liaison. After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find the liaisons of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of the liaisons. At home, ESL students dictate a piece of English news, find the barriers where liaisons exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.

In the third lesson “Weak Forms,” the English listening barrier of weak forms is planned to be solved. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers teach the knowledge of weak forms, using the PPT. At the same time, let ESL students use the weak forms table of the handouts. ESL
students read the weak forms table aloud three times after the teacher, paying attention to the weak forms. The functional words have two pronunciation forms: the strong form and the weak form. The strong form refers to the pronunciation of functional words which are independent without context. In the context, the functional words are always pronounced in weak forms because they are not stressed in sentences. Weak forms of the functional words are mainly reflected in the weakening of vowels. The faster the speech speed is, the more frequent the phenomenon of weak forms are, which makes the sentences difficult to understand. Therefore, the key to improve English listening comprehension is to master the weak forms of the functional words, which requires a lot of imitation, practice and memory. The following tables show pronunciations of functional words. ESL students read them aloud after the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Property of a Word (Part of Speech)</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>/ju:/</td>
<td>/ju/</td>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>he</td>
<td>/hi:/</td>
<td>/i:/</td>
<td>/i/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>she</td>
<td>/ʃi:/</td>
<td>/ʃi/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>/wi:/</td>
<td>/wi/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>/mi:/</td>
<td>/mi/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>him</td>
<td>/him/</td>
<td>/im/</td>
<td>/əm/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>her</td>
<td>/hɔ:r/</td>
<td>/hɔr/</td>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>us</td>
<td>/ʌs/</td>
<td>/əs/</td>
<td>Read as /s/ in let's.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td>them</td>
<td>/ðɛm/</td>
<td>/ðəm/</td>
<td>/ðm/</td>
<td>/m/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong Form</td>
<td>Weak Form 1</td>
<td>Weak Form 2</td>
<td>Weak Form 3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Table 2: Pronoun Pronunciation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>my</td>
<td>/mai/</td>
<td>/mi/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your</td>
<td>/jo:/</td>
<td>/jo/</td>
<td>/jo/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his</td>
<td>/hiz/</td>
<td>/iz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>myself</td>
<td>/maiˈself/</td>
<td>/maˈself/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yourself</td>
<td>/joˈself/</td>
<td>/joˈself/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>herself</td>
<td>/həˈself/</td>
<td>/həˈself/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>themselves</td>
<td>/ðəmˈselvz/</td>
<td>/ðmˈselvz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 3: Relative Pronoun Pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>/hu:/</td>
<td>/hu/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whom</td>
<td>/huːm/</td>
<td>/hum/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whose</td>
<td>/huːz/</td>
<td>/huz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>/ðæt/</td>
<td>/ðət/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 4: Demonstrative and Indefinite Pronoun Pronunciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative Pronoun</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>/ðæt/</td>
<td>/ðət/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite Pronoun</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>/sʌm/</td>
<td>/som/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Strong Form</td>
<td>Weak Form 1</td>
<td>Weak Form 2</td>
<td>Weak Form 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>/bi:/</td>
<td>/bi/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>am</td>
<td>/æm/</td>
<td>/əm/</td>
<td>/m/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| is   | /iz/       | Read as /s/ after /p/, /t/, /k/, /f/, /v/, /l/.
|       |             | Read as /z/ after vowels or voiced consonants except for /z/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/. |             |
| are  | /aː/       | /ə/         |             |             |
| was  | /wɔz/      | /wəz/       |             |             |
| were | /wər/      |             |             |             |
| been | /biːn/     | /bin/       |             |             |

Table 5: Verb “To Be” Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>/hæv/</td>
<td>/həv/</td>
<td>/ɔv/</td>
<td>Read as /v/ after I, we, you and they.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has</td>
<td>/hæz/</td>
<td>/həz/</td>
<td>/əz/</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td>/hæd/</td>
<td>/həd/</td>
<td>/əd/</td>
<td>Read as /d/ after I, he, she, we, you and they.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall</td>
<td>/ʃæl/</td>
<td>/ʃəl/</td>
<td>/ʃl/</td>
<td>/l/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should</td>
<td>/ʃud/</td>
<td>/ʃəd/</td>
<td>/ʃd/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>/wil/</td>
<td>/wəl/</td>
<td>/əl/</td>
<td>Read as /l/ after pronoun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Strong Form</td>
<td>Weak Form 1</td>
<td>Weak Form 2</td>
<td>Weak Form 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would</td>
<td>/wʊd/</td>
<td>/wəd/</td>
<td>/əd/</td>
<td>Read as /d/ after pronoun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>/kæn/</td>
<td>/kən/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could</td>
<td>/kud/</td>
<td>/kəd/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td>/mʌst</td>
<td>/məst/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>/du:/</td>
<td>/də/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does</td>
<td>/dəz/</td>
<td>/dəz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Auxiliary Verb Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Property of a Word (Part of Speech)</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>/ei/</td>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an</td>
<td>/æn/</td>
<td>/ən/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the</td>
<td>Read as /ði:/ before vowels. Read as /ðə/ before consonants.</td>
<td>/ði/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Article Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Property of a Word (Part of Speech)</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Strong Form</th>
<th>Weak Form 1</th>
<th>Weak Form 2</th>
<th>Weak Form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunction</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>/ænd/</td>
<td>/ənd/</td>
<td>/nəd/</td>
<td>/n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but</td>
<td>/bʌt/</td>
<td>/bət/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td>/ɔr/</td>
<td>/ər/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>than</td>
<td>/ðæn/</td>
<td>/ðən/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conjunction</strong></td>
<td>that</td>
<td>/ðæt/</td>
<td>/ðət/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Continued)</td>
<td>as</td>
<td>/æz/</td>
<td>/əz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>till</td>
<td>/tl/</td>
<td>/tl/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>until</td>
<td>/ənˈtil/</td>
<td>/ənˈtil/</td>
<td>/ntil/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>because</td>
<td>/biˈkəz/</td>
<td>/biˈkəz/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nor</td>
<td>/nɔ:/</td>
<td>/nɔ/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Conjunction Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The Property of a Word</strong></th>
<th><strong>Word</strong></th>
<th><strong>Strong Form</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preposition</strong></td>
<td>at</td>
<td>/æt/</td>
<td>/ət/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of</td>
<td>/ɔv/</td>
<td>/əv/</td>
<td>/v/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for</td>
<td>/fɔ:r/</td>
<td>/fər/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from</td>
<td>/frəm/</td>
<td>/frəm/</td>
<td>/frm/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to</td>
<td>/tu:/</td>
<td>Read as /tə/ before consonants.</td>
<td>Read as /tu/ before /w/, vowels and at the end of sentence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Preposition Pronunciation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>The Property of a Word</strong></th>
<th><strong>Word</strong></th>
<th><strong>Strong Form</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 2</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weak Form 3</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introducer</strong></td>
<td>there</td>
<td>/ðər/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adverb</strong></td>
<td>not</td>
<td>/nɔt/</td>
<td>Read as /nt/ in abbreviated form.</td>
<td>/n/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjective</strong></td>
<td>such</td>
<td>/sʌtʃ/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Introducer, Adverb, and Adjective Pronunciation
After reading the weak forms table aloud after the teacher, ESL students read forty phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the weak forms. In the during-listening part, ESL students listen to the song “Scarborough Fair”, and find the weak forms. Then ESL students listen to forty-eight sentences and the movie “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King”, and write down the words in the blanks, paying attention to the weak forms. In the after listening part, ESL students sing the song “Scarborough Fair” after the recording, read the phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of weak forms. After that, ESL students read after actors of the movie “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King” in groups, paying attention to the pronunciation of weak forms. Then ESL students discuss the pronunciation of weak forms in groups, and find more examples of weak forms. After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find the weak forms of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of weak forms. At home, ESL students dictate a piece of English news, find the barriers where weak forms exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.

In the fourth lesson “Comprehensive Listening”, the English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms are planned to be solved comprehensively. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers review the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students read fifteen sentences aloud after the teacher three times, and find the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. In the during listening part, ESL students listen to the song “Rhythm of the Rain” and twenty sentences, and find liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms. Then ESL students listen to another twenty sentences and the movie “Forrest Gump”, and fill in the blanks, paying attention to liaison, incomplete explosion and weak forms.
of the sentences. In the after listening part, ESL students sing the song “Rhythm of the rain” after the recording, and read the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After that, ESL students read after the actors of the movie “Forrest Gump” aloud three times, and do the role-play of the movie “Forrest Gump” in groups, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students discuss the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in groups, and find more examples. After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At home, ESL students dictate a piece of English news, find the barriers where incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.

**Development of the Project**

It took me four weeks to do the project. At the beginning, I made an overall plan to help ESL students overcome the three major barriers in English listening, namely, incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. I wrote a general introduction to explain the purpose of the project and the role of each section.

In the first week, I planned to help ESL students to conquer the English listening barrier of incomplete explosion. In the pre-listening part, I prepared the knowledge of incomplete explosion and eighteen words and phrases to let ESL students realize their listening barrier of incomplete explosion. In the during listening part, I found the song “Right Here Waiting”, the
movie “Home Alone” and some phrases and sentences for conquering the listening barrier of incomplete explosion. For the song “Right Here Waiting”, I designed the exercise of finding the incomplete explosion and marking them out. For the phrases, the sentences and the movie “Home Alone”, I designed the exercises of listening and filling the incomplete explosions in the blanks to let ESL realize and recognize their listening barrier of incomplete explosion. In the after listening part, I designed some practice activities of singing the song “Right Here Waiting” after the recording, reading the phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, reading after the actors of movie “Home Alone” aloud, doing role-play of the movie “Home Alone” in groups, discussing about the pronunciation of incomplete explosion in groups, finding more examples of incomplete explosion, finding incomplete explosion parts of another song and movie, dictating a piece of English news at home, and focusing on incomplete explosion. Through pre-listening, during listening and after listening processes, the purpose of helping ESL students consolidate and improve their recognition and pronunciation ability of incomplete explosion will be fulfilled. Therefore, ESL students can conquer the English listening barrier of incomplete explosion effectively and efficiently.

In the second week, I planned to help ESL students to conquer the English listening barrier of liaison. In the pre-listening part, I prepared the knowledge of liaison, twenty words and phrases to let ESL students realize their English listening barrier of liaison. In the during listening part, I found the song “My heart will go on”, the movie “Titanic”, a humorous story, some phrases and sentences for conquering the listening barrier of liaison. For the song “My heart will go on”, I designed the exercise of finding the liaisons and mark them out. For the phrases, sentences and the movie “Titanic”, I designed the exercises of listening and filling the liaisons in the blanks to let ESL realize and recognize their listening barrier of liaison. In the
after listening part, I designed some practice activities of singing the song “My heart will go on” after the recording, reading the phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, reading after the actors of movie “Titanic” aloud, doing role-play of the movie “Titanic” in groups, discussing about the pronunciation of incomplete explosion in groups, finding more examples of liaisons, finding liaison parts of another song and movie, dictating a piece of English news at home, and focusing on liaison. Through pre-listening, during listening and after listening processes, the purpose of helping ESL students consolidate and improve their recognition and pronunciation ability of liaison will be fulfilled. Therefore, ESL students can conquer English listening barrier of liaison effectively and efficiently.

In the third week, I planned to help ESL students to conquer the English listening barrier of weak forms. In the pre-listening part, I prepared the knowledge of weak forms, the weak form table, forty phrases and sentences to let ESL students realize their listening barrier of weak forms. In the during listening part, I found the song “Scarborough Fair,” the movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King,” some phrases and sentences for conquering the listening barrier of weak forms. For the song “Scarborough Fair,” I designed the exercise of finding the weak forms and marking them out. For the phrases, sentences and the movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King,” I designed the exercises of listening and filling the weak forms in the blanks to let ESL realize and recognize their English listening barrier of weak forms. In the after listening part, I designed some practice activities of singing the song “Scarborough Fair” after the recording, reading the phrases and sentences aloud after the teacher three times, reading after the actors of movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King” aloud, doing role-play of the movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King” in groups, discussing about the pronunciation of weak forms in groups, finding more examples of weak forms, finding weak
form parts of another song and movie, dictating a piece of English news at home, and focusing on weak forms. Through pre-listening, during listening and after listening processes, the purpose of helping ESL students consolidate and improve their recognition ability and pronunciation of weak forms will be fulfilled. Therefore, ESL students can conquer English listening barrier of weak forms effectively and efficiently.

In the fourth week, I planned to help ESL students to conquer English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms comprehensively. In the pre-listening part, I designed reviewing the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and prepared fifteen sentences to let ESL students read aloud after the teacher and find English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. In the during-listening part, I found the song “Rhythm of the Rain”, the movie “Forrest Gump” and sentences for conquering ESL students’ listening barrier of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. For the song “Rhythm of the Rain”, I designed the exercise of finding the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms and marking them out. For the sentences and the movie “Forrest Gump,” I designed the exercises of listening and filling the incomplete explosions, liaison and weak forms in the blanks to let ESL students realize and recognize their English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. In the after listening part, I designed some practice activities of singing the song “Rhythm of the Rain” after the recording, reading the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, reading after the actors of the movie “Forrest Gump,” doing role-play of the movie “Forrest Gump” in groups, discussing about the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in groups, giving more examples of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, finding incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms parts of another song and movie, dictating a piece of English news at home, and focusing on incomplete
explosion, liaison and weak forms together. Through pre-listening, during listening and after listening processes, the purpose of helping ESL students consolidate and improve their recognition and pronunciation ability of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms comprehensively will be fulfilled. Therefore, ESL students can overcome their English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms effectively and efficiently.

At last, I prepared the PPT for ESL teachers and the handouts for students to use in the classes. To make the project vivid and convincing, I found the YouTube links of the songs and the movies. Furthermore, I found the corresponding pictures of the songs and the movies, so the field project looks more interesting and professional.

The Project

The project in its entirety can be found in the appendix.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The Problems of ESL Students’ English Listening Comprehension

Most of ESL students have some English pronunciation barriers in their listening and speaking, consisting of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words. Because many ESL students are used to speaking English sentences word by word, it is hard for them to understand English sentences spoken in standard way comprising of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Because English news, movies, talk shows, songs are spoken in standard way, it is difficult for ESL students to understand these real English listening materials. Because ESL students can't recognize the pronunciation combination of words in English sentences, they can't understand a lot of English sentences which have the pronunciation combinations of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms when they listen to English news, songs, movies, talk shows, and so on.

I taught English comprehension classes in the Training College of Beijing Foreign Studies University for nine years, so I met a large number of ESL students who had the English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words. It is very difficult for ESL students to understand the real English materials, such as English songs, movies, news and talk shows. Therefore, it is important for them to find correct ways to conquer these English pronunciation barriers to improve their English listening comprehension effectively and efficiently.
The Purpose of the Project

This field project has four aims: 1) to let ESL students realize that they have some barriers in some pronunciation combination of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words in English sentences, 2) to help ESL students find correct ways to conquer English pronunciation barriers in listening and speaking, 3) to make ESL students form correct and standard pronunciation habits of English sentences, and 4) to improve their listening and speaking abilities efficiently. This project is designed to use specific listening practice to conquer ESL students’ English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. In order to arouse ESL students’ interest in English listening, the project helps ESL teachers find appropriate English listening materials for practicing ESL students' intensive and extensive listening comprehension. The project also aims to help ESL students to find effective ways to conquer their English pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words to improve English listening and speaking.

Significance of the Project

Through learning this project, ESL students can realize that they have some pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in English speaking and listening, learn to dictate English sentences to find their barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words in English sentences, imitate the standard pronunciation of English sentences, follow the right ways to conquer the pronunciation barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words, and learn to pronounce English sentences correctly. If ESL students want to make breakthroughs in English listening, they must break through these difficulties and conquer these barriers. The method is to repeat imitating the phonetic materials with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak
forms of functional words until ESL students can speak these standard sentences naturally and fluently, and remember the pronunciation combination clearly. After a period of practice, ESL students can speak English in the correct way, and make improvement in understanding a large number of standard sentences with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words when they listen to English news, movies, songs and talk shows. ESL students also can learn how to freely communicate with others in English. Therefore, they can improve their English listening and speaking competence efficiently.

Because dictation is useful in improving English listening ability, this project emphasizes the importance of dictation to recognize the English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

ESL teachers also benefit from this project. ESL teachers can suggest ESL students to see some English films and recommend them to use some good English website, such as Youtube. English movies and songs are excellent listening materials for ESL students to improve their English speaking and listening ability. ESL teachers can assign some dictation homework for students to do at home. Dictation can be an effective way to improve ELS student's pronunciation distinguishing ability, increasing their vocabulary, enriching their English background knowledge and strengthen their English listening comprehension ability.

The Ways That this Project Accomplishes its Purpose

There are four sections in the project of Conquering English Listening Barriers. Each section is divided into pre-listening, during listening and after listening. From Section One to Section Three, ESL teachers have one week to solve one of ESL students’ listening barriers. In the fourth section, ESL teachers solve ESL students listening barriers comprehensively. Every week, ESL teachers will have one lesson lasting for two and a half hours, which has three parts,
including pre-listening, during listening and after listening. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students read the materials of the pre-listening parts aloud after the teacher. When ESL students are familiar with the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, they should get ready for the during-listening parts. In the during listening part, ESL students listen to the English songs, stories, movies, phrases and sentences, and complete listening exercises according to the requirements. In the after listening part, ESL students discuss, analyze, summarize and find out the reasons why they can't understand real English material, such as English songs, movies and films. The reason is that these real English materials have lots of pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and ESL students have English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students can understand why English speakers can speak so fast in some situations, and imitate the singers in the songs and actors in the movies very well after learning this project. After that, ESL students should read phrases and sentences after ESL teachers aloud, sing the songs after the recording, imitate the actors of the movies aloud, and memorize the pronunciation combination of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After classes, ESL students need to listen to more English songs and movies, finding incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At home, ESL students should dictate English news, finding the reasons why they cannot understand the movies and the news. Because dictation is useful in improving English listening ability, so it is important to do dictation after listening, ESL teachers can assign some dictation homework for students to do at home. Dictation can be an effective way to improve ELS student's pronunciation distinguishing ability, increasing their vocabulary, enriching their English background knowledge and strengthen their English listening comprehension ability.
After dictation, ESL students need to sing after the songs, read after the movies and the news aloud, consolidating what they have learned in classes. Through all of these processes, ESL students can conquer their English listening barriers effectively and efficiently.

After using the handbook created for this project, ESL students can use this pronunciation knowledge correctly in English sentences, speak English sentences more confidently, and better imitate the combination pronunciation of words which have the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms of functional words. This skill practice will help ESL students remember correct pronunciation and understand real English listening materials, such as English news, movies, songs, and talk shows. This project is designed to make ESL students realize their pronunciation problems by dictating English sentences, and correct their pronunciation problems by imitating standard English sentences so that they can eventually understand English standard sentences with the combined pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms of functional words.

The project will give ESL teachers helpful strategies to teach English listening and speaking as a second language accurately, to improve ESL students’ abilities of acquiring English listening and speaking efficiently, and to use advanced techniques to reinforce the development of ESL students’ English listening and speaking skills effectively. At the same time, the project assists ESL teachers to evaluate ESL students' listening ability, and find appropriate English listening materials, correct English listening procedures and strategies to improve ESL students' listening abilities.
Final Thoughts

ESL students need to spend a lot of time in practicing the similar listening exercises. Students should read the listening materials aloud and summarize the reasons why they can't understand the listening materials after listening. Students should use these phonetic knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms to recognize more pronunciation combinations of English sentences, listen to more English songs, sing after the singer of the songs, dictate more English movies and news, find out the parts that cannot be dictated, analyze their own listening weaknesses, do more follow-up reading aloud and imitation, recognize incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms and other pronunciation phenomena in English songs, movies, news and so on. Through these English listening and imitation processes, ESL students can solve English listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms effectively. At the same time, ESL teachers can add the pronunciation knowledge of phonetic assimilation, sentence stress, tone and intonation to help ESL students have a comprehensive understanding of English sentence pronunciation. If ESL students want to overcome more phonetic and listening barriers, they should be familiar with the rules of English sentence pronunciation and do a lot of listening practice. In the listening practice, ESL students can combine intensive listening with extensive listening. At the beginning of English listening practice, ESL students should focus on intensive listening to conquer their listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, analyze the reasons why they can't understand, and read after the standard English listening materials aloud. When ESL students have mastered the basic pronunciation knowledge, they can do some extensive listening exercises to recognize more English sentences with pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After hard work in English listening practice and imitation, ESL students can improve their English listening and speaking ability effectively.
I taught the course of “Conquering English listening Barriers” at Beijing Foreign Studies University for nine years. The course “Conquering English listening barriers” had been studied by a large number of ESL students. After learning this course, ESL students’ listening and speaking ability has been improved significantly. Many students can sing English songs very well, just like the singers. The reason that ESL students cannot keep up with the singer's speed before class because they do not the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After learning and consolidate the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, they can sing English songs as fast as the singers. When reading English movie dialogues aloud after the actors, ESL students can remember the pronunciation combination of English words in sentences, improve the speech recognition ability of English Listening, and speak as well as the actors after imitation. Therefore, this project can improve ESL students' English listening and speaking ability greatly after the instruction and consolidation of English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms by using related English phrases, sentences, songs, movies and news. Because ESL students are interested in English songs and movies, they have enthusiasm to listen to more English songs and movies, and imitate the singers and actors. The students were very thankful to my instruction and said that if they had learned the lessons “Conquering English listening Barriers” earlier, they would not have taken such a detour in English listening and speaking for so many years. Therefore, it is crucial that ESL students can be taught English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms as early as possible to form a good habit at the beginning of English learning.
Recommendations

There are some recommendations for ESL teachers, ESL students, ESL textbook writers, and the course “Conquering English Listening Barriers” to conquer ESL students’ English listening barriers effectively and appropriately.

1. For ESL teachers:

The project has four sections, including incomplete explosion, liaison, weak forms and comprehensive listening. Each section has pre-listening, during listening and after listening. In pre-listening part, ESL teachers should instruct the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms to let ESL students understand and be familiar with their pronunciation barriers and the related knowledge. After ESL teachers have taught the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, they should lead the students to read English sentences with the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms at least three times, and let students have good preparation for the during-listening part. In during listening, ESL teachers play the audio, let ESL students listen and use the handouts to complete the relevant exercises as required. After comparing answers, ESL teachers let ESL students listen to the audio again, and help ESL students realize their own barriers in English listening. In the after-listening part, ESL teachers ask ESL students analyze, summarize and find out the reasons why they can't understand, and help ESL students consolidate the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms by requiring ESL students to sing English songs after the singers, read phrases and sentences aloud after ESL teachers, imitate movie dialogues after the film actors aloud, and do some role-play according to
the movies. Because ESL students have a lot of interest in English movies and songs which are authentic English listening materials, ESL teachers ought to ask ESL students to use more songs and movies and guide them to recognize the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in the songs and movies. ESL teachers should assign homework for ESL students to do at home, such as listening to another songs, dictating another movies and news, finding incomplete explosion, liaison, and weak forms of the songs and the movies, singing the songs after the singers, reading dialogues after the movie actors aloud, and focusing on the pronunciation phenomena of the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Some ESL teachers can be trained to teach ESL students the correct ways to speak standard English and understand real English materials, such as English songs, movies, news and so on.

2. For ESL students:

   In classes, ESL students should learn the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, read phrases and sentences after ESL teachers aloud, sing the songs after the recording, imitate the movie actors aloud, and memorize the pronunciation combination of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After listening, ESL students sing English songs after the singers, read phrases and sentences aloud after ESL teachers, read dialogues after the movies actors aloud, especially paying attention to the words which should be filled in the blanks, because these words have the pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and ESL students have difficulties in pronunciation and listening of these words combinations. ESL students can recognize and memorize the pronunciation combination of these words in English sentences after reading them aloud several times. After classes, ESL students need to listen to more English songs and movies, and find incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At home, ESL students should dictate English
movies and news, and find the reasons why they cannot understand the movies and the news. Then ESL students need to sing after the songs, read after the movies and the news aloud. Through all of these processes, ESL students can conquer their English listening barriers effectively and efficiently. ESL students need to remember and review the pronunciation combination of the words with pronunciation phenomena of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After doing more dictation and imitation, ESL students can realize their English listening barriers, and conquer these barriers by singing after the songs and reading after the actors of the movies or announcers of the news. ESL students need to do more exercises on these barriers according to their own weakness. Through accomplishing many dictation and imitation, ESL students can consolidate and memorize English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, and conquering English listening barriers successfully.

3. For ESL textbook writers:

Some ESL English teaching textbooks should be reformed to emphasize English pronunciation instruction of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. ESL textbooks should include the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms to avoid ESL students to read English sentences word by word, strengthen ESL students’ ability to speak and understand standard English like English native speakers at the beginning of English learning. Therefore, English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms can be instructed at the beginning of English studying so that more ESL students can form correct English listening and speaking habit since childhood, just like English native speakers. In my opinion, children's listening and speaking imitation ability is naturally stronger than adults, so children can learn and master English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms better than adults. Because children can learn standard English listening
and speaking well unconsciously, and benefit for the whole life if they can learn English pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. I suggest textbook writers to develop a series of children's English listening and speaking books in the future to guide children to listen and speak English sentences like English native speakers, so that they can speak and understand the standard English naturally, and lay a solid foundation for the future English study at the stage of the enlightenment education.

4. For the course “Conquering English Listening Barriers”:

   The English listening class “Conquering English Listening Barriers” can be combined with an oral English class. In the oral English class, ESL students can discuss the English background knowledge which is needed in the English listening class to enhance ESL students' English background knowledge. ESL students can also practice what they have learned in English listening class so as to consolidate the pronunciation knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Therefore, ESL students’ English listening and speaking level can be improved effectively.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX 1

The Field Project
Conquering English Listening Barriers

Dan Wu

University of San Francisco
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Introduction

This project aims to use accurate and effective ways to conquer ESL students’ listening barriers of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. There are four sections in the project of Conquering English Listening Barriers. Each section is divided into pre-listening, during listening and after listening. From Section One to Section Three, ESL teachers have one week to address one of ESL students’ listening barriers. In the fourth section, ESL teachers solve ESL students listening barriers comprehensively. Every week, ESL teachers will have one lesson lasting for two and a half hours, which has three parts, including pre-listening, during listening and after listening. In the pre-listening part, ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Then ESL students read the materials of the pre-listening parts aloud after the teacher. When ESL students are familiar with the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms, they should get ready for the during listening parts. In the during listening part, ESL students listen to the English songs, stories, movies, phrases and sentences, and complete listening exercises according to the requirements. In the after listening
part, ESL students analyze why they can't understand, summarize and find out the reasons. After that, ESL students should read phrases and sentences after ESL teachers aloud, sing the songs after the recording, imitate the actors of the movies aloud, and memorize the pronunciation combination of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. After classes, ESL students need to listen to more English songs and movies, finding incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. At home, ESL students should dictate English news, finding the reasons why they cannot understand the movies and the news. Then ESL students need to sing after the songs, read after the movies and the news aloud. Through all of these processes, ESL students can conquer their English listening barriers effectively and efficiently.

Week 1  Incomplete explosion

I. Pre-listening

A: ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of incomplete explosion, using the PPT of Conquering English Listening Barriers.

There are six plosive consonants in English:/p/, / b/, / t/, / d/, / k/, and / g/. The pronunciation process of plosive consonants is divided into three steps: 1. The airflow channel is blocked when the pronunciation organ is in the correct pronunciation position, that is to say, it is blocked. 2. The blocked airflow makes a very short pause to hold back. 3. Air flow breaks through obstacles and produces explosive sound to remove obstruction. Incomplete explosion refers to the two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with a plosive consonant, the latter begins with a consonant. The airflow of the former plosive consonant is blocked for a short while, and break through the second consonant. As a result, the sound of the former plosive consonants is omitted. Incomplete explosion is the natural result of rapid speech flow.
Incomplete explosion can occur either inside words, such as blackboard, postcard, doctor, or between two adjacent words, such as fast food restaurant, first step, make progress.

B: ESL students read the following words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the incomplete explosions. The incomplete explosions are indicated in brackets.

1. pos(t)card  2. ne (g)lect  3. a(c)tually  4. a(d)vance  5. u(p)most

6. ele(c)tronic  7. ca(p)tain  8.su(c)cess  9.brea(k) down  10. bi(g) change

11. goo(d) morning  12. grea(t) hall  13. grea(t) hall  14. a(t) least

15. wor(k) hard  16. re(d) nose  17. hel(p) me  18. firs(t) step

II. During listening

A: ESL students listen to the song “Right Here Waiting”, and find the incomplete explosions. The incomplete explosions are indicated in brackets.

YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYAPwIjT-uk
Right Here Waiting

Oceans apart day after day
And I slowly go insane
I hear your voice on the line
But i(t) doesn’t sto(p) the pain
If I see you nex(t) to never
How can we say forever
Wherever you go
Whatever you do
I will be righ(t) here waiting for you
Whatever it takes
Or how my hear(t) breaks
I will be righ(t) here waiting for you
I too(k) for granted, all the times
That I thought(d) las(t) somehow
I hear the laughter, I tas(te) the tears
But I can’(t) ge(t) near you now
Oh, can’t you see it baby
You’ve go(t) me goin’ crazy
Wherever you go
Whatever you do
I will be righ(t) here waiting for you
Whatever it takes
Or how my hear(t) breaks
I will be righ(t) here waiting for you
I wonder how we can survive
This romance
But in the end if I’m with you
I’ll ta(ke) the chance

B: ESL students listen and write the words and phrases they hear, paying attention to the incomplete explosions.

1. ______________ 2. ______________ 3. ______________ 4. ______________ 5. ______________
6. ______________ 7. ______________ 8. ______________ 9. ______________ 10. ______________
11. ______________ 12. ______________ 13. ______________ 14. ______________
15._____________ 16._____________ 17._____________ 18._____________
19._____________ 20._____________

Answers:


C: ESL students listen and complete the following sentences, focusing on the incomplete explosions.

1. _____________ will not be forgotten.

2. A liar needs a _____________.

3. Traveling is _____________ with men of other countries.

4. A _____________ is never welcome.

5. A nod is as good as a wink to a _____________.

6. Hope is a _____________, but it is a_____________.

7. The _____________ is the one you run for and _____________.

8. It is the _____________ that is difficult.

9. Laughter, the _____________.

10. All that glitters is _____________.

11. Better be alone than in _____________.
12. England has _____________ by her exertion, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.

13. First impressions are _____________.

14. _____________ wears the stone.

15. _____________ a _____________ to make a _____________.

16. In this world nothing can be said to be certain, _____________ and taxes.

17. The _____________ breaks the camel’s back.

18. The house _____________ is like a room without windows.

19. _____________ would never come in pairs.

20. _____________ before a fall.

Answers:


14. Constant dropping  15. It takes; great man; good listener  16. except death

17. last straw  18. without books  19. Good luck  20. Pride comes

D: ESL students listen to the movie “Home Alone”, paying attention to the incomplete explosions, and fill in the blanks.
Scene 1:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IT7-T-pqCCs&list=PLOdvjOWq-SGctFF_bAyFjCBIt9GTDg8tg&index=36

Scene 2:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j65k0BbebGQ

Scene 1

Buzz: _____1______, you little trout –sniffer.

Kevin: I’m _____2_____. I did what I did because Buzz _____3_____. And since he gets away with everything, I will _____4_______ have it. Since you are so stupid to believe his lies… I don’t care whether the idiotic Florida trip is wrecked or not. Who wants to _____5_______ in a tropical climate anyway?

Mom: Kevin!
Dad: Kevin, you walk out of here, you sleep on the ______ 6 _______.

Fuller: Yeah, with me.

Kevin: So what else is new?

Uncle Frank: You’d better ______7_______ my trip, you little sour puss! You dad’s paying ______8_______ for it.

Kevin: Oh, I ______9_______ to spoil your fun, Mr Cheapskate.

Buzz: What a ______10_______ young man.

Scene 2

Kevin: They are all a bunch of jerks.

Mom: Hi! You know, Kevin, _____11________ we all _____12_______ take a trip, we had a problem__________13_____________.

Kevin: Yeah, with me getting crapped on.

Mom: I _____14_______ for your choice of words. That’s ___________15_____________ and not what’s happening this time. Buzz ______16_______ to you.

Kevin: Yeah, then he _____17_______ a trout-sniffer. He ________18________________ said. He was _____19_______ up to you.

Mom: Ok, why don’t you _____20_______ up her for a while _____21_______ over? When you’re ready to apologize to Buzz and to the rest of the family, you can come down.

Kevin: I’m not apologizing to Buzz! I’d rather kiss a ______22_______!
Mom: Then you ______23_______ up here the rest of the night.

Kevin: Fine, I _____24_______ go down anyway! I _____25_______ anybody in this family. And you know what? If I _____26_______ own money, I’d go on my own vacation. Alone, without any of you guys. And I’d have the _____27_______ of my whole life.

Mom: Well, you _____28_______ wish ______29_______. Maybe you’ll get it again this year.

Kevin: I _____30_______.

Answers:


III. After listening

A: ESL students sing the song “Right Here Waiting” after the recording.

B: ESL students read the words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion.

C: ESL students read the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion.

D: ESL students read after the movie “Home Alone” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “Home Alone” in groups. Pay attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion.
E: ESL students discuss about the pronunciation of incomplete explosion in groups, and find more examples of incomplete explosion.

F: After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find incomplete explosion parts of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of the incomplete explosion.

G: ESL students dictate a piece of English news at home, find the barriers where incomplete explosions exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.

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**Week 2  Liaison**

**I. Pre-listening**

A: ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of liaison, using the PPT.

Generally speaking, it refers to two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with consonants, and the latter begins with vowels. The consonant of the first word and the vowel of the second word should be linked together, regarding them as they are in the same syllable. In liaison, syllables are generally not stressed. They just need to pass by naturally. They cannot be pronounced too heavily. Liaison can make a group of words connected and become a series of syllable combinations, which make the internal connection of coherent language closer and the language more fluent.

Liaison can be divided into the following situations:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions of liaison</th>
<th>The method of liaison</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with a consonant phoneme, and the second word begins with a vowel phoneme.</td>
<td>Spell vowels and consonants together.</td>
<td>stand up, get up, in it, good idea, love it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with r or re, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>R or re should pronounce /r/, and spell with the vowel phoneme after it.</td>
<td>far away, for it, bear it, after all, for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /i/, /iː/, /eɪ/, /aɪ/ or /ɔɪ/, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>Add /j/ between two vowels, and spell with the second vowel.</td>
<td>say it, lie awake, the other, stay up, fly away, the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /uː/, /u/, /ɔu/ or /au/, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>Add /w/ between two vowels and spell with the second vowel.</td>
<td>go on, how old, do it, how often, how about, know us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B: ESL students read the following words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the liaison. Liaisons are represented by the connected symbols.

1. first_of_all 2. work_it_out 3. put_it_off 4. get_out 5. post_office
6. keep_on 7. in_an_instant 8. there_are 9. after_all 10. better_off
11. for_example 12. do_it 13. see_off 14. here_and_there 15. the_other
16. too_often 17. try_on 18. stay_up 19. how_old 20. how_often

II. During listening

A: ESL students listen to the song “My Heart Will Go On”, and find the liaisons. Liaisons are represented by the connected symbols.

YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9eZv2l-q6Y
My Heart Will Go On

Every night in my dreams
I see you, I feel you
That is how I know you go on

Far across the distance
And spaces between us
You have come to show you go on

Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on
Once more you open the door
And you're here in my heart
And my heart will go on and on

Love can touch us one time
And last for a lifetime
And never let go 'til we're gone
Love was when I loved you
One true time I'd hold you
In my life we'll always go on

Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on
Once more you open the door
And you're here in my heart
And my heart will go on and on

You're here, there's nothing I fear
And I know that my heart will go on
We'll stay forever this way
You are safe in my heart and
My heart will go on and on

B: ESL students listen to the tape, mark the liaisons of the sentences, paying attention to the division of meaning group.

1. The great Difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas.

2. Like is like an onion: You peel it off one layer at a time, and sometimes you weep.

3. As long as I am alive, I shall go on studying.

4. The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer others.

5. Have an aim in life, or your energies will all be wasted.
6. A good surgeon must have an eagle’s eye, a lion’s heart, and a lady’s hand.

7. The past is not a package one can lay away.

8. In prosperity, our friends know us, in adversity we know our friends.

9. Like all other science, mathematics arose out of the needs of men.

10. Life without an aim is like sailing without a compass.

C: ESL students listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to the liaisons.

1. Have you ever _____________ in the Campus Daily?

2. Television _____________ too much of our time.

3. A book should teach us to enjoy it or to _____________.

4. But it wasn’t the life that she had _____________.

5. Necessity is the _____________.

6. Our hair _____________.

7. It is better to _____________ your feet than to _____________ your knees.

8. I want to _____________.

9. A friend in need _____________.

10. Preachers say, “ _____________ I say, not as I do.”

11. Where there is a will, __________________________.
12. Good friends should __________________________.

13. An apple a day __________________________.

14. I’m usually __________________________.

15. __________________________, and he’ll take an ell.

16. Let me __________________________.

17. __________________________ will be considered.

18. Rome wasn’t __________________________.

19. Everybody is ignorant, _____________ different subjects.

20. Poverty is the __________________________.

Answers:

1. placed an ad  2. takes up  3. endure it  4. dreamed of as a teenager

5. mother of invention  6. stands on end  7. die on; live on  8. be alone

9. is a friend indeed  10. do as  11. there is a way  12. share everything

12. Keeps the doctor away  14. worn out at the end of the day

15. Give him an inch  16. see it right away  17. No other options

17. built in a day  19. only on  20. mother of all arts

D: ESL students listen to the humorous story and fill in the blanks, paying attention to the liaisons.
A man was telling ______1_______ his friends the _____2_______ his contended married life. “My wife makes all the small decisions,” he explained, “and I ______3_______ the big ones, so we never interfere in ______4_______ and never ______5_______ with each other. We have no complaints and no arguments.” “That sounds reasonable,” answered his friends. “And what ______6_______ does your wife make?”

“Well,” answered the man, “she decides what jobs I apply for, what sort of house we ______7_______, what furniture we have, where we go ______8_______, and things like that.”

His friends was surprised. “Oh?” he said. “And what do you consider important decisions then?”

“Well,” answered the man, “I consider who should be Prime Minister, whether we should ______9_______ to poor countries, what we should ______10_______ the atom bomb, and things like that.”

Answers:

1. one of 2. secret of 3. make all 4. each other’s business 5. get annoyed
6. sort of decisions 7. live in 8. for our holidays 9. increase our help
10. do about

E: ESL students listen to the movie “Titanic” and fill in the blanks, paying attention to the liaisons.
YouTube link:

Part 1:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kvi.FCnbEA&list=PLvu8rDA5nGF1RXxi-p6CgWOee-9qBQOr6&index=20

Part 2:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cPVhxYkxs4&list=PLvu8rDA5nGF1RXxi-p6CgWOee-9qBQOr6&index=21

Part 3:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wlxlbOQTt4&list=PLvu8rDA5nGF1RXxi-p6CgWOee-9qBQOr6&index=22

Part 1

Jack: Don’t ______1______!

Rose: Stay back. Don’t come any closer.
Jack: Come on, just give me your hand. I’ll pull you back over.

Rose: No, stay where you are. I ______2_____. I’ll let go.

Part 2

Jack: No, you won’t.

Rose: What do you mean “No, I won’t?” Don’t presume to tell me _____3_____ will or won’t do. You don’t know me.

Jack: Well, you would have _____4_____ already.

Rose: You are distracting me. _____5_____.

Jack: I can’t. I’m involved now. You let go and I’m. I’ll have to _____6_____ there after you.

Rose: Don’t _____7______. You’ll be killed.

Jack: _____8_____ good swimmer.

Rose: The fall alone will kill you.

Jack: It would hurt, not saying it wouldn’t. Tell you the truth, I’m a lot more _____9_____ the water being so cold.

Rose: How cold?

Jack: Freezing. Maybe a couple degrees over. You’ve ever been to Wisconsin?

Rose: What?
Jack: They have ______10_______ the coldest winters around. I ______11_______ there in the
Chippewa Falls. Remember when I ______12_______ kid, me and my father, who went ice-
fishing out on Lake Minnesota. Ice-fishing as you know is where you...

Rose: I know ______13_______ is.

Jack: Sorry, you just seem like, you know, ______14_______ indoor girl. Anyway, I fell through
some thin ice, and I’m telling you water that cool, like right down there. It hits you
______15_______ thousand knives stabbing you ______16______ your body. You can’t
breathe, you can’t think, at least ______17_______ but the pain, which is why I’m not looking
forward to jumping in there after you. ______18_______ said, I don’t ______19_______ choice.
I guess I’m ______20_______ hoping you’ll come back over the rail and get ______21_______
the hook there.

Rose: You’re crazy.

Jack: That’s what everybody says, but, with all due respect, Miss, I’m not the one handing off
the ______22_______ the ship here. ______23_______ Give me your hand.

Part 3

Jack: You don’t want to ______24_______ . Well, I’m Jack Dawson.

Rose: Rose Rebeck Hill.

Jack: I’ll have to get you to write ______25_______ down. Come on, come on.

Rose: Oh, please, please help me.

Jack: Listen, listen to me. I’ve got you. I won’t let go. Now pull ______26_______ ! Come on,
come on, Try, you can do it. I’ve got you.
Answers:

1. do it  2. mean it  3. What I  4. done it  5. Go away  6. jump in  7. be absurd  8. I’m a  9. concerned about  10. some of  11. grew up  12. was a
13. what ice-fishing  14. kind of  15. like a  16. all over  17. not about
18. Like I  19. have a  20. kind of  21. me off  22. back of  23. Come on
24. do it  25. that one  26. yourself up

III. After listening

A: ESL students sing the song “My Heart Will Go On” after the recording.

B: ESL students read the words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of liaison.

C: ESL students read the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of liaison.

D: ESL students read after the movie “Titanic” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “Titanic” in groups. Pay attention to the pronunciation of liaison.

E: ESL students discuss about the pronunciation of liaison in groups, and find more examples of liaison.

F: After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find the liaisons of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of the liaisons.
G: ESL students dictate a piece of English news at home, find the barriers where liaisons exist,  
and then read after the news aloud three times.

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Week 3. Weak Forms

I. Pre-listening

A: ESL teachers instruct the knowledge of weak forms, using the PPT. At the same time, let ESL  
students use the weak forms table of the handouts. ESL students read the weak forms table aloud  
three times after ESL teachers, paying attention to the weak forms.
The functional words have two pronunciation forms: the strong form and the weak form. The strong form refers to the pronunciation of functional words which are independent without context. In the context, the functional words are always pronounced in weak forms because they are not stressed in sentences. Weak forms of the functional words are mainly reflected in the weakening of vowels. The faster the speech speed is, the more frequent the phenomenon of weak forms are, which makes the sentences difficult to understand. Therefore, the key to improve English listening comprehension is to master the weak forms of the functional words, which requires a lot of imitation, practice and memory.

Here are the weak pronunciations of the functional words. ESL students read them aloud after the teacher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the property of a word</th>
<th>word</th>
<th>strong form</th>
<th>weak form 1</th>
<th>weak form 2</th>
<th>weak form 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pronoun</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>/ju:/</td>
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<td>Demonstrative Pronoun</td>
<td>Indefinite Pronoun</td>
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<td>Read as /s/ in let's.</td>
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Read as /s/ after /p/, /t/, /k/, /f/. Read as /z/ after vowels or voiced consonants except for /z/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/.
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<tr>
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<td>shall</td>
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|         | the  | Read as /ði:/ before vowels.  
Read as /ðə/ before consonants. |
| conjunction | and | /ænd/ | /ənd/ | /nd/ | /n/ |
|         | but  | /bʌt/ | /bət/ |
|         | or   | /ɔːr/ | /ər/ |
|         | than | /ðæn/ | /ðən/ |
|         | that | /ðæt/ | /ðət/ |
|         | as   | /æz/ | /əz/ |
|         | till | /til/ | /tl/ |
|         | until | /ʌnˈtil/ | /ənˈtil/ | /ntil/ |
|         | because | /biˈkəz/ | /biˈkæz/ |
|         | nor  | /nɔː/ | /nə/ |
B: ESL students read the following words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the weak forms. Weak forms are in italics.
1. black and blue

2. as clear as day

3. Hot or cold

4. Seven or eight

5. The more, the better.

6. The others

7. A lot of money

8. Have an apple

9. I come from China.


11. I can do it for myself.

12. What do you want for a present?

13. The day that I arrived.

14. She has been out.

15. I heard him sing.

16. I like his tie.

17. I saw her yesterday.
18. *She* opened *her* eyes.

19. *She* asked *as the* way.

20. Let’s go home.

21. Pass me *the* salt.

22. *We* gave *them* some food.

23. *We could* finish it tomorrow.

24. It *should be* fine tomorrow.

25. *We must* obey orders.

26. What *can* I do?

27. *The* windows *are* clean.

28. *We were* happy.

29. *The* students *have* left.

30. I *have* done it.

31. *To die or not to die?*

32. I want *to ask you.*

33. *The man had* left.

34. They’d *left home.*
35. How do they know?

36. When does the plane arrive?

37. Don’t be silly.

38. It will rain.

39. There is a cinema in the corner.

40. It does not matter.

II. During listening

A: ESL students listen to the song “Scarborough Fair”, and find the weak forms. Weak forms are in italics.

YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMZd2KGrbBI
Scarborough Fair

*Are you* going to Scarborough Fair?

Parsley, sage, rosemary *and* thyme

Remember me *to* one who lives there

She *was* once *a* true love *of* mine

Tell her *to* make *me* a cambric shirt

Parsley, sage, rosemary *and* thyme

Without no seams *nor* needle work

*Then she'll be* a true love *of* mine

Tell her *to* find *me* an acre *of* land

Parsley, sage, rosemary *and* thyme

Between *the* sea water *and* the sea strands

*Then she'll be* a true love *of* mine

Tell her *to* reap it with *a* sickle *of* leather

Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
And gather it all in a bunch of heather

Then she'll be a true love of mine

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?

Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme

Remember me to one who lives there

She was once a true love of mine

B: ESL students listen and write down the words they hear, paying attention to the pronunciation of these weak forms.

1. ___________ tired.

2. ___________ my brother.

3. ___________ friends.

4. ___________ been there.

5. ___________ been ill.

6. ___________ explained it to you.

7. ___________ go by train.

8. ___________ be late.

9. ___________ love to.

10. ___________ hand it in on time.

11. ___________ pretty.
12. ___________ enemies.

13. ___________ friendly.

14. ___________ happy.

15. ___________ do housework.

16. ___________ like apples.

17. ___________ catch the rain.

18. ___________ done it.

19. ___________ finished it.

20. ___________ left.

21. ___________ be so lazy.

22. ___________ go swimming.

23. ___________ rely on him.

24. ___________ listen.

25. ___________ draw.


27. ___________ rain.

28. ___________ tell a lie.
Answers:

1. I’m
2. He’s
3. We’re
4. I’ve
5. He’s
6. I’d
7. I’ll
8. You’ll
9. I’d
10. He’d
11. She isn’t
12. They aren’t
13. He wasn’t
14. You weren’t
15. I don’t
16. She doesn’t
17. He didn’t
18. I haven’t
19. He hasn’t
21. We hadn’t
21. I shan’t
22. I won’t
23. I shouldn’t
24. He wouldn’t
24. I can’t
26. I couldn’t
27. It mayn’t
28. You mustn’t

C: ESL students listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to the weak forms.

1. Life has a value only when it has something valuable _____________.
2. He that has _____________ is dead to the world.
3. The heart of the fool is in his mouth, but the _____________ in his heart.
4. The man who has made up his mind _____________ will never say “impossible”.
5. Money will buy a pretty dog, but it _____________ the wag of his tail.
6. _____________ ways to persuade others is with your ears by listening to them.
7. _____________ the stepping stones to human progress.
8. He _____________ praises everybody praises nobody.
9. Facts do not cease to exist _____________ they are ignored.
10. Gifts _____________ are dangerous.
11. Living dog is _____________ a dead lion.
12. The more a man knows, the more he _____________ ignorance.

13. I won’t come back _____________ ten.

14. Victory _____________ to me unless I go to it.

15. One father _____________ ten children; ten children _____________ one father.

16. I only _____________ I have but one life to lose for my country.

17. Love is ever the _____________ as fire is of light.

18. The lion is not so _____________ he is painted.

19. _____________ wait for no man.

20. I am a slow walker, _____________ I never walk backwards.

Answers:

1. as its object  2. lost his credit  3. mouth of the wise  4. to win  5. won’t buy

5. One of the best  7. Books are  8. who  9. just because  10. from enemies

19. better than  12. discovers his  13. till  14. won’t come  15. can support; cannot support  16. regret that  17. beginning of knowledge  18. fierce as

20. Time and tide  20. but

D: ESL students listen to the movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King”, and write down the words in the blanks, paying attention to the weak forms.

“The Sound of Music” YouTube link:
The Sound of Music

Captain: Now, this is your new governess, Fraulein Maria. ______1______ sound your signals, you will step forward and give your name. You, Fraulein, listen Carefully. Learn their signals so you ______2______ call them when you want them.

Liesel: Liesl.
Friedrich: Friedrich.
Louisa: Louisa.
Kurt: Kurt.
Brigitta: Brigitta.
Marta: Marta.

Captain: And Giret. Now, ______3______ see how well you listened.
Maria: I ______4_______ need to whistle _______5______, Reverend Captain. I mean.
_______6______ use their names. Such lovely names,

Captain: Fraulein, this is a large house. The grounds are extensive. ______7_______ have
anyone shouting. You will take this, please learn _______8_______ use it. The children will help
you. Now, when I want you this is what you will hear.

Maria: Oh, no. sir. I'm sorry, sir, I ______9_______ never answer to whistle. Whistles
______10_______ dogs and cats and other animals ______11_______ children and definitely for
me. It ______12_______ too humiliating.

Captain: Fraulein, _______13______ this much trouble _______14_______ abbey ?

Maria: Oh, much more, sir.

Captain: Hmm.

( Captain blew the whistle again )

Maria: I ______15_______ know your signal.

Captain: You ______16_______ call me "captain".

Answers:

1. As I  2. can  3. let's  4. won't  5. for them  6. I'll  7. And I will not  8. to  9. could  10. are for
11. but not  12. would be  13. were you  14. at the
16. don't  16. may

“The Lion King” YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MuYrfqiEMZc&list=PLzxAkZTbPNp0WhsNL8HFZI0m1E
FncUWUv&index=3
Mufasa, the lion king is telling Simba, his son, an important rule of life.

Mufasa: Look, Simba, everything 1 light touches is our kingdom.

Simba: Wow!

Mufasa: A king's time is ruler rises and falls like the sun. One day, Simba, the sun will set on my time here 2 rise with you 3 new king.

Simba: And will this all 4?

Mufasa: Everything!

Simba: Everything the light touches! What 5 shadowy place?

Mufasa: That's beyond our borders, you 6 never go there, Simba.

Simba: 7 thought a king can do whatever he wants.

Mufasa: Oh, there's more to being a king 8 getting your way all the time.
Simba: ______ 9 ______ more ?

Mufasa: Simba, everything you see exists together in a delicate balance. ______10______ king, you need to understand that balance and respect all the creatures ______11______ crawling ant ______12______ leaping antelope.

Simba: _______13______ dad, _______14______ eat the antelope ?

Mutasa: Yes, Simba. But let _______15______ explain. When we die, our bodies become the grass _______16______ antelopes eat the grass, and so we are all connected in the great circle _______17______ life.

Answers:
1. the  2. and will  3. as the  4. be mine  5. about that  6. must  7. But I
8. than  9. There's  10. As a 11. from the  12. to the  13. But  14. don't we
15. me  16. and the  17. of

III. After listening

A: ESL students sing the song “Scarborough Fair” after the recording, focusing on the weak forms.

B: ESL students read the words and phrases aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the weak forms.

C: ESL students read the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of weak forms.

D: ESL students read after the movie “Bodyguard” aloud three times, and do role-play of the movie “Bodyguard” in groups. Pay attention to the pronunciation of weak forms.
E: ESL students discuss the pronunciation of weak forms in groups, and find more examples of weak forms.

F: After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find the weak forms of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of weak forms.

G: ESL students dictate a piece of English news at home, find the barriers where weak forms exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.
Week 4: Comprehensive Listening

I. Pre-listening

A: ESL teachers review the knowledge of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

B: ESL students read the following sentences aloud after the teacher three times, and find the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

1. It is my great honor to present this gift to you on behalf of the company.

2. You wouldn’t believe it if I told you that I can run like the wind blows.

3. There is one small step for a man, a giant leap for mankind.

4. I am not the one hanging of the back of a ship here.

5. I would like a cup of tea, a drink of jam and bread.

6. Jenny and I was like peas and carrots.

7. I fit in the army like one of them round pegs.

8. The first rule of Fight Club is: You do not talk about Fight Club.

9. I'm going to make him an offer he can’t refuse.
10. Hope is a good thing and maybe the best of things.

11. It takes a strong man to save himself, and a great man to save another.

12. There is a plan to make all of this right.

13. I could eat about a million and a half of these.

14. You just couldn't see an end to it.

15. If there is anything you need, I will not be far away.

II. During listening

A: ESL students listen to the song “Rhythm of the Rain”, and find liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms of the song.

YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQOlOnkfa-c&list=PLE2oSWv_9CqfY7OshTfEQiHaCSXk9JWbW
Rhythm of the Rain

Listen to the rhythm of the falling rain

Telling me just what a fool I've been

I wish that I would go and let me cry in vain

And let me be alone again

The only girl I care about has gone away

Looking for a brand new start

But little does she know that when she left that day

Along with her she took my heart

Rain please tell me now does that seem fair

For her to steal my heart away when she don't care?

I can't love another when my hearts somewhere far away

The only girl I care about has gone away

Looking for a brand new start
But little does she know that when she left that day
Along with her she took my heart

Rain won't you tell her that I love her so
Please ask the sun to set her heart aglow
Rain in her heart and let the love we knew start to grow

Listen to the rhythm of the falling rain
Telling me just what a fool I've been
I wish that it would go and let me cry in vain
And let me be alone again

Oh, listen to the falling rain
Pitter patter, pitter patter
Oh, oh, oh, listen to the falling rain
Pitter patter, pitter patter

B: ESL students listen to the sentences, and mark liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms, paying attention to incomplete explosions, liaisons and weak forms.

1. Sam walked down to the front of the table and accepted the gift with pride.

2. Life was like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get.

3. You have to put the past behind you before you can move on.

4. Take my hand, so we can put all this behind us.

5. Does not a warm hand feel better than a cold shark?
6. There is an awful lot you can tell about a person by their shoes.

7. what you do to me like that just throw me back into the dark and toss me out of the back door.

8. I'm not a smart man, but I know what love is

9. You just stay away from me please.

10. They'd all dressed up in their robes and their bedsheets, and acted like a bunch of ghosts or spooks or something.

11. How many roads must a man walk down before you can call him a man?

12. America owes you a debt of gratitude.

13. Everything you see exists together in a delicate balance.

14. But I think you can either run from it or learn from it.

15. If I don't fight for it, who will?

16. You can tell a lot from a person's voice.

17. Destiny is something we've invented because we can't stand the fact that happening is accidental.

18. Sometimes a little discomfort in the beginning can save a whole lot of pain down the road.

19. There's only so much fortune a man really needs, and the rest is just for showing off.
20. When you have grown up, happiness is a state of mind that you try to understand.

C: ESL students listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms of the sentences.

1. Everybody ____________ .

2. ____________ for excellent young men.

3. ____________, momma named me after the great civil war hero.

4. They’d even ____________ their horses ____________ and ride around.

5. I want to reach people ____________ personal level.

6. It ________________ in water.

7. Nothing just happens, it's all ____________ .

8. I would like to ____________ .

9. Take my ____________ .

10. I think I ____________ .

11. That makes ____________ .

12. I was thinking if we could ________________ after work.


14. You learn to take life ____________ .

15. Outwardly, I was everything a ____________ girl should be.
16. What the _____________ university is to find a suitable husband.

17. All life ______________ luck.

18. I figure __________________ wasting it.

19. God shall _____________ all the tears from their eyes.

20. The former world has ____________ .

Answers:

1. gets a second chance  2. Excellent careers  3. When I was a baby  4. put bed sheets on  5. on a
6. made me look like a duck  7. part of a plan  8. propose a toast  9. word for it  10. should give it
a go  11. two of us  12. grab a cup of coffee  13. is a deep ocean of  14. as it comes at you  15.
well-brought up  16. purpose of  17. is a game of  18. life is a gift and I don’t intend on  19. wipe
away  20. passed away

D: ESL students listen to the movie “Forrest Gump” and fill in the blanks, paying attention to
liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms.
Forrest Gump

Scene 1

YouTube link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKgF_F0uTcE&list=PLy4SmBobJ7wym22Q4skCSaS88uR0RiH9P

Forrest: Now, when I _______1______ , Momma named me after the _______2______ hero, Genera! Nathan Bedford Forrest... She said we were _______3______ him in some way. And,
what he did was. he ______4_______ this club called the Ku Klux Klan. They'd already
______5______ in their robes and their bed-sheets and act _____ 6_______ or spooks or
something. They'd even _____7______ their horses and ______ 8______ . And anyway, that's
______9______ my name, Forrest Gump. Momma _____ 10_______ was to remind me that
sometimes we all do things that, well, ______11_______ no sense.

( Forrest 's feg brace was stuck in the sidewalks. )

Mrs. Gump: Just wait, let me ______12_______. ( Mrs. Gump helps Forrest up onto the
sidewalk. She looks up and notices the two old man are watching them. )

Mrs. Gump: Oooh, Alright. What are you all staring at ? Haven't you ever
______13______ little boy with braces on his legs before ? Don't ever anybody tell you they're
better than you. Forrest. If _____14______ to be the same. he'd have ______ 15_______ braces
on our legs.

Forrest: Momma always _____ 16_______ things so I understand them. We lived about a
quarter mile of Route 17, _____17_______ from the town of Greenbow, Alabama. That's in
______18______ Greenbow. Our house _____ 19_______ Momma 's family since her grandpa
's grandpa 's grandpa had come across the ocean _____20_______ years ago. Something like
that. Since it was just me and Momma, and we had all these empty rooms, Momma
______21_______ those rooms out. Mostly the people passing through. That 's how Mommy got
money. Mommy was a real _____22______.

Mrs. Gump: Remember what I told you Forrest. You're _____23_______ than anybody else is.
Did you hear what I said, Forrest, you ' re the same as everybody else. You are not different.

Scene 2

YouTube link:
Gump: What's the matter, Mama?

Mrs. Gump: I'm dying, Forrest, Come on in, sit down over here.

Gump: Why are you dying, Mama?

Mrs. Gump: It's my time. It's just my time. Oh, now.. don't you ______24_______, sweet heart.

Death is ______25____ life. Something we're all ______26_______ do. I ______27_______, but I was destined to be your mama. I did the best I could.

Cump: You ______28_____. Mama.

Mrs. Gump: Well... I happen to believe you make your own destiny. You have to do the best with what God gave you.

Gump: What's my destiny, Mama?

Mrs. Gump: You're going to have to ______29_______ for yourself. ______30_______ chocolates, Forrest. You never know what you're going to get.

Answers:

1. was a baby  2. great Civil War  3. related to  4. started up  5. dressed up

6. like a bunch of ghosts  7. put bed-sheets on  8. ride around  9. how I got  10. said that the Forrest part  11. just don't make  12. get it  13. seen a  14. God intend everybody  15. given us all 16. had a way of explaining  17. about half mile  18. county of  19. had been in  20. about a thousand  21. decided to rent  22. smart lady  23. not different  24. be afraid  25. just a part of  26. destined to  27. didn't know it  28. did good  29. figure that out  30. Life is like a box of

III. After listening
A: ESL students sing the song “Rhythm of the rain” after the recording, paying attention to incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

B: ESL students read the sentences aloud after the teacher three times, paying attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

C: ESL students read after the movie “Forrest Gump” aloud three times, do role-play of the movie “Forrest Gump” in groups. Pay attention to the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

E: ESL students discuss the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms in groups, and find more examples.

F: After the class, ESL students use another song and movie, find incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms of the song and the movie, sing after the song, and read after the movie aloud, focusing on the pronunciation of incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms.

G: ESL students dictate a piece of English news at home, find the barriers where incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms exist, and then read after the news aloud three times.
APPENDIX 2

Handouts
Lesson 1

Incomplete explosion

During listening

A: Listen to the song “Right Here Waiting”, and find the incomplete explosions.

Right Here Waiting

Oceans apart day after day
And I slowly go insane
I hear your voice on the line
But it doesn’t stop the pain
If I see you next to never
How can we say forever
Wherever you go
Whatever you do
I will be right here waiting for you
Whatever it takes
Or how my heart breaks
I will be right here waiting for you
I took for granted, all the times
That I thought would last somehow
I hear the laughter, I taste the tears
But I can’t get near you now
Oh, can’t you see it baby
You’ve got me goin’ crazy
Wherever you go
Whatever you do
I will be right here waiting for you
Whatever it takes
Or how my heart breaks
I will be right here waiting for you
I wonder how we can survive
This romance
But in the end if I’m with you
I’ll take the chance

B: Listen and write the words and phrases they hear, paying attention to the incomplete explosions.

1. __________ 2. __________ 3. __________ 4. __________ 5. __________
6. __________ 7. __________ 8. __________ 9. __________
10. __________ 11. __________ 12. __________ 13. __________
14. __________ 15. __________ 16. __________ 17. __________
18. __________ 19. __________ 20. __________

C: Listen and complete the following sentences, focusing on the incomplete explosions.

21. __________ will not be forgotten.

22. A liar needs a __________.

23. Traveling is __________ with men of other countries.
24. A _____________ is never welcome.

25. A nod is as good as a wink to a _____________.

26. Hope is a _____________, but it is a _____________.

27. The _____________ is the one you run for and _____________.

28. It is the _____________ that is difficult.

29. Laughter, the _____________.

30. All that glitters is _____________.

31. Better be alone than in _____________.

32. England has _____________ by her exertion, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.

33. First impressions are _____________.

34. _____________ wears the stone.

35. _____________ a _____________ to make a _____________.

36. In this world nothing can be said to be certain, _____________ and taxes.

37. The _____________ breaks the camel’s back.

38. The house _____________ is like a room without windows.

39. _____________ would never come in pairs.

40. _____________ before a fall.
D: Listen to the movie “Home Alone”, paying attention to the incomplete explosions, and fill in the blanks.

Buzz: _____1_____, you little trout –sniffer.

Kevin: I’m _____2_____. I did what I did because Buzz _____3_____. And since he gets away with everything, I will _____4_____. have it. Since you are so stupid to believe his lies… I don’t care whether the idiotic Florida trip is wrecked or not. Who wants to _____5____ in a tropical climate anyway?

Mom: Kevin!

Dad: Kevin, you walk out of here, you sleep on the _____6_____.

Fuller: Yeah, with me.

Kevin: So what else is new?

Uncle Frank: You’d better _____7____ my trip, you little sour puss! You dad’s paying _____8____ for it.

Kevin: Oh, I _____9_____ to spoil your fun, Mr Cheapskate.

Buzz: What a _____10_____ young man.

Kevin: They are all a bunch of jerks.

Mom: Hi! You know, Kevin, _____11_____ we all _____12_____ take a trip, we had a problem _____13_____

Kevin: Yeah, with me getting crapped on.
Mom: I _____14_____ for your choice of words. That’s _______15_____________ and not what’s happening this time. Buzz _____16_____ to you.

Kevin: Yeah, then he _____17_____ a trout-sniffer. He ___________18_____________ said. He was _____19_______ up to you.

Mom: Ok, why don’t you______20_______ up her for a while _____21_________ over? When you’re ready to apologize to Buzz and to the rest of the family, you can come down.

Kevin: I’m not apologizing to Buzz! I’d rather kiss a _____22_______!

Mom: Then you _____23_____ up here the rest of the night.

Kevin: Fine, I _____24_____ go down anyway! I _____25_____ anybody in this family. And you know what? If I _____26______ own money, I’d go on my own vacation. Alone, without any of you guys. And I’d have the _____27_______ of my whole life.

Mom: Well, you _____28_____ wish _____29_______. Maybe you’ll get it again this year.

Kevin: I _____30_______. 
Lesson 2
Liaison

During listening

A: Listen to the song “My Heart Will Go On”, and find the liaisons.

Every night in my dreams
I see you, I feel you
That is how I know you go on

Far across the distance
And spaces between us
You have come to show you go on

Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on
Once more you open the door
And you're here in my heart
And my heart will go on and on

Love can touch us one time
And last for a lifetime
And never let go 'til we're gone
Love was when I loved you
One true time I'd hold you
In my life we'll always go on

Near, far, wherever you are
I believe that the heart does go on
Once more you open the door
And you're here in my heart
And my heart will go on an on

You're here, there's nothing I fear
And I know that my heart will go on
We'll stay forever this way
You are safe in my heart and
My heart will go on and on

B: Listen to the tape, mark the liaisons of the sentences, paying attention to the division of
meaning group. Read them aloud three times.

11. The great Difficulty in education is to get experience out of ideas.

12. Like is like an onion: You peel it off one layer at a time, and sometimes you weep.

13. As long as I am alive, I shall go on studying.

14. The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer others.

15. Have an aim in life, or your energies will all be wasted.
16. A good surgeon must have an eagle’s eye, a lion’s heart, and a lady’s hand.

17. The past is not a package one can lay away.

18. In prosperity, our friends know us, in adversity we know our friends.

19. Like all other science, mathematics arose out of the needs of men.

20. Life without an aim is like sailing without a compass.

C: Listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to the liaisons.

22. Have you ever _____________ in the Campus Daily?

23. Television _____________ too much of our time.

24. A book should teach us to enjoy it or to _____________.

25. But it wasn’t the life that she had _____________.

26. Necessity id the _____________.

27. Our hair _____________.

28. It is better to _____________ your feet than to _____________ your knees.

29. I want to _____________.

30. A friend in need _____________.

31. Preachers say, “___________ I say, not as I do.”

32. Where there is a will, ________________.
33. Good friends should __________________________.

34. An apple a day __________________________.

35. I’m usually __________________________.

36. __________________________, and he’ll take an ell.

37. Let me __________________________.

38. __________________________ will be considered.

39. Rome wasn’t __________________________.

40. Everybody is ignorant, ____________ different subjects.

41. Poverty is the __________________________.

D: Listen to the humorous story and fill in the blanks, paying attention to the liaisons.

A man was telling ______ 1 _______ his friends the ______ 2 _______ his contended married life. “My wife makes all the small decisions,” he explained, “and I ______ 3 _______ the big ones, so we never interfere in ______ 4 ______ and never ______ 5 _______ with each other. We have no complaints and no arguments.” “That sounds reasonable,” answered his friends. “And what ______ 6 ______ does your wife make?”

“Well,” answered the man, “she decides what jobs I apply for, what sort of house we ______ 7 ______, what furniture we have, where we go ______ 8 ______, and things like that.”

His friends was surprised. “Oh?” he said. “And what do you consider important decisions then?”
“Well,” answered the man, “I consider who should be Prime Minister, whether we should ______9______ to poor countries, what we should ______10______ the atom bomb, and things like that.”

E: Listen to the movie “Titanic” and fill in the blanks, paying attention to the liaisons.

Part 1

Jack: Don’t ______1______!

Rose: Stay back. Don’t come any closer.

Jack: Come on, just give me your hand. I’ll pull you back over.

Rose: No, stay where you are. I ______2_______. I’ll let go.

Part 2

Jack: No, you won’t.

Rose: What do you mean “No, I won’t?” Don’t presume to tell me ______3_______ will or won’t do. You don’t know me.

Jack: Well, you would have ______4_______ already.

Rose: You are distracting me. ______5_______.

Jack: I can’t. I’m involved now. You let go and I’m. I’ll have to ______6_______ there after you.

Rose: Don’t ______7_______. You’ll be killed.

Jack: ______8_______ good swimmer.
Rose: The fall alone will kill you.

Jack: It would hurt, not saying it wouldn’t. Tell you the truth, I’m a lot more ______9______ the water being so cold.

Rose: How cold?

Jack: Freezing. Maybe a couple degrees over. You’ve ever been to Wisconsin?

Rose: What?

Jack: They have ______10______ the coldest winters around. I ______11______ there in the Chippewa Falls. Remember when I ______12______ kid, me and my father, who went ice-fishing out on Lake Minnesota. Ice-fishing as you know is where you...

Rose: I know ______13______ is.

Jack: Sorry, you just seem like, you know, ______14______ indoor girl. Anyway, I fell through some thin ice, and I’m telling you water that cool, like right down there. It hits you ______15______ thousand knives stabbing you ______16______ your body. You can’t breathe, you can’t think, at least ______17______ but the pain, which is why I’m not looking forward to jumping in there after you. ______18______ said, I don’t ______19______ choice. I guess I’m ______20______ hoping you’ll come back over the rail and get ______21______ the hook there.

Rose: You’re crazy.

Jack: That’s what everybody says, but, with all due respect, Miss, I’m not the one handing off the ______22______ the ship here. ______23______. Give me your hand.

Part 3
Jack: You don’t want to ______24______. Well, I’m Jack Dawson.

Rose: Rose Rebeck Hill.

Jack: I’ll have to get you to write ______25______ down. Come on, come on.

Rose: Oh, please, please help me.

Jack: Listen, listen to me. I’ve got you. I won’t let go. Now pull ______26______! Come on, come on, Try, you can do it. I’ve got you.

Lesson 3

Weak Forms

I. Pre-listening

A: Here are the weak pronunciations of the functional words. Read them aloud after the teacher.

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<th>weak form 2</th>
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<td>to</td>
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<td>Read as /tə/ before consonants.</td>
<td>Read as /tu/ before /w/, vowels and at the end of sentence.</td>
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B: Read the following words and phrases aloud, paying attention to the weak forms. Read them aloud three times.

41. black and blue
42. as clear as day
43. Hot or cold
44. Seven or eight
45. The more, the better.
46. The others
47. A lot of money
48. Have an apple
49. I come from China.
50. Better late than never.
51. I can do it for myself.
52. What do you want for a present?
53. The day that I arrived.
54. She has been out.
55. I heard him sing.
56. I like his tie.
57. I saw her yesterday.
58. She opened her eyes.
59. She asked as the way.
60. Let’s go home.
61. Pass me the salt.
62. We gave them some food.
63. We could finish it tomorrow.
64. It should be fine tomorrow.
65. We must obey orders.
66. What can I do?
67. The windows are clean.
68. We were happy.
69. The students have left.
70. I have done it.
71. To die or not to die?
72. I want to ask you.
73. The man had left.
74. They’d left home.

75. How do they know.

76. When does the plane arrive?

77. Don’t be silly.

78. It will rain.

79. There is a cinema in the corner.

80. It does not matter.

II. During listening

A: Listen to the song “Scarborough Fair”, and find the weak forms.

Scarborough Fair

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
Remember me to one who lives there
She was once a true love of mine

Tell her to make me a cambric shirt
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
Without no seams nor needle work
Then she'll be a true love of mine
Tell her to find me an acre of land
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
Between the sea water and the sea strands
Then she'll be a true love of mine

Tell her to reap it with a sickle of leather
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
And gather it all in a bunch of heather
Then she'll be a true love of mine

Are you going to Scarborough Fair?
Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme
Remember me to one who lives there
She was once a true love of mine

B: Listen and write down the words you hear, paying attention to the pronunciation of these weak forms.

29. _____________ tired.
30. _____________ my brother.
31. _____________ friends.
32. _____________ been there.
33. _____________ been ill.
34. _____________ explained it to you.
35. ___________ go by train.

36. ___________ be late.

37. ___________ love to.

38. ___________ hand it in on time.

39. ___________ pretty.

40. ___________ enemies.

41. ___________ friendly.

42. ___________ happy.

43. ___________ do housework.

44. ___________ like apples.

45. ___________ catch the rain.

46. ___________ done it.

47. ___________ finished it.

48. ___________ left.

49. ___________ be so lazy.

50. ___________ go swimming.

51. ___________ rely on him.
52. listen.

53. draw.

54. help.

55. rain.

56. tell a lie.

C: Listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to the weak forms.

21. Life has a value only when it has something valuable ____________.

22. He that has ____________ is dead to the world.

23. The heart of the fool is in his mouth, but the ____________ in his heart.

24. The man who has made up his mind ____________ will never say “impossible”.

25. Money will buy a pretty dog, but it ____________ the wag of his tail.

26. ____________ ways to persuade others is with your ears by listening to them.

27. ____________ the stepping stones to human progress.

28. He ____________ praises everybody praises nobody.

29. Facts do not cease to exist ____________ they are ignored.

30. Gifts ____________ are dangerous.

31. Living dog is ____________ a dead lion.
32. The more a man knows, the more he _____________ ignorance.

33. I won’t come back _____________ ten.

34. Victory _____________ to me unless I go to it.

35. One father _____________ ten children; ten children _____________ one father.

36. I only _____________ I have but one life to lose for my country.

37. Love is ever the _____________ as fire is of light.

38. The lion is not so _____________ he is painted.

39. _____________ wait for no man.

40. I am a slow walker, _____________ I never walk backwards.

D: Listen to the movies “The Sound of Music” and “The Lion King”, and write down the words in the blanks, paying attention to the weak forms.

The Sound of Music

Captain: Now, this is your new governess, Fraulein Maria. _______1_____ sound your signals, you will step forward and give your name. You, Fraulein, listen Carefully. Learn their signals so you _______2______ call them when you want them.

Liesl: Liesl.

Friedrich: Friedrich.

Louisa: Louisa.

Kurt: Kurt.
Brigitta: Brigitta.

Marta: Marta.

Captain: And Giret. Now, ______ 3 ______ see how well you listened.

Maria: I ______ 4 ______ need to whistle ______ 5 ______, Reverend Captain. I mean. ______ 6 ______ use their names. Such lovely names,

Captain: Fraulein, this is a large house. The grounds are extensive. ______ 7 ______ have anyone shouting. You will take this, please learn ______ 8 ______ use it. The children will help you. Now, when I want you this is what you will hear.

Maria: Oh, no. sir. I'm sorry, sir, I ______ 9 ______ never answer to whistle. Whistles ______ 10 ______ dogs and cats and other animals ______ 11 ______ children and definitely for me. It ______ 12 ______ too humiliating.

Captain: Fraulein, ______ 13 ______ this much trouble ______ 14 ______ abbey?

Maria: Oh, much more, sir.

Captain: Hmm.

( Captain blew the whistle again )

Maria: I ______ 15 ______ know your signal.

Captain: You ______ 16 ______ call me "captain".

The Lion King

Mufasa, the lion king is telling Simba, his son, an important rule of life.

Mufasa: Look, Simba, everything ______ 1 ______ light touches is our kingdom.

Simba: Wow!

Mufasa: A king's time is ruler rises and falls like the sun. One day, Simba, the sun will set on my
time here ______2______ rise with you _______3______ new king.

Simba: And will this all _______4______?

Mufasa: Everything!

Simba: Everything the light touches! What _______5______ shadowy place ?

Mufasa: That's beyond our borders, you _______6______ never go there, Simba.

Simba: _______7______ thought a king can do whatever he wants.

Mufasa: Oh, there's more to being a king _______8______ getting your way all the time.

Simba: _______9______ more ?

Mufasa: Simba, everything you see exists together in a delicate balance. _______10______ king, you need to understand that balance and respect all the creatures _______11______ crawling ant _______12______ leaping antelope.

Simba: _______13______ dad, _______14______ eat the antelope ?

Mufasa: Yes, Simba. But let _______15______ explain. When we die, our bodies become the grass _______16______ antelopes eat the grass, and so we are all connected in the great circle _______17______ life.
Lesson 4

Comprehensive Listening

I. Pre-listening

Read the following sentences aloud, and find the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Read them aloud three times.

21. It is my great honor to present this gift to you on behalf of the company.

22. You wouldn't believe it if I told you that I can run like the wind blows.

23. There is one small step for a man, a giant leap for mankind.

24. I am not the one hanging of the back of a ship here.

25. I would like a cup of tea, a drink of jam and bread.

26. Jenny and I was like peas and carrots.

27. I fit in the army like one of them round pegs.

28. The first rule of Fight Club is: You do not talk about Fight Club.

29. I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse.

30. Hope is a good thing and maybe the best of things.

31. It takes a strong man to save himself, and a great man to save another.

32. There is a plan to make all of this right.
33. I could eat about a million and a half of these.

34. You just couldn’t see an end to it.

15. If there is anything you need, I will not be far away.

II. During listening

A: Listen to the song “Rhythm of the rain”, and find liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms of the song.

Rhythm of the rain

Listen to the rhythm of the falling rain
Telling me just what a fool I've been
I wish that it would go and let me cry in rain
And let me be alone again

The only girl I care about has gone away
Looking for a brand new start
But little does she know that when she left that day
Along with her she took my heart

Rain please tell me now does that seem fair
For her to steal my heart away when she don't care?
I can't love another when my hearts somewhere far away

The only girl I care about has gone away
Looking for a brand new start
But little does she know that when she left that day
Along with her she took my heart
Rain won't you tell her that I love her so
Please ask the sun to set her heart aglow
Rain in her heart and let the love we knew start to grow
Listen to the rhythm of the falling rain
Telling me just what a fool I've been
I wish that it would go and let me cry in vain
And let me be alone again
Oh, listen to the falling rain
Pitter patter, pitter patter
Oh, oh, oh, listen to the falling rain
Pitter patter, pitter patter

B: Listen to the sentences, and mark liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms, paying attention to incomplete explosions, liaisons and weak forms.

16. Sam walked down to the front of the table and accepted the gift with pride.

17. Life was like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're going to get.

18. You have got to put the past behind you before you can move on.

19. Take my hand, so we can put all this behind us.

20. Does not a warm hand feel better than a cold shark?
21. There is an awful lot you can tell about a person by their shoes.

22. what you do to me like that just throw me back into the dark and toss me out of the back door.

23. I'm not a smart man, but I know what love is.

24. You just stay away from me please.

25. They'd all dressed up in their robes and their bed sheets, and acted like a bunch of ghosts or spooks or something.

26. How many roads must a man walk down before you can call him a man?

27. America owes you a debt of gratitude.

28. Everything you see exists together in a delicate balance.

29. But I think you can either run from it or learn from it.

30. If I don't fight for it, who will?

31. You can tell a lot from a person's voice.

32. Destiny is something we’ve invented because we can’t stand the fact that happening is accidental.

33. Sometimes a little discomfort in the beginning can save a whole lot of pain down the road.

34. There’s only so much fortune a man really needs, and the rest is just for showing off.

35. When you have grown up, happiness is a state of mind that you try to understand.
C: Listen and complete the following sentences, paying attention to liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms of the sentences.

21. Everybody _____________.

22. ____________ for excellent young men.

23. ____________, momma named me after the great civil war hero.

24. They 'd even ____________ their horses ____________ and ride around.

25. I want to reach people ____________ personal level.

26. It ________________ in water.

27. Nothing just happens, it's all ____________.

28. I would like to ______________.

29. Take my ______________.

30. I think I ______________.

31. That makes ______________.

32. I was thinking if we could ________________ after work.

33. A woman’s heart ____________ secrets.

34. You learn to take life ____________.

35. Outwardly, I was everything a ____________ girl should be.

36. What the ____________ university is to find a suitable husband.
37. All life __________________ luck.

38. I figure ______________________ wasting it.

39. God shall ___________ all the tears from their eyes.

40. The former world has ____________.

D: ESL students listen to the movie “Forrest Gump” and fill in the blanks, paying attention to liaisons, incomplete explosions and weak forms.

Forrest Gump

Scene 1

Forrest: Now, when I _______1______ , Momma named me after the _______2______ hero, General Nathan Bedford Forrest... She said we were _______3______ him in some way. And, what he did was. he _______4_______ this club called the Ku Klux Klan. They'd already _______5______ in their robes and their bed-sheets and act _______6_______ or spooks or something. They'd even _______7_______ their horses and _______8_______. And anyway, that's _______9______ my name, Forrest Gump. Momma _______10_______ was to remind me that sometimes we all do things that, well, _______11_______ no sense.

( Forrest 's feg brace was stuck in the sidewalks. )

Mrs. Gump: Just wait, let me _______12_______. ( Mrs. Gump helps Forrest up onto the sidewalk. She looks up and notices the two old man are watching them. )

Mrs. Gump: Oooh, All right. What are you all staring at? Haven't you ever _______13_______ little boy with braces on his legs before? Don't ever anybody tell you they're
better than you. Forrest. If ______14_______ to be the same. he'd have ______15_______ braces
on our legs.

Forrest: Momma always ______16_______ things so I understand them. We lived about a
quarter mile of Route 17, _____17_______ from the town of Greenbow, Alabama. That's in
_____18_______ Greenbow. Our house _____19_______ Momma 's family since her grandpa
's grandpa 's grandpa had come across the ocean _____20_______ years ago. Something like
that. Since it was just me and Momma,

and we had all these empty rooms, Momma _____21_______ those rooms out. Mostly the
people passing through. That 's how Mommy got money. Mommy was a real _____22_______.

Mrs. Gump: Remember what I told you Forrest. You're _____23_______ than anybody else is.
Did you hear what I said, Forrest, you 're the same as everybody else. You are not different.

Scene 2

Gump: What's the matter, Mama ?

Mrs. Gump: I'm dying, Forrest, Come on in, sit down over here.

Gump: Why are you dying, Mama ?

Mrs. Gump: It's my time It's just my time. Oh, now.. don't you _____24_______, sweet heart.
Death is _____25_______ life. Something we 're all _____26_______ do. I
_____27_______, but I was destined to be your mama. I did the best I could.

Cump: You _____28_______. Mama.

Mrs. Gump: Well... I happen to believe you make your own destiny. You have to do the best
with what God gave you.

Gump: What's my destiny, Mama ?
Mrs. Cump: You're going to have to ______29_______ for yourself. _______30_______
chocolates, Forrest You never know what you're going to get.
APPENDIX 3

PPT for the Field Project
Conquering English Listening Barriers

Dan Wu
University of San Francisco
Lesson 1
Incomplete Explosion

• There are six plosive consonants in English: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/.
• Incomplete explosion refers to the two adjacent words which are connected in meaning. The former ends with a plosive consonant, the latter begins with a consonant. The airflow of the former plosive consonant is blocked for a short while, and break through the second consonant. As a result, the sound of the former plosive consonants is omitted.
• Incomplete explosion can occur either inside words, such as blackboard, postcard, doctor, or between two adjacent words, such as fast food restaurant, first step, make progress.
Incomplete Explosion

• Read the following words and phrases aloud, and pay attention to the incomplete explosion. Read them aloud three times.

1. Pos(t)card                   2. ne (g)lect
3. a(c)tually                  4. a(d)vance
5. u(p)most                   6. ele(c)tronic
7. ca(p)tain                  8. su(c)cess
9. brea(k) down               10. bi(g) change
11. goo(d) morning            12. grea(t) hall
13. grea(t) hall              14. a(t) least
15. wor(k) hard               16. re(d) nose
17. hel(p) me                 18. firs(t) step
Incomplete Explosion
Listen to the Song
“Right Here Waiting”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Incomplete Explosion
Listen to the Movie “Home Alone”

Click Here for YouTube Link Scene 1

Click Here for YouTube Link Scene 2
Lesson 2
Liaison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with a consonant phoneme, and the second word begins with a vowel phoneme.</th>
<th>Spell vowels and consonants together.</th>
<th>stand up, get up, in it, good idea, love it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with r or re, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>R or re should pronounce /r/, and spell with the vowel phoneme after it.</td>
<td>far away, for it, bear it, after all, for example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /iː/, /i/, /eɪ/, /aɪ/ or /ɔɪ/, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>Add /j/ between two vowels, and spell with the second vowel.</td>
<td>say it lie awake the other stay up fly away the end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are two adjacent words. The first word ends with /uː/, /u/, /ɔu/ or /au/, and the second word begins with a vowel.</td>
<td>Add /w/ between two vowels and spell with the second vowel.</td>
<td>go on how old do it how often how about know us</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Liaison

• Read the following words and phrases aloud, and pay attention to the liaison. Read them aloud three times.

1. first of all  
2. work it out  
3. put it off  
4. get out  
5. post office  
6. keep on  
7. in an instant  
8. there are  
9. after all  
10. better off  
11. for example  
12. do it  
13. see off  
14. here and there  
15. the other  
16. too often  
17. try on  
18. stay up  
19. how old  
20. how often
Liaison
Listen to the Song
“My Heart Will Go On”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Liaison
Listen to the Movie “Titanic”

Click Here for YouTube Link Part 1

Click Here for YouTube Link Part 2

Click Here for YouTube Link Part 3
Lesson 3
Weak Forms

• The functional words have two pronunciation forms: the strong form and the weak form.

• The strong form refers to the pronunciation of functional words which are independent without context.

• In the context, the functional words are always pronounced in weak forms because they are not stressed in sentences.

• Weak forms of the functional words are mainly reflected in the weakening of vowels.

• The faster the speech speed is, the more frequent the phenomenon of weak forms are.
Weak Forms

• Read the following words and phrases aloud, and pay attention to the weak forms. Read them aloud three times.

  1. black and blue
  2. as clear as day
  3. Hot or cold
  4. Seven or eight
  5. The more, the better.
  6. The others
  7. A lot of money
  8. Have an apple
  9. I come from China.
11. I can do it for myself.
12. What do you want for a present?
13. The day that I arrived.
14. She has been out.
15. I heard him sing.
16. I like his tie.
17. I saw her yesterday.
18. She opened her eyes.
19. She asked as the way.
20. Let's go home.
Weak Forms

21. Pass me the salt.
22. We gave them some food.
23. We could finish it tomorrow.
24. It should be fine tomorrow.
25. We must obey orders.
26. What can I do?
27. The windows are clean.
28. We were happy.
29. The students have left.
30. I have done it.
Weak Forms

31. To die or not to die?
32. I want to ask you.
33. The man had left.
34. They’d left home.
35. How do they know?
36. When does the plane arrive?
37. Don’t be silly.
38. It will rain.
39. There is a cinema in the corner.
40. It does not matter.
Weak Forms

Listen to the Song

“Scarborough Fair”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Weak Forms

Listen to the Movie

“The Sound of Music”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Weak Forms
Listen to the Movie “The Lion King”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Lesson 4
Comprehensive Listening

Read the following sentences aloud, and pay attention to the incomplete explosion, liaison and weak forms. Read them aloud three times.

1. It is my great honor to present this gift to you on behalf of the company.
2. You wouldn't believe it if I told you that I can run like the wind blows.
3. There is one small step for a man, a giant leap for mankind.
4. I am not the one hanging off the back of a ship here.
Comprehensive Listening

5. I woul(d) like a cup of tea, a drink of jam and bread.
6. Jenny and I was li(ke) peas and carrots.
7. I fit in the army like one of them round pegs.
8. The first rule of Fight Club is: You do not talk about Fight Club.
9. I'm going to ma(ke) him an offer he can't refuse.
10. Hope is a good thing and maybe the best of things.
11. I(t) takes a strong man to save himself, and a grea(t) man to save another.

12. There is a plan to make all of this right.

13. I could eat about a million and a half of these.

14. You jus(t) couldn’t see an end to it.

15. If there is anything you need, I will no(t) be far away.
Comprehensive Listening

Listen to the Song “Rhythm of the Rain”

Click Here for YouTube Link
Comprehensive Listening

Listen to the Movie “Forrest Gump”

Click Here for YouTube Link Scene 1

Click Here for YouTube Link Scene 2
Thank you