



TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE 5: VIRTUAL DOCTOR

Hello. I'm Margot Politis. Welcome to Study English, IELTS preparation.

Today, we have a story about new technologies in medicine. We're going to look at 'linking' in spoken English, and then we'll talk about the word 'there'.

Let's listen to Dr Stuart Stapleton talk about how he treats patients in other locations using computers and cameras.

At the Blue Mountains end, there are four cameras. There's one which stands roughly where I would stand as the team leader in a resuscitation that gets the overview of the room and the patient and the environment. There's another camera that's located above the patient's bed.



There's also a camera that lets us look at things like X-rays, cardiographs, blood pressure charts and the like.

And there's a final camera which is actually a mobile camera, which can also be head mounted. So for example, if one of the staff up there needs to perform a procedure, which they may have done maybe once or twice, then someone who's got a lot more experience can be at this end and guide them through the process.

To speak English fluently and sound like a native speaker, it's important to link some words together. Knowing how native speakers link their words together will also make it easier to understand spoken English.

Sometimes it may be difficult to know where one word ends and the next one begins.

For example, 'healthy ear' sounds the same as 'healthy year'. When 'healthy' is linked together with 'ear', a /j/ sound is added.

So 'healthy ear' and 'healthy year' have the same pronunciation, shown phonetically like this, /'h | i j ə/, /'h | i j ə/.

Normally, the context of the sentence would give you the meaning.

Listen to Dr Stapleton talking about a mobile camera that can view X-rays or cardiographs. Listen to how Dr Stapleton links his words, but in particular listen for the /j/ linking sound.



And there's a final camera, which is actually a mobile camera, which can also be head mounted. So for example, if one of the staff up there needs to perform a procedure, which they may have done maybe once or twice, then someone who's got a lot more experience can be at this end and guide them through the process.

Dr Stapleton, like most native speakers, speaks quickly! Listen to how he says the phrase, 'which is actually a mobile camera.'



And there's a final camera which is actually a mobile camera.

Dr Stapleton says: 'actually a' like this
/ˈæk uəli ə/.

To make your speech flow as smoothly as Dr Stapleton's, it's important to focus on the last sound of a word and the first sound of the next, and then link the words together.

There are different types of linking in English.

This is *linking type 1*: vowel + /j/ + vowel.

'Actually' ends in an /i/ vowel sound and the next word begins with a /ə/ schwa sound. Linking these words together we have /ˈæk uəli j ə/.

Listen once again to Dr Stapleton. See if you can hear another example of /j/ linking.

Then someone who's got a lot more experience can be at this end and guide them through the process.

Dr Stapleton says 'be at' /bi æt/, /bi j æt/.

'Be' ends with the vowel sound /i/, and 'at' begins with vowel /æ/. Linking these words together with the /j/ sound we have:

be at /bi j æt/.

Let's listen again. This time listen to how these two words are linked: 'also a'.

What sound does Dr Stapleton use to link the two words?

There's also a camera that lets us look at things like X-rays, cardiographs, um, blood pressure charts and the like.

He says: 'There's also a camera'.

Did you hear a /w/ sound? 'There's also a camera'.

We sometimes use a /w/ sound to link between vowels.

'Also a' / ə / 'I' / wə /

This is linking type 2: vowel + /w/ + vowel

Knowing when to use /j/ and when to use /w/ depends on the end vowel of the first word.

High front vowels link with the /j/ sound.

High front vowels are /i/, /aɪ/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/, the sounds that are produced with the highest part of the tongue and close to the front of the mouth.

For example:

see, me
/si/ /mi/

my, eye
/maɪ / /aɪ /

way, say
/weɪ / /seɪ /

boy, toy
/bɔɪ / /tɔɪ /

high front vowels
/i/ /aɪ/ /eɪ/ /ɔɪ/

see, me
/si/ /mi/

my, eye
/maɪ/ /aɪ/

way, say
/weɪ/ /seɪ/

boy, toy
/bɔɪ/ /tɔɪ/

High back vowels link with the w sound.

High back vowels are /u/, /aʊ/, /oʊ/, sounds that are produced with the highest part of the tongue but close to the back of the mouth, like:

who, too
/hu/ /tu/

how, now
/haʊ / /naʊ /

go, slow
/goʊ / /sloʊ /

high back vowels
/u/ /aʊ/ /oʊ/

who, too
/hu/ /tu/

how, now
/haʊ/ /naʊ/

go, slow
/goʊ/ /sloʊ/

Look at the sentence:

“Have you ever been overseas?”

Notice ‘you ever’. ‘You’ ends with /ju/ – a high back vowel. So it links with *linking type 2*– the /w/ sound.

It becomes ‘you ever’ /ju w və /.

Now let’s consider another aspect of Dr Stapleton’s interview. He uses the word ‘there’ in different ways.

Here’s the clip again. Listen for ‘there’.

There are four cameras. There’s one which stands roughly where I would stand as the team leader in a resuscitation that gets the overview of the room and the patient and the environment. There’s another camera that’s located above the patient’s bed.

Dr Stapleton uses ‘there’ to talk about the position of the cameras.

He says things like:

‘there are four cameras,

‘there’s one which stands’,

‘there’s another camera’.

In these expressions, ‘there’ is used as an *introductory subject*.

It’s used when we want to say something exists somewhere. ‘There’ is not the *subject* but rather an ‘empty’ word that fills the position where the subject is usually found.

It doesn’t contribute meaning. It’s used because the sentence would be grammatically incorrect without it. The real *subject* follows the *verb*.

“There are four cameras.”

Notice that the verb form of the *introductory subject* agrees with the *real subject*. The *real subject* is plural - ‘four cameras’.

So he uses the plural form of the verb ‘to be’ - ‘there are’.

So we have ‘there are four cameras’, but ‘there is another camera’.

Here’s another use of ‘there’.

So for example, if one of the staff up there needs to perform a procedure, which they may have done maybe once or twice, then someone who's got a lot more experience can be at this end and guide them through the process.

In this example, Dr Stapleton says: "one of the staff up there needs to perform a procedure".

'There' is used as an *adverb* to mean 'in that place'.

So 'there' can be used as an *introductory subject* or as an *adverb of place*.

Listen to Dr Stapleton in this clip and see if you can identify which way he uses 'there'.

There's also a camera that lets us look at things like X-rays, cardiographs, blood pressure charts and the like.

And there's a final camera which is actually a mobile camera, which can also be head mounted.

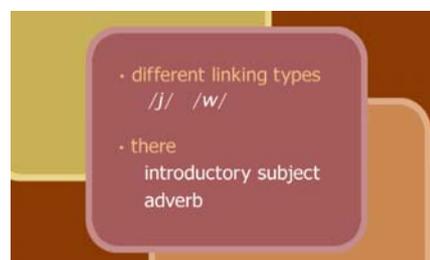
He says: 'there's also a camera',

and 'there's a final camera'.

These are examples of *introductory subjects*.

So today we've looked at 2 different *linking types* in spoken English – using /j/ and /w/; and we've talked about 'there' being used as an *introductory subject*, and as an *adverb*.

And you can get more practice by going to our Study English website. You can read the transcript and check the study notes.



And there you have it. I'll see you next time on Study English. Bye bye.