

# Natural speech features

What to take into account when  
speaking spontaneously

Maria del Mar Suárez Vilagran – 2011

Expressió oral i escrita en anglès  
Comunicació audiovisual





# Oral speech features

- Thinking aloud
- Pauses
- Repetitions
- Use of fillers
- False starts
- Affective (to do with feeling) features – expression of emotion, doubt, confidence
- Role of intonation in stating, implying, reinforcing
- Types of utterance (statement, question, command, exclamation)



# Errors

Successful speech production is a constant battle against error, and those errors can pop up anywhere.

- The phrases we then use to interrupt and correct ourselves (phrases such as "sorry", "I mean", "let me put that another way", etc.) are known generically as "editing expressions".

# Hesitation devices

- Pausing is a natural and necessary part of the production of spontaneous speech
- Filled vs unfilled pauses + planning time
- Not a great difference between native and some non-native speakers in hesitation devices with respect to length, frequency and nature of planning time

- Taken from: Lorna Wedge THE NATURE OF PAUSES (FILLED AND UNFILLED) IN THE SPEECH OF NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE (SPANISH AND JAPANESE) SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH  
[http://www.google.es/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=7&ved=oCFEQFjAG&url=http%3A%2F%2Fintranet.bpc.ac.uk%2Fresearchpapers%2FLorna\\_Wedge.doc&rct=j&q=natural%20speech%20hesitations&ei=1laTTdmVDoKDhQeFhOzeDw&usg=AFQjCNFWERrOYRWZ2KYpheJwtDU-Xgo1dg&cad=rja](http://www.google.es/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=7&ved=oCFEQFjAG&url=http%3A%2F%2Fintranet.bpc.ac.uk%2Fresearchpapers%2FLorna_Wedge.doc&rct=j&q=natural%20speech%20hesitations&ei=1laTTdmVDoKDhQeFhOzeDw&usg=AFQjCNFWERrOYRWZ2KYpheJwtDU-Xgo1dg&cad=rja)

# Feedback

- Levelt's (1989) types of feedback
  - Am I saying what I meant to say?
  - Is this the way I meant to say it?
  - Is what I am saying socially appropriate? (see slide 1)
  - Am I selecting the right words?
  - Am I using the right syntax and morphology?
  - Am I making any phonological errors?
  - Is my articulation at the right speed and pitch?

J. Levelt (1989). *Speaking: From intonation to articulation*. ACL-MIT Press Series in Natural Language Processing. Bradford Book - The MIT-Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, London, England.