3.5: Articulatory Processes- Assimilation

When we speak, we don’t articulate individual segments separate from each other. Our articulators are always moving from the sound they just made to the sound that’s coming up. This means that each speech segment is influenced by the sounds that are near it. When a sound changes some of its properties to be more similar to the nearby sounds, this is known as assimilation.

Check Yourself

1. What articulatory process is at work when the word *bank* is pronounced as [bæŋk]?
• Assimilation (Anticipatory / Regressive).
• Assimilation (Perseveratory / Progressive).

2. What articulatory process is at work when a child pronounces the word yellow as [lɛlou]?
• Assimilation (Anticipatory / Regressive).
• Assimilation (Perseveratory / Progressive).

3. What articulatory process is at work when the word cream is pronounced as [kʰiʃm]?
• Assimilation (Anticipatory / Regressive).
• Assimilation (Perseveratory / Progressive).

Answers