Segmental and Suprasegmental Analysis: A Case Study of a Malay Learner’s Utterances of an English Song

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Abstract – Pronunciation mistakes are among the common occurrences made by L2 Malay learners of English. Bahasa Melayu and English vary in the numbers of vowels and diphthongs, as well as the origin of the consonants (Goay and Choo, 2003). Despite having sundry disparities, both are phonetics languages and use Roman characters in the written form (Wai, Siew and Roziati, 2007). Hence, this paper aims to analyze the differences and similarities of English sound with Bahasa Melayu, by focusing on two features; Segmental and Suprasegmental (Prosodic Rules – Assimilation, Dissimilation, Insertion, Deletion and Linking). The analysis was gathered from a case study, where a Malay subject’s utterances of an English song was recorded and transcribed by using IPA transcription. An in-depth analysis was done by comparing the subject’s written utterances to the original lyric of the song. The lyric was also transcribed into phonetics transcription based on a standard Received Pronunciation (RP) of English. The findings indicate that there are various notable features in the subject’s utterances when compared to the RP of English and these features are consistent and frequent among L2 Malay learners. Ergo, the implication of this case study would be useful for academicians, material developers, researchers; those who are involved in the teaching of English.

Keywords - L2 Learner, Pronunciation, Phonology, Segmental, Suprasegmental

I. INTRODUCTION

Malay language, the mother tongue of the Malay ethics group has been used as a medium of intergroup communication among the Malays ever since its existence (Asmah, 1977). Going down in the history of Malay language, Bahasa Melayu belongs as one of the members of the Western Group of the Austronesian family, where all the indigenous languages of Southeast Asia are related. This language is widely spoken among Malay-speaking countries namely Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei and the like (Abdullah, 1974; Swan and Smith, 2001; Wai, Siew and Roziati, 2007). The varieties of Malay language used in these countries vary according to the assimilation process that the language has undergone. Such occurrence has brought along some major differences in terms of its orthography as well as pronunciation.

Hence, this paper aims to analyze the differences and similarities of English sound with Bahasa Melayu, by focusing on two features; Segmental (Consonants and Vowels) and Suprasegmental (Prosodic Rules - Assimilation, Dissimilation, Insertion, Deletion and Linking).

It is important to note that the variety of languages used for the whole of this paper is British English. Meanwhile the Malay language adverts in this paper is Bahasa Melayu, the National Language of Malaysia. It is also acknowledged as Bahasa
Malaysia, generally. Subsequently, the paper will also dwell on the discussion and illustration of some possible problems that the Malay-speaking learners might face in acquiring English as their L2.

Bahasa Melayu and English vary in the numbers of vowels and diphthongs, as well as the origin of the consonants (Goay and Choo, 2003). Despite having sundry disparities, both are phonetics languages and use Roman characters in the written form. Overall, as specified by Swan and Smith (2001) English has twenty-two vowels and diphthongs and forty-two consonants, whereas Bahasa Melayu has six main vowels, three diphthongs, nineteen native consonants and eight loan consonants from Arabic and English sounds (Goay Teck Chong and Choo Say Tee, 2003).

II. METHODOLOGY

A student from a local university in Malaysia volunteered to participate in this case study. The subject is a final year, degree student from the school of Business and Entrepreneurship. He is 25 years old and currently finishing his final year project. As a whole, his knowledge on English language can be categorized between intermediate and advanced level. He is Malay, born and raised in Perlis, Malaysia and his spoken (informal) language is the Northern dialect.

A video was recorded using a digital camera and the duration of the recording is 3:07 minutes long. The subject was asked to sing a complete song and to make him less tense and anxious, a guitar is allowed and the song was chosen by the subject himself. The subject was also aware of the recording.

Based on the Received Pronunciation (RP), the original lyric of the song was transcribed into IPA transcription. Aside from that, the subject’s utterances of the song have been transcribed into phonetics transcription as well, and this is vital for the analysis purposes.

The song “Better Together” by Jack Johnson, taken from his album “In Between Dreams” (2005), can be considered as a fast song with upbeat tempo. Since the subject relied on his memory while the recoding was conducted, some of the wordings might defer from the original lyric. (Refer to both transcriptions to see the differences).

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Vowels

According to Goay and Choo (2003), Bahasa Melayu has six main vowels; comprises of two front vowels /i/ /e/, two middle vowels /a/ /a/ and two back vowels /u/ /o/, and three diphthongs /ai/ /au/ /oi/. English, on the other hand, has twenty-two vowels and diphthongs and they are divided into long and short vowels, a feature that is absence in Bahasa Melayu.

Apart from that, the vowels of both languages share great similarities. Goay and Choo (2003) claim that the complex vowels of Bahasa Melayu, which is also known as diphthongs, occur similarly in English diphthongs. These vowels and diphthongs sounded quite similar to the ones in English. Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka (1983) has illustrated some examples of these diphthongs; /ai, oi, au/. For Bahasa Melayu the words are pandai /pandai/, amboi /amboi/ and aurat /aurat/, while the English words are bye /bai/, toy /toy/, and now /nau/.

B. Consonants

As stated earlier, Bahasa Melayu has nineteen native consonants /p, b, t, d, k, g, ?, s, h, c, j, r, l, m, n, n, ?/ and eight Arabic and English loan consonants, /f, v, ð, ß, z, x, y/ where they are pronounced in a rather similar way as the English consonants (Wai, Siew and Rozati, 2007). Ironically, despite having similar pronunciation, there are quite a number of differences between these languages. Thus, to demonstrate the phonological diversity between these two languages, it is best to compare their manners of articulation as well as the places of articulation.
In the manner of articulation of plosive/stop, the phonemes involved in Bahasa Melayu are similar with English, /p, b, t, d, k, g/. Apart from that, they also share similar places of articulation such as bilabial, alveolar and velar. According to Swan and Smith (2001), the plosive/stop phonemes of Bahasa Melayu are always unaspirated as compared to English. Hence, these Bahasa Melayu plosive phonemes /p, t, k/ would sound more like /b, d, g/ in English. As a result, English /p/ and Bahasa Melayu /p/ are pronounced slightly different, for instance, pot /pot/ in contrast with pasu /pasu/, where the English /p/ is aspirated while the Bahasa Melayu /p/ is not. Abdullah (1974) avers that Bahasa Melayu has one more additional plosive phoneme, which is /ʔ/, the glottal stop, as in pokok /pokokʔ/. This phoneme is non-existence in English as it comes from Arabic influence.

There are nine phonemes in the areas of labiodentals, dental, alveolar, palato-alveolar and glottal of English and Bahasa Melayu fricatives and one more additional phoneme in Bahasa Melayu. They are /f, v, θ, s, z, j, ʃ, x, h/ and the additional Bahasa Melayu phoneme is /x/ located in velar such as khatam /khatam/. The reason for sharing the same phonemes is because, Bahasa Melayu’s fricatives are all loan words from English except /x, s, h/ (Goay and Choo, 2003).

In the case of affricate, there are two English phonemes, similarly with Bahasa Melayu with the same place of articulation that is palato-alveolar. However, their symbols are written differently despite having the same pronunciation; /c, j/ for Bahasa Melayu and /tʃ, dʒ/ for English. As suggested by Abdullah (1980), Goay and Choo (2003), with careful attention, one can notice the exiguous different between the words cari /cari/ as opposed to chain /tʃen/, as the latter is more aspirated than the former.

With reference to Nik’s book (1988), Bahasa Melayu has four nasal phonemes; /m, n, ŋ, n/, while English has only three; /m, n, ŋ/. Both, Bahasa Melayu and English nasal phonemes are from the same places of articulation; bilabial, alveolar and velar. For the additional nasal of Bahasa Melayu, /ŋ/, it is located at the palatal area with words such as monyet /monget/.

The lateral phoneme /l/ can be found in both Bahasa Melayu and English as it shares the same pronunciation and place of articulation that is alveolar area, for example lekas /lekas/ and leg /leg/. According to Goay and Choo (2003) phoneme /r/ appears as roll in Bahasa Melayu but in English, it appears as approximant phoneme. This phoneme comes from a different manner of articulation and has different places of articulation as well; palato- alveolar for English and labiodentals for Bahasa Melayu. For instances in words such as red /red/ and roti /roti/.

As mentioned above, the phoneme /ɾ/ is considered as roll rather than approximant in Bahasa Melayu. Hence, Bahasa Melayu has only two semivowels or approximant; /w, y/, while English has three, /w, r, j/ phonemes. Goay and Choo (2003) categorized English /j/ phoneme as similar to Bahasa Melayu /y/ phoneme since they have similar sound, regardless of the written form. For examples the word, yearn /jərn/ as compared to yang /yəŋ/. They share the same /w/ phoneme.

C. The Possible Problems of Malay-Speaking Learners in Acquiring English

Mispronunciation among language learners is considered normal when learning a foreign language. According to Swan and Smith (2001) the phonological system of Bahasa Melayu and English is immensely different and because of this reason, Malay-speaking learners might encounter some problems in acquiring English as their second language.

Haja (2002) believes that one of the obvious mistakes done by these learners is to pronounce English words likewise when pronouncing Bahasa Melayu words. They tend to follow the way the words are spelled, as they are unaware of the fact that English does not have a perfect match between the orthography system and its words. The word etiquette /eˈtɪkwit/ is commonly mistaken as /eˈtkwiti/ by these learners. The same applies when it comes
to spelling, thus word such as economy will be spelled like ekonomi, instead (Swan and Smith, 2001).

As mentioned above, Bahasa Melayu’s plosive phonemes are different with English, as they are always unaspirated. As a result, the dubiety of these words, pin-bin, tile-dial, and cot-got are greater as learners are unable to know the differences. Low proficient learners are inclined to pronounce the /p/ sound instead of the right sound, /t/ in any position and as a result, the word prefer and film will become /preper/ and /pilm/.

Apart from that, Malay learners have an enormous tendency to drop certain English sounds, simply because those sounds do not exists in their native language. According to Abdullah (1980), accede to the former scholars Swan and Smith (2001), Malay learners tend to drop the voiced stops /b, d, g/, fricatives /v, z, f/ as well as affricates /tf, dz/ especially when these phonemes appear at the final part of English words. Ergo, hand will become (haan), old will be (oul) and ship might be (sip). Correspondingly, English fricatives like /θ, s/ are always pronounced incorrectly as /t, d/ for example, the word thousand /θaʊzənd/ would be (tousan).

The existence of short and long vowels in Bahasa Melayu marked another possible mistake as the confusion between deep /di:p/ as compared to the word, dip /dɪp/, is obscure. (Samsuri, 1972). Sometimes, when the learners are faced with such difficulty in struggling with certain sounds, they opt to substitute the sounds. In this case, the sound /h/ is exchanged to the sound /ʔ/. Unconsciously, the wide opening of the glottis has caused a different quality from the English /h/ and thus, making an error in pronouncing certain words.

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS
A. Segmental Features (Vowels and Consonants)

Based on the transcribed song there are some apparent segmental features produced by the subject and these features can be divided into vowels and consonants. Due to the upbeat tempo of the song, it is clear to see that the subject struggled to gallop his utterances throughout the song. Consequently, the subject rushed in most part of the recording, which resulted in many elided of words (as can be seen in the subject’s transcription).

Apart from elision of words, the subject has also committed several errors such as in pronouncing the word here [haː] (line 10) as it was pronounced as [jia], from glottal-fricative to palatal-approximant and this is understandable since the latter required less effort and energy. The subject’s confusion in long and short vowels is serious as most mistakes come from this aspect, for examples,

tonight (line 20) [taːnɪt] becomes [tuːnɪt]
postcard (line 2) [pəʊstkɑːd] becomes [pʊstkɑd]
sheoebx (line 6) [ʃuːbks] becomes [ʃuːbks]

This is very common among native speakers of Bahasa Melayu, as such vowels’ feature does not exist in that language. Similarly, the word combination [kɑmbəˈneɪʃən] (line1) was pronounced as [kɔmbəˈneɪʃən], with the different lip rounding feature as the former is unrounded and the latter as rounded.

The subject requires a lot of practice in pronouncing consonants as his mistakes can lead to misunderstanding of the intended words. In line 9, the word heart [haːt] can be confused with hard [haːd] as the subject failed to distinguish between these two voiced and voiceless alveolar-plosive.

Since Bahasa Melayu lacks aspirated sound, the subject is unable to produce enough aspirated sound like a native speaker in the word, things [θɪŋz] (line5) as he can only produce [tɪŋz], where the aspirated fricative has become voiceless plosive. Similarly, the aspirated sound is just not enough in the word put [pʊt] in line 2.

Another clear mistake done by the subject is the word sleeping [ˈsliːpɪŋ] (line 44) as it was pronounced as [ˈsɪpɪn] with the omission of the phoneme /ɪ/.
B. Suprasegmental Features: Prosodic Rules
   (Assimilation, Dissimilation, Insertion, Deletion and Linking)

There are many prosodic rules, which can be found in the subject’s utterances and they include Assimilation, Dissimilation, Insertion, Deletion as well as Linking. For the sake of coherence and intelligibility, each of the classification is dealt with separately and the examples are organized in tabular forms.

a) Assimilation

Assimilation is the process where the speech sound is influenced by the neighboring sound, which resembles each other more closely. This process can further be divided into three subcategories; progressive, regressive and coalescent assimilation (Fox, 2000). Below are some of the examples of assimilated sounds, which are presented in the song (Refer to the lines of the lyric).

In progressive assimilation, the conditioning sounds precede and affect the following sounds. The regular plural and simple present /s/ and /z/ alteration, depends on the final sound of the word (Fox, 2000). The word condition is the voiced or voiceless sound of the suffix. The s-ending of voiced suffixes such as /n, t, d, n, r/ will cause the s-ending to be pronounced as /z/ while voiceless suffixes such as /t, f, k/ will cause the s-ending to be pronounced as /s/. For the regressive, the voiceless /t/ of the word to is the conditioning sound that causes the voiced /v/ preceding it to assimilate and become voiceless /t/. Finally, for coalescent, the final alveolar sound /t/ are followed by /v/, which resulted in palatalized affricate that is /tf/.

b) Dissimilation

Dissimilation process refers to two neighboring sounds that become less alike due to some features (Crystal, 2011). In the song, there are two types of dissimilation, which are fricative voiced and voiceless. The word the [ðə] (line 2) is pronounced as [ða] due to fricative dissimilation that changes voiced fricative [ð] to [d]. The fricative [ð] becomes less like the adjacent fricative consonant, by changing the manner of articulation to stop, [d]. This can be seen in words such as they [ðeɪ] (line 21), together [təˈgɛðə] (line 14), that [ðæt] (line 3) and there’s [ðəz] (line 1). The same can be seen in the voiceless fricative [θ] in these examples; things [θɪŋz] (line 5) and beneath [bənɪθ] (line 35).

c) Insertion

Insertion causes a segment not present at the phonemic level to be added to the phonetic form of the word and it can be seen in three ways; voiceless stop insertion, glottal stop insertion and insertion of vowel (Fox, 2000).

In the voiceless stop insertion, a voiceless stop with the same place of articulation as the nasal is inserted between a nasal and a voiceless fricative. For examples, /t/ and /k/ are inserted between nasal sounds /n, ŋ/ and fricative /s/.

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TABLE I. EXAMPLES OF ASSIMILATION OF SPEECH SOUND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assimilation</th>
<th>Word / Phrase</th>
<th>IPA Sound (RP)</th>
<th>Assimilated Sound (the subject)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>words (line 1)</td>
<td>[waːdз]</td>
<td>[waːz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>things (line 5)</td>
<td>[θaŋz]</td>
<td>[trŋkз]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>photographs (line 6)</td>
<td>[fautəɡraːfs]</td>
<td>[faʊtəɡraːfs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>questions (line 9)</td>
<td>[kwɛstʃəns]</td>
<td>[kwɛstʃənts]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stars (line 16)</td>
<td>[stɔz]</td>
<td>[sætɔz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>moments (line 19)</td>
<td>[maʊməntz]</td>
<td>[maʊməntz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dreams (line 20)</td>
<td>[drɪmz]</td>
<td>[dɑrtʃmz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sings (line 22)</td>
<td>[sɪŋz]</td>
<td>[sɪŋz]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regressive</td>
<td>have to (line 26)</td>
<td>[hæv tu]</td>
<td>[hæflə]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalescent</td>
<td>night you (line 24)</td>
<td>[nɪt juː]</td>
<td>[nɪtʃ juː]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
answer (line8) \([\text{a:nsə}]\) becomes [\(\text{ʔəːntsə}\]
questions (line9) \([\text{kwestʃəns}]\) becomes [\(\text{kwest[æntʃ]}\]
brings (line23) \([\text{brɪŋs}]\) becomes [\(\text{brɪŋks}\]
things (line 26) \([\theta \text{nə}]\) becomes [\(\text{tiŋks}\]

In the glottal stop insertion, \(/\?)/ is optionally inserted before a stressed word-initial vowel, such as our \([\text{ʔəʊə}]\) (line5), answer \([\text{ʔəːntsə}]\) (line8) and always \([\text{ʔəːˈweɪz}]\) (line12). Finally, a common non-native error is the insertion of vowel within existing strings of segments, which can be seen below,

\begin{itemize}
    \item stars (line 16) \([\text{stəːz}]\) mispronounced as \([\text{sətəːz}]\)
    \item dreams (line 5) \([\text{drɪːmz}]\) mispronounced as \([\text{dɛɹːmz}]\)
    \item real (line 5) \([\text{rɛl}]\) mispronounced as \([\text{rɪəl}]\)
    \item try (line4) \([\text{traɪ}]\) mispronounced as \([\text{tɑːrɪ]}\)
\end{itemize}

d) Deletion (Elision)

Deletion means the disappearance of sound and there are four rules of this deletion and they are elision of \(/t/\) and \(/d/\), simplification of complex consonant cluster, disappearance of \(/a/\) in unstressed syllables and finally, the disappearance of \(/v/\) in the word \(of\) before consonants (Fox, 2000).

Firstly, the rule of elision of \(/t/\) and \(/d/\) can happen when they appear in consonants clusters, for examples

(i) You look so pretty sleeping \textit{next to me} (line44) \([\text{nɛksttu}]\) becomes \([\text{nɛkstu}]\) \((/\text{u}/ \text{is elided between} /\text{k}s/ \text{and} /\text{t}/)\)

(ii) \textit{Just might find their way into my dreams tonight} (line20) \([\text{fændəːz}]\) becomes \([\text{fændəː}]\) \((/\text{d}/ \text{is elided between} /\text{n}/ \text{and} /\text{ð}/ \text{or} /\text{d}/)\)

Secondly, the rule of deletion also applies when complex clusters are simplified the examples below, where \(/t/\) and \(/d/\) are elided to ease pronunciation.

\begin{itemize}
    \item postcard (line2) \([\text{pəʊstkɑːd}]\) becomes [\(\text{pəʊskɑːd}\]
    \item moments (line19) \([\text{məʊmənts}]\) becomes [\(\text{məʊmənz}\]
    \item words (line1) \([\text{wɔːdz}]\) becomes [\(\text{waːz}\]
\end{itemize}

Thirdly, deletion can also occur when \(/a/\) is elided in unstressed syllables as can be seen in these examples;

\begin{itemize}
    \item photographs (line6) \([\text{fəʊtəˈgrɑːfs}]\) becomes [\(\text{fəʊtəgrɑːfs}\]
    \item we’re together (line14) \([\text{wiəˈteɪdər}]\) becomes [\(\text{witədər}\]
\end{itemize}

Finally, the rule of eliding \(/v/\) can happen in the word \(of\), for example, only if it appears before a consonant such as \textit{most of the} \([\text{məʊstədə}]\) (line9) and \textit{all of these} \([\text{ɔːl əf ˈtiːz}]\) (line19).

e) Linking

Speakers often link or join two vowel sounds in various ways such as by linking \(/j/, /w/\) sounds and this is common for non-rhotic speakers of English. This linking process is done to ease the transition from one vowel to another. Below are the examples for linking \(/j/\) and \(/w/\) (Fox, 2000).

(i) \textit{these dreams might find their way into my day}.. (line 27-28) \([\text{weɪntu}]\) becomes [\(\text{wejntu}\]

(ii) with only two just \textit{me and you} (line 32) \([\text{miːənd}]\) becomes [\(\text{miːjənd}\]

(iii) \textit{I’ll tell you one thing it’s always better when we’re together} (line14) \([\text{juːˈwʌn}]\) becomes [\(\text{juːˈwʌn}\]

(iv) \textit{…the mango tree now It’s always better}.. (line35-36) \([\text{nɔːwts}]\) becomes [\(\text{naʊwts}\]

C. General Comments and Observations

Upon hearing the recording for the first time, it is easily to detect and distinguish that the singer of the song is a non-native speaker of English. Some parts of the song are very easy to understand while others require more patience and exigent demands of attentiveness, since the pronunciation has diverted immensely from RP. This diversion might cause confusion in understanding the exact words said by the subject.
Judging the pronunciation of the subject as a whole, which is until the end of the song I would consider it as satisfactory and passable. This is due to the fact that a great part of the errors and mistakes done by the subject are common among non-native speakers who speak Bahasa Melayu. Non-native speakers can still understand a major part of the song, even though it does not resemble RP.

There are many possible factors which might contribute to the diversion of RP and one of them is the interference of mother tongue, which is Bahasa Melayu (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2009). This can clearly be seen when the subject followed a very distinct feature of Bahasa Melayu that is pronouncing every syllable clearly with equal amount of stresses. Due to this, the utterances become choppy with tempestuous rhythm in the intonation. This has made the subject’s utterances as refined and unnatural.

Another factor which has let the subject’s pronunciation to divert from RP, is the different features of both languages (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2009). These features do play a vital role in effecting the subject’s utterances. Unable to recognize and distinguish between long and short vowels, voiced and voiceless consonants have made the words to sound differently as pronounced in RP. Furthermore, features such as aspiration, glottal stops and the like have contributed to the diversion issue.

Sociological as well as psychological factor might also hand out to such problem (Fox, 2000). The subject’s anxiousness and alertness can cause the subject to over pronounce certain words. At the same time, the subject’s pronunciation in this song cannot be the benchmark to measure the subject’s delivery, since with lots of practice, one can have the tendency to sound like a native speaker particularly if s/he imitates the “sound” in a particular song. A famous example is those Indian singers from Malaysia, Alleycats, who can sing in Bahasa Melayu, exactly like native speakers but their polished skill is exposed as soon as they converse in Bahasa Melayu spontaneously.

V. CONCLUSION

In short, there are many notable features of the subject’s utterances as compared to standard RP of English. These features can be seen by looking at the segmental and suprasegmental properties of both languages, in phonetics transcription. In general, pronunciation skill can be polished through strenuous practice by imitating the native speakers’ way of pronouncing words. Based on the lengthy discussion, it is opined that the absence of English features in Bahasa Melayu marks as a forewarning for language teachers in teaching the learners about English phonological system. Since these features are consistent and frequent among Malay-speaking learners, it could serve as an advantage for teachers in helping Malaysians to mastering English. Nevertheless, focuses should be on the intended message rather than accuracy of each sound, as the importance of intelligibility between speakers of English is the vital purpose of communication among any other pretexts.

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APPENDIX A
Original Lyrics (RP’s IPA Transcription)

Song Title: Better Together
Singer: Jack Johnson
Album: In Between Dreams (2005)

There's no combination of words
ðeːs nəʊ kæmbɪˈnɛʃən əv wəːdz
I could put on the back of a postcard
æ kʊd pʊt ən ðə bæk əv ðə pəʊstkɑːd
No song that I could sing
nəʊ sɔŋ ðət æ kʊd sɪŋ
But I can try for your heart
bʌt æ kæn təri fɔː jɔː hɑːt
Our dreams, and they are made out of real things
ɔər dɹiːmz ænd ðei əː meɪd ɔʊt əv rɪəl θɛNZ
Like a, shoebox of photographs
laɪk æ ʃuːbɒks əv fəʊtəˈɡrɑːfs
With sepia tone loving
wɪð sɪpɪəˈtoʊn ˈlʌvɪŋ
Love is the answer,
ˈlʌv iz ði ˈænswə
At least for most of the questions in my heart
at list for: mæost æv ðæ kwestʃəns in mɔi hɔ:t

Like why are we here? And where do we go?
lɪk wəri ə wi: ʰɪə and we: du: wi: gəʊ
And how come it's so hard?
ənd həʊ kɔm ɪts gəʊ hɑ:d
It's not always easy and
ɪts nɔt ɔ:ltweɪz ɪ:zi ænd
Sometimes life can be deceiving
sʌmtaɪmz lɪf kan bɪ: də'si:vɪŋ
I'll tell you one thing it's always better when we're
together
lɪl tel ju: wʌn əθ mɪts ɔ:ltweɪz bɛtə wɛn wɪə tægəðə

[Chorus:]
MMM it's always better when we're together
hemm ɪts ɔ:ltweɪz bɛtə wɛn wɪə tægəðə
Yeah, we'll look at them stars when we're together
jeː wɪː lʊk ət dæm stɑːz wɛn wɪə tægəðə
Well, it's always better when we're together
wel its ɔ:lweiz bèt e wen wiə tægəðə

Yeah, it's always better when we're together
jə: its ɔ:lweiz bèt e wen wiə tægəðə

And all of these moments
ənd ɔ:l ev ʤiəz mæməntz

Just might find their way into my dreams tonight
dʒast mɔːt faɪnd dʒə: weɪ inˈtu: mai ˈdrɪːmjz ˈtɛnəɪt

But I know that they'll be gone
bɔt ən əʊ ðet ðeɪl bɪ: ɡən

When the morning light sings
wen ði ə ˈmaːnət lɑːt ˈsɪŋ

And brings new things
ənd bɹɪŋz ˈnjʊ: θ ɪnz

For tomorrow night you see
fɔ: təˈmɔːrəʊ ˈnait juː siː

That they'll be gone too
ðet ðeɪl bɪ: ɡən tuː

Too many things I have to do
tuː ˈmɛni θ ɪnz əi hæv tuː dʊː
But if all of these dreams might find their way

Into my day to day scene

I'd be under the impression

I was somewhere in between

With only two

Just me and you

Not so many things we got to do

Or places we got to be

We'll sit beneath the mango tree now


It's always better when we're together

Well, it's always better when we're together

Yeah, it's always better when we're together

I believe in memories

They look so, so pretty when I sleep

Hey now, and when I wake up,

You look so pretty sleeping next to me

But there is not enough time,
And there is no, no song I could sing

And there is no, combination of words I could say

But I will still tell you one thing

We're better together.
APPENDIX B

Subject's Utterances (IPA Transcription)

Song Title: Better Together
Singer: Jack Johnson
Album: In Between Dreams (2005)

There's no combination of words
d:s ʰə kəmbəˌkənənət ən wɝz
I could put on the back of a postcard
ə kʰəd ˈpʌt ʌn ˈbæk ən e pʊskəd
No song that I could sing
nəŋ sɑŋ ˈhɛt ə kʰəd ˈsiŋ
But I can try for your heart
bʌt ə kɑŋ tərə fɔ: ʃɔ ˈhɑ:t
Our dreams, (and they) are made (əut) of real things
ʔɑʊ̯ ə dəriːmz ɑː mɛrd ən rɪɬ tʃɪks
Like a, shoebox of photographs
lʌɪk ə ʃuːbəks əv fəʊtəɡrəfs
With sepia(+n)tone loving
wɪt siːpiəntəʊn ˈlʌvɪŋ
Love is the answer,
ˈlʌv ɪz diː ʔɑːntsə
At least (for) most of the questions in my heart
at liːst məʊst ə də kwɛstʃənts in mɔ hiːt

Like why (are) we here? And where do we go?
laɪk wɛ wiː jiə ənd wɛː də wiː ɡeo
And how come it's so hard?
ənd hæ kæm ɪts ɡeo hɑːd
It's not always easy (and)
ɪts nɔt ɑːlwɛiz ɪzɪ
Sometimes life can be (deceiving) (+misleading)
ˈsʌmtaɪmz laɪf kæn biː mɪsliːdɪŋ
I'll tell you one thing it's always better when we('re) together
ɪl tel juː wʌn θ mɪ ɪts ɑːlwɛiz ˈbɛtə wɛn wi təˈgeðə

[Chorus:]
(MMM) (+Yeah) it's always better when we('re) together
jeː ɪts ɑːlwɛiz ˈbɛtə wɛn wi təˈgeðə
Yeah, we('ll) look at them stars when we('re) together
jeː wɛ lʊk ət sɛrəz wɛn wi təˈgeðə
(Well) (+Yeah), it's always better when we(ʻre) together

Yeah, it's always better when we(ʻre) together

(And) all of these moments

Just might find their way into my dreams tonight

But I know (that) another they(ʻre) be gone

When the morning light sings

(And) brings new things

(For) tomorrow night you see

That they'll be gone too

Too many things I have to do
(But) if all of these dreams might find their way

If ɔːl diːz dɔːrɪːmz mɔːt fɔːnd ɔː: wɛi

Into my day to day scene

Jɪntʊ mɔɪ dɪ tʊ dɪ siːn

I’d be under the impression

Aɪ dɪ: ɔnɪ dɪ ɪmprepʃən

I was somewhere in between

Aɪ ɔwz ɔmweɪ ɪn bɪtwiːn

With only two

Wɪt ɔnli tuː:

Just me and you

dʒʌst miː ʃənd juː:

Not so many things we got to do

Nɔt səʊ mən意 tŋks wiː gətʊ duː:

(Or places we got to be) [inaudible]

We(ɪ) sit beneath the mango tree now

Wɪ sit bɪniːt də mɑŋɡəʊ triː nɔʊ
It's always better when we're together

wits ?ːlweɪz ˈbɛtə wən wɪ təɡɛðə

(Mmm) (+Yeah), we're somewhere in between together

jeː wɪ ˈsʌmwhɛ ɪn bɪtwiːn təɡɛðə

(Well) (+Yeah), it's always better when we're together

je: its ʔːlweɪz ˈbɛtə wən wɪ təɡɛðə

Yeah, it's always better when we're together

je: its ʔːlweɪz ˈbɛtə wən wɪ təɡɛðə

(MMmmmm MMmmmm Mmmmm) [omitted]

I believe in memories

əɪ bɪˈliːv ɪn mɛməriz

They look so, so pretty when I sleep

də lʊk səʊ səʊ prɪtɪ wən ə ˈsliːp

(Hey) (+and) now, (and) (+when), when I wake up,

ənd nɔʊ wənd wənd wən ə wɛk əp

You look so pretty sleeping next to me

juː lʊk səʊ prɪtɪ ˈsɪpmɪŋ ˈneks tə miː

But there is not enough time,

bɛt dəː iz nɔt ɪnəf tɛm
(And) there is no, no song I could sing
\[\text{dɛː iz iz uːn uːn uːn uːn uːn kʊd sɪ}\]
(And) there is no, combination of words I could say
\[\text{dɛː iz u e kəʊmbɪneʃən uə wəːz uə kʊd səi}\]

But I will still tell you one thing
\[\text{bət uə wɪl stil tɛl juː wən θ iŋ}\]

We(we) better together.
\[\text{wə bètə tɛrdəɾə}\]