

For the next month, be aware of errors in speech production (“slips of the tongue”) and speech comprehension (“slips of the ear”). Although Dick Clark’s TV Bloopers and errors involving song lyrics (see <http://www.kissthisguy.com>) are **not permitted**, just about anything else is. Keep your ears open during lectures, during news and radio reports, during Presidential addresses, on the bus, at the gym, at parties, etc. for anything that gets misspoken or misheard. Each error that you collect is worth 3 points for a maximum of 30 points. NB: **Do not** copy speech errors off the web or take them from any other source. You are meant to collect these “in nature”.

If your native language is not English, you may use either English or your native language. If you do choose a language that is not English, please see me so that we can work out a transcription system (if it is a language that I am not familiar with).

As you encounter each error, write down the following four things:

For a slip of the tongue:

1. what was actually said
2. what was supposed to be said
3. whether the slip was corrected
4. the date and context

For a slip of the ear:

1. what was perceived
2. what was actually said
3. whether the slip was corrected
4. the date and context.

The “context” in number 4. refers to the person who made the error and the situation in which he or she made it. If the error happens in the public domain (e.g. David Letterman misspeaks a line), it is okay to name him as the speaker. In other situations, you may want to use generic terms, such as “friend” or “family member” to preserve speaker anonymity.

Bring to class on Apr. 30th:

The ten errors (and the four-part description of each). These should be typed and grouped according to error type (production vs. comprehension).

Some examples of speech errors are listed on the back of this page. Speech errors come in many varieties, so if the error you observe does not look like one of them, include it on your list anyway. Note that saying “melk” for “milk” (as many Northern Ohioans do) or saying “gonna” for “going to” does not count. In order for something to be an error, the speaker has to *intend* to produce a form that she or he did not make. Accents, dialects and registers do not fall into this category.

Speech Production Errors

(examples collected by V. Fromkin, UCLA, and by L. Maynell, OSU).

what was supposed to be said:

I went to **Betsy's baby** shower

emergency cardiac

bird watching

chocolate **chip** cookie dough

leave no stone **unturned**

soap suds

what was actually said:

---> I went to **baby's Betsy** shower

---> emerdiac

---> **word botching**

---> chocolate **dough** cookie dough

---> leave no stone **unstoned**

---> soap **studs**

Speech Perception Errors

said:

I'm going to go brush my teeth.

Do we have any bay leaves?

I have to work tonight

heard:

; I'm going to go flash my teeth.

; Do we have any Bailey's?

; I have some dynamite