4.2 Final consonant sounds
- AAE has a process of **word-final cluster reduction**
  - Complex codas are reduced to single segments
    - “test” [st] → [s], “hand” [nd] → [n]
  - Theory 1: underlying complex codas are reduced due to phonological processes (rules)
  - Theory 2: diachronic progression of AAE has made no underlying complex codas, instead simple codas have been preserved from African languages
    - Makes the prediction that any production of a complex coda is through insertion to remedy hiatus (two vowels next to each other)
  - Morphologically complex forms are also reduced, resulting in context guiding disambiguation
    - “Pushed” [pʊʃd] → [pʊʃ]
      - *Yesterday, he push me.* (past tense)
      - *They push me.*
  - Theory 1: supported due to suffixation causing appearance of underlying clusters
    - “Accept” [ɛksep] → “acceptable” [ɛkseptəbl]
      - Only with vowel-initial suffixes though; consonant-initial suffixes still produce reduction more often
      - “Frienly”
    - Reduction optionally occurs before -er and -ing, more obligatory retention before -able
  - Some words are probably underlingly reduced
    - “pos” *post* [poʊs] gets pluralized as “poses” [poʊsəz]
- **Augmentation to theory 1:** sonority plays a role in reduction, where sufficient difference in sonority licenses preservation of complex codas
  - *Think* [θɪŋk] - not reduced
  - *Fast* [fæst] - reduced! [fæs]
- 4.3 devoicing
  - making a voiced consonant voiceless
  - Typically applies to the consonants at the ends of words.
  - Words ending in b,d,g are pronounced as if they end in p,t,k
  - Study conducted by Baran and Seymour: “minimal word pairs in which the final consonant sound of one word was voiced and the final consonant sound of the other word in the pair was voiceless, as in cab and cap, respectively. They found that whites listening to blacks made the most errors in distinguishing the words in the pairs
- More specifically when blacks listened to these pairs produced by whites, they mistook words ending in a voiceless consonant for its counterpart ending in a voiced consonant.
- Black participants also had little difficulty in matching the SAE pronunciation of pig with a corresponding picture but were less certain about the voiceless “pick”
- Final consonant devoicing can result in ambiguity amongst dialects.

4.4 sound patterns/th

- Section discusses how /t, d/ and /f, v/ occur in AAE when “th” is present
- When discussing /th/, as we know theta is voiceless and eth is voiced.
- The articulatory description of a consonant sound includes three different types of information that are used to identify or characterize them:
  ○ (a) state of the glottis in the production of the consonant
  ○ (b) place of articulation of the consonant
  ○ (c) manner of articulation of the consonant
- Place of Articulation - Place in the mouth at which the sound is made
- Manner of Articulation - Identifies the way the sound is made
- /t,d/ and /f,v/ differ from one another in the state of the glottis where /t/ s voiceless and /d/ is voiced, while the /f/ is voiceless and the /v/ is voiced
- Three Generalizations
  ○ (t, d, f, v) occur in positions where /th/ occur in GAE
  ○ Voiceless /t, f/ normally occur in medial and final environments in AAE where theta and eth are present in GAE
  ○ Voiced /d, v/ occur in the same environment where eth occur in GAE
    ■ dat [dæt] ‘that’
    ■ baf [bæf] ‘bath’
    ■ wif, wit [wif], [wt] ‘with’
    ■ mont, monf [mʌnt], [mʌnf ] ‘month’
- AAE speakers, however do produce theta in the beginning of words such as thin, thigh, and thing
- Speakers do not use /t/ in environments which theta (voiceless th) begins a word in English

4.5 r and l: liquid vocalization

- May be pronounced as unstressed vowels post-vocically
  - Linking r: appears in the spelling
- May be replaced with a schwa or a lengthened vowel:
  - bea [bɛə] ‘bell’
  - b. pia [pə] ‘pill’
- c. coo [ko:] 'cold'

4.6 additional phonological patterns
- -In/ing
  - → alveolar nasal in word-final -ing
- Skr/str-
  - → skr word-initially
- Vowels
  - [oi] in some contexts that are spelled “oa” (coach, road)
  - pin/pen merger
  - [ɛr] lowering: → [ɛr] in words such as “prepare”

4.7 prosodic
1. ‘sounding black,’ if anything at all, and the extent to which this judgment is based on certain types of prosodic patterns. Rickford (1972) raised questions about the issue of blacks ‘sounding black’ and whites ‘sounding white.’
  - intonational patterns identify them as black. - 124
2. Another reason that research in this area is important is that it can add to our understanding of the role that prosodic features play in the meaning and interpretation of phrases and sentences in AAE. - 124-125
  - Example: it was noted that BIN and are produced with certain stress patterns, which are related to the way the markers are interpreted. That is to say that if BIN is not stressed, then it will not indicate remote past meaning
3. It may be that speakers of different varieties of American English have these tones, rhythms and pitch in mind when they say that the speech of African Americans indicates that the speakers have an attitude or are angry, confrontational and rude, as well as when they say that African Americans have more expressive and soulful speech.

Research in this area may also shed light on the tonal properties of (stressed)BIN and (unstressed) dən
- Gullah: shows departure between AAE and West African Languages
- Tones closer to West African Languages (Turner 1949)

Tarone’s 1973 study of AA adolescents in Seattle Washington:

1. A wider pitch range, extending into higher pitch levels than in English or formal black English, and often shifting into a falsetto register
2. More level and rising final pitch contours on all sentence types in an informal situation were used
3. Apparent greater use of falling final pitch contours with yes-no questions in formal, threatening situations, but level and rising final contours in informal, familiar situations
4. The use of non-final intonation contours, without the use of the lexical item
if, to mark the dependent clause of some conditional sentence

Summary:
It is easy for listeners to evaluate the sounds and sound combinations that have been discussed as lazy speech, but the descriptions show the way in which combinations are very systematic and based on defined rules that make reference to specific environments in which sounds occur.

The voicing value of consonant sounds plays a major role in the production of sounds and the specific sound that is used in a certain environment. For example, /f/ and /v/ occur in environments in which voiceless /θ/ and voiced /ð/, respectively, occur in general American English.

Suprasegmental features such as stress and intonation have not been well studied, but they are often discussed in relation to unique features of AAE.

The studies that have been conducted on yes-no questions in AAE converge on the point that both level (or flat) and falling tones are used in these constructions. It may be that the types of intonational contours that speakers use mark the speech as being unique.