Articulation and speech planning at prosodic boundaries

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In recent years, researchers have made significant progress identifying articulatory processes during pauses. Thus Gick et al. (2004) have found that default articulatory settings during pauses differ for speakers of French and English, indicating that these are part of the linguistic inventory of a language. Ramanarayanan et al. (2009, 2010) have shown differences in the articulations of grammatical in comparison to non-grammatical pauses and resting positions and Katsika et al. (2014) have shown how pause postures, which are specific articulations of the vocal tract during grammatical pauses, are coordinated with speech gestures. What is unclear, however, is what the cognitive function of these articulatory processes during pauses is. I will present two studies examining this question. The first study examines the existence, properties, and cognitive function of pause postures in American English. Specifically, I examine how they are related to speech planning. I follow this with a small study examining manual and head movements during pauses, again asking how these might tie in with speech planning processes. I conclude with a discussion of the implication of these studies for our understanding of the linguistic representation and cognitive function of prosodic boundaries.