

# Phonetics and Phonology

## FF1B

### Lecture 8 Worksheet

#### ASPECTS OF CONNECTED SPEECH III

#### ELISION

Print this worksheet and bring it with you to the lecture.

- Practical definition:  
under certain circumstances sounds disappear, ie in certain circumstances a phoneme may have zero realisation

#### Examples in Czech

srdce /srce/    jablko /japko/    džbán /zba:n/    dcera /cera/    francouzština /francouftina/

#### 1. Historical elision

##### - proper nouns

Gloucester /            /    Worcester /            /!!!    Leicester /            /

##### - consonant clusters

<del>WH</del> -	where /weə/    when /wen/
<del>WH</del> -	who /hu:/    whole /həʊl/
<del>WR</del> -	wrong /rɒŋ/    write /raɪt/
<del>KN</del> -	know /nəʊ/    knife /naɪf/
<del>PS</del> -	psychic /saɪkɪk/    psalm /sɑ:m/
<del>PN</del> -	pneumonia /ŋju:'məʊniə/
<del>SFL</del> -	castle /kɑ:sl/    whistle /wɪsl/
<del>SFN</del> -	fasten /fɑ:sn/    chestnut /tʃesnʌt/
<del>MB</del>	climb /klaɪm/    bomb /bɒm/
<del>MN</del>	hymn /hɪm/    column /kɒləm/
<del>BT</del>	doubt /daʊt/    debt /det/
<del>PT</del>	receipt /rɪ'si:t/

## 2. Colloquial elision

### VOWELS

- loss of weak vowel after /p,t,k/  
/p'teɪtəʊ/, /t'mɑ:təʊ/, /p'hæps/
- weak vowel + /n,l,r/ becomes a **syllabic consonant**  
tonight /t'naɪt/, national /næʃnl/, correct /k'rekt/

### CONSONANTS

- /t,d/ in clusters  
acts /æks/, mostly /məʊsli/, landlady /lænleɪdɪ/, grandmother /grænməðə/
- other consonants in clusters  
months /mʌns/, clothes /kləʊz/
- /t/ at word boundaries  
last night /lɑ:s naɪt/, just now /dʒʌs naʊ/
- loss of final /v/ in “of” before consonants  
lots of them /lɒts ə ðəm/, waste of money /weɪst ə mʌni/

### CONTRACTIONS

= a special case; some experts do, some don't regard them as cases of elision

- “had” --> 'd : /d/, /əd/
- “not” --> n't : /nt/
- “are” --> 're : /ə/, etc.

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## 3. No elision

what time /wɒt taɪm/, fresh shirt /frefʃɜ:t/, half full /hɑ:f fʊl/, with this /wɪð ðɪs/

- these sounds get articulated but are given no audible realisation, ie you “hold the first consonant but don't release it until you articulate the other (following) consonant

The following exercises have been taken from

## 5 Optional sounds

OPTIONAL SOUNDS

- 1 Optional sounds are sounds which are pronounced by some speakers or on some occasions, but are omitted by other speakers or on other occasions. In LPD they are indicated in two ways: by **italics** and by **raised letters**.
- 2 Sounds shown in **italics** are sounds which the foreign learner is recommended to include (although native speakers sometimes omit them). They denote sounds which may optionally be **elided** (omitted).  
lunch 'lʌnʃ Some say 'lʌnʃ, others say lʌnʃ  
LPD recommends lʌnʃ  
bacon 'beɪk ən Some say 'beɪk ən, others say 'beɪk n. LPD recommends 'beɪk ən
- 3 Sounds shown with **raised letters** are sounds which the foreign learner is recommended to ignore (although native speakers sometimes include them). They denote sounds which may optionally be **inserted**.  
fence 'fens Some say fens, others say fɛns. LPD recommends fens.  
sadden 'sæd ɪn Some say 'sæd n, others say 'sæd ən. LPD recommends 'sæd n

### Sounds shown in italics: elision

**Elision** is the omission (= deletion) of a sound that would otherwise be present. It is particularly characteristic of rapid or casual speech.

#### EXERCISE 23

AIM: TO IDENTIFY THE FULL AND ELIDED PRONUNCIATION OF WORDS WHEN YOU HEAR THEM.

- a. The words below all have a sound which can be elided (omitted, deleted). Listen to the cassette: each word is spoken twice, first in full, and then with elision.

	<i>in full</i>	<i>with elision</i>
1. French	frenʃ	frenʃ
2. plunge	plʌndʒ	plʌnʒ
3. stamped	stæmpɪt	stæmpt
4. tangerine	'tændʒ ə 'rɪn	'tæŋ ə 'rɪn
5. tasteful	'teɪst fʊl	'teɪst fʊl
6. kindness	'kaɪnd nəs	'kaɪn nəs
7. awaken	ə 'weɪk ən	ə 'weɪk n

- b. Listen to the words on the cassette. For each word circle the appropriate transcription in a. above.

### EXERCISES 25-26

AIM: TO UNDERSTAND THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH ELISION OF CONSONANTS TAKES PLACE, AND SO TO PREDICT WHEN ELISION MAY TAKE PLACE. TO SAY AND TRANSCRIBE FULL AND ELIDED FORMS.

#### Elision of consonants

Within a syllable:  
t may be elided in ntʃ e.g. lunch lʌnʃ, lʌnʃ  
d may be elided in ndʒ e.g. strange streɪndʒ, streɪnʒ  
p may be elided in mps, mpt e.g. jumped dʒʌmpt, dʒʌmpt  
t may be elided in nts e.g. contents 'kɒn tɛnts, 'kɒn tɛns  
k may be elided in ŋks, ŋkt e.g. lynx lɪŋks, lɪps  
At the end of a syllable, t and d may be elided before a consonant in the next syllable:  
t may be elided in ft, st e.g. firstly 'fɜ:stli, 'fɜ:stli  
and less commonly in pt, kt, lft, θt, ʃt  
d may be elided in ld, nd e.g. baldness 'bɔ:ld nəs, 'bɔ:ld nəs  
and less commonly in bd, gd, dʒd, vd, ɒd, zd, md, ɪd

#### EXERCISE 25

Say and transcribe the following words in their full form, and with elision. You can check the pronunciation on the cassette, and the transcription in the key.

1. pinch *in full* *with elision*
2. bandstand
3. camped
4. wistful
5. softness
6. textbook

#### EXERCISE 26

Four of the following words can exhibit elision. Circle those words.

- softly softer customer lounge firstly judged  
lateness wasteful

## 6 Syllabic consonants

- Most syllables contain a vowel sound. Sometimes, though, a syllable consists only of a consonant (or consonants). If so, this consonant (or one of them) is a nasal (usually *n*) or liquid (l or *r*, especially in AmE, *r*). For example, in the usual pronunciation of **suddenly** 'sʌd n̩li, the second syllable consists of *n* alone. Such a consonant is called a **syllabic consonant**.
- Instead of a syllabic consonant it is always possible to pronounce a vowel plus an ordinary (non-syllabic) consonant. Thus it is possible, though not usual, to say 'sʌd n̩li rather than 'sʌd n̩li.

### EXERCISE 29

AIM: TO RECOGNISE SYLLABLES CONTAINING A SYLLABIC CONSONANT OR VOWEL + CONSONANT, WHEN YOU HEAR AND SEE THEM.

- The words below all have a main pronunciation with a syllabic consonant. Listen to the cassette: each word is spoken twice, first with a syllabic consonant, and then with a vowel + consonant.

*syllabic consonant*      *vowel + consonant*

- |                |              |                 |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. suddenly    | 'sʌd n̩li    | 'sʌd n̩li       |
| 2. Britain     | 'brɪt n̩     | 'brɪt n̩        |
| 3. frightening | 'fraɪt n̩ɪŋ  | 'fraɪt n̩ɪŋ     |
| 4. hidden      | 'hɪd n̩      | 'hɪd n̩         |
| 5. medal       | 'med l̩      | 'med əl         |
| 6. needlework  | 'ni:dl̩ wɜ:k | 'ni:dl̩ əl wɜ:k |
| 7. cattle      | 'kætl̩       | 'kætl̩ əl       |
| 8. petals      | 'pet l̩z     | 'pet əl z       |
| 9. panel       | 'pænl̩       | 'pænl̩ əl       |
| 10. softener   | 'sɒf n̩ə     | 'sɒf ən ə       |
| 11. station    | 'steɪʃ n̩    | 'steɪʃ ən       |
| 12. fastened   | 'fɑ:sn̩d     | 'fɑ:sn̩d        |

- Listen to the words on the cassette. For each word, circle the appropriate transcription in a. above.



KEY

## 7 Compression

- Sometimes a sequence of sounds in English has two possible pronunciations: either as two separate syllables, or **compressed** into a single syllable. Possible compressions are shown in LPD by the symbol  $\sim$  between the syllables affected.
 

E.g. **lenient** 'lɪ:nɪənt      Two pronunciations are possible: a slower one 'lɪ:nɪənt, and a faster one 'lɪnɪənt.

**diagram** 'daɪəgræm      Two pronunciations are possible: a slower one 'daɪəgræm, and a faster one 'daəgræm. \*

**maddening** 'mæd'nɪŋ      Two pronunciations are possible: a slower one with three syllables, 'mæd n̩ɪŋ or 'mæd ənɪŋ, and a faster one with two syllables, 'mæd nɪŋ
- Generally the uncompressed version is more usual
  - in rarer words
  - in slow or deliberate speech
  - the first time the word occurs in a discourse.

The compressed pronunciation is more usual

  - in frequently-used words
  - in fast or casual speech
  - if the word has already been used in the discourse.

### Compression involving a consonant

Compression causes a possible syllabic consonant to become a plain non-syllabic consonant.

A frequent context for compression is when *-ing* is added to a verb ending with a syllabic consonant. The inflected form often appears in the dictionary under the verb, with the ending shown separately.

**battle**, B ~ 'bætl̩      'bætl̩      'bætl̩      ~ed d      ~ez  
 ~ɪŋ      'ɪŋ

This represents an entry **batling** bætl̩ɪŋ which can be pronounced with three syllables or two syllables.