

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

WH -	where /weə/ when /wen/
WH -	who /hu:/ whole /həʊl/
WR -	wrong /rɒŋ/ write /raɪt/
KN -	know /nəʊ/ knife /naɪf/
PS -	psychic /saɪkɪk/ psalm /sɑ:m/
PN -	pneumonia /ŋju:'məʊniə/
SFL -	castle /kɑ:sl/ whistle /wɪsl/
SFN -	fasten /fɑ:sn/ chestnut /tʃesnʌt/
MB	climb /klaɪm/ bomb /bɒm/
MN	hymn /hɪm/ column /kɒləm/
BT	doubt /daʊt/ debt /det/
PT	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 /grænmʌðə/
- 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.

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 *Study Guide* by C. Fletcher.

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	'tændʒ 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 lɪnks, 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 n l i, 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 n l i rather than 'sʌd n l i.

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 n l i | 'sʌd n l i |
| 2. Britain | 'brɪt n | 'brɪt ən |
| 3. frightening | 'fraɪt n ɪŋ | 'fraɪt ən ɪŋ |
| 4. hidden | 'hɪd n | 'hɪd ən |
| 5. medal | 'med l | 'med əl |
| 6. needlework | 'ni:dl wɜ:k | 'ni:dl əl wɜ:k |
| 7. cattle | 'kætl | 'kætl əl |
| 8. petals | 'pet l z | 'pet əl z |
| 9. panel | 'pænl | 'pænl əl |
| 10. softener | 'sɒf n ə | 'sɒf ən ə |
| 11. station | 'steɪʃ n | 'steɪʃ ən |
| 12. fastened | 'fɑ:sn d | 'fɑ:sn ənd |

- 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 n ɪ ŋ or 'mæd ən ɪ ŋ, and a faster one with two syllables, 'mæd n ɪ ŋ

- 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 ~ 'bætl 'bætl ɪŋ ~ed d ~esz
 ~ɪŋ ɪŋ

This represents an entry **batling** bætl ɪ ŋ, which can be pronounced with three syllables or two syllables.