

Unit 7

Syllables & Rhythm (1):

assimilation, elision, linking

Slides for the session of

Phonetics with Listening Practice (British)

held on

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<English Phonetics: Unit 7:>

/ˈɪŋ.gɪf/ /fə.ˈnet.ɪks/ /ˈjuː.n.ɪt/ /sev.n/

[ˈɪŋ.gɪf.ə.fə.ˈner.əks.ˈjuː.n.ət. ˈsev.n] (AusE, broad)

<Syllables & Rhythm (1)>

/ˈsɪl.əb.əlz/ /ən/ /ˈrɪð.əm/ /wʌn/

[ˈsɪl.əb.ɪz.n. ˈɪwɪð.m. | ˈwʌn] (AusE, broad)

<assimilation, elision, linking>

/ə.sɪm.ə.ˈleɪf.ən/ /i.ˈlɪz.ən/ / ˈlɪŋk.ɪŋ/

[ə.sɪm.ə.ˈleɪf.ən | ə.ˈlɪz.ən | ˈlɪŋk.ɪŋ] (AusE, broad)

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Assimilation and elision: theory

- Consonants at the edge of one syllable often adapt to neighbouring consonants — becoming more similar to them (ASSIMILATION) or disappearing altogether (ELISION) — so as to make the pronunciation smoother.

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- (Assimilation: a change in quality; elision: a change in quantity.)

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- (Assimilation: a change in quality; elision: a change in quantity.)
- Usually assimilation is ‘anticipatory’ — a preceding consonant adapts to a following consonant. (In French, anticipatory assimilation is also common: « le tragique destin des Romanov » [lətʁɑzi~~k~~destɛ̃dɛvɔmanɔ̃ → lətʁazi[□]destɛ̃dɛvɔmanɔ̃])

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- Doesn't this interfere with the ability of phonemes to signal differences in meaning?

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- The next slide contains examples of assimilation and elision from Eckert and Barry:

Assimilation and elision: examples

- ['kɫmænd 'getɪt] → ['kɫmən̩ 'getɪt]

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- ['wʊt hæz 'hæpənd] → ['wʊts 'hæpɪnd]

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- ['wɒt həz 'hæpənd] → ['wɒts 'hæpɪnd]
- ['ɹʊt ðə 'ɹɪlg] → ['ɹʊt̚ ðə 'ɹɪlg]

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- ['wɒt həz 'hæpənd] → ['wɒts 'hæpɪnd]
- ['pʊt ðə 'pɪlg] → ['pʊt ðə 'pɪlg]
- ['kləʊz ðə 'dɔ:] → ['kləʊz zə 'dɔ:]

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- ['kləʊz ðə 'dɔ:] → ['kləʊz zə 'dɔ:]
- [bɒt (?)əv 'kɔ:s] → [bɒtəf 'kɔ:s]

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- [bʌt (?)əv 'kɔ:s] → [bʌtəf 'kɔ:s]
- [aɪ kən 'du: ɪt] → [aɪkŋ 'du:ɪt]

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Linking (Liaison)

- **Why Germans sound so strange (!):**
[ʔaɪn ˌʔastɛʁoɪːt] ('ein Asteroid')

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Let's look quickly at "Dialectal Differences".

Linking (Liaison)

- **Why Germans sound so strange (!):**
[ʔaɪn ˌʔastɛʁɔɪt] ('ein Asteroid')
- **Consonant-Vowel Linking:**
VC V → VC_˩V not VCʔV
/ən/ /'æst ə ɔɪd/ → [ən_˩'æstɛɪd]

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- **r-linking:**
V₁(r) V₂ → V₁rV₂ (V₁ = aə ɔə ʒə ə ɪə eə ɔə aɪə aʊə)
/pɔə(r)/ + /ɪt/ → [p^hɔə^rɪt] (pour it)

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- **Intrusive r:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁rV₂ (V₁ = a: ɔ: ɜ: ə)
/pɔ:/ + /ɪt/ → [ˈp^hɔə^ɹɪt] (paw it)

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- **Intrusive r:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁rV₂ (V₁ = a: ɔ: ɜ: ə)
/pɔ:/ + /ɪt/ → [p^hɔə^ɹɪt] (paw it)
- **Intrusive j:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁jV₂ (V₁ = i: eɪ aɪ ɔɪ)
/si:/ + /ɪt/ → [sɪjɪt] (see it)

Let's look quickly at "Dialectal Differences".

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/pɔə(r)/ + /ɪt/ → ['p^hɔə^ɹɪt] (pour it)
- **Intrusive r:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁rV₂ (V₁ = a: ɔ: ɜ: ə)
/pɔ:/ + /ɪt/ → ['p^hɔə^ɹɪt] (paw it)
- **Intrusive j:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁jV₂ (V₁ = i: eɪ aɪ ɔɪ)
/si:/ + /ɪt/ → ['si:ʝɪt] (see it)
- **Intrusive w:**
V₁ V₂ → V₁wV₂ (V₁ = u: əʊ aʊ)
/səʊ/ + /ɪt/ → ['səʊ^wɪt] (sew it)

Let's look quickly at "Dialectal Differences".

Additional Reading

If you have time, look at the scans of the pages from Eckert and Barry that are here:

http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/phoneticswithlistening/unit07_2023/

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Simon Roper:

An Upper-Class Southern British Accent, 1673 - 2023:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KYaqdJ35fPg>

(This relates to the work we did in Unit 5.)

Halliday 1970: 57-59

Study Unit 1: Rhythm

http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/Study_Units_01-10/Unit_01/

The text is here:

http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phoneticswithlistening/Halliday1970/The_Book/2193_001.pdf

Have a look at the text of “Dialectal Differences”.

Check to see if there are any words that end with difficult consonant clusters. How would you go about making it easier for someone to pronounce these words?

Check every word which begins with a vowel sound (not necessarily a vowel letter, and not a ‘silent’ consonant letter). Is there consonant-vowel linking at the beginning of the word? Is there an ‘intrusive’ /r/, or /w/ or /j/?