

Unit 10

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 10:>

/ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ/ /fə.ˈnet.ɪks/ /ˈjuː.n.ɪt/ /ten/

[ˈɪŋ.gəlɪʃ.fə.ˈnet.ɪks.juː.n.ətˈ tʰen] (AusE, broad)

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/ˈsɪl.əb.əlz/ /ən/ /ˈrɪð.əm/ /wʌn/

[ˈsɪl.əb.əlz.ən.ˈrɪð.əm. | ˈwɛn] (AusE, broad)

<assimilation, elision, linking>

/ə.ˌsɪm.ə.ˈleɪ.f.ən/ /i.ˈlɪz.ən/ /ˈlɪŋk.ɪŋ/

[ə.ˌsɪm.ə.ˈleɪ.f.ən | ə.ˈlɪz.ən | ˈlɪŋk.ɪŋ] (AusE, broad)

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3 Additional Reading

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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 » [lətʁazikdɛstɛ̃dɛʁomanɔv → lətʁazikdɛstɛ̃dɛʁomanɔv])

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- Alveolar consonants (such as /t d s z l/) are particularly susceptible to anticipatory assimilation in English.

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

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- No.

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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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- ['stænd 'bæk] → ['stæm: 'bæk]

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

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- ['wʌt hæz 'hæpənd] → ['wʌts 'hæpɪnd]
- ['ɹʊt ðə 'ɹɪlg] → ['ɹʊt̚ ðə 'ɹɪlg]

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- ['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 ˌʔastɛʁɔ'i:t] ('ein Asteroid')
- **Consonant-Vowel Linking:**
VC V → VC_˩V not VCʔV
/ən/ /'æst ə ɔɪd/ → [ən_˩'æstəɔɪd]

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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^ɹɪt] (pour it)

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/pɔə(r)/ + /ɪt/ → [ˈp^hɔə^ɹɪt] (pour it)
- **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/ → ['si:ɹɪt] (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/phonetics/unit11_20241/

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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/phonetics/Halliday1970/
Study_Units_01-10/Unit_01/](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phonetics/Halliday1970/Study_Units_01-10/Unit_01/)

The text is here:

[http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phonetics/Halliday1970/
The_Book/2193_001.pdf](http://www.spence.saar.de/arcanum/phonetics/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/?