

## Phonemes in Connected Speech

The rhythmic pattern of the English language causes significant changes in the quality the English vowels and consonants in connected speech:

*Reduction.* In unstressed syllables, the articulation of English vowels is weakened and the duration is shortened. Vowels are partially reduced (e.g., *So late* [so `leit], where /əʊ/ may be pronounced as [o]) or reduced to /ə/ (e.g., *Not so late* ['nɒt sə `leit]; *from Brazil*, where /frɒm/ may be pronounced as [frəm]).

*Elision (Deletion).* In rapid or careless speech, sounds may be left out. Most typically, consonants /t/ and /d/ are dropped if they are a part of a consonant cluster, e.g., in such words and phrases as *kindness*, *next day*, *want to go (wanna go)*, *don't know (dunno)*. Weak vowel /ə/ may also be dropped, e.g., in *can*, *slacken*, *fool about*, *fire alarm*.

*Liason.* A sound may be introduced between words to link them. In Received Pronunciation (the standard accent of Standard English in the United Kingdom), the final *r* is usually not pronounced, e.g., *father* /'fɑ:ðə/, *summer* /'sʌmə/. But if the next word begins with a vowel, /r/ is used to link the words, e.g., *summer and autumn* /'sʌmə ənd 'ɔ:təm/. *Intrusive /r/* may appear between two vowels even if there is no *r* at the end of the first word, e.g., *America(r) and Asia*, *formula(r) of success*.

*Accommodation.* It is adapting the articulation of a consonant to a neighbouring vowel (e.g., /ʃ/ in *shoe* is labialized under the influence of the rounded /u:/) or a vowel to a neighbouring consonant (e.g., /e/ in *men* is nasalized).

*Assimilation.* In a consonant cluster, a consonant is partially or fully assimilated by a neighbouring consonant. *Partial assimilation* means that a consonant loses some of its features and acquires some features of another consonant, e.g., in *ten bikes* /n/ becomes bilabial under the influence of /b/ and the word combination may sound as /tem baiks/. *Full assimilation* means that a consonant takes the form of

a neighbouring consonant, e.g., /s/ in *horseshoe* may be pronounced as /ʃ/ under the influence of the following consonant – /'hɔ:ʃfu:/.

According to the criterion of direction, there are three main kinds of assimilation:

- *regressive assimilation*, which means that a consonant is changed under the influence of the following sound, e.g., *in* ← *May* /ɪm meɪ/, *let* ← *me* /lem: i:/, in *play* /p/ loses its plosion under the influence of /l/;
- *progressive assimilation*, which means that a consonant is influenced by a preceding sound, e.g., *lunch* → *score* /lʌntʃ ʃkɔ:/; compare *it's* /ɪts/ to *it is* /ɪt ɪz/, in *it's* /z/ becomes voiceless and sounds like /s/ under the influence of the preceding /t/;
- *coalescent (reciprocal) articulation*, which means that neighbouring sounds influence each other, e.g., *won't you* /wəʊnt ju/ → /wəʊntʃu/, *would you* /wʊd ju/ → /wʊdʒu/, *miss you* /mɪs ju/ → /mɪʃu/, *lose you* /lu:z ju/ → /lu:ʒu/.

## References

1. Васильев В.А. 1980. Фонетика английского языка: Нормативный курс. Москва: Высшая школа. Англ. 256 с.
2. Паращук В. Ю. 2005. Теоретична фонетика англійської мови: Навчальний посібник для студентів факультетів іноземних мов. Вінниця: НОВА КНИГА. 240 с. Англ.
3. Borisova, L.V., Metlyuk, A. A. 1980. Theoretical phonetics. Минск: Вышэйшая школа. 144 p.
4. Crystal, D. 2003. The Cambridge encyclopedia of language. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 480 p.