

GOVT. PG COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, GANDHINAGAR, JAMMU

SEM : 2

SUBJECT : Functional English

COURSE TITLE: Phonetics and grammar

COURSE CODE: OFUETC0201

UNIT : 3

ASSIMILATION AND ELISION

(I)ASSIMILATION

DEFINITION

In connected speech all the syllables and words are not always spoken in the same way as they are spoken in isolation.

Sometimes a sound in a syllable or a word is influenced by the sound of a syllable or word preceding or following it. The way in which sounds are influenced by each other is called assimilation. In other words, assimilation is a process whereby adjacent consonants become more similar to each other in

manner or place of articulation in order to facilitate the flow of pronunciation.

EXAMPLE: In 'Newspaper', the voiced |z| of 'news' changes into voiceless |s| because the following sound |p| is a voiceless sound.

TYPES OF ASSIMILATION

- 1) Anticipatory: As the name implies, in this type of assimilation one or more consonants change so as to prepare for/facilitate the pronunciation of the following one. This change may be either in manner or place of articulation.
- 2) Progressive : An assimilation whereby a sound becomes more like the preceding sound; as in shortening *captain* to *cap'm* rather than *cap'n*.
- 3) Two way assimilation: Both preceding and following sound is affected.

Assimilation is **total** if the assimilated sound adopts all the phonetic features of another sound and becomes identical to it.

An assimilation is **partial** if the assimilated sound retains at least one of its original phonetic features and adopts only some of the phonetic features of another sound.

EFFECTS OF ASSIMILATION

- 1) It affects the place of articulation.
- 2) It affects the manner of articulation.
- 3) State of glottis is also affected.

In other words, Assimilation is a sound change where some phonemes (typically consonants or vowels) change to be more similar to other nearby sounds. It is a common type of phonological process across languages. Assimilation can occur either within a word or between words. It occurs in normal speech, and it becomes more common in more rapid speech. In some cases, assimilation causes sound spoken to differ from the normal "correct" pronunciation of each sound in isolation. In other cases, the changed sound is considered canonical for that word or phrase.

(II) ELISION

DEFINITION OF ELISION

An elision is the removal of an unstressed syllable, consonants, or letters from a word or phrase, for the purpose of decreasing the number of letters or syllables when mixing words together. The missing letter is replaced by an apostrophe. Generally, the middle or end letter or syllable is eliminated, or two words are blended together, and an apostrophe is inserted.

TYPES OF ELISION

Elision can be of the following types:

- 1)** Weak vowels are lost after |p|, |t|, |k| as in 'tomato', pronounced as /tə'mɑ:təʊ/, etc.
- 2)** |n|, |t| and |r| become syllabic when preceded by weak vowel which is dropped as in 'tonight' becoming /tə'nait/, 'police' becoming /pə'li:s/ or 'correct' becoming /kə'rekt/.
- 3)** In some other cases the last sound of a word or a syllable gets dropped as in 'fast track' becoming /fɑ:st æk/.

4) In casual rapid speech |f| of 'of' is usually dropped and so we usually speak 'waste of time' as /weɪstataɪm/.

Most elisions in English are not mandatory, but they are used in common practice and even sometimes in more formal speech.

In linguistics, an elision or deletion is the omission of one or more sounds in a word or phrase. The word elision is frequently used in linguistic description of living languages, and deletion is often used in historical linguistics for a historical sound change.

Even though the effort that it takes to pronounce a word does not hold any influence; in writing, a word or phrase may be spelled the same as it is spoken for example, in poetry or in the script for a theatre play. In order to show the actual speech of a character, elision is used. It may also be used in an attempt to transcribe non-standard speech. Some types of elision are commonly used in poetry in order to preserve a particular rhythm.

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