The Phonetics of English Pronunciation
Session 09

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Homework review

Exercise 1

a. *negotiation* *negotiator*
   [nəˌɡəʊʃiˈeɪʃən] [nəˈɡəʊʃieɪtə]

b. *fantasy* *fantastic*
   [ˈfæntəsi] [fənˈtæstɪk]

c. *medicine* *medicinal*
   [ˈmedsɪn] [məˈdɪsɪnəɫ]

d. *Arabic* *Arabian*
   [ˈæɹəbɪk] [əˈɹeɪbiən]

e. *horror* *horrific*
   [ˈhɒɹə] [həˈɹɪfɪk]

Homework review (cont'd)

Exercise 2

Wherever   mountains   reach   the   sky   above,
we͜əˈɹevə   ˈma͜ʊntənz   ˈɹiːʧ   ðə   ˈska͜ɪ ʲ əˈbʌv

on   icy,   starry   nights   in   Summertime,
ən͜ ˈna͜ɪsi   ˈstɑːɹi   ˈna͜ɪts͜ sɪn   ˈsʌməˌta͜ɪm

the   frigid   air   appears   to   flow   away.
ðə   ˈfrɪʤɪd͜ ˈdɛə ˡ əˈpi͜əz̥   tə   ˈflə͜ʊ ʷ əˈwe͜ɪ

Topics

- Transcription practice: "Linking" etc.
- "Cross-word effects"
    - Boundary conditions: Elision and Assimilation
      Read: Section VI.4, pp. 223-227
    - Stress patterns in compounds
      Read: Section VI.2, pp. 188-212

Transcription Exercise

- Focus: Linking and Weak forms
- So segmental problems are not highlighted
  - R-sounds are symbolized with [r] not [ɹ]
  - L-sounds are symbolized with [l] whether they are clear or dark.
  - Final-voiced consonants are not highlighted.
- This doesn't mean they are any less important!
  Please don't forget them.

Transcription

They expected him to arrive at the reception after all
ðeɪ ʲ ɪk'spektɪd ‿ɪm   tʊ ʷ ə'raɪv ‿ət̬   ðə   rə'sepʃən ‿ɑːftə ʳ 'ɔːl̩

the other aunts and uncles had offered their
ðɪ ʲ ʌðə ʳ 'ɑːnts ‿ə'n ‿ʌŋkəlz ‿ə'd ‿ɒfəd   ðeə

congratulations to the excited couple. The object of
kəŋɡrætjə'leɪʃənz tə ðɪ ʲ ɪk'saɪtɪd 'kʌpəl | ðɪ ʲ 'ɒbʤɪkt ‿əv

the exercise was to give them a final treat
ðɪ ʲ eksɛsaɪz wəz tə 'ɡɪv ðəm ‿ə 'faɪnəl 'triːt

Assimilation

- Assimilation means "changing to become more similar"
- We have already seen that sounds can change under the influence of the next word onset:
  /t/ → [t̪] before a dental fricative:
- In fact *alveolar* word-final plosives /t d/ and the nasal /n/ *very often change* to become more similar to the initial consonant of the following word (not only before /ð θ/:

		compare German:
just in case	*on guard*	*in großen Firmen*
[ʤʌst ɪn̪ keɪs]	[ɒn̪ ˈgɑːd]	[ɪŋ grɔːsən fɪɛmən]
let me go	*red button*	*es steht mir gut*
[ˈlep̚ mi ˈgəʊ]	[ˈreb̚ ˈbʌtn̩]	[ɛʃ teːp̚ miɛ gut]

Assimilation (cont'd)

- The preceding examples are examples of *left-to-right* (or *anticipatory*) assimilation.
- We also saw in an earlier lecture that sounds can change under the influence of the previous word coda (*right-to-left* assimilation):
- In *the* (because it's weak):

  /ð/ → [z] after /z/   *lose the way*
  ['luːz̯ ə'weɪ]

- Like in German, weak /ən/ endings lose the schwa and assimilate to the preceding consonant:

  happen   *taken*   *heaven*
  ['hæpm̩]   ['teɪkŋ̩]   ['hevm̩]

Elision

- *Elision* is leaving something out.
- In casual speech a great deal gets left out (in German, English and many other languages!) E.g.
  /ˈhast du ʔaınən moˈmɛnt ˈtsaıt/ → [ˈhasn̩moˈmɛnʔˈtsaıt]
- *Too casual* speech shouldn't be practised (it will come naturally if you speak English a lot)
- But *consonant cluster simplification* in certain cases is normal, *not* over-casual, and avoids sounding too precise:
  fric. + /t/ # cons. → fric. # cons.

	she left Sunday	the last post
precise	[ʃi ˈleft ˈsʌndi]	[ðə ˈlɑːst ˈpəʊst]
normal	[ʃi ˈlef ˈsʌndi]	[ðə ˈlɑːs ˈpəʊst]

A commen German mistake

- Within words there is a notorious "elision site" which rarely gets taught and which betrays German learners:
- Words ending in ⟨tion⟩ that are derived from words ending with **plosive + /t/** lose the [t] and have just /ʃ/. (In phonology it is said that the /t/ has been "palatalised".)

except	[ek'sept]	→ [ek'sepʃən]	not [ek'septʃən]
interrupt	[ɪntə'rʌpt]	→ [ɪntə'rʌpʃən]	not [ɪntə'rʌptʃən]
correct	[kə'rekt]	→ [kə'rekʃən]	not [kə'rektʃən]

- But it is only with ⟨tion⟩ that the palatalisation lead to the *elision* of the [t] element.

In	*capture*	*rupture*	*lecture*	*structure*	/t/ remains!
	['kæp.tʃə]	['rʌp.tʃə]	['lek.tʃə]	['strʌk.tʃə]	

A common German mistake (cont'd)

- But, of course, ⟨tion⟩ doesn't always lose the [t] (there are always exceptions!)
- The words where a [ʧ] is pronounced are derived from a few verbs ending in /st/:
  ingest, *digest* [. . . ˈʤest] → [. . . ˈʤes.ʧən]
  And, of course: *question* [ˈkwes.ʧən]

Word-stress patterns

- This is a tricky area...
  sometimes deceptively easy...
  sometimes frustratingly confusing

Firstly *Stress mistakes are very noticeable*
(because stress functions as a signal for the important parts of an utterance)

Secondly there are related words in German and English which can differ in their word-stress placement.
Many of these are regular suffix differences and are easily learned:

	English	**German**
⟨tion⟩	unstressed	stressed
⟨ual⟩/⟨uell⟩	unstressed	stressed

Word-stress patterns: compounds

- This is a particularly dangerous area for German learners of English. Why?
- In English, *compounds are not always written as one word* like they are in German:
  Mädchenhandelsschule vs. *Girls' Business School*
- And semantically equivalent compounds sometimes have the same stress pattern as German, sometimes *not*:
  'Haupt͵straße vs. *'High ͵Street* (strong-weak)
  but: *'Schatz͵insel* vs. *͵Treasure 'Island* (weak-strong)
- We also use the terms *primary stress* and *secondary stress* for "strong" and "weak".