

English and French

English from Iggy Roca and Wyn Johnson (1999) *A Workbook in Phonology*. Blackwell. French from Roca and Johnson (1999) *A Course in Phonology*. Blackwell.

English

In fast speech in English, words can be shortened by one syllable by deleting unstressed word-initial syllable vowels, sometimes creating what would normally be unacceptable clusters. In spite of this, there appear to be some restrictions on when a vowel may be deleted. (The transcriptions of the English words are based on General American pronunciation.)

	<u>normal</u>	<u>fast</u>		<u>normal</u>	<u>fast</u>
1. potato	[pətəyDo]	[pteyDo]	6. reduction	[rədʌkʃn]	*[rdʌkʃn]
2. career	[kəriyr]	[kriyr]	7. retire	[rətayr]	*[rtayr]
3. commotion	[kəməwʃn]	[kmowʃn]	8. mature	[məčur]	*[mčur]
4. phonetic	[fəneDɪk]	[fnɛDɪk]	9. laconic	[ləkanɪk]	*[lkanɪk]
5. pathetic	[pəθɛDɪk]	[pθɛDɪk]	10. platonic	[plətanɪk]	*[pltanɪk]

What prevents deletion in the right-hand column?

French

French high vowels can be syllabified in two different ways:

A.

1.	il jou	[ilʒu]	'he plays'	jouer	[ʒwe]	'to play'
2.	il tue	[iltü]	'he kills'	touer	[twe]	'to kill'
3.	contribution	[kɔ̃tribüsyɔ̃]	'tax'	contribuable	[kɔ̃tribwɔ̃bɔ̃]	'taxpayer'
4.	il lie	[illi]	'he ties'	lier	[lye]	'to tie'
5.	colonie	[kəlɔ̃ni]	'colony'	colonial	[kəlɔ̃nyal]	'colon ial'

(i) Can you see any reason for the different syllabification?

Compare the data in A with those in B.

B

6.	plier	[plie]	*[plye]	'to fold'
7.	prier	[prie]	*[prye]	'to pray'
8.	clouer	[klue]	*[klwe]	'to nail'
9.	trouer	[true]	*[trwe]	'to make a hole in'
10.	cruauté	[krüote]	*[krwote]	'cruelty'
11.	influence	[ɛflüäs]	*[ɛflwäs]	'influence'

(ii) What do these new facts suggest about the structure of constituents of the syllable in French?