

A review: Phonological Processes (continued)

1.
 - a. Assimilation
 - b. Dissimilation
2. Syllable Structure Processes (these affect the distribution of segments in words)
3. Weakening and Strengthening Processes

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1.
 - a. ASSIMILATION

The influence of one segment upon another so that the sounds become more alike or identical.

- (i) Consonant assimilates vowel features
e.g., Russian:

PALATALIZATION OF CONSONANTS BEFORE FRONT VOWELS.

Nupe (a West African language):

PALATALIZATION OF CONSONANTS BEFORE FRONT VOWELS;
LABIALIZATION BEFORE ROUNDED VOWELS.

English:

HISTORICAL PALATALIZATION (FOLLOWED BY A SHIFT IN PLACE OF
ARTICULATION)

- (ii) Vowel assimilates consonant features
e.g., English:

VOWELS ARE NASALIZED WHEN ADJACENT TO A NASAL
CONSONANT IN THE SAME SYLLABLE.

Chatino (spoken in Mexico):

UNSTRESSED VOWELS ARE VOICELESS BETWEEN VOICELESS
CONSONANTS.

- (iii) Consonant assimilates consonant features
e.g., English:

THE ENDINGS FOR THE PLURAL, THIRD PERSON SINGULAR, AND THE PAST TENSE
AGREE IN VOICING WITH A PRECEDING CONSONANT.

Yoruba (spoken in West Africa); English:

THE NASAL CONSONANT BECOMES HOMORGANIC WITH A FOLLOWING CONSONANT.

(iv) Vowel assimilates vowel features
e.g., Turkish:

VOWEL HARMONY: VOWELS AGREE IN CERTAIN FEATURES
(Turkish: backness and roundness)

German:

UMLAUT: BACK VOWELS ARE FRONTED BEFORE CERTAIN SUFFIXES CONTAINING A FRONT VOWEL

Umlaut was a productive rule in Old English:

foot/feet
goose/geese
mouse/mice

Assimilation may be

(i) progressive (left-to-right)

e.g., plot [p] cry [ɹ]

(ii) regressive (right-to-left)

e.g., bean [i]

b. DISSIMILATION

A process in which two segments become less similar to each other.

e.g., English:

Latin → English

2. SYLLABLE STRUCTURE PROCESSES

Result in the preferred syllable structure: CV

a. Deletion

Consonant deletion

e.g., French

A WORD-FINAL CONSONANT IS DROPPED IF THE FOLLOWING WORD BEGINS WITH A CONSONANT.

Vowel deletion

e.g., French

THE VOWEL OF THE DEFINITE ARTICLE IS DELETED IF THE FOLLOWING WORD STARTS WITH A VOWEL.

- b. epenthesis (segment insertion)
Consonant insertion:

e.g., Hanunoo (spoken in the Philippines):

THE CONSONANT h IS INSERTED TO BREAK UP A VOWEL CLUSTER.

In some dialects of English:

The *idea* came

But: the *idea-r-is* good.

r-INSERTION

Vowel insertion

e.g., Latin:

THE VOWEL e IS INSERTED TO BREAK UP CONSONANT CLUSTERS WORD-FINALLY.

English:

A SCHWA IS INSERTED TO BREAK UP FINAL CONSONANT CLUSTERS.

- c. Coalescence: Two adjacent segments are replaced by a single one which shares features of the two original ones.

Consonant coalescence:

e.g., Korean:

WHEN A STOP AND h ARE ADJACENT, THEY ARE REPLACED BY AN ASPIRATED STOP.

English:

MORPHEME FINAL t, d, s, z AND A FOLLOWING GLIDE ARE REPLACED BY ALVEOPALATAL FRICATIVES.

Vowel coalescence:

Latin → Spanish:

ai au BECOME e AND o (THE RESULTING VOWEL HAS THE SAME VALUE FOR BACKNESS AND ROUNDNESS AS THE ORIGINAL HIGH VOWEL.

Vowel-consonant coalescence:
e.g., French:

A VOWEL PLUS A NASAL CONSONANT BECOMES A NASALIZED VOWEL WHEN THE CONSONANT IS WORD-FINAL.

d. Metathesis: Two segments may interchange.
e.g., Hebrew:

s AND t INTERCHANGE WHEN ADJACENT.

3. WEAKENING AND STRENGTHENING PROCESSES

Vowels:

a. Syncope: A vowel is deleted word-internally when it occupies a weak position (=unstressed).

Weakening process!!
e.g., Latin → French

English: *chocolate, nursery*, etc.

Weakening process!

b. Apocope: The loss of a final unstressed vowel (weak position!)

e.g., Saami (a Finno-Ugric language)

Weakening process!

c. Diphthongization: Stressed vowels and tense vowels are strong vowels; they frequently diphthongize.

e.g., Latin → Italian
Strengthening process!

Consonants:

d. Lenition (consonant weakening)
e.g., Finnish:

VOICELESS LONG STOPS BECOME SHORT WHEN THE SYLLABLE ENDS IN A CONSONANT.

p → v; k → ∅ WHEN THE SYLLABLE ENDS IN A CONSONANT.

NEUTRALIZATION: Phonological distinctions are reduced in a particular environment. Segments that contrast in one environment, have the same representation in the environment of neutralization.

a. Consonant neutralization

e.g., German:

THE OPPOSITION BETWEEN /t/ AND /d/ IS NEUTRALIZED WORD-FINALLY (What is the phonological process?)

English:

THE OPPOSITION BETWEEN /t/ AND /d/ IS NEUTRALIZED INTERVOCALICALLY FOLLOWING A STRESSED SYLLABLE (What is the phonological process?)

b. Vowel neutralization

e.g., Russian:

THE OPPOSITION BETWEEN /o/ and /a/ IS NEUTRALIZED IN UNSTRESSED POSITION (What is the phonological process?)

English:

VOWEL REDUCTION: WEAKENING OF AN UNSTRESSED VOWEL TO SCHWA (What is the phonological process?)