

Assimilation Rules

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Assimilation Rules

Definition

Assimilation

- From Latin *assimilatio*, meaning "to render similar"
- A linguistic process by which a sound becomes similar to an adjacent sound.



Progressive Assimilation

If the phoneme changes to match the preceding phoneme, it is progressive assimilation.



Regressive Assimilation

If the phoneme changes to match the following phoneme, it is regressive assimilation.



Reciprocal Assimilation

If there is a mutual influence between the two phonemes, it is reciprocal assimilation.



Consonant Assimilation

In the case the two phonemes can fuse completely and give a birth to a different one. This is called a coalescence. The result of consonant assimilation is usually a geminate consonant.



Assimilation Rules

Example

Total Assimilation

- “winter” :

/t/ □ [n] / [n] ____

(meaning that /t/ becomes [n] in the environment after [n]).

- “center” :

/t/ □ [n] / [n] ____

(/t/ becomes [n] in the environment after [n]).

Partial Assimilation

- **“stopped”** :

/d/ □ [t] / [p] ____

(i.e. /d/ becomes [t] in the environment after [p].)

- **“picked”** :

/d/ □ [t] / [k] ____

(i.e. /d/ becomes [t] in the environment after [k].)

Progressive (or left-to-right) Assimilation

- **“dogs”** :

/s/ □ [z] / [g] ____

(the ending [s] is assimilated to [z] by the influence of the preceding voiced [g].)

- **“pubs”** :

/s/ □ [z] / [b] ____

(the ending [s] is assimilated to [z] by the influence of the preceding voiced [b].)

Regressive, or Anticipatory (or right-to-left) Assimilation

■ “miss you” :

[m'ISE]

/s/ → [S] / ____ [j] .

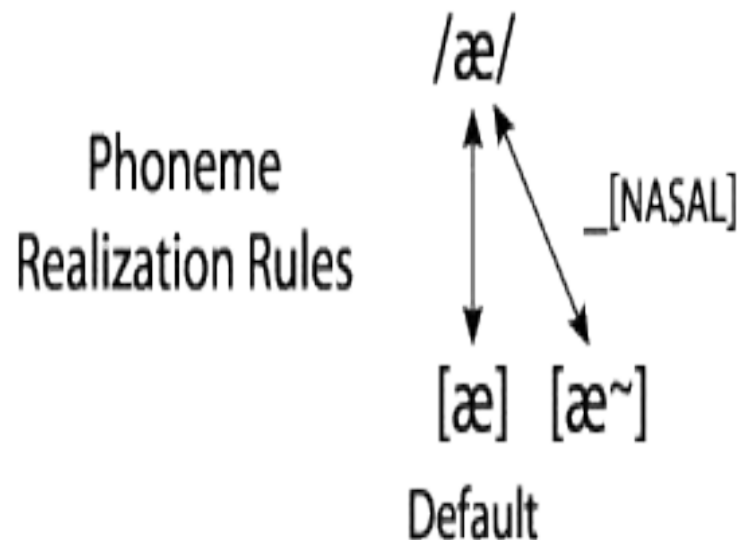
(the sound [s] in [mls] is changed to [S] by the assimilation of the following palatal glide [j].)

Double Assimilation

■ “man” :

/A/ \square [A] / [m] __ [n]

(The [A] in /mAn/ is nasalized by its preceding [m] and its following [n].)



References

- American English Phonetics
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The End

