

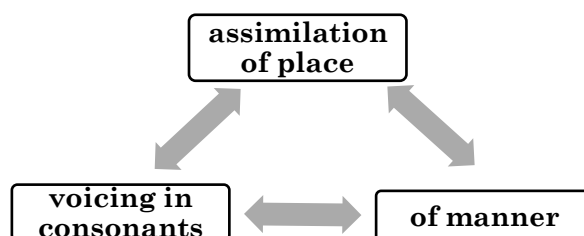
Unit II. Sentence stress

Lesson 11: Assimilation

Let's define

Assimilation is a natural process which happens in every language. It is also carried out unconsciously, so speakers don't normally realize what they are doing. Assimilation processes are quite simple: our articulators (tongue, lips, teeth, etc.) have to move from one position to another - from /n/ to /b/, for example-, but certain changes are difficult to make in the required time, so they take a shortcut.

- Three types of assimilation-



1. Assimilation of Place of articulation: it often occurs in rapid colloquial speech

Case	regressive	Examples
Case 01	/t/ changes to /p/ before the bilabial /p, b, m/	- That person. /ðæp 'pɜ:sən / - It boils. /ɪp 'bɔɪlz / - That money. /ðæp 'mʌni /
Case 02	/d/ changes to /b/ before the bilabial /p, b, m/	- It could be better. /kʊb bi 'betə / - You could publish it. /kʊb 'pʌblɪʃɪt / - She could modify it. /kʊb 'mɒdɪfaɪɪt /
Case 03	/t/ changes to /k/ before /the velar k/ or /g/	- Is that clear? /ðæk 'klɪə / - Put down that gun. /ðæk 'gʌn /
Case 04	/d/ changes to /g/ before the velar /k/ or /g/	- You should come. /ʃʊg 'kʌm / - He should go. /ʃʊg 'gəʊ /
Case 05	/n/ changes to /ŋ/ before the velar /k/ or /g/	- One king. /wʌŋ 'kɪŋ/ - Then go for it! /'ðen 'gəʊ fəɪt /
Case 06	/s/ changes to /ʃ/ before /j/ or /i/ let's practice--	Dress shop / / Nice yacht / /
Case 07	/z/ changes to /ʒ/ before /j/ or /i/ let's practice--	cheese shop / / as you / /

2. Assimilation of manner of articulation: in most rapid colloquial speech.

Case 01:	Regressive /θ/ changes to /s/ before /s/	both sides /bəʊs saɪdz/ earth science /ɜ:s 'saɪəns/
Case 02:	progressive	in the /ɪð ði:/ Get them /geð ðəm/ Read them /ri:ð ðəm/

3. Assimilation of voice

It occurs when the vibration of the vocal cords is not something that can be switched on and off very swiftly, as a result groups of consonants tend to be **either all voiced or all voiceless**.

Case 01:	Progressive Grammatical endings	Likes /laɪgs/ Dogs and cats /dɒgz ænd kæts/
Case 02:	Regressive	Of course /ɒv ɡɔ:s/ Supposed to /sə'pəʊzɪ tu:/ Has to /hæs tu: / Used to /ju:zɪ tu:/ Have to /hæf tu:/

N.B.

- If a sound changes influenced by a following sound, it is called **regressive assimilation**.
- If a sound is influenced by a preceding sound, it is called **progressive assimilation**.