

## Appendix 17

### Shortening vs lengthening of stressed vowels

#### / ɪ /

This vowel, like / ʌ / and / ʊ / is only encountered shortened, never lengthened in the data. It may be shortened before any consonant and cluster. Examples of shortening:

*pit* (many examples); *pig; Glyn; hill; Twickenham; ri'diculous; ter'rific; in'sisting; official; pro'visions; re'ligious; 'swimming; 'silly; 'fifty; 'hinting; 'builders; 'pimples; 'Swindon.*

#### / ʌ /

This vowel, like / ɪ / and / ʊ / is only encountered shortened, never lengthened in the data. It may be shortened before any consonant and cluster. Examples of shortening:

*up; (the eleven) plus; touch; much; dust; once; thumped; clubs; 'couple; 'mucker( = work colleague) ; 'butty ( = friend) ; 'busses; 'nothing; 'muscle; 'Russian; 'trouble; 'coming; 'summons; 'Cymmer; Aber'cynon; 'colour; 'Dylan; 'rugby; 'struggling; cy'mysgiad ( = mix-up) ; 'Dyffryn; 'hundred; 'pumping; 'company; 'functions; re'dundant; re'dundancy; 'hunger; 'hundred; 'youngsters; 'wonderful; 'Rhymney*

#### / ʊ /

This vowel, like / ɪ / and / ɔ / is only encountered shortened, never lengthened in the data. It may be shortened before any consonant and cluster. Examples of shortening:

*soot; push; tooth; 'putting; 'pudding; 'wooden; 'cooking ; 'bully; 'football; cwtch*

#### / ɛ /

This vowel, like / a / and / ɒ /, may be shortened or lengthened.

In monosyllables, shortening may occur with any succeeding type of consonant; examples from the data: *less; met; bed; head; leg*. Before clusters only shortening may occur; examples from the data: *Welsh; French; wedge; sledge*.

In polysyllables, speakers may

- lengthen / ɛ / where the succeeding consonant, or cluster, is joined into the following syllable. Examples of lengthening from the data are: *'record (n) (three instances of long); 'messing ; 'desecrated; 'Gethin; 'Essex; 'lessons; 'ready; 'regular; 'Evans ; 'weather(4 occurrences); alto'gether; 'cemetary; 'many (4 occurrences); 'penalty; 'terrace (4 occurrences); 'ferry; 'Heritage (5 occurrences); 'buried; pros'perity; 'telly; Llwyn'celyn; Rhyd'felin; ce'lebrities; 'negligence*

- shorten /ɛ/ where the succeeding consonant closes the stressed syllable.  
Examples of shortening from the data are: *apath'etic; de'pended; per'centage; 'pension; 'vendering (machine); 'twenty; tre'mendous; 'secretary; col'lections; 'lecturers; e'lected; 'excellent; 'deathly; 'helpful; 'Welshman;*

Words are not always syllabified by speakers in the same way. For example the words '*second*'; '*better*' are found in the data either with vowel lengthening or shortening.

## /ə/

This vowel, like /ɛ/ and /ɔ/, may be shortened or lengthened.

With monosyllables

- shortening is found in the data before clusters, examples are *tax; stacked; smashed*, with the exception of *France* (one occurrence of lengthening, three of shortening).
- Before voiceless consonants, shortening or lengthening may occur; examples from the data are *cap* (short); *back* (two occurrences of long, two of short); *pack* (long); *mat* (long)
- Before voiced consonants, only lengthening occurs in the data; examples are *have; sad; bad* (three examples); *man* (four examples); *Mam; damn; Aber'fan.*

Lengthening, when it occurs, can be striking, with some informants changing the vowel sound to a more backed quality [ä–ö].

In polysyllables:

- Before a cluster almost only shortening was found : e.g. '*accent; factories; dis'aster; 'plasterer; head'master* ( 5% long in questionnaire data) ; '*after; 'Africa; 'satchel; ro'mantic; 'ambulance; 'auntie; (Dai) 'Bando; Tony'pandy*
- Before single consonants:
  - if the consonant closes the syllable only shortening is found in the data e.g. '*apathy; 'accurate; e'vacuated; ca'pacity*
  - if the consonant is joined into the succeeding syllable, only lengthening occurs, e.g. '*category; 'Latin; 'matter; 'Mafia; 'catholic; com'passion; 'rabbit; 'fabulous; 'Braddock; 'Dagenham; i'magine; 'travel; Tre'hafod; Aber'avon; family; 'damage; 'gramaphone; 'management; Tre'banog; ap'parently; 'married; 'garage; 'carry; com'parison; 'Barry; Llan'harry; 'valleys ; 'talent; Tre'alaw*

From the examples above, it can be seen that either shortening or lengthening may occur with voiceless consonants.

## /ɔ/

This vowel, like /ɛ/ and /ə/, may be shortened or lengthened.

In stressed monosyllables:

- when closed by a voiceless consonant or cluster only shortening is found in the data: e.g. *top; spot; boss; docks; Scots; chopped; robbed*
- when closed by any other consonant only lengthening is found in the data: e.g. *job; God; dog; Tom ; gone ; wrong ; Gnoll (Football Ground)*

In polysyllables:

- before a cluster only shortening is found in the data: e.g. '*Wattstown*; '*hospital*; '*Sospan*; '*res'ponsible*; '*context*; '*Rhondda*; '*Ponty* ; '*always*; '*Colville* ; '*longer* voiceless consonant shortening and lengthening was found in the data.
- before a voiceless consonant, whether shortening or lengthening may occur depends on how the word is syllabified; examples in the data are '*proper* (short); '*soccer* (short); '*bosses* (short); '*offers* (long); '*office* (long)
- before any other consonant mainly lengthening is found in the data; e.g. '*probably*; '*Sodom and Go'morrah*; '*lobbyist*; '*modern*; '*products*; '*bother*; '*Coventry*; '*communist*; '*honest*; '*comical*; '*Donald*; '*Thomas*; '*forestry*; '*quarry*; '*sorry*; '*Morris*; '*solid* (three examples); '*tech'nology*; '*Hollybush*. Exceptions are '*collier* (short); '*colliery* (two short, four long);

Whether /ɛ/, /a/ and /ɔ/ may be shortened or lengthened depends on the way the word is syllabified.

1. If a succeeding consonant closes the syllable (VC#V) [where underlining denotes the stressed vowel and # the syllable division] only shortening was found

e.g. *apa'thetic* [apə'θɛt · | ɪk]  
*'accurate* ['æk · | ɪcurət]  
*'soccer* ['sɔ̄k · | ʌ]  
*Aber'cynon* [abʌ'kλn · ʌn]

2. If the succeeding consonant was syllabified with the following syllable (V#CV) only lengthening was found

e.g. *'record* ['rɛ · | kəd]  
*'catholic* [ka · θʌlɪk]  
*'office* ['ɔ · fɪs]

Although there was a strong tendency for voiceless consonants to be syllabified by the speaker with the stressed vowel, this was by no means universal, as can be seen from '*record*', '*catholic*' and '*office*' in the data immediately above.

Speakers seem to have a certain amount of choice as to how to syllabify, with the result that not only words of similar phonetic composition , but even the same word may be syllabified differently by different speakers, for example :

*second* [sɛk · | ʌnd] or [sɛ · | kʌnd]  
*chapel* [tʃæp · | ɿ] or more commonly [tʃa · | pl]

/i:, u:/

These long vowels may be markedly shortened. In the data the following examples of shortening occurred :

/i:/: *keep* ; '*sleeping* ; *meat*; *Pete*; '*heating*; '*beating*; *cheek*; *week*; *teeth* ;

*Keith* ; *police*; *policemen*; '*recent*; *east*;

u:/: *roof* ; *proof* ; (*Glyn and Donald*) '*Houston* (five examples); *boost*; *boots*

All shortenings observed are in the environment of a following voiceless consonant, or consonant cluster.

With diphthongs, many cases of shortening occurred in the data: e.g.

/ʌɪ/

*life; right; lies; time; pints; fight; twice; 'finest; 'miner(s)(five examples); 'private; 'lying; re'tired; 'lighting (three examples); 'driver; 'higher; 'ninety; 'Blaina (Terrace); (Barry) 'Island*

/ɔɪ/

*(un)em'ployment; 'royal ; 'noisy ; en'joyed; 'toilets ; boys; oil; 'toilets; 'loiter; 'boyo; 'Noisel*

/ʌʊ/

*house (six examples); down; 'houses; 'shouting; 'hours & our (both disyllabic); 'thousand; 'mountain; 'trousers ; 'Tower*

/ɪʊ/

*mute; Bute; dis'pute; 'duo; 'beautiful; 'Brewery*

/eɪ/ *tails; days; plays; failed; train; saying; 'station (when diphthongal);*

*'eighty; 'training*