

L'élision en français : une catégorie qui n'est plus catégorique

Elision in French: a category that is no longer categorical

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Abstract: Elision is the least well investigated of the processes collectively known as 'linking phenomena' in French phonology. Data from a corpus of late 20th-century interviews show that 39% of new CV onsets created by forward resyllabification are due to elision (considerably more than those due to liaison or *enchaînement* of fixed consonants) and a further 9% to sites created by intrusive fillers (notably *eu* and *hein*), a source hitherto overlooked. Yet elision is not categorical. We document instances of minor but stable variability alongside tokens of non-elision of *que* and its compound forms. Non-elision is characteristic of fluent, relaxed speech and seems to be spreading. We argue that it is not motivated by phonology but by register and discourse factors in continuous speech.

Key words: elision, linking, schwa, truncation, continuous speech.