A phonological Study of Elision in Standard English and Standard Arabic

AbdAli Nayif Hasan
University of Babylon / College of Basic Education

Introduction

Elision can be defined as the "omission of sounds in connected speech" (Crystal, 2003: 158). In this respect, Underhill (1998: 61) indicates that "elision is a natural result of the speech organs cutting corners in connected speech, mainly to word boundaries". Thus, elision is the characteristic of rapid connected speech. It is used for the sake of making the pronunciation of sounds easy in connected speech. It is possible to elide a single phoneme or a whole syllable as illustrated in the following instances:

- **handsome** /hansəm/ → /hansm/ (a single phoneme /s/ is elided).
- **library** /laibrəri/ → /laibri/ (a whole syllable /ri/ is elided).

In Arabic, the most commonly elided sounds are [a], [y], and [w] (Ateeq, n.d.: 44). Sometimes, elision in English is similar to that in Arabic as illustrated in the following examples in which /t/ is elided in both of them:

- **mostly** /moustli/ → /mousli/
- **[istikta ][a]** → *[istikta a]*

On the other hand, sounds such as [y] and [w] can be elided in Arabic, whereas in English it is impossible to elide /j/ and /w/ which are known as gliding English it consonants or semi-vowels as shown below:

- **[damun ]** → [damun]
- **[yaw[idu]** → [ya[idu]

( Ibid )

you / ju:/
we /wi:

It can be hypothesized that differences are more than similarities between English and Arabic types of elision. Accordingly, the present study aims at investigating such points of similarities and differences.
The research under investigation is of considerable value to those interested in the field of contrastive studies. Also it gives an insight about English and Arabic phonology.

2- **Elision in English**

This section is concerned with the conditions that govern the elision of single phonemes such as consonants and vowels as well as the elision of whole syllables. Historic elision is also taken into consideration.

2.1 **Elision of Consonants**

This section deals with the phonemes whose elision primarily depends on their environment, i.e. the context in which the words containing such phonemes occur.

2.1.1 **Elision of /t/ and /d/**

Many linguists affirm that /t/ and /d/ are considered the most commonly elided phonemes in English. In this respect, Finch (2005: 44-45) points out that such a type of elision is due to "casual speech" as illustrated in the following examples:

- Mostly /moustli/ → /mousli/
- Handsome /hands ɔm/ → /hans ɔm/

Similarly, Collins and Mees (2008: 118) note that such an elision is involved when changing from "the ideal form in connected speech". In addition, Underhill (1998: 61) states that /t/ and /d/ are elided when they occur in a sequence of three consonants in connected speech:

- Next please /nekst pli:z/ → /neks pli:z/
- You and me /ju: and mi:/ → /ju: ɔ n mi: /

In the same way, Roach (2000:143) points out that "in clusters of three plosives or two plosives plus a fricative, the middle plosive may disappear". Consider the following instances in which the medial plosive /t/ is elided:

- Acts /akts/ → /aks/
- Looked back /lukt bak/ → /luk bak/

In addition, Yule (1996: 59 -60) says that /t/ and /d/ are elided in consonant clusters especially in "coda position", i.e. after the center of the syllable as the following instances illustrate:

- Aspects /aspeks/ → /aspeks/
- Friendship /frendʃip/ → /frenʃip/

/ t/ and /d/ are also elided when they occur finally preceded by /n/ and followed by a word beginning with a consonant as in:

- Hand that to tom /hand ət tɔt tom/ → /han ət tɔt tom/
In this respect, Crystal (1989: 164) indicates that /d/ is elided when it occurs between /n/ and one or two of the following consonants such as /s/, /m/, /z/: handsome /handsm/ \(\rightarrow\) /hansm/

Gimson (1977:297-298) points out that "the alveolar plosives are apt to be elided in rapid speech when they occur in the following sequences followed by a word beginning with a consonant":

\[-st/ , -ft/ , -\ t/ , -nd/ , -zd/ , -d/ -vd/ , -pt/ , -kt/ , -t\ t/ , -bd/
\[-gd/ ,
\[-d, d/ ;

last chance / la:st tfans/ \(\rightarrow\) /la:s tfans/

kept quiet /kept kwaid/ \(\rightarrow\) /kep kwai/.

Collins and Mees (2008: 121) say that the sequence /tt/ is reduced to /t/ in the following forms:

ought to, want to, got to:

We ought to visit him / wi o:t vizit im /

I want to leave / ai wont li:v /

It is worth noting that /t/ and /d/ are not elided when they are

1- followed by a word beginning with /h/:

smoked hering / smoukt heri/ (ibid : 120).

2- followed by a word beginning with a vowel:

hand it to me / hand it t mi/ (Hudson, 2000 : 210)

Concerning this point, Collins and Mees (2008:120) note that in certain sequences shown in the following example /k/ is elided:

They asked us / 4 ei a:st ?s/.

However, /t/, in addition to /k/, may also be elided when followed by a consonant:

masked gunman / ma:st g-n mân/ \(\rightarrow\) /ma:s g-n mân/

3-preceded by /nt/ or /lt/ in which case they may be replaced by a glottal stop [?]:

spent time / spent taim / or / spen? taim /

walt Disney / wo:lt dizni/ or / wo:l? dizni / (Ibid)
2.1.2 Elision and Assimilation

Heffner (1975: 188) affirms that "when two sounds become contiguous in the speech measure, one or both of them may, in the fusion of the configuration, undergo changes which tend to make each more like its neighbor". In this case, Gimson (1977:298) indicates that when final /t/ or /d/ are followed by /j/, they are kept in a coalesced form with /j/, i.e. /tʃ/ and /dʒ/.

Is that yours? / iz a tʃoːz /

Would you like this? / wudʒ u laik ð is /

Similarly, Kuiper and Allan (1996: 74) note that elision of a segment may allow an assimilation to occur:

*hand bag* / hand bag /                      / han bag /                      / ham bag / .

It can be noted that since /d/ is elided, /n/ and /d/ become adjacent. As a result /n/ changes into /m/ under the influence of /b/ so that both of them will become bilabial, i.e. having the same place of articulation.

2.1.3 Elision of /t/ in Contracted Forms

The phoneme /t/ of the negative form is often elided, particularly in disyllables, before a following consonant:

You mustn't lose it / ju mɔsn luːz it / .

Wouldn't she come? / wudŋ ʃi k- m / .

(Gimson, 1977:298)

Elision of /t/ may sometimes occur before a vowel:

You mustn't over eat it. / ju m ɔ sn ouv ɔ r iː it / .

(Ibid)

2.1.4 Elision of /h/

In casual speech, the phoneme /h/ is elided when it occurs in weak forms of function words as in:

I think he will have told her. / aɪ ɪ n k i wil ɔ v tould ɔ / .

(Hudson, 2000: 210)

The example above shows that *he* is pronounced /i/, *have* / ɔ v/ and *her* / ɔ r / .

2.1.5 Elision of Dental Fricatives

Dental fricatives such as /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are prone to elision when they occur in certain words such as *months* and *clothes*:
months / m-nës /  \[→\]  / m-ns /  
clothes / klou'diz/  \[→\]  / klouz /  
(Collins and Mees, 2008:121)

However, / ŵ / is not elided in numerals such as fifth and twelfth. Instead, the preceding sound may be elided:

fifth / fifë / \[→\]  / fi ŵ /  
twelfth / twelfë / \[→\]  / twelŒ/  
(Ibid)

2.1.6 Elision of / ŵ /

Gimson (1977: 143) indicates that the phoneme / ŵ / in the word of is elided when followed by a consonant:

lots of them / lots ð ŵ ðm / \[→\]  / lots ð ð ðm /  

In the same respect, Crystal (2003: 247) says that a word such as "of is prone to elision before consonants":

lots o’ people / lots ð pi:pl / .

In addition, Collins and Mees (2008: 121) note that the elision of / ŵ / in of is common when followed by / ð /:

three of the websites / ŵ ri: ð ŵ ð ð websaits / \[→\]  / ŵ ri: ð ð ð websaits /  

2.1.7 Elision of a Whole Syllable

Crystal (203:247) states that "a whole syllable may be elided, especially when there is a separated consonant as in:

library / laibrôri/ \[→\]  / laibri /  (the syllable / rô / is elided.)
particularly / pôtikjulu/i/ \[→\]  / pôtikjuli/  (the syllable / ðlô / is elided.)

Similarly, Rajimwale (2009: 105 -106) indicates that elision may occur in words such as because and probably in which case they can be heard as cause and probly.

2.1.8 Historic Elision

Kuiper and Allan (1996: 75) state certain instances in which there are silent consonants that reflect the earlier pronunciation and they have no longer been pronounced even in careful speech:

Wright, knee, gnaw, thistle, fasten, walk, lamb, etc.

In this respect, Elgin (1979: 95) states a phonological rule that /g/ is elided when it occurs before a word final nasal as in: sign / sain / design /dizain /. However, / g / is
pronounced when followed by a suffix as in: *signature* /signi∫∂/ and *designation* /dezigne∫∂n/.

On the other hand, Fromkin et al (2003: 310) agree with Hudson (2000: 412) to state a rule by means of which /b/ in old spelling is omitted when it occurs finally preceded by a nasal consonant as in:


However, Hudson (Ibid) notes that the stop consonant /b/ is retained when a suffix is added as in: *limb* / lim/ , *limber* / limb∂/ .

### 2.2 Elision of Vowels

This section is primarily concerned with the elision of vowels in contracted forms and weak syllables. Such types of elision can be initial or medial according to the context in which they occur as illustrated in the following points.

#### 2.2.1 Elision of Initial Vowels

Gimson (1977: 297) says that schwa / ə / is elided when followed by a continuant and preceded by a word-final consonant. (*"compensation for the loss of / ə / frequently being made by the syllabicity of the continuant"*) . Consider the following examples:

*not alone* / not əloun/ / notl loun/
*get another* / get ən∂∂/ / get n n∂∂/

On the other hand, when a word initial schwa / ə / is preceded by a vowel sound, it may coalesce with the preceding vowel:

*try again* / trai əgen/ / trai gen/

(Ibid)

Lass (1984:187) states that the process of eliding initial vowels is referred to as aphaeresis. Kuiper and Allan (1996:74) points out that a vowel such as /a/ can be elided in the word

*am* when it occurs in a contracted form :

*I am* / ai am/ / I'm / aim/

In the same respect, Rajimwale (2009: 105-106) indicates that schwa / ə / in weak syllables is elided as in:

*about* / əbaut/ / bout / baut/
*along* / əlong/ / long / long/
2.2.2 Elision of Medial Vowels

Gimson (1977: 143) indicates that schwa /ə/ disappear when it follows aspirated sounds such as /p/, /t/ and /k/ as the following examples illustrate:

- potato /pəˈtɛiəu/ → [pʰteiəu]
- today /təˈdei/ → [tʰdei]
- canary /kəˈneəri/ → [kʰneəri]

On the other hand, Gimson (Ibid:297) states that schwa /ə/ "may be elided if it is followed by linking /r/ and word initial vowel":

- after awhile /aftr əˈwail/
- father and son /faː ə rən sən/

Lass (1984: 187) names such a phonological process of vowel elision as syncope (syncopation):

- secretary /səˈkrɛtəri/ → /səkritri/
- dictionary /dɪkˈʃənəri/ → /dɪkʃəri/

Kuiper and Allan (1996: 74) indicate that a vowel sound can be elided in certain words such as geography /dʒiˈərəfi/ → /dʒografi/

Hudson (2000: 210) affirms that in English casual speech, the unstressed schwa /ə/ or /i/ is elided in the middle of words when the preceding vowel is stressed as in:

- victory /vɪktəri/ → /viktri/
- easily /eɪzəli/ → /iːzəli/
- finally /fәˈniəli/ → /fәnli/

Finally, Roach (2000: 142) notes that "a weak vowel + /n/, /l/ or /r/ becomes a syllabic consonant":

- tonight /ˈtnaɪt/, police /ˈpliːs/, correct /ˈkrep/

3- Elision in Arabic

In Arabic, there are two types of elision: regular and irregular. The former is associated with the internal structure of words. This means that elision is due to difficulty of pronunciation.

The latter does not follow a morphological rule. It is referred to as arbitrary. (Ateeq, n.d.: 44)

3.1 Regular Elision

This type of elision can be illustrated in the following points:
1- The glottal stop [?] in the present form of the verb, present participle and past participle such as [u?krimu], [mu?krimu] and [mu?kramu] is elided. Thus, such forms become [u?krimu], [mukrimu] and [mukramu] respectively. This type of elision is mentioned to make the articulation of these words easy. (Ibid)

2-The sound[w] is omitted in the present form of the verb derived from the past form of the verb that consists of three consonants beginning with [w] as illustrated in the following examples:

- [wa?ada] يوعد [yaw idu]
- [wasafa] يوصف [yawsifu]

The present forms [yaw idu] and [yawsifu] become [ya? idu] and [yasifu] respectively. (Ibid)

In the same respect, when [almasdar] is derived from the past form of such verbs, the first sound is elided as indicated in the following instances:

- [wa?ada] يوعد [ya? idatan]
- [wasafa] يوصف [yasifatan]

(Ibid)

It is worth noting that [w] is not elided when:

a: the present form of the verb begins with [y] followed by [u] as in [yu? idu] and [yu? adu].

b: a

as in [yawjalu] whose past form is [wajila], or [u] as in [yawdu?u] whose past form is [wadu?a]. (Ibid)

Note that [w] in the present form is considered the first sound in the verb.

3- Elision of the second consonant of the verb that consists of three consonants, the second of which is followed by the vowel sound [i] and the third is attached to the pronoun [t] functioning as subject (first person singular) and followed by [u] that indicates the grammatical case as in:

- [d aliltu] [d iltu]
- [d aliltu] [d itu]

(Ibid: 48) and (Al-Shaafi'i, 2000:405)
Note that if the second consonant of such verbs is followed by the vowel sound [a], these verbs are written in full forms without changing as in:

\[ \text{Halaltu} \text{ [Hazatu] and Qasastu} \]

(Al-Moosili, 2001: 562)

4-Elision of the second consonant of the present or imperative form of the verb which is followed by the vowel sound [i] and whose third consonant is attached to [n] which functions as subject (third person feminine plural as in:

\[ \text{Qarra} \text{ [Yaqirn]} \text{ [Qirn]} \text{ [Qar]} \]

The elision in such an example is due to the meeting of two similar consonants, i.e. the repetition of [r] though there is [i] between them. However, a full form can be written without elision:

\[ \text{Qar} \text{ [Yaqir]} \text{ [Qirn]} \text{ [Qar]} \]

(Ibid)

5- The sound [d] may be assimilated with a following [d] in a verb attached to [t] functioning as subject (first person singular):

\[ \text{Radadtu} \rightarrow \text{Radutu} \]

This example shows that one of the assimilated sounds disappears. (Hilaal, 2004:222) and (Al-Isterabaathy, 2004: 901)

3.2 Irregular Elision

This type of elision is referred to as arbitrary, i.e. it is not morphologically conditioned as indicated in the following instances:

1- The sound [x] in the word [Baxxin] is elided and this word becomes [Baxin].

(Al-Yemeni, 2002:606)

2- The sound [h] in the word [Harhun] is elided and this word becomes [Harun].

(Ibid: 571)

3- The sound [n] in the words [Mun] and [In] is elided so that these words will become [Mun] and [In]. (Ibid: 572)

4- The sound [f] in the words [Sawfalu] and [Sawfalu] that occurs in [Sawfa?] and [Sawfa?] is elided. Thus, such words become [Sawfa?] and [Sawfa?] respectively.

(Al-Yemeni, 2002:606)
5- The [h] in the words [afah] and [sanah] is elided. As a result, these words become [afah] and [sanah]. (Ibid)

This sound is also elided [hada] to become [d aa] as in this verse:

\[\text{man d alla d i ye\text{f} fa u indahu illa bi?i\text{d} nihi}\]

6- [t] or [t] in the word [istataa] is elided so that this word becomes [t]

The sounds [istata'] or [istaa'] (Ateeq, n.d.:48) & (Al-Moosili, 2001:562) become

7- The [b] in the word [rubba] is elided so that this word will become [rubba].

(Ibn usfoor, 1986: 562)

8- [y] in the word [yadyun] is elided. As a result, this word becomes [yadun].

The sound

(Ateeq, n.b.:48)

9- The sound [w] in the word [qadwun] is elided. Thus, this word becomes [qadun]

word

(Ibid)

This sound is also elided when followed by [u u]as in

Thus, such words [maquul] and [maquud] respectively. (Al-Yemeni, 2002:567).

words become

10- The sound [w] in the words [samwun] and [banwun] is elided and these words become [samwun] and [banwun] respectively. Note that [?] is attached initially to them. (Ibid)

11- [w] in the word [a fawun] is elided and replaced by the feminine mark [t]

The sound so that such a word will become [afawun]. (Ibid)

12- The glottal stop [?] in the word [? ilaah] is elided and this word becomes [Ilaah] the word
because of its frequent use in the holly Qura'n.(Al-Yemeni, 2002: 572)

13- The [?] in the words [tar?]a? and [yi?]a? is elided. (Ibid: 570-572)

Thus, such words become [tara ] and [yaa? ] respectively.

Similarly, Ibn Usfoor (1986:559) indicates that the [?] in the imperative verbs [kul ] and [mur].

Such as: [a?ul ] [umur] is elided and those forms become [kul] and [mur].

14 - Al-Batlioosi(1980:338) indicates that the glottal stop [ ] in the word [?bn] is elided when such a word occurs between:

a- two proper nouns as in [haa d a zaydu bin a'li ] .

b- two surnames as in [haa4a abu ja' far bin abi muhammad ].

in

c- a proper noun and a surname as in [abu abdillahi bin zayd ].

3.2.3 **Elision of Vowels**

This section is concerned with the elision of vowels such as [a] , [aa] , [i] , [ii] , [u] and [uu] as the following points illustrate:

1- The vowel sound [aa] in certain words [ya xaaf] is elided provided this word is such as preceded [lam ]. As a result it becomes [lam ya xaf]. (Nahar, 1998: 273) by

Note that the long vowel sound [aa] in the example above changes into a short vowel [a].

2- The vowel [amaa] that occurs in [amaa wallaah ] is elided and replaced [aa ] in

by [a]. Consequently, this structure [amaa wallaah ].(Ibn Usfoor, 1986:559) becomes

3--Mohammad(2006:80) notes that the vowel [aa] in the [ama] is elided interrogative

and replaced by [a] when such a word is attached to prepositions [ilaa] such as
Thus, this word becomes [fiima] and [ilaama] respectively.

4-The vowel sound [a] and the preceding consonant [y] in the words [miyal] are elided. As a result these words [sir] and [mil] respectively. (Ibid) change into

The vowel sound [i] is elided when:

a- it is [ya?ulmutakallimi](i.e., it expresses the speaker as an object):

represented by

b-it occurs at the end of adjectives [almuta aali] that changes into

such as

[almuta aal]. (Ibid)

c- it occurs at the end of definite nouns such as [alwaadi] as illustrated below:

into

d- it occurs at the end of verbs especially in Qur'anic recitation in which the insertion of a vowel is not permitted as illustrated in the following verse:

(Al-Hashimi, 2002:270)

e- it occurs at the end of the word [ji?tuka ?msi]. Consider the following example:

Also

6- The vowel sound [ii] is elided when:

a - it is [yaa?ul muxaataba](the feminine addressee) in a verb ending with a heavy mark of emphasis by [nuunu ttawkiidi aqiila] referred to as

that the sounds [n] and [a] after [ii] are also elided due to the succession of similar sounds [?nnuunuzzaa?ida]. (Al-Hashimi, 2002:270)
b-it expresses a masculine plural preceded by a glottal stop [ʔ] as in:
[almustahziʔiin ] that changes into [almustahziin ] . (Ibid: 605)
Note that the long vowel sound [ii] in the examples (a) and (b) above changes into a short vowel[i].
7- The vowel sound [u] is elided when it occurs at the end of 
[alwatanu] and words such as 
[qablu ]as indicated in these instances
 [الوطن] من قبل [min qabl ] قبل
( Nahar ,1998 : 273 )
8- The vowel sound [uu] is elided when:
a- it occurs in a verb preceded by [lam ] as in [yaqul ] that changes into [lam yaqul]. (Ibid )
b- it occurs in words such [dawud]and [tawus] that change into [طاوس] and [داود]
c- it is represented by 
[waawujamaa ] that expresses a masculine plural in a verb 
ending with a heavy mark of emphasis [nuunuttawiidi ] qila ]as in :
[laatadribunanna ]( Al-Hashimi, 2002:270)
Note that the long vowel [uu] in the points (a), (b) and (c) above changes into a short vowel [u].

4- Contrastive Analysis

This section deals with comparing and contrasting types of elision in English and Arabic in order to arrive at the similarities and differences between them.

4.1 Elision of Consonants

4.1.1 Elision of /t/ and /d/

As a matter of fact, the phonemes /t/ and /d/ are considered the most commonly elided consonants in English rapid speech especially when they occur in a sequence of two or three consonants as in
mostly /mousli / and handsome /hans d m / . (Finch, 2005:44-45) & (CollinsMees, 2008:118)
similarly, in Arabic the \([t]\) in the word \(\text{استطاع} \) is elided. Thus, sound
this word changes into \(\text{استطاع} \) . (Ateeq , n. d. :48 )
It can be noted that the sound \([d]\) is not elided in Arabic. However, it can be assimilated with a following \([d]\) where one of them disappears as \(\text{رددت} \) changes into \(\text{رددت} \) in the word \([radtu]\) . (Hilaal, 2004:222)

4.1.2 Elision of /t/ in Contracted Forms

In English, the consonant /t/ is elided when it occurs in negative contracted forms such as can't, don't, wouldn't, mustn't and others provided it is followed by a consonant as in:
You can't do it / ju ka:n du it / . (Gimson, 1977:298)
Such a type of elision has no counterpart in Arabic.

4.1.3 Elision of /h/

In English, this consonant is elided when it occurs in weak forms of function words as in:
I think he will invite him. /ai € ink i: wil invait im / (Hudson, 2000:210).
In Arabic, the [h] in the word [هذا] is elided. Thus, this word becomes [ذا] as illustrated in the following verse:
قال الله تعالى "من ذا الذي يشفع عنه إلا بابنها" ...
bi?i€nihi
(البقرة : آية الكرسي 255)
On the other hand, [h] in the words [شفهه], [sanah] and [سان] the sound is elided. As a result, these words [شفهه], [sanah] become
(Al-Yemeni, 2002:572)

4.1.4 Elision of /d/ and /€/ /

In English, the phonemes, dental fricatives, /d/ and /€/ can be elided when they occur in certain words such as months / m - ns / and clothes / klouz / respectively. (Collins and Mees, 2008:121)
In Arabic, those phonemes are not elided.
4.1.5 Elision of / f / and / v /

In English, / f / can be elided in words such as *fifth* / fiθ / and *twelfth* / twelθ / . (Ibid)

In Arabic, the [f] in the word *سُوْف* [sawfa] that occurs in the structure سُوْف أَفعل كَذَا [saw fa l ka4aa] is elided. Consequently, this سُوْف أَفعل كَذَا [saw fa l ka4aa] structure will be سُوْف [sawfa] (Al-Yemeni,2002:272)

This sound is also elided when it is represented by a geminated letter in the word [uffin]-اف- which changes into اف [ufin]. (Ibid)

On the other hand, / v / in the word *of* is elided provided this word is followed by sound as in: *lots of them* / lots ð m / . (Gimson ,1977:143) a consonant

It should be noted that this sound has no counterpart in Arabic.

4.1.6 Elision of a Whole Syllable

In English, a whole syllable can be elided especially when there is a separated consonant as in: *library* /laibri / (here the syllable / rð / is elided)

*probably* /probli / (here the syllable / bɔð / is elided )

(Crystal, 2003:247) & (Rajimwale,2009:105-106 )

In Arabic, a whole syllable can be elided as illustrated in the elision of the second sound of the verb that consists of three consonants, the second of which is followed by a vowel sound / i/ and [t]functioning as subject(first person singular)as in:

the third is attached to the pronoun [ ˌ alitl ] [ ˌ alitu ] (Al-Moosili, 2001:561)

This example shows that a whole syllable such as [li ] is elided .

Another example is the elision of the whole syllable [na] as in:

[laatadribuunanna ] [laatadribunna ]

(Al-Hashimi, 2002:270)

4.1.6 Historic Elision

In English, certain words contain consonants that cannot be pronounced. They reflect the earlier pronunciation of these words: Wright, *gnaw, knee* etc. (Kuiper and Allan ,1996 :75).

It is worth noting that the elided consonants in those words are /w/ , /g/ and /k/ respectively .
In Arabic, there is no counterpart to such a type of elision.

4.1.7 **Elision of [y] and [w]**

In English, these sounds are pronounced as /j/ and /w/ which are referred to as gliding consonants or semi-vowels and they cannot be elided, whereas in Arabic they may be elided as the following points illustrate:

a- The [y] in the word [yedun] is elided. Thus, it changes into [yadun].

(Ateeq, n.d.: 48)

b- The [w] in the past form of certain verbs such as [wa' ada] is elided when sound changed into present. Thus it becomes [ya' idu]. (Ibid: 44)

4.1.8 **Elision of the Glottal Stop**

In English, the glottal stop is not elided, whereas in Arabic it can be elided as shown below:

The glottal stop [?i ilaah], [?i?unaas] and [?i?yaa] is elided and [tara?aa] and [?i?yaa] respectively.

The glottal stop in [?lilaah], [?llaah] and [?lilaah] is elided and [?nnaas] and [?yaa].

(Al-Yemeni, 2002: 570-572)

Note that such a type of elision does not occur in English.

4.1.9 **Miscellaneous Types of Elision**

a- In Arabic, the [b], [x], [h] and [n] in the words [rubba], [baxxin] sounds [harh] and [mun u] are elided. Consequently, these words become [rubba] and [baxxin] respectively. (Al-Yemeni, 2002: 571-572)

Note that such a type of elision does not occur in English.

b- In English, when two similar sounds such as /t/ and /d/ come together, they are reduced to one, i.e. they are pronounced as /t/ as in: ought to, got to and want to: I want to leave /ai won t li:v/. (Collins and Mees, 2008: 121)

In Arabic, there is no counterpart to such a type of reduction.
4.2 **Elision of vowels**

4.2.1 **Elision of Initial Vowels**

In English, a vowel sound can be elided initially as in:

a-the contracted forms of *I am* /ai am/ *I’m* /aim/ ( /a/ is elided)

    *he is* /hi: iz/ *he’s* /hi: z/ ( /i/ is elided)

    ( Kupier and Allan, 1996 : 74 )

b- *about* /baут/ , *try again* /tri gen/ , *not alone* /not loun/

    ( Rajimwale, 2009 : 105-106 ) & ( Gimson, 1977 : 297 )

Note that in Arabic a vowel sound is not initially elided.

4.2.2 **Elision of Medial Vowels**

In English, weak vowels such as schwa /ə/ and /i/ that occur in the middle of words can be elided as shown in the examples below:


b- *victory* /viktri/ , *finally* /fainli/ ( Hudson, 2000 :210 )


In Arabic, a vowel sound can be elided in the middle of words as indicated below:

a- The vowel sound [aa] in certain verbs [yexaaf] is elided provided this verb is such as

    preceded by [lam]. Thus, it becomes [yexaf]. ( Nahar, 1998 :273 )

b- The vowel sound [ii] in words such as [mustaqri?in] ( Al-Yemeni, 2002 :605 )

c- The vowel sound [uu] in [yaquul] is elided provided such a verb is preceded by verbs such as

    [lam]. Consequently, it becomes [yaqul]. ( Nahar,1998 :273 )

    It can be noted that the long vowel sounds [aa] , [ii] and [uu] in the Arabic examples (a) , (b) and (c) change into short vowels [a] , [i] and [u] respectively.

4.2.3 **Elision of Final Vowels**

In English, a vowel sound cannot be elided finally, whereas in Arabic it may be elided as illustrated in the following points:

a- The vowel sound [aa] at the end of the اَلما [amaa] that comes in the structure اَلما وَالله
[amaa wallaah ] is elided and this [amawallah] . (Al-Yemeni, 2002:568) structure becomes

b-The vowel sound [aa ] in the [maa] is elided when this word is attached to interrogative

[ alaa ] and [fi ] . As a result they become [alaama] prepositions such as [ilaama] and [fiima ] respectively . ( Ibid:606 )

c-The vowel sound [i] at the end of words [Imuta’ aali ] is elided and such a similar to word changes to [Imuta aal ] . ( Nahar ,1998 : 273 )

d-The vowel sound [i] at the end of the word [msi ] is elided and this word becomes [ms ] . ( Ibid :278 )

f- The vowel sound [u ] at the end of the word [qablu] in the structure [min qablu ] is elided and the structure becomes [min qabl ] ( Ibid : 273 )

It should be noted that the long vowel sound [aa] in (a)and (b) above changes into a short vowel [a].

5- Conclusions

It can be concluded that there are points of similarities and differences between English and Arabic types of elision as illustrated bellow:

5.1 Points of Similarities

The following points indicate that the elided phonemes in English are similar to those in Arabic:
1- Elision of / t /.
2-Elision of /h /.
3- Elision of / f /.
4- Elision of a whole syllable.
5- Elision of medial vowels.

5.2 Points of Differences

The following points show that patterns of elision in Arabic are different from those in English as elaborated below:
a- The following types of elision occur only in English, i.e. they have no counterparts in Arabic:
1- Elision of /d/
2- Elision of /t/ in contracted forms
3- Elision of /€/ and /₫/
4- Elision of /v/
5- Historic elision
6- Reduction of two similar successive consonants into one such as /t/ in want to and similar structures.
7- Elision of initial vowels.

b- The following types of elision occur only in Arabic, i.e. they have no counterparts in English:
1- Elision of [y] and [w]
2- Elision of the glottal stop [?]
3- Elision of ن [n], ح [h], خ [x] and ب [b]
4- Elision of final vowels

References
1- English