



Lecture 3 The vowel system; clipping

1. **VOWEL NOTATION.** The phonemic transcription of English vowels may be

- **quantitative:** *reed* /ri:d/, *rid* /ri:d/ DJ Outline, EPD1-12
- **qualitative:** *reed* /ri:/, *rid* /ri:/ Ladefoged, Abercrombie (ɪ = ɪ)
- **(both)** *reed* /ri:d/, *rid* /ri:d/ Gimson, Roach, Wells LPD

—see discussion at <http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/ipa-english-uni.htm>

2. THE R.P. VOWELS (strong vowels)

ɪ	ʊ	ɪ:	u:	ɪə	ʊə
e	ʌ	eɪ	ɔɪ	əʊ	eə
æ	ɒ	aɪ	aʊ	ɔ:	ɔ:
short		high front	long high back	non-high	

3. PRE-FORTIS CLIPPING

feed /fi:d/ [fi:d], but *feet* /fi:t/ [fi't, fi'ʔt, fi'ʔ]
rise /raɪz/ [ra'ɪz], but *rice* /raɪs/ [raɪs]; etc.

first version:

V → [clipped] / _ [-voi]

When followed by a **fortis** consonant, a vowel undergoes **clipping**, i.e. has its duration cut, with no change of quality.

fee-paying /'fi: peɪ ɪŋ/, *scorecard* /'skɔ: kɑ:d/, *U-turn*, etc.

second version:

V → [clipped] / _ [-voi]₁ #

A vowel undergoes clipping when followed by one or more fortis consonants **in the same morpheme**.

build /bɪld/ [bɪɹ'd], but *built* /bɪlt/ [bɪɹt, bɪɹʔt, bɪɹʔ]

third version:

syllable	σ
	/ \
onset, rhyme	O R
	/ \
nucleus, coda	N C
	/ \
	x (x) x (x)
x → [clipped]	/ _ [+son] [-voi]

4. RHYTHMIC CLIPPING

read, reader, readership; man, manage, management; tend, tender, tenderness. ‘Stress-timed rhythm’, ‘isochrony’: Duration is progressively less as progressively more syllables follow within the same stress group.
teach, teacher; use (n), useful, usefulness