# THE USE AND PERCEPTION OF WEAK FORMS

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**This paper deals with the use of weak forms as one of the significant features of English pronunciation. Since the correct use of weak forms differentiates native from non-native speech, it is very important for students of English as a major subject at university to be able to use them when speaking English. The aim was to test the use of weak forms in the students' speech, their perception of weak forms and their metalinguistic knowledge about the phenomenon.**

*Key words: weak forms, use, perception, metalinguistic knowledge, connected speech, native speech, pronunciation*

## 0. INTRODUCTION

The use of weak forms is one of the significant features of connected speech and should therefore be stressed in teaching English pronunciation, especially in the case of students of English at university, since their speech should be fluent and should resemble that of native speakers. Our teaching experience has shown that students are not familiar enough with the above mentioned phenomenon.

The aim of this research is to see to what extent students of English (non-native speakers) at the Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, use weak forms in their speech, whether they perceive the use of weak forms as a feature of informal English pronunciation and how familiar they are with the very phenomenon of weak forms.

We need to test: 1) their use of weak forms; 2) their perception of weak forms (the assumption is that most students perceive weak forms as a feature of informal style whereas it is in fact a feature of spoken native English, regardless of the degree of formality); 3) their awareness of the existence of weak forms and the fact that the use of weak forms is a feature of native speech.

The number of subjects involved in the research is not sufficient to draw general conclusions but the results might highlight some points of interest which need to be further researched.

## *1. WEAK FORMS IN CONNECTED SPEECH*

When discussing weak forms in the English pronunciation one should begin by defining the phenomenon of connected speech. As defined in Gimson (1980:255), connected speech is an utterance consisting of more than one word. Speech is a continuum of sound and it is only our mind that analyses this continuum into discrete units (cf. Josipović, 1999). The word is, like the phoneme, an abstraction from this continuum and must be expected to be realized in phonetically different ways according to the context. There is a range of differences which may exist between its concrete realization when said (often artificially) in isolation and those which it has when, in connected speech, it is subject to the pressures of its sound environment or of the accentual or rhythmic group of which it forms part (Gimson, 1980:283).

Although accentual patterns of connected speech are freer than those of the word and are largely determined by the meaning to be conveyed, some words are predisposed by their function in the language to receive accent. These *content* or *lexical* words are typically main verbs, adverbs, nouns, adjectives, demonstrative pronouns, etc. Other categories of words, such as auxiliary words, conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, relative pronouns and articles (*form* or *grammatical* words), are more likely to be unaccented, although they, too, may be exceptionally accented if the meaning requires it (Gimson, 1980:256).

(3) He /w@z/ late.
(4) He /wQz/ late.

The pronunciation in (4) should be used to contradict some such statement as *He wasn't late*, whereas in all other cases the pronunciation as in (3) should be used.

The accented realisations of grammatical words are referred to as strong forms and their unaccented varieties are called weak forms. Weak forms show reductions of the length of sounds, obscuration of vowels and the elision of vowels and consonants (Gimson, 1980: 261).

There are about forty such words in the English language. An outstanding importance of weak forms lies in the fact that their use is universal in all forms of mother tongue English worldwide. Weakform words can in one or the other of their forms seriously affect stylistic values and even occasionally totally alter meanings. Failure to make adequate use of them can result in abnormal effects such as a mechanical 'rattling' rhythm which is very rarely found in natural English, or even cause outright misunderstandings.

(1) The speaker asked /fO:/ questions.
(2) The speaker asked /f@/ questions.

**Weakform words: Shortlist**

### I.  Determiners

*1.   a* /@/ before consonants only

2. *an* /@n/ before vowels only
3. *her* /3:/ proclitic, /h@/ after breaks, /@/ enclitic (e.g. Their cat is ginger with bits of white on her face and paws.; How long have they had her?)
4. *his* Iz/ (e.g. If I had known he wouldn't keep his promise, I would have done it yesterday.)
5. *our* /A:/ (e.g. Have you seen our new dog?)
6. *some* /sm/ before consonants, /s@m/ before vowels
7. *the* /D@/ before consonants, *the* /Di/ before vowels
8. *your* /j@/ only in high-fluency situations (e.g. How does he get on with your cat?)

## II.  Pronouns

9. *he* /I/ (e.g. How does he get on with your cat?)
10. *him* /Im/ (e.g. The Smiths had told us that you had him.)
11. *me* /mi/
12. *she* /Si/
13. *them* /Dm/, before vowels /D@m/ (e.g. She usually gets them too hot.; We often have to wait for them to cool before we can handle them.)
14. *us* /@s/ (e.g. We didn't know you had a new dog. The Smiths had told us that you had him.)
15. *we* /wi/ (e.g. We often have to wait for them to cool...)
16. *you* /ju/ (e.g. Do you know what we have to do today?)

## III. Connectives

17. *and* /@n/, after t, d and fricatives /n/ (e.g. Their cat is ginger with bits of white on her face and paws.)
18. *as* /@z/ (e.g. As my old grandmother used to say...)
19. *but* /b@t/ (e.g. Freddy gets a bit rough at times but not more than Fluffy can handle.)
20. *so* /s@/ not before vowels
21. *than* /Dn/, before vowels /D@n/ (e.g. There is nothing worse than food served called.; Freddy gets a bit rough at times but not more than Fluffy can handle.)
22. *that* /D@t/

## IV.  Prepositions

23. *at* /@t/ (e.g. Freddy gets a bit rough at times but not more than Fluffy can handle.)
24. *for* /f@/ (e.g. We often have to wait for them to cool...)
25. *from* /frm/, before vowels /fr@m/
26. *of* /@v/ (e.g. We have thought of getting some.)
27. *to* /t@/, before vowels /tu/ (e.g. We often have to wait for them to cool...)

## V.  Verbs

*28. am /@m/*
*29. are /@/ (e.g. Cold plates are awful.)*
*30. be /bi/*
*31. can /kn/ before vowels /k@n/ (e.g. Freddy gets a bit rough at times but not more than Fluffy can handle.)*
*32. do /d@/, before vowels /du/ (e.g. Do you know what we have to do today?)*
*33. does /dz/, before vowels /d@z/ (e.g. How does he get on with your cat?)*
*34. had /@d /, after breaks /h@d/ (e.g. I didn't know the Robinsons had got the kitten.)*
*35. have /@v /, after breaks /h@v/ (e.g. How long have they had her?)*
*36. has /z, @z/, after breaks /h@z/ (e.g. But Tom has promised to do that.)*
*37. is /z/, after sharp sounds /s/*
*38. must /m@st/ (e.g. We must polish the furniture.)*
*39. shall /Sl/, before vowels /S@l/ (e.g. With the two of us we shall have it done in no time.)*
*40. was /w@z/, or /wz/ except before vowels (e.g. She was a Christmas present.)*
41. *were /w@/*
*42. will /l/, after breaks /wl/, but before vowels /w@l/*

## VI. Honorifics

*43. saint /snt/ General British only*
*44. Sir /s@/ General British only.*

(Taken from J Windsor Lewis, University College London, Summer Course in English Phonetics, August 2003)

The examples in brackets are given for the weak forms which occur in the texts used for this research.

It should be noted that verb forms such as *am, are, be, can, could, do, does, had, has, have, is, must, shall, was, were, will, would* retain a strong form when they occur finally even though they are unaccented, e.g. *Who's coming? I am* /{m/; *Who's got it? I have.* /h{v/
Similarly, prepositions, e.g. *to, from, at for*, apart from having a strong form when receiving a primary (nuclear, tonic) accent, also have a qualitative prominence when final and unaccented, e.g. *What are you laughing at?* /{t/ (Gimson, 1980:263)

## *2. METHODOLOGY*

The subjects in this research were students of English at the Department of English, Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb. The number of students that participated in this research

was 23 and they were chosen randomly. There were 13 first year students (out of 135), 9 third year students (out of 190) and 1 fourth year student.

In the first part of our research we wanted to test to what degree the subjects use weak forms in their pronunciation of English. The subjects were asked to read aloud four texts in the form of dialogues. The texts were extracts from everyday conversations. Such texts were chosen because of the assumption that the subjects, whether or not familiar with the phenomenon of weak forms as a feature of native speech, would associate the use of weak forms with informal English. Since the very situation of being recorded creates the atmosphere of formality, it was expected that the subjects would adapt their pronunciation to their idea of 'correct formal English pronunciation'.

A few minutes were allowed to get acquainted with the texts, after which the subjects read them aloud and their reading was recorded using a dictaphone and a mini disc recorder. The following are the texts that the subjects were asked to read.

### 1.  *Why Wait for Tom?*

*A: Do you know what we have to do today?*
*B: No, I haven't got a clue.*
*A: We must polish the furniture.*
*B: But Tom has promised to do that.*
*A: Never mind. I suggest we start without him. With the two of us we shall have it done in no time.*
*B: If I had known he wouldn't keep his promise, I would have done it yesterday.*

### 2.  *Insubordinate Claws*

*A: I didn't know the Robinsons had got a kitten.*
*B: Oh, yes. She's a dear little thing.*
*A: How long have they had her, Harold?*
*B: Some time. She was a Christmas present.*
*A: What does she look like?*
*B: She's black with bits of ginger and white on her face and paws.*
*A: And what have they called her?*
*B: Fluffy. But the children call her Clawry-Paws. They are always getting so many scratches from her.*

### 3.  *Cat and Dog Life*

*A: Have you seen our new dog?*
*B: No. The Smiths had told us that you had him.*
*A: He's a ducky little chap.*
*B: How does he get on with your cat?*

*A: They do tend to fight quite a bit.*

*B: Do you mean really savagely?*

*A: Freddy gets a bit rough at times but not more that Fluffy can handle. She'll even invite him to chase her round the garden sometimes.*

*B: But she has to have her food on her own, of course.*

*A: Oh, yes, naturally.*

### 4. A Question of Temperature

*A: As my old grandmother used to say, there's nothing worse than food served cold.*

*B: Oh, no! I agree with you. Cold plates are awful.*

*A: Those little trays are good – you know – with a light underneath for keeping things nice and hot.*

*B: Oh, yes. I'm afraid we haven't got any of those.*

*A: No. Neither have we, actually, but we have thought of getting some. Jane's very keen on heating dishes.*

*B: Oh. Is she? That's good.*

*A: Well it's all right. Except she usually gets them too hot. We often have to wait for them to cool before we can handle them.*

*(Texts 2-4 were taken from J Windsor Lewis, University College London, Summer Course in English Phonetics, August 2003)*

The second part of our research was aimed at testing the subjects' perception of weak forms, again assuming that they perceive weak forms as a feature of informal style.

Seven sentences were taken from the texts used in the first part of the research. Each sentence was pronounced in two ways and recorded onto a CD. There were altogether seven pairs of sentences. In the first sentence of each pair all the weak forms were pronounced correctly, whereas in the second sentence of each pair all the instances that should have been pronounced as weak were pronounced as strong forms, which produced speech that did not sound natural.

The following are the sentences that were recorded:

1. Do you know what we have to do today?
2. We must polish the furniture.
3. If I had known he wouldn't keep his promise, I would have done it yesterday.
4. And what have they called her?
5. Have you seen our new dog?
6. The Smiths had told us that you had him.
7. We often have to wait for them to cool before we can handle them.

The subjects were asked to listen to the seven pairs of sentences and told they would be asked some questions about them. The questions were aimed at assessing whether the subjects recognized the difference between the two pronunciations and identifying how they perceived each of the two pronunciations. The ultimate aim was to test whether the initial assumption that the students perceive the use of weak forms as a feature of informal speech was correct.

The following questions were asked:

1.  Can you hear the difference between the two pronunciations?
2.  What is the difference?
3.  Can both pronunciations be considered correct English pronunciation?
4.  If no, which is correct?
5.  If the subject recognizes the weak form pronunciation as correct, we ask why the other pronunciation is incorrect.
    If the subject recognizes the strong form pronunciation as correct, we ask why the other pronunciation is incorrect.
6.  If the subject recognizes both pronunciations as correct, we ask the following set of questions:
-   Which of the two pronunciations sounds more natural?
-   Do you think that the difference between the two pronunciations is a matter of the degree of formality?
-   If yes, which of the two do you regard as more formal? Why do you consider the other one less formal?

The third part of the research was aimed at testing the subjects' metalinguistic knowledge regarding the phenomenon of weak forms. The assumption was that the students would not differentiate between weak and strong forms as a feature of spoken English on the one hand and short and full forms as a feature of written English on the other hand. Moreover, the students would equate weak with short and strong with full forms. Since the use of short and full forms depends on the degree of formality in written texts, the students would assume that the same applied to weak and strong forms and that strong forms were the formal way of pronunciation, while weak forms were limited to the informal style. Furthermore, they would believe that all full forms should be pronounced as strong forms.

The following questions were asked:

1.  Do you know what weak forms are?
2.  Do you know the difference between weak and strong forms?
3.  What are full and short forms?
4.  Are full forms necessarily pronounced as strong forms?
5.  In which cases are full forms pronounced as weak forms?

6.  Can you give examples of each?

## 3. RESULTS

PART 1

In the text that the subjects were asked to read, there were 86 instances of weak forms, 42 of which occurred in the proclitic and 44 in the enclitic position. There were 9 verbal proclitics and 12 verbal enclitics, 12 pronoun proclitics and 17 pronoun enclitics, 4 pronoun determiner proclitics and 2 pronoun determiner enclitics, 9 connectives in the proclitic and 4 in the enclitic position, 4 prepositional proclitics and 5 prepositional enclitics and 4 particles to in the proclitic and 4 in the enclitic position.

Table 1 shows the subjects' pronunciation of weak forms in both proclitic and enclitic position. The figures refer to the number and percentage of correctly and incorrectly pronounced weak forms in both positions.

| SUBJECTS | PROCLITIC | | | | ENCLITIC | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CORRECT | | INCORRECT | | CORRECT | | INCORRECT | |
| | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT | NUMBER | PERCENT |
| 1st YEAR | | | | | | | | |
| 1. | 27 | 64% | 15 | 36% | 18 | 41% | 26 | 59% |
| 2. | 17 | 41% | 25 | 59% | 20 | 45% | 24 | 55% |
| 3. | 15 | 36% | 27 | 64% | 11 | 25% | 33 | 75% |
| 4. | 12 | 29% | 30 | 71% | 8 | 18% | 36 | 82% |
| 5. | 31 | 74% | 11 | 26% | 19 | 43% | 25 | 57% |
| 6. | 30 | 71% | 12 | 29% | 27 | 61% | 17 | 39% |
| 7. | 31 | 74% | 11 | 26% | 20 | 45% | 24 | 55% |
| 8. | 39 | 93% | 3 | 7% | 30 | 68% | 14 | 32% |
| 9. | 34 | 81% | 8 | 19% | 30 | 68% | 14 | 32% |
| 10. | 16 | 38% | 26 | 62% | 9 | 20% | 35 | 80% |
| 11. | 36 | 86% | 6 | 14% | 26 | 59% | 18 | 41% |
| 12. | 22 | 52% | 20 | 48% | 15 | 34% | 29 | 66% |
| 13. | 22 | 52% | 20 | 48% | 18 | 41% | 26 | 59% |
| 3rd YEAR | | | | | | | | |
| 14. | 35 | 83% | 7 | 17% | 28 | 64% | 16 | 36% |
| 15. | 33 | 79% | 9 | 21% | 28 | 64% | 16 | 36% |
| 16. | 19 | 43% | 23 | 57% | 12 | 29% | 32% | 71% |
| 17. | 27 | 64% | 15 | 36% | 20 | 45% | 24 | 55% |
| 18. | 18 | 43% | 24 | 57% | 13 | 30% | 31 | 70% |
| 19. | 32 | 76% | 10 | 24% | 21 | 48% | 23 | 52% |
| 20. | 26 | 62% | 16 | 38% | 16 | 36% | 28 | 64% |
| 21. | 34 | 81% | 8 | 19% | 24 | 55% | 20 | 45% |
| 22. | 33 | 79% | 9 | 21% | 26 | 59% | 18 | 41% |
| 4th YEAR | | | | | | | | |
| 23. | 28 | 67% | 14 | 33% | 20 | 45% | 24 | 55% |

On average, the subjects pronounced 63.8% of the weak forms in the proclitic position

correctly and 36.2% incorrectly. Moreover, 45.3% of the weak forms in the enclitic position were pronounced correctly, while 54.7% were pronounced incorrectly.

The figures show that the subjects on the average have better pronunciation of weak forms in the proclitic than in the enclitic position.

Table 2 shows the average percentage of correct and incorrect instances of pronunciation of weak forms for the first, third and fourth year students respectively.

| SUBJECTS | PROCLITIC | | ENCLITIC | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CORRECT | INCORRECT | CORRECT | INCORRECT |
| 1st YEAR | 60.8% | 39.2% | 43.8% | 56.2% |
| 3rd YEAR | 67.8% | 32.2% | 47.8% | 52.2% |
| 4th YEAR | 67% | 33% | 45% | 55% |

As shown in Table 2, there is only a slight difference in the correct pronunciation between the students at the beginning of their studying of the English language at the advanced level at university  and those in the second half of their studies.

In the subjects' reading, the following weak forms were identified as the ones with the greatest rate of incorrect pronunciation: the auxiliary verbs *have* and *had*, the pronouns and pronoun determiners *he, her, him, his, them* and the auxiliary verb *do* with the pronoun *you* in the question form.

Table 3 shows the number of the correct pronunciations of the above mentioned weak forms in either proclitic or enclitic position by each subject. The average percentage of the correctly pronounced weak forms is given at the bottom of the table.

| No. | PROCLITIC (correct) | | | | ENCLITIC (correct) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | HER (3) | HE (1) | HAD (1) | DO YOU (2) | HER (5) | HIM (2) | HAVE (4) | HAD (2) | HIS (1) | THEM (3) |
| 1. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 3. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 4. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 5. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 7. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 8. | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| 9. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 10. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 12. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 13. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 14. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |

| 15. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 17. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 18. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 20. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21. | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 22. | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 23. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 5.8% | 21.7% | 26% | 41.3% | 8.7% | 26% | 7.6% | 28.3% | 4.3% | 27.5% |
| | The percentage of correctly pronounced instances of weak forms | | | | | | | | | |

As shown in Table 3, the percentage of correctly pronounced weak forms is the lowest in the case of pronouns and pronoun determiners *her* and *his* and the auxiliary verb *have*, the correct pronunciation of which was below 10%.

There were even four subjects who did not pronounce any of the above mentioned weak forms correctly.

PART 2

All 23 subjects could hear the difference between the two pronunciations of the seven pairs of sentences. The great majority of the subjects described the difference in terms of connected speech in the first and pronouncing words separately in the second sentence of the pair, although they did not use precise metalinguistic terminology. Out of 23, 22 subjects identified both pronunciations as correct English. 22 subjects recognize the first (weak form) pronunciation as sounding more natural than the second one. One subject perceives both pronunciations as equally natural. 17 subjects perceive the difference between the two pronunciations as a matter of the degree of formality, recognizing the second pronunciation as the more formal one. 5 subjects do not perceive the difference in the two pronunciations as a matter of the degree of formality. When asked why they perceived the first pronunciation as less formal, the 17 subjects used arguments such as: "more fluent, more relaxed, everyday speech, more speech-like, spoken faster and therefore not formal, better intonation and pace". One subject suggested that the first pronunciation was more 'native speaker-like'.

PART 3

Out of 23 subjects, 13 do not know what weak forms are, 3 have got a rough idea of what they might be and 7 came close to defining them. It needs to be noted that the subjects' metalanguage is poor, regardless of their year of studying at the university. Only four subjects were able to distinguish between weak and strong forms. 19 subjects equated weak/strong with short/full forms in that they did not differentiate between spoken and written language. 13 of these did give examples of short and full forms but they identified them as a feature of both written and spoken language. The latter three of the six questions asked were answered by hardly any student. The attempts at answering those questions revealed that the subjects

once again associated the use of any sort of 'shortened' form, whether it be in speech or in writing, with informal style.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this research show that the subjects are not familiar enough with the phenomenon of connected speech and that they tend to pronounce separately words that should be pronounced together as part of a phonological word. That means that they pronounce clitics as strong forms, whereas they should be pronounced as weak forms, 'leaning' on the adjacent stressed word. That creates speech which sounds unnatural, with a rattling rhythm, which is far from native speech. Native speakers would immediately recognize this as non-native speech, regardless of how accurately the isolated words are pronounced.

Moreover, the results show that there is only an insignificant improvement in mastering the connected speech with the students approaching the end of their studies of the English language at university.

The pronunciation of weak forms in the proclitic position is by 20% better than the enclitic ones. However, there is a number of weak forms in either the proclitic or enclitic position which were recognized as a great problem for all subjects, regardless of the year of studying, namely pronouns and pronoun determiners *her* and *his* and the auxiliary verb *have*.

It needs to be noted that, although the subjects did not produce connected speech in their reading, all of them identified the difference between the two pronunciations in the recorded seven pairs of sentences. All 23 subjects recognized the first sentence in each pair as the one pronounced in a way that sounded more natural than the second one. In describing the difference between the two pronunciations, they qualified the first one as 'more fluent', 'more casual', 'more speech-like', 'with better intonation and pace' and even more 'native speaker-like'.

What is interesting is that the majority of the subjects perceive the difference between the two pronunciations as a matter of the degree of formality, identifying the second one as more formal. 22 of them identified both pronunciations as correct English. That leads us to believe that the subjects' idea of correct formal English pronunciation is that which differs greatly from informal, 'everyday' speech, whereby the formal one 'sounds more firm and decisive', 'divides words more accurately', 'each word is stressed', 'words are better articulated', 'more scholarly', 'more official', 'the person sounds as if she is reading' and so on. It is significant that the subjects perceive connected speech as informal and not the kind of pronunciation that should be aspired to in any situation, regardless of the degree of formality. On the contrary, connected speech is the essence of native speech, weak forms being its most significant feature.

By way of conclusion, it would be recommended to dedicate more time and effort to raising the students' awareness of the features of English pronunciation, both in terms of metalinguistic and practical knowledge.

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# UPOTREBA I PERCEPCIJA SLABIH OBLIKA

**Sažetak**

**Članak govori o upotrebi slabih oblika kao jedne od značajnih karakteristika izgovora u engleskom jeziku. Budući da točna upotreba slabih oblika razlikuje izvorni od neizvornog govora, veoma je važno da studenti engleskog jezika kao glavnog predmeta na fakultetu znaju upotrebljavati slabe oblike u svome govoru. Cilj ovog članka bio je ispitati upotrebu slabih oblika u govoru ispitanih studenata, njihovu percepciju slabih oblika i metalingvističko znanje o samome fenomenu.**

*Ključne riječi: slabi oblici, upotreba, percepcija, metalingvističko znanje, vezani govor, izvorni govor, izgovor*