

**AG 7: Form and function of insertions and deletions in speech**  
(Kurz-AG, Mittwoch)

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Phonetics as well as phonology has treated insertions and deletions differently: while for phonetics, insertions and deletions mark the endpoints of gradual processes, for phonology, both processes are categorical and fulfill different functions.

Insertions have been phonologically interpreted as a syllable structure repair mechanism (insertion of /t/ as onset in Axinica Campa), prosodic boundary markers (glottal stop insertion in German and English) or as hiatus preservation (Skerre). Other types of insertions such as /t/-epenthesis in nasal-fricative sequences in US-English (/prins/ is pronounced as [prints]) do not seem to have a specific function; in fact, in South African English, these insertions are unattested (Fourakis & Port, 1986). The epenthesis process can be easily explained as a phonetic by-product of the phasing of articulatory gestures. However, it remains unclear why only selected consonants /h ʔ t w j l r r ɾ/ are the most frequently inserted segments across languages.

Phonologically, deletions, too, are claimed to serve the purpose of optimizing the syllable structure (cluster simplification in Polish) or adjusting prosodic requirements (/s/ is deleted word-finally but not utterance-finally in Castilian Spanish). However, we can also find the opposite effect, whereby the syllable onset is being made less optimal by deleting the unstressed syllable nucleus. In German, we found vowel deletions in unstressed syllables causing complex onsets and, moreover, confusion between competing forms (i.e. *geleiten* 'to accompany' can be pronounced as *gleiten* 'to slide') in faster rates of speech. Thus, the altered form poses a question about the undesired products of deletions.

This workshop will provide a forum for phonologists, phoneticians, and morphologists to discuss the forms and functions of deletions and insertions found cross-linguistically, their dependence on prosodic structure, accent, phonotactics, frequency as well as their consequences for phonological systems.