

# Talk a Lot

## Focus on Connected Speech

### Weak Forms – Information Sheet

#### Notes:

- The weak forms of many function words are commonly used in **spoken English** instead of strong forms (in Standard Pronunciation, dialects, and accents).
- All words that have weak forms usually act as function words.
- All words that have weak forms have only one syllable – they are monosyllabic (apart from “any”).
- Most of the weak forms use the vowel sound **schwa** /ə/.
- If we use strong forms when we should use weak, we sound overly **formal** and it's harder for people to understand us, because the sentence stress is incorrect (see p.12.1). Communication is reduced.
- If a function word comes at the end of a sentence we usually use its strong form, e.g. “What are you looking for?” /fɔː/ or, “Who are you writing to?” /tuː/
- If we want to show emphasis or contrast, we can vary intonation by using strong forms where we would normally use weak forms, e.g. “Where've you been all day?” /biːn/

	<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>		<u>weak</u>	<u>strong</u>
<u>articles &amp; determiners</u>			<u>conjunctions</u>		
a	/ə/	/eɪ/	and	/ən/ or /ənd/	/ænd/
an	/ən/	/æn/	but	/bət/	/bʌt/
any	/'ə.ni/	/'en.i/	than	/ðən/	/ðæn/
some	/səm/	/sʌm/	that	/ðət/	/ðæt/
such	/sətʃ/	/sʌtʃ/			
the	/ðə/ or /ði/	/ðiː/	<u>prepositions</u>		
			as	/əz/	/æz/
			at	/ət/	/æt/
			for	/f/ or /fə/	/fɔː/
			from	/frəm/	/frɒm/
			of	/əv/	/ɒv/
			to	/tə/ or /tu/	/tuː/
<u>be &amp; auxiliary verbs</u>			<u>pronouns</u>		
am	/əm/	/æm/	he	/i/ or /hi/	/hiː/
are	/ə/	/ɑː/	her	/ə/ or /hə/	/hɜː/
be	/bi/	/biː/	him	/ɪm/	/hɪm/
been	/bɪn/ or /bɪn/	/biːn/	his	/ɪz/	/hɪz/
is	/z/ or /s/	/ɪz/	me	/mi/	/miː/
was	/wəz/	/wɒz/	she	/ʃɪ/	/ʃiː/
were	/wə/	/wɜː/	them	/ðəm/	/ðem/
do	/də/ or /du/	/duː/	their	/ðə/	/ðeə/
does	/dəz/	/dʌz/	us	/əs/	/ʌs/
had	/əd/ or /həd/	/həd/	we	/wi/	/wiː/
has	/əz/ or /həz/	/hæz/	you	/jə/ or /ju/	/juː/
have	/əv/ or /həv/	/hæv/	your	/jə/ or /jər/	/jɔː/
can	/kən/	/kæn/			
could	/kəd/	/kʊd/			
must	/mst/	/mʌst/			
shall	/ʃəl/	/ʃæl/			
should	/ʃd/	/ʃʊd/			
would	/wd/	/wʊd/			