Weak & Strong Forms
we saw stressed and unstressed syllables in individual words
something similar happens in complete sentences
Where are you from?
Where are you from?

I’m from London.
Where are you from?

I’m from London.
Where are you from?

I’m from London.
Where are you from?

I’m from London.
Where are you from?

I’m from London.
Are they from Italy?
Are they from Italy?

Yes, they are.
Are they from Italy?

Yes, they are.
Are they from Italy?

Yes, they are.
Are they from Italy?

Yes, they are.
Yes, they are. Are they from Italy?
Yes, they are.
some words have two pronunciations
a weak form

/ frəm /
are / ə /
and a strong form

/ frəm /

are / əː /
the weak form is the usual pronunciation
the weak form is the usual pronunciation
the **strong form** is used only when the word is stressed
the strong form is used only when the word is stressed

eg. when it’s the last word
the vowel is simplified

to ə or І
which words have weak and strong forms?
prepositions
prepositions

auxiliary verbs
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
possessive adjectives
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
possessive adjectives
possessive pronouns
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
possessive adjectives
possessive pronouns
conjunctions
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
possessive adjectives
possessive pronouns
conjunctions
articles
prepositions
auxiliary verbs
modal verbs
pronouns
possessive adjectives
possessive pronouns
conjunctions
articles

‘grammar’ words
which words only have strong forms?
nouns
nouns

MAIN VERBS
nouns
main verbs
adjectives
nouns
main verbs
adjectives
adverbs
nouns
main verbs
adjectives
adverbs
nouns
main verbs
adjectives
adverbs

‘meaning’
words
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<th>prepositions</th>
<th>weak form</th>
<th>strong form</th>
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<td>ðiː</td>
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when do weak forms become strong?
1.

the end of the sentence
Where are you from?
Yes, I am.
No, I’m not.
2.

negatives
I can speak German.
I can speak German.
I can’t speak German.
I can’t speak German.
You aren’t listening.
I’m not listening.
the stress is always on ‘not’ even when it’s abbreviated
3.
auxiliary or modal substitutes or includes the main verb
I can’t speak German but my friend can.
Do you like English coffee?

No, I don’t.
4.

double stress for emphasis
I do like your hat!
I didn’t crash my car!
I didn’t crash my car.
I crashed hers!
Video: Today Is the Best Day of my Life
HOMEWORK

make a list of the weak forms that you used in your latest writing homework
University of Baghdad
Ibn Rushd college/English Dep.
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