

Elision in Esahie

Abstract

One of the syllable structure changes that occurs in rapid speech because of sounds influencing each other is Elision. This paper provides an account of Elision in Esahie also known as Sehwi, a Kwa language spoken in the Western North region of Ghana. The analysis of the data is couched in the Autosegmental framework introduced by Goldsmith (1976) as a framework which gives independent representation to segments and suprasegments. The paper portrays that vowels, consonants, syllables and tones are affected by the elision process. It demonstrates that elision, though purely a phonological process, is influenced by morphological factors such as vowel juxtapositioning during compounding and at word boundary.

Commented [A1]: e. No need capitalizing it.

Commented [A2]: within

Commented [A3]: you don't need this in abstract. There will be space for you to define and explain it.

Commented [A4]: shows

Keywords: Elision, Esahie, Sehwi, Tone, Deletion, Phonology

1. Introduction

The works of (Abakah 2004a, 2004b), Abdul-Rahman (2013), Abukari (2018), Becker and Gouskova (2016) confirm that elision is a common feature in most languages for resolving syllable structure anomalies. This paper provides an account of elision in Esahie, a Kwa language spoken in the Western North region of Ghana. The paper demonstrates that elision is employed in Esahie as a syllable structure repair mechanism. Elision is purely a phonological process but can sometimes be triggered under morphological factors.

Commented [A5]: Let the reader have a gist of what to expect in the main work with specificity.

Commented [A6]: On which language(s) are their works based? What specifically do they say about elision?

Data for this study was gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary naturalistic data was elicited from native speakers in Sehwi using ethnographic and stimuli methods. Tools used were the Ibadan Word list, SIL picture story, participant observation and focus group discussion. Forty people were used in the data collection. Twenty people were selected from the two dialect areas, i.e. Anhwiaso and Wiawso. Five respondents were selected from four towns in each dialect area. Unstructured interviews were also used as follow ups from the elicitation. The analysis of the data is captured in the Autosegmental framework introduced by Goldsmith (1976) as a framework which gives independent representation to segments and suprasegments.

Commented [A7]: That factor that it is a phonological process does not mean it can be triggered by only phonology. In fact, syntax can also trigger it. It is the domain of its occurrence that matters.

Commented [A8]: What informed the use of these tools? Can you briefly explain it?

Commented [A9]: What is the justification for this choice of respondents? Did you really need this number?

Commented [A10]: You have not told us already about the dialects. Why five for each dialect?

The paper is segmented as follows; Section 1 introduces the study while section 2 provides a brief account on the syllable structure of Esahie and elision in general. Section 3 discusses the environments within which vowel elision occurs in Esahie. Section 4 focuses on consonant elision, with section 5 dwelling on elision in borrowed words in Esahie. The rest are section 6 which focuses on tonal processes in elision, and section 7 which concludes the discussion.

Commented [A11]: This paper is about speech sounds and accompanying phonological process. So why this choice? No mention is made of how you recorded the speech and even examples of the recordings?

2.0 Esahie syllable structure

In this section I present a brief account on the syllable structure of Esahie. The basic syllable structure in Esahie are the CV and the V. The V can be either a vowel or a syllabic consonant, i.e. a nasal, a trill or a lateral. Aside the CV and the V, the language allows other syllable types such as the CVC and CRV.

Commented [A12]: Syllable structure in Esahie

Commented [A13]: Any previous studies to reference?

Commented [A14]: Aside from....

Commented [A15]: Delete

Example 1- Syllable types in Esahie

Commented [A16]: Follow the acceptable journal style in numbering your examples.

CV—	/gó/ /bó/ /dɔ/	‘to dance’ ‘to whip’ ‘there’
V—	/ɔ/, /a/, /o/, /n/, /m/, /l/, /r/	
CRV ¹ —	/krá/ /bráá/ /pra/	‘to bid farewell’ ‘woman’ ‘sweep’
CVC-	/fɛm/	‘to lend’

Commented [A17]: How possible can these segments be V(owels)?

Commented [A18]: Does this word has only one V?

Albeit these forms, there are some constraints on the syllable patterns. The language has a dispreference for consonant cluster, i.e. CCV² syllables. It prefers open syllable and allows only the alveolar and bilabial nasals /n, m/ in coda positions. In the subsequent sections, I discuss the salient elision processes that occur in the Esahie language.

Commented [A19]: How does this structure differ from the so-called CrV?

Commented [A20]: Does the language have codas? If it prefers open syllables, then it cannot have codas. Be mindful of discussions of structure of syllable and structure of words/morphemes. Also the term coda is not the same as word-final consonants. I suspect you are rather talking about consonants that can end words and not necessarily codas. Therefore, in the so-called CVC you are not talking about structure of a syllable, but rather the structure of simple words. The second C in CVC, I suspect is syllabic, hence cannot be a coda, i.e. part of another syllable. Please revise your knowledge on syllable to be able offer clearer explanations.

Commented [A21]: Depict. You are not referring to the same set of data, I suppose.

Commented [A22]: This is not clear. Do you mean it can also occur in other positions aside from the initial? From the definition, is Matthews referring to within stem/word or morpheme boundary phenomenon?

Commented [A23]: Widening is visible....a better verb will do.

Commented [A24]: Can it occur in morphological context too?

Commented [A25]: while

Commented [A26]: resolve

Commented [A27]: what does this mean? Do mean V1 survives the deletion process?

Commented [A28]: Possible for what? Deletion or survival? Clarify

Commented [A29]: Join this paragraph with the preceding one.

Commented [A30]: Restate this

Commented [A31]: Be mindful of your use of terms. Truncation is a morphological process...

2.1 Elision

Matthews (1997: 11) alludes that “elision is a process by which a vowel at the end of a word is lost, or elided, before another vowel at the beginning of a word.” Data from Akan and other languages depicts that elision extends beyond word final to mid and initial positions. Abakah (2004a: 182) widens the scope and context when he describes elision as a phonological process by which a vowel, a consonant and sometimes a syllable, which is an intrinsic property of a morpheme in an isolative style, is dropped in a combinative style.

Accordingly, in elision, a sound segment, be it a vowel, consonant or a syllable, is lost in different phonological contexts. Most languages employ elision to break vowel hiatus (Orie & Pulleyblank 2002), however, there are differences in which vowel is elided and the context of elision. In some languages, the first vowel (V₁) is elided, while in others, the second vowel (V₂) is elided. Casali (1997) identifies four contexts in which vowel elision is used to dissolve vowel hiatus in Etsako. These are: at the boundary between two lexical words (*de +akpa* → *dakpa* ‘buy a cup’ & *owa +ɔda* → *owɔda* ‘a different house’); at the boundary between a lexical word and a functional word, where V₁ elision is more common than V₂. It can also be at the boundary between a CV prefix and a root, where he claims that V₁ occurs; and at the boundary between a root and a suffix, where either V₁ or V₂ elision is possible.

Similar to Etsako, Abakah (2004a) shows that in Akan, vowel elision involves the truncation of one of two contiguous vowel at word boundary. This occurs when a word that ends in a vowel is followed by another word that begins in a vowel. He explains that if the second vowel in the sequence of V₁ # V₂ is [-Low], then it is obligatorily deleted. However, if the first vowel is [-low], then the first vowel is deleted. Abakah (2004a) further shows that in compounding, word boundary vowel sequence may be deleted simultaneously under the condition that the final syllable of the first free form is CV#, where the C is [+Son] and the V₁ is [+High], with the # V₂ underspecified for tongue height position feature. He explains that regardless of the dialectal variations

¹ The fact is that Esahie has a CRV syllable type that is derived from a CVRV disyllabic word after the application of a deletion of the first V and then re-syllabification. The CRV in Esahie is therefore disyllabic and realised as Cr.V with the [r] being syllabic.

Example: **Underlying Form [CVRV]** **Phonetic form [CRV]**
a. pírá → pr.á ‘to sweep’

² The only CCV syllable type always has /r/ in the second C slot.

in Fante, the post sonorant word final deletion must occur intervocalically at the underlying level of representation. Aside sound segments, Abakah notes that syllables are also deleted in rapid speech in Fante.

Commented [A32]: What does this mean?

Commented [A33]: from

3.0 Elision in Esahie

As a phonological process, both vowels and consonants can be elided in Esahie. This process occurs often to create syllable types that are acceptable in the language. In this study, I group the discussion of elision into two- vowel elision and consonant elision and show how they manifest in the language. I show that through phonological processes such as elision, complex syllables are simplified at onset and coda positions.

Commented [A34]: do you mean words of syllable sizes more than two? Are you talking about clusters? This is not clear.

3.1. Vowel Elision Across Word Boundary

Vowels can be concatenated when two independent monomorphemic words are put together. When this happens, one of the vowels may be elided. In Esahie, when two words are juxtaposed, and the first word ends in a vowel [V₁], and the second word begins with a vowel [V₂], one of the words loses its vowel. The conditions that trigger the process are not only phonological, but rather morpho-syntactic in nature. Let us examine instances of occurrence in Esahie.

Commented [A35]: Do you mean they are not phonological at all or that additionally they are also morpho-syntactic?

3.1.1 [V₂] Elision in Compounds

As stated earlier, when two words are juxtaposed, and the first word ends with a vowel, and the second word begins with a vowel, the second word loses its initial vowel. Consequently, in the sequence of V₁ #V₂ in a compound, the V₂ is elided as shown in example 2.

Commented [A36]: Are your examples of compounds in juxtaposition?

Commented [A37]: How different is this expression from the preceding statement? I think it is a repetition.

Example 2.

Input		Output	Meaning
a. dùá (tree)	+	ɔ́bá (offspring)	dùábá fruit
b. sètɛ́ (destroy)	+	ɛ̀wíàsé (world)	sètɛ́wíàsé destroy the world
c. àhìní (chiefs)	+	ɛ́fíé (house)	àhìnífíé (àhìnyíé) palace
d. èsàhíé (Esahie)	+	ɔ́híní (chief)	èsàhíèhíní chief of Esahie
e. bàkà́ (tree)	+	ɛ̀bóín (outer cover)	bàkà́:bóín tree bark

Commented [A38]: Gloss

Commented [A39]: This looks orthographic rather than phonetic. Please check and do a proper transcription.

Commented [A40]: The bracketing of the glosses does not seem right. Check the journal style.

Commented [A41]: Can you explain the tone changes observed in the inputs and the outputs? Abakah's (2005) tone rules in Akan can be of help

Commented [A42]: This is also orthography

Commented [A43]: This looks orthographic

Commented [A44]: Check the tone markings. It seems it is rather LHH as in Akan.

Commented [A45]: What is the motivation for this loss or deletion? Can you explain that?

Commented [A46]: So what is the originating node/tier in the figure? You need to show the step/stage reflecting the input/underling representation before you show the intermediate level/step where the deletion occurs.

Commented [A47]: What is the meaning of this? Please spell out

Commented [A48]: You need to look at this representation again.

In the above examples, the second words lose their initial vowels in the output form, so in example (2a), dùá + ɔ́bá becoming dùábá 'fruit', we notice a loss of /ɔ/ in the compound word. These words in isolation will be pronounced with the both vowels intact. V₂ elision in Esahie is captured by figure 1 below.

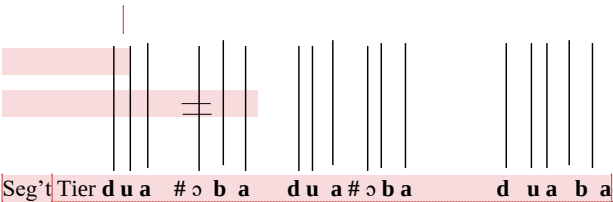


Figure 1: Illustrates V₂ Elision

3.2 V₁ Elision at word Boundary

V₁ elision also happens when the first vowel in a sequence of vowels across word boundary is lost. In Esahie, this is observed in the perfective and possessive construction.

3.2.1 V₁ Elision in a Perfective construction

Perfective verbs in Esahie are formed by adding a low tone clitic /à/ to a high-toned verb. In a perfective construction where a pronoun is added to the perfective verb, the pronoun loses its vowel in the sequence. Consider these examples.

- Example 3.
- | | |
|----|----------------------------------|
| a. | mí + à + kó → mǎhó |
| | 1SG/SUBJ + PERF + go |
| | I have gone |
| b. | bé + à + kírǎ → bahírǎ |
| | 3PL/SUBJ + PERF + put on a cloth |
| | they have put on a cloth |
| c. | yé + à + dí → yǎlí |
| | 1PL/SUBJ + PERF + eat |
| | we have eaten |
| d. | wó + à + sǎtǎí → wǎsǎtǎí |
| | 2SG/SUBJ + PERF + destroy |
| | he has destroyed |
| e. | wó + à + ǎnomá → wǎnomá |
| | 2SG/SUBJ + PERF + curse |
| | you have cursed |

We notice from the examples that the addition of the pronoun to the perfective marker results in a vowel sequence which is impermissible in the language. It is in this context that the pronoun loses its vowel in rapid speech.

3.2.2 V₁ Elision in Possessive Constructions

The possessive construction in Esahie is marked with a possessive pronoun attached to a noun. In situations where the nouns begin with a vowel, a sequence of vowel is created at the word boundary. When this happens, the vowel of the possessive pronoun (V₁) is lost in a V₁ # V₂ sequence. Study the examples in (4) below:

- Example 4.
- | | |
|----|-------------------------------|
| a. | wó + ǎlíé → [wǎlíé] |
| | 3SG food |
| | ‘your food’ |
| b. | mí + ǎdzǎpǎdíé → [mǎdzǎpǎdíé] |
| | 1SG property |
| | ‘my property’ |

Commented [A49]: b

Commented [A50]: occurs

Commented [A51]: Why is it the V₁ and not V₂ that deletes? This is the explanation readers would want to read. What makes V₂ resist the deletion?

Commented [A52]: Check the Africanist use of PRONOUN VRS PRONOMINAL

Commented [A53]: So which rule or process causes the UR /k/ to be realized as [h] in Esahie? Can you explain that?

Commented [A54]: Why not mihó instead?

Commented [A55]: Check and follow Leipzig glossing convention.

Commented [A56]: Same question as the preceding one.

Commented [A57]: Is this a sound or orthography?

Commented [A58]: No tone on this syllable?

Commented [A59]: Do you mean vowel sequence in “impermissible” in Esahie? How do you then explain the sequences in 4a&b? Again, which sequence are you talking about? Of different quality and or same quality?

Commented [A60]: Check the tone again! I suspect it could be LHLHH instead of LLLHH, at least judging from the fact that it is possibly of Akan source.

- c. yé + àpíná → [yàpíná]
2PL bat 'our bat'
- d. wó + àsíwá → [wàsíwá]
3SG betrothed 'your betrothed'

Commented [A61]: Why a change in the vowel in the same 3SG? Is it realized differently?

Commented [A62]: Check spelling. Betrothed

We observe from the data that the pronouns drop their vowels in the output form. In example (4a) *wó* + *àlilé* → [wàlilé] 'your food', /o/ is lost in the output. The loss of the vowel is due to the impermissible sequence of vowels at the word boundary. V₁ elision in a possessive construction is illustrated below in figure 2.

Commented [A63]: The question again is, why the V1? Per Integrity Principles, segments in the roots are to be protected than those in the peripherals such as affixes. Provide explanations why the deletion of V1.

Commented [A64]: Spell out at first use

Commented [A65]: So how do you label the segment or the feature that has deleted in the output?

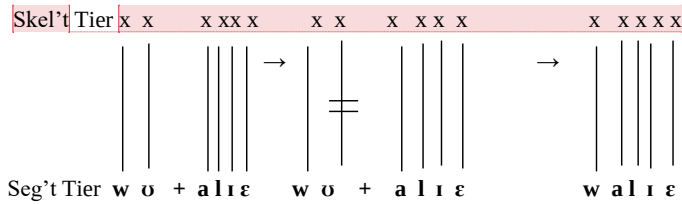


Figure 2: V₁ Elision in a possessive construction

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned elision in the possessive construction, elision in the possessive form is not operational for the 2PL *-émɔ*. *émɔ* does not lose its vowel under the same context. That is, there is no elision of the V₁ when *émɔ* is attached to a noun in the possessive form as shown below.

Commented [A66]: Rephrase for clarity

Commented [A67]: Good point. So the question, therefore, is, why isn't there elision here? This is what readers are interested in hearing/reading!

Example 5.	Input	Output	Meaning
a.	émó + àpíná your + bat	émó àpíná	your bat
b.	émó + èsúé your + cry	émó èsúé	your cry
c.	émó + èwìàsé your + world	émó èwìàsé	your world

Vowel elision at word boundary also finds expression in Dagbani, but while in Esahie the elision is bidirectional, [V₁ or V₂], in Dagbani (Abdul-Rahman 2013: 222) vowel elision is unidirectional where the vowel is always deleted at the leftward position as shown in example 6 below.

Commented [A68]: Reconsider this statement...

Commented [A69]: Is this bidirectionality claim peculiar to Esahie? How about Akan that it seems to borrow words from?

Example 6.

- a) sa.a (rain) tahən.ga (shouting) ⇒ sa.ta.hənga "thunder"
- b) no.o (fowl) gal.li (egg) ⇒ no.gal.li "fowl egg" (Abdul-Rahman, 2013: 222)

In addition to the segmental changes in Esahie discussed, there are tonal processes that are triggered by the elision of the segments, and these will be discussed in section 6.

3.3 Pre-Sonorant High Vowel Elision

Another occurrence of vowel elision in Esahie is at a pre-sonorant position. In Esahie, anytime a [+High] vowel occurs before a sonorant, the vowel is elided. This takes place in a CVCV words where the C_2 is a [+Sonorant, -Lateral, -Nasal, -Continuant], (CVRV) that is the liquid /r/. The V_1 invariably deletes resulting in a CRV sequence. Study the examples in (7) below.

Example 7.	Underlying	Surface	Meaning
a.	tìnbàbíré	tìnbàbré	sit
b.	nètíré	nètíré	dust
c.	tènvìrè má	tènvìrè má	tongue
d.	ànwúró	ànwúró	town
e.	ngùrùmá:	ngùrùmá:	okro/okra
f.	àsòròbúá	àsòròbúá	monkey

From the examples, we observe the elision of a pre-liquid [+high] vowel in a CVRV syllable structure. The data further shows two types of pre-liquid [+high] vowel Elision. In example (7a-c), the high vowels are [-ATR, front] vowels, while that of example (7d-f) are [+ATR, back] vowels. In both cases, the elision of the vowel reduces the word to a CRV structure. This syllable type can still be considered as disyllabic because of the phonetic features of /r/. The elision process is captured in figure 3.

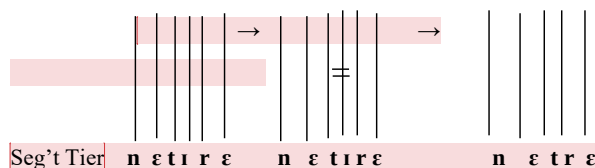


Figure 3: Pre-sonorant High Vowel Elision

The subject of pre-liquid elision also finds expression in Fante, a coastal dialect of Akan (Abakah 2004a). However, in Fante, the vowels which surround the liquid must be identical as exemplified in (8) below:

Example 8.	a.	mí +ara →	mara →	maa	'I emphatically
	b.	obiara →	obiara →	obiaa	'everybody'
	c.	biribi →	biibi		'something' (Abakah 2004a: 200-201)

4.0 Consonant Elision

Aside vowels, consonant are also elided in Esahie. Consonant elision occurs when a nasal is found in word final position. The syllable structure of Esahie allows nasals in coda position. However, when an alveolar nasal /n/ follows a [+high] vowel in the word final position, the final nasal consonant is deleted. This occurs after the nasal has regressively assimilated the [+high] oral vowel that precedes it to be nasalized. Examine the following examples in (9).

Example 9.	Underlying	Surface	Meaning
a.	sraín	sraín	moon
b.	àwòsín	àwòsì	darkness

Commented [A70]: Where is this from, when CVCV is not indexed? You need to first index the source/input syllable first?

Commented [A71]: ?

Commented [A72]: So where is the tone after the deletion of the tone bearing unit? Does it mean the outputs br, tr, nvr, gr, and sr are all clusters?

Commented [A73]: This vowel is not [+ATR]. Check

Commented [A74]: e

Commented [A75]: in fact, I see only one vowel.

Commented [A76]: What does this mean? Does the syllable structure change?

Commented [A77]: What is the "phonetic feature" of 'r' and how does it make a syllable disyllabic? Note that 'phonetic' sounds are not represented in slashes.

Commented [A78]: Why segmental tier when you are discussing syllable?

Commented [A79]: What is the originating node/tier?

Commented [A80]: Reconsider this statement!

Commented [A81]: Similar studies have been done in Dolphyne (2006), Marfo (2013), Ofori (2012), among others about Twi. You can check to guide you.

Commented [A82]: Aside from...

Commented [A83]: Can also be....

Commented [A84]: This statement is not clear. Which consonant deletes when which nasal is in a final position? Nasal consonant or nasal vowel?

Commented [A85]: Perhaps you need to briefly discuss the syllable structure of Esahie words. Do you mean to say Esahie has codas, and therefore closed syllables?

Commented [A86]: To nasalise it.

Commented [A87]: Consider...

Commented [A88]: So what is the syllable structure of this word? Monosyllabic CCVVC? Or how would you syllabify it so you get the n to become the coda you are talking about? Is the final nasal not tone-marked?

Commented [A89]: Where is the tone here?

c.	àmbáín	àmbáĩ	bat
d.	èsóín	èsóĩ	elephant
e.	bèsín	bèsĩ	back
f.	èbíín	èbíĩ	feces

A close examination of the data shows the elision of a final nasal consonant. In example (9a) the final nasal in *sráín* is lost in the output form, while the [+high] vowel is nasalized to get *sráĩ* ‘moon’. The derivation involves two ordered phonological processes of nasalization before elision. First, the nasal consonant regressively spreads its nasality feature onto the penultimate vowel causing it to be nasalized. Subsequently, the nasal consonant is lost resulting in the surface form. This phenomenon is also present in the French derivation of *bõ*. In French, the word [*bon*] becomes [*bõ*] after it has gone through an ordered process of nasal assimilation and final consonant elision. This can be represented as follows in figure 4:

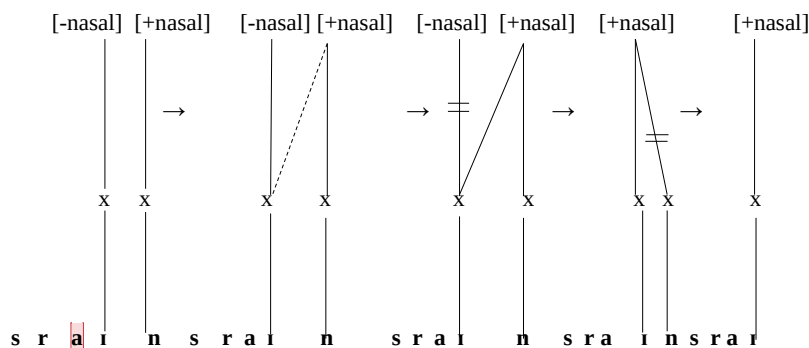


Figure 4: Autosegmental representation of final nasal elision.

It will be recalled from the syllable structure that the nasal /n/ is allowed at the coda. The elision in this structure therefore stems from the nasalization of the preceding vowel. Dagbani also exhibit final nasal elision, but where Esahie will delete an alveolar nasal at the word final position, Dagbani deletes a bilabial nasal at the word final position in a compounding process as shown in (10) below.

Example 10.

- a. *kpam* (oil) *b'ε.ɣo* (bad) ⇒ *kpab'ε.ɣo* (bad/dirty oil) (Abdul-Rahman 2013: 226)

4.1 Syllable Truncation

Another instance of elision in Esahie compounding involves syllable truncation. In some compounds, a syllable is truncated in the output form. Consider the following example.

Example 11.

	Underlying	Surface	Meaning
a.	ædzá + Kwaku	ædzá:kú (ædzeeku)	male name
b.	ñzá: + fũfúé	ñzá:fúé	palmwine
c.	pàpá + Kofi	paakofi	male name
d.	Nana + Osei	naasei	male name

Commented [A90]: Nasality is not a feature but rather a property. The feature is rather ‘nasal’.

Commented [A91]: Penultimate means the vowel before the last vowel! But from your own examples, you don’t nasalise the penultimate vowels a, o, e. check and revise

Commented [A92]: Why do think it is necessary to cite French example when sister languages to Esahie are abound with extremely similar examples? I think this is misplaced!

Commented [A93]: Why do you leave this segment out in the representation? Any special reason?

Commented [A94]: Why the use of the term autosegmental here? How about the previous figures? Were they also not autosegmental representations?

Commented [A95]: “Recalled” from where? Can you be specific and refer to a particular point of reference in terms of example number?

Commented [A96]: Rephrase this expression.

Commented [A97]: How necessary is this discussion? What is the point being made here? This is not clear!

Commented [A98]: Truncation is more of morphological operation than phonological. Check the terminology.

Commented [A99]: Is this phonetic or orthographic? Why not also tone-marked as the other?

Commented [A100]: Which syllable has been truncated here? how do you know it is not the second syllable instead? Any evidence?

Commented [A101]: Why not nanasei? Again this is not phonetic.

We notice from the data the loss of a syllable in the output form. Again, the compounding process involves two phonological processes. First, there is a truncation of the first syllable of the second stem, after which there is a compensatory lengthening. Apparently, the loss of the syllable is compensated for by lengthening the final vowel of the first stem. In example (11a), *anta* + *kwaku*, the first syllable of the second stem is truncated to [ku] before it is attached to the first stem resulting in *antaku*. Afterwards, the final vowel of the first stem is lengthened to surface as *antaaku*. Following vowel height harmony, the low vowel /a:/ is raised to a non-low level in consonance with the [+high] nature of the vowel in the following syllable resulting in *antæeku*. Again, we notice that the syllable truncation is bi-directional in Esahie. In example (11a and 11b), it is the first syllable of the second stem that is elided, but in example (11c), it is the second syllable of the first stem which is truncated. This syllable truncation is illustrated in figure 5 below:

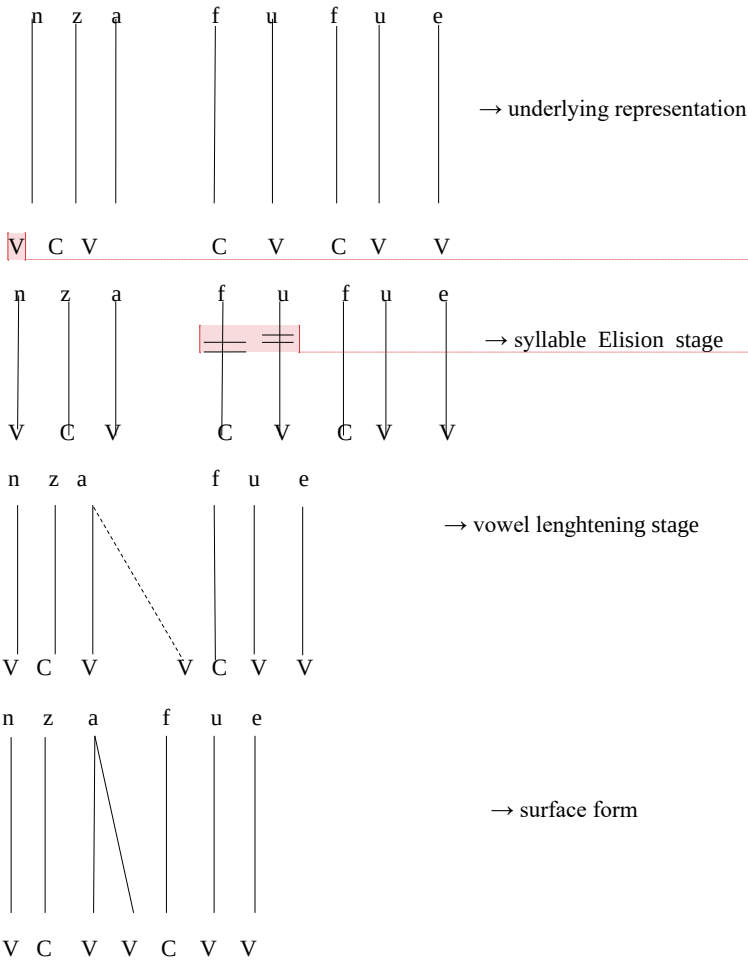


Figure 5: Autosegmental representation of syllable truncation.

Commented [A102]: In (c), such truncation is not seen. Can you explain why? In the first place, what motivates the truncation? I have come across similar works on Akan such as Abakah (2004), Adomako (2015, 2017), which may be useful in explaining this phenomenon.

Commented [A103]: This needs clarification. Height harmony? [e] is neither high nor low, so it is harmonizing with which vowel?

Commented [A104]: Check. Is n a V?

Commented [A105]: Are you discussing segmental or syllable truncation? The delinking sign is again segments and not one syllable?

Abakah (2004b) reports that in all dialects of Akan, intervocalic consonant that occurs in human names and kinship terms are deleted in a CVCV syllable structure as in:

Example 12

a.	papa+ kwasi	→	paakwesi	‘male name’
b.	nana + mansa	→	naamansa	‘female name’
c.	kofi + nimo	→	koonimo	‘male name’

Although this is like that of Esahie, it must be noted that the context of elision varies. While in Akan it is always the second syllable of the first stem which is deleted; in Esahie, the elided syllable is not position specific. It could be the initial stem of the second constituent as in example (11a) or the second stem of the first as in examples (11c). Again, one cannot conclude that the elision in Esahie is just intervocalic loss. While one can argue that in example (11a) it may be the loss of the consonant /kw/, the same cannot be said of [fu] in [fufue] in example (11c) where there is a complete syllable loss. It is appropriate, therefore, to call this process as it occurs in Esahie as syllable truncation followed by compensatory lengthening, as that will capture all similar cases. Also, like Esahie, in Dagbani, some parts of the syllable are truncated when they co-occur with other word forms. In a noun-adjective sequence, the second syllable of the first constituent is lost in the compounding process. The deleted syllable is always a CV with either a lateral or a glottal onset consonant as exemplified below.

Example 13.

- a. **ku.li (funeral) + pal.li (raw) ⇒ ku.pa.li “fresh funeral”**
- b. **su.li (anger) + yo.li (bad) ⇒ su-yo.li “bad anger” (Abdul-Rahman 2013: 226)**

5.0 Elision in borrowed words

According to (Bussmann 2006: 55), linguistics borrowing or loanwords is the “adaptation of a linguistic expression from one language into another”. Thomason and Kaufman (2001: 37) on the other hand refer to it as “the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language by speakers of that language: the native language is maintained but is changed by the addition of the incorporated features”. Esahie also borrow words from other languages, especially the English language to fill lexical vacuum. The borrowed words come with their own syllable structure which may conflict with that of Esahie. When this happens, the borrowed words with impermissible sound sequencing undergo some repair strategies. One of these is elision. The elision in the borrowed words is to allow them to conform with the syllable structure of Esahie. The elided segment may be a consonant or a vowel. In the sections that follows, I discuss the elision of consonant and then vowels in the borrowed words.

5.1 Consonant Elision in borrowed words

Esahie does not allow sounds in the coda position unless for the nasals /n, m/. Due to this, borrowed words from English with non-nasal coda must be re-syllabified. The re-syllabification is done either by insertion or by consonant elision. In case of elision, the C₁ or C₂ may be elided. Let us examine the data in example (14) below.

Example 14.

	English	Esahie	
a.	/fækt/	[fáɖɪ]	‘fact’
b.	/tæk.si/	[tazi]	‘taxi’
c.	/æsk/	[a:zi]	‘ask’
d.	/peɪst/	[pesɪ]	‘paste’

Commented [A106]: Why not the deletion of one syllable and subsequent lengthening rather than intervocalic deletion? How do you account for kofi#nimo being realized as koonimo and not *koinimo?

Commented [A107]: Do you mean given similar context?

Commented [A108]: So if not intervocalic loss in 11c&d, what is it? Can you explain it?

Commented [A109]: This statement needs rephrasing for clarity

Commented [A110]: How related is Dagbani to Esahie? Is this exemplification necessary?

Commented [A111]: Bussmann (2006:55)

Commented [A112]: borrows

Commented [A113]: is your argument that borrowing or loaning is to fill lexical vacuum? That cannot always be the case. Don't forget prestige, sometimes, could be a factor in borrowing.

Commented [A114]: These strategies...

Commented [A115]: How do you identify elision in borrowed words? I think it applying in the borrowing process instead.

Commented [A116]: Check grammar

Commented [A117]: ???

Commented [A118]: Are final nasal consonant actually codas? I doubt!

Commented [A119]: Why is this vowel, and not any other vowel the epenthetic vowel?

We notice from the data above that in (14a and 14b) it is the C₁ which is deleted, while in (14c-14d) it is the C₂ that is deleted. The elision of the consonant triggers other processes. The nativisation process involves four ordered rules, namely— consonant elision, vowel insertion, re-syllabification, and intervocalic voicing. In (14a) for instance, the English borrowed word /fækt/ has a final CC. The C₁ is first deleted leaving a final /t/. Esahie does not permit /t/ in the coda so a vowel is inserted to become /fætu/. The word, after insertion, becomes disyllabic, and is further re-syllabified for /t/ to become onset following the onset maximization principle — /fæ.tu/. Finally, via voicing assimilation, /t/ becomes /d/ resulting in /fæ.du/ being realised by the natives. This process is illustrated in figure 6 below.

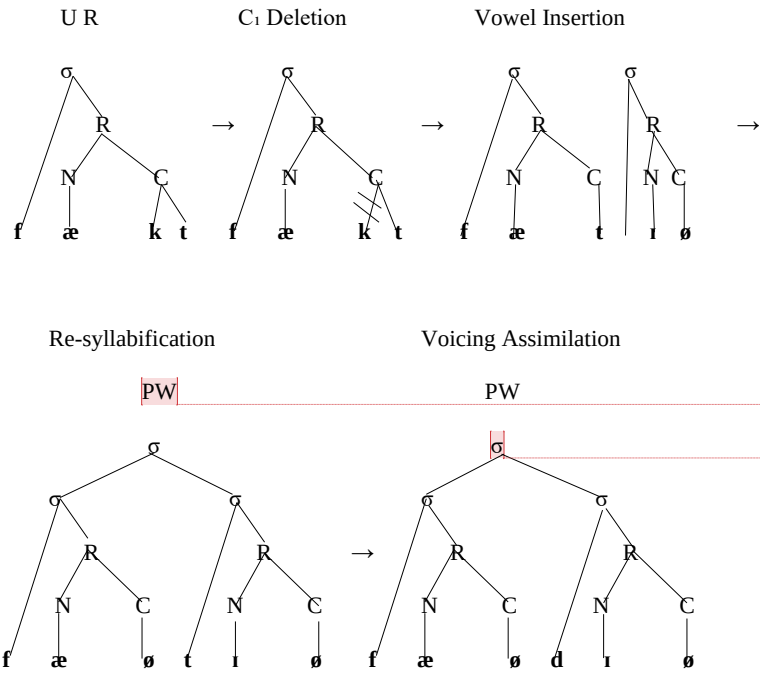


Figure 6: Consonant Elision in English borrowed words

5.2 Vowel Elision in borrowed words

The word structure of the Esahie disallow the [front, high], vowels /i, ɪ/ at word-initial position. Based on this, when English words with the initial [front, high] vowel are borrowed into Esahie, these vowels are elided. Consider the words in example (15) below.

Example 15.	English	Esahie	
a.	/ɪn 'sɪst/	[nzɪsɪ]	'insist'
b.	/ɪn. 'stɛd/	[nzɪdɛ: dɪ]	'instead'
c.	/ɪn 'spɛktə/	[nzɪpɛdɔ]	'inspector'

Commented [A120]: What motivates the deletion of C₁ and not C₂? Or is it random? Probably sonority explanations are feasible here.

Commented [A121]: Avoid this

Commented [A122]: This realization looks different from what is in (14a). is the vowel +ATR?

Commented [A123]: Why is this a prosodic word?

Commented [A124]: How does a syllable branch off into two other syllables?

Commented [A125]: e

Commented [A126]: Does where a vowel can and cannot occur have to the structure of a word? I think it is about vowel distribution. [front, high]? Does it mean [back, high] is permitted?

Commented [A127]: Indicate the syllable boundary

Commented [A128]: Show us the boundary of each syllable

In these examples, the vowel /i/ is elided as discussed earlier. This result in the word beginning with the alveolar nasal /n/. We notice in the data, for instance in example (15a) /m 'sist/, that the initial vowel /i/ of /m 'sist/ is elided because Esahie does not accept it. The elision of the initial vowel causes the nasal /n/, which is a sonorant to become syllabic. The syllabic nasal then assimilates the onset voiceless fricative of the second syllable /s/ to become voiced /z/. Following the rules of consonant elision, vowel insertion and re-syllabification (cf. section 3.1), the CC at the coda of the second syllable is restructured resulting in the word being realised as [nziɾ].

As mentioned earlier, there are tonal processes that are caused by the elision of the segments, and these are discussed in the next section.

6.0 Tonal Elision in Esahie

The segmental elision discussed in sections 3 and 4 triggers tonal processes. This section discusses the changes that tones undergo when the segment is elided. Among them are tone re-association, tone spread, tone deletion and OCP application. The tone is independent so when the segments are gone, the tone remains to behave separately.

6.1 Tonal Elision s in V₂ elision

We recall in example (2a), (cf. section 3.1) *dùg* + *ɓá* becoming *dùàbá* 'fruit', a loss of V₂ in the compound word. After the deletion of the V₂ segment, several tonal processes take place. When the segment is elided, a floating L tone is left in its stead. The floating L tone then re-associates with the left vowel which has a H tone and dock on it to become HL. Since derived nouns in Esahie have a LH tonal output regardless of the tonal input (cf. Owusu Ansah & Akanlig-Pare forthcoming), the low tone then spreads onto the H. The H tone is subsequently delinked leaving the L tone to yield a LH tonal output. This is represented in figure 7 below.

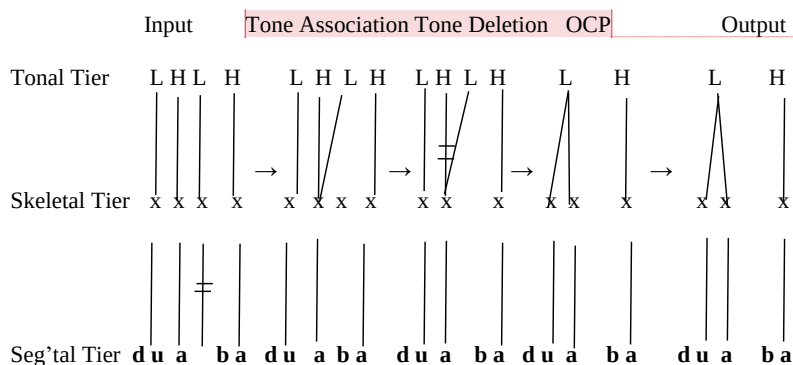


Figure 7: Tone Elision in V₂ Segment

In the case of V₂ in the perfective construction, the tone is deleted with the vowel. This is because even if the tone survives and re-associates with another segment, it will be deleted because of the expected tonal output.

Commented [A129]: Is it [ɪ] or [i] that elides?

Commented [A130]: Check agreement

Commented [A131]: ...instance,...

Commented [A132]: repetition

Commented [A133]: does not accept what?

Commented [A134]: How does a deletion of a segment causes the other to be syllabic? An explanation is needed.

Commented [A135]: As shown in ...

Commented [A136]: This statement is not clear. Do you mean this derivation follows a similar consonant deletion, vowel insertion and resyllabification or CC restructuring comes after these processes?

Commented [A137]: Consider restating this statement

Commented [A138]: e

Commented [A139]: How about syllable elisions? I thought tone is the property of the syllable and not the segment in Esahie. This needs to be established before the discussions.

Commented [A140]: What is 'them'?

Commented [A141]: Is OCP application a 'tonal process'?

Commented [A142]: Of what?

Commented [A143]: Replace with a better word

Commented [A144]: Change this word

Commented [A145]: What does this mean?

Commented [A146]: e

Commented [A147]: I think this vowel form functions as a singular morpheme so it is not just a vocalic segment.

Commented [A148]: You need to be consistent with your use of terminology; elide vs delete,....

Commented [A149]: What does this mean?

Commented [A150]: Do you mean the vowel to its left or the vowel left behind? Again, does it re-associate with only the vowel or the vowel as a syllable? Please clarify this.

Commented [A151]: Which process refers to which stage? Do proper alignment.

Commented [A152]: You need to explain this derivation well; stage by stage. For example, why the OCP? Does it apply elsewhere? That is, is it a regular process in the language?

Commented [A153]: Can you exemplify this for the reader to properly appreciate it.

6.2 Tonal Elision in V₁ elision

In section 3.2.2 on V₁ elision, we observed that the vowels of the pronouns are tone bearing as in *wó+álíé* → [wǎlíé]. The loss of the vowel will leave the H tone to be floating. This floating H tone is associated with the initial vowel of the noun to get a HL tone. To satisfy the LH tonal condition of the output form, the H floating tone from the V₁ which is associate with the initial L tone of the second word is delinked. This is shown in figure 8 below.

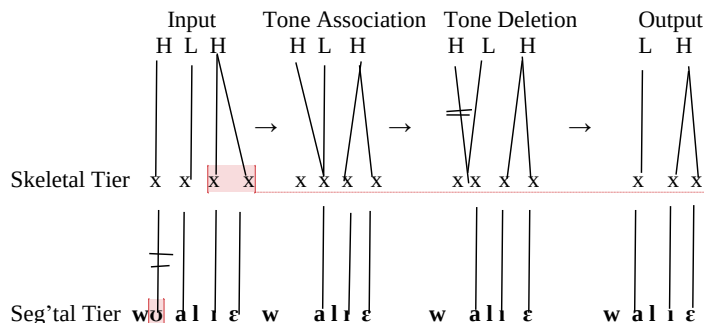


Figure 8: Tone Elision in V₁ Segment

7. Conclusion

This paper has provided an account of elision in Esahie. It has demonstrated that vowels, consonants, syllables, and tones can be elided in the language, with varied context of operation. We have shown that vowels can be elided at word boundary in environments such as the sequence of V₁ # V₂ in compounds, in a possessive construction with a sequence of V₁ # V₂, and in a perfective construction where the perfective verb is attached to a pronoun. Furthermore, using examples, we have also shown that, in Esahie, anytime a [+high] vowel occurs before a liquid, the vowel is deleted. This occurs in a CVCV syllable structure where the C₂ is a sonorant (CVRV). The V₁ is elided resulting in a CRV syllable structure.

On consonant elision, the paper has shown that in Esahie, when an alveolar nasal /n/ follows a [+high] vowel in the word final position, the final nasal consonant is deleted. This occurs after the nasal has regressively assimilated a [-back, +high, -ATR] vowel to be nasalized. The elision is ordered for the nasal consonant to regressively spreads its nasality feature onto the penultimate vowel causing it to be nasalized. Subsequently, the nasal consonant is deleted. It is also observed that entire syllables are truncated.

It has also shown that to conform to the syllable structure of Esahie, borrowed words with impermissible syllable structures such as consonant clusters, or non-nasal coda are re-syllabified via elision and insertion. Finally, we also realized that there are tonal processes such as tone re-association, tone spread, tone deletion and OCP application that are triggered by the deletion of the segments.

Commented [A154]: Are there vowels in Esahie that do not bear tone? If yes, can you mention them and tell us why?

Commented [A155]: realise

Commented [A156]: check the expression

Commented [A157]: How did you determine the input HH are linked to the same node? By which tone rule? This is not yet explained.

Commented [A158]: does the delinking take place in the input?

Commented [A159]: This is not clear

Commented [A160]: This is a repetition

Commented [A161]: Of course you HAD to use examples.

Commented [A162]: whenever

Commented [A163]: Do you mean CuRV too don't occur?

Commented [A164]: What does 'this' refer to?

Commented [A165]: delete

Commented [A166]: is it always or must it always be the case that n is preceded by vowels of this feature? Take a second look and provide all cases of different contexts of occurrences.

Commented [A167]: Check grammar

Commented [A168]: Where? When? How? Why?

Commented [A169]: Consider restating this

Commented [A170]: This is a summary. Can you briefly talk about the findings instead?

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1	First Person
2	Second Person
3	Third Person
ATR	Advanced Tongue Root
C	Consonant
C ₁	First Constituent
H	High
HT	High tone
L	Low
LT	Low tone
LTS	Low Tone Spread
N	Noun
PERF	Perfective
PL	Plural
PRFX	Prefix
Seg't	Segmental
Skel't	Skeletal
UR	Underlying Representation
V	Vowel
V ₁	First Vowel
V ₂	Second Vowel

Commented [A171]: You don't need this to consume one page. What you need to do is to either footnote the list or spell the words out on first use and resort to the abbreviations subsequently. It is more useful for syntax papers.

Reference

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