Elision in Iraqi Turkmen With Special Reference to English

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Abstract

The current study tries to shed light on the different possibilities of elision in Iraqi Turkmen . Elision of consonants - historical (established) and contextual-will be dealt with . Elision of vowels ,in native and non-native words , will also be covered with enough examples . The study will be concluded with conclusions and references .

INTRODUTION

Elision is a term used in **PHONETICS** and **PHONOLOGY** to refer to the omission of sounds in connected speech ; consonants and vowels are affected alike and whole syllables could be elided (Crystal , 1985 : 107) . Roach (1983 : 108) states elision in a simple way : " in certain circumstances a phoneme may be realized as zero or have zero realization " . Roach (ibid) contends that the process of change in phoneme realizations due to change of the speed and casualness of speech is called ' gradation ' . Instead of the term ' elision ', O'Connor (1980 : 103 . 105) uses 'disappearance' for the omission of sounds .

Ward (1972 : 196) attributes elision of a consonant in English partly to resemblance of a consonant in place or manner of articulation to one of the neighbouring consonants ; the loss of it would not easily be noticed by the hearer . Jones (1956 : 133) believes that elision is due to economy of effort , so if a word is intelligible without a certain sound , people tend to elide that sound . Gimson (1970:236) believes that in English " the weakly accented syllables have undergone a process of gradation , i.e. loss of phonemes or obscuration of vowels " . Gimson (ibid.) also distinguishes between cases of elision which have been established in the language for some time , and those which have become current only recently .

In the following sections , elision of consonants and vowels in Iraqi Turkmen (henceforth I.T.) will be dealt with with enough examples (1) . The examples
of elided word forms are found in the colloquial speech of the language . The current paper is a systematic study which draws on data observed and collected by the researchers from native spankers of I.T.

Examples :-

(i) Arabic medial glottal stop is usually elided in I.T. , e.g.
   / fa?l / $\longrightarrow$ / fal /   ' omen '
   / ma?mu:r / $\longrightarrow$ / ma:mur / ' deputy '

1

(ii) Arabic final glottal stop is also elided in I.T.

/ d₃afa:? /	→ / d₃afa /	' ill-treatment ' [2]
/ wafa: ? /	→ / wafa /	' loyalty '
/ safa : ? /	→ / safa /	' ease , peace '
/ hawa : ? /	→ / hawa /	' air '

Rendering properly:

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(iii) Persian word – final / t / is elided in I.T. in some words like :

/ serbest / → / serbes / ' free '
/ av dest / → / ebdes / ' ritual ablution ' [3]

2-2 Contextual

   Some of the possibilities of contextual elision in I.T. are the following :
(i) The morphemes / in , ün , ın ,un / which show possessiveness (genitive case) in I.T. are elided in word – finals before a following word , e.g.

/ selimin arwa:dı / → **/ selim arwa : dı /**   **' Selim's wife '**
/ mühsünün arwa:dı / → **/ mühsün arwa :dı /**   **' Muhsin's wife '**
/ xıdırın arwa : dı / → **/ xıdır arwa : dı /**   **' Kidir's wife '**
/ qulun arwa : dı / → **/ qul arwa: dı /**   **' the slave's wife '**

It is noted that the above –mentioned morphemes are elided only when the following word is / arwad / ' wife ' ; these elisions indicate insult and underestimation .

(ii) The syllables / er , ar / meaning ' if ' are prone to be elided in penultimate syllables in I.T. , e.g.

/ enerse / → / ense / ' if he comes down '
/ qaxarsa / → / qaxsa / ' if he gets up '

(iii) The syllable / ji / indicating progressiveness is usually elided in a word meaning ' to say ' , ' to talk ' , e.g. .

/ dijiri / → / diri / ' he is saying '

(iv) Final / r / is elided at the end of the syllable / - ger / in words expressing condition or necessity , e.g.

/ eger / → / ege / ' if '
/ meger / → / mege / ' must '

(v) Final / t / is elided at the end of a cluster followed by / -mag / denoting participiality , e.g.

/ qupartmag / → / quparmag / 'to break off '

(vi) The phoneme / l / in the imperative verbs / cal / ' hit (imp) ' / qal / ' remain (imp.) ' / sal / ' leave (imp.) ' is usually elided especially when followed by another word , e.g.

/ cal ba:sına /	⟶	/ ca bas ına /	' Hit on his head '
/ qal burda /	⟶	/ qa burda /	' Remain here '
/ sal ja:dına /	⟶	/ sa ja:dına /	' Remind him '

(vii) When the first sound of the second element of a compound word begins with /h/ followed a vowel , / h / will be elided , e.g.

| / ew harda / | ⟶ | / ew arda / | ' Where is the house? ' |
| / aj hawar / | ⟶ | / aj awar / | ' Oh , my God ! ' |

(viii) The expression / ha:xsı zaman / ' what time ? ' is usually pronounced as / ha zaman / with / -xsı / elided . And the expressions / na : xsı zaman / or / na : xsı wa: xıt / , ' what time ? ' have also elided / -xsı / , thus rendered as / ne zaman / and / ne wa:xıt/

(ix) According to Crystal (op.cit. : 107) , elision is resorted to " because of the implications for constructing well-formed metrical lines , which would scan well " . An example from I.T. is the following :

/ zindȝiri sallatma / ⟶ / zindȝiri sallama / ' Do not draw the chain ' , where the phoneme /t/ is dropped from / sallatma / .

3.ELISION OF VOWELS

3.1 Native

The possibilities of vowel elision in native I.T. words are mainly the following :
(i) Final / i , ü , ı , u / are usually elided when followed by another word beginning with a phoneme identical with the preceding last phoneme of the first word after dropping the final vowel especially when this elision does not affect the meaning of the resultant words , e.g.

/ e:liwi wer /	⟶	/ e:liw wer /	' Give me your hand '
/ sütü tö:ktü /	⟶	/ süt tö:ktü /	' He spilt the milk '
/ qa:pı pendȝere /	⟶	/ qa:p penedȝere /	' door and window '
/ do:lu legen /	⟶	/ do:l legen /	' a full wash bowl '

3

(ii) Word – final vowels /i,ü,ı,u / following /n- / indicating possessiveness are usually dropped especially when followed by another word ,e. g.

/e: wini jıxtı / →	/ e: win jıxtı /	' He ruined his life'
/ sütünü icti/ →	/ sütün icti/	' He drank his milk'
/ a: tını sa : ttı / →	/ a: tın sa : ttı /	' He sold his horse '
/ duzunu sa: ttı / →	/ duzun sa: ttı /	' He sold his salt '

(iii) Word – initial / i / is usually elided in / iki / 'two' , wherever it is found in a sentence , e.g.

/ iki kitap / →	/ ki kitap /	' two books'

(iv) When a word ends in a vowel and the following word begins with a vowel too , the last vowel of the first word is dropped (elided) retaining the vowel of the following word ; the resultant word will be read as one word with a reduced syllable , e.g.

/e: wi e : skidi / →	/ eiwe: skidi /	' His house is old '
/ kere a: ldı / →	/ kera : ldı /	' He bought butter '
/ kö : tü adam / →	/ kö: tadam/	' a bad man '
/ do: lu el / →	/ do: lel /	' a full hand '
/ daha ejji / →	/ dahejji /	' far more better '

ln/ kö: tadam/ above ,/t / is rendered / t / to coincide with the following back vowel / a / after eliding front vowel / ü / .

3. 2 Non – native (Loan – words)

Elision of vowels in borrowed words is usually found in Arabic loan words . Elided vowels are medial / i / and /u / , e. g .

/hali: ma / →	/ helme/	' a girl's name '
/rutu: ba / →	/ rütbet /	' humidity '

Some Arabic vowels (above) undergo changes when borrowed into I. T . : Arabic central / a / becoming I.T. front / e / in the first example ; back / u / becoming front /ü / , and consonant /t / is added to the end of the second syllable in the second example .

Conclusions and Summary of Findings

The following points are arrived at in the current study :

4

1) Elision is one of the distinguishing features of the structure of Iraqi Turkmen.

2) Historical (established) cases of elision of consonants in l. T . are mainly found in loan – words.

3) Contextual elision of consonants are the final / in, ün ,ın , un / showing possessiveness .Conditional medial / er, ar / ; / ji / indicating progressiveness , final / r / in / - ger / ; final /t / followed by the syllable /mag/ denoting participiality ; final /l / in some imperative verbs ; the first letter /h / of a second element of a compound word followed by a vowel ; and / -xsı / of /ha: xsı / and / na : xsı / followed by /zaman / or / wa : xıt / . Contextual elision in l. T . is also found when constructing well – formed metrical lines .

4) Elision of vowels in native words are mainly final / i , ü , ı , u / of the first element ; word – final vowels / i , ü , ı , u / of the first element following / n- / ; word initial / i / of / iki / ' two ' ; and a final vowel of the first element is elided retaining the following vowel of the following word .

5) Elision of vowels in non-native (mainly Arabic) borrowed words are medial / i / and /u/.

6) Elision occurs in I.T. due to many reasons : the majority of cases of elision are due to economy of effort in colloquial rapid speech . The other factor is the resemblance of a consonant to its neighbouring counterpart (see introduction) , e.g. / t / is dropped in / ebdest / since / s / and / t / are denti – alveolars in I.T. (cf . 2.1 (iii)) ; / t / is elided in / qupartmag / as / r / is alveolar and / t / denti alveolar in I.T. (cf. 2.2 (v.)) .

7) There are twelve different cases of elision of consonants in I.T. (historical and contextual) ; while elision of vowel occurs only in five cases (native and non – native)

APPENDIX

TURKMEN SEGMENTAL SYMBOLS *

1- The pure vowels
i   a short high front unrounded vowel , e.g. / ip / ' rope '
ü   a short high front rounded vowel , e.g. / jüz / ' hundred '
e   a short higher – mid front unrounded vowel , e.g. / ew / ' home '

e: a long higher – mid front unrounded vowel , e.g. / e:wi / ' his (her) home .

e a short lower – mid front unrounded vowel , e.g. / el / ' hand '

e: a long lower – mid front unrounded vowel , e.g. / e:l ci / ' suitor '

ö a short lower – mid front rounded vowel , e.g. / göz / ' eye '

ö: a long lower – mid front rounded vowel , e.g. / gö:zü / ' his (her) eye '

u a short high back rounded vowel , e.g. / uzun / ' tall '

ı a short high back unrounded vowel , e.g. / qıl / ' pray '

o a short higher – mid back rounded vowel , e.g. / o / ' that '

o: a long higher – mid back rounded vowel , e.g. / do:lu / ' full '

a a short low back unrounded vowel , e.g. / axsam / ' evening '

a: a long low back unrounded vowel , e.g. / a:ldı / ' he (she) bought '

2- The Diphthongs

ij   as in / sijmeg /   ' to urinate '

ew   as in / ew /   ' home '

ew   as in / ewkele /   ' massage ' (imp)

ej   as in / qejmeg /   ' cream '

öj   as in / köj /   ' village '

aw   as in / aw /   ' hunting '

aj   as in / aj /   ' moon , month '

oj   as in / toj /   ' a wedding '

uj   as in / qujju /   ' a well , a pit '

3- The Consonants

P a voiceless bilabial plosive , e.g.   / paj / ' share '

b a voiced bilabial plosive , e.g.   / bir / ' one '

t a voiceless denti-alveolar plosive , e.g.   / et /   ' meat '

t a voiceless denti – alveolar emphatic plosive , e.g. / ta:wıg /   ' hen '

d a voiced denti – alveolar plosive , e.g.   / dört /   ' four '

k a voiceless palatal plosive , e.g. / kösk /   ' chest '

g a voiced palatal plosive , e.g.   / göz /   ' eye '

q a voiceless uvular plosive , e.g.   / qujrug /   ' tail '

f   a voiceless labio-dental fricative , e.g.   / fırlat /   ' throw (imp) '

s a voiceless denti-alveolar fricative , e.g.   / ses /   ' voice '

s a voiceless denti-alveolar emphatic fricative , e.g.   / sol / ' left '

z a voiced denti-alveolar fricative , e.g.   / zehhir /   ' poison '

s a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative , e.g. / bos /   ' empty '

x   a voiceless velar fricative , e.g.   / xax /   ' people '
g   a voiced velar fricative , e.g.   / oglan /   ' boy '
h   a voiceless pharyngeal fricative , e.g.   / hamam /   '
bath '
9   a voiced pharyngeal fricative , e.g.   / $9ed_3d_3i$ /   ' bitter '
h   a glottal fricative , e.g.   / baha /   ' expensive '
c   a voiceless alveolar affricate , e.g.   / ca:mır /   ' mud '
d_3 a voiced alveolar affricate , e.g.   / d_3am /   ' glass '
m   a voiced bilabial nasal , e.g.   / mum /   'candle '
n   a voiced denti-alveolar nasal , e.g. / nene /   ' mother '
l   a voiced alveolar lateral , e.g.   / lekke /   'stain '
r   a voiced alveolar flap , e.g.   / burun /   ' nose '
w   a voiced bilabial approximant, e.g.   / wer /   ' give (
imp) '
j   a voiced palatal approximant , e.g. jaz / ' summer '

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(1)Since there is no masculine , versus feminine contrast in I.T. , the pronoun ' he' , 'him' will be used throughout the paper rather than he / she or him / her whenever these pronouns are needed .

2. **Elision of Consonants in I.T.**
2-1   **Historical (Established)**

The majority of historical elision of consonants in I.T. are in the loan-words used in it. These loans are either of Arabic or Persian origin .
(2) In I.T. low vowels / a , e , e , ö , o / are lengthened only when followed by another syllable containing a high (always short in I.T.) vowel / ı , i , u , ü / .
(3) In the Persian /av/ , / a/ is rendered / e / in I.T. to coincide with / e / in / dest / according to vowel harmony principle . And / v / is replaced by / b/ since / v / is not found in I.T. .
* Turkmen segmental symbols and their descriptions are after (Lewis , 1975 ; Benderoglu , 1976) .