Sample Abstract

Based on “Syncope in Namklaw”, the sample term paper by Bruce Hayes and Heidi Fleischhacker

Syncope in Namklaw

This paper documents syncope in Namklaw, a Namklawic language spoken in Noisevelet. Data are given from fieldwork with a native speaker of Namklaw. These new data largely confirm the findings of Fleischhacker (2001), except for a restriction of the rule to casual speech, and an additional restriction on the consonants flanking the to-be-syncopated vowel.

Fleischhacker describes syncope in Namklaw as deletion of a post-tonic vowel that is in a non-final syllable and flanked by exactly one consonant on each side, as in /amila/ → [ʼam.la] ‘platypus’ (stress, whose assignment precedes syncope, is on the antepenultimate syllable). Suffixation creates alternations, as in /amila-ma/ → [ʼa.mil.ma] ‘platypus-pl.’ and /amila-ma-nu/ → [ʼa.mi.ʼam.nu] ‘platypus-pl.-acc.’. The post-tonic (as opposed to merely penultimate) requirement is confirmed by words with exceptional pre-antepenultimate stress: /lu'patirome/ → [lu.ʼpat.ro.me], *[lu.ʼpa.tirme] ‘mongoose’. The requirement that the vowel be flanked by no more than one consonant is confirmed by words with CC clusters adjacent to the penult: /konektima/ → [ko.ʼnek.ti.ma] *[ko.ʼnekt.ma] ‘extension cord’.

The speaker consulted in this study performs syncope only in casual speech. Fleischhacker (personal communication) confirms this finding. In casual speech, the present speaker follows Fleischhacker’s rule, except that he performs syncope only when the consonants flanking the target vowel do not have the same place of articulation: /opekuga/ → [ʼo.pe.ku.ga], *[ʼo.ʼpek.ga] ‘itinerant bagpiper’ (cf. Fleischhacker’s [ʼo.ʼpek.ga]). This restriction holds for various manners of articulation.

Aim for 200 to 500 words (this is 226).