

Hiatus in ChiShona: a phono-morphosyntactico account

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This paper discusses how hiatus results in ChiShona and how phonology and morpho-syntax resolves it. Research has shown that languages generally do not allow hiatus, that is, a sequence of vowels across a syllable boundary. In this regard, this article seeks to explore the morphosyntactic environments in which vowel sequences occur in ChiShona and explain the synchronic hiatus resolution strategies that are employed in this language. Thus provide a phono-morphosyntactico account of hiatus resolution. This study shows that ChiShona relies on glide formation, glide epenthesis, vowel elision and vowel coalescence in order to resolve hiatus. Furthermore, this investigation concludes that the motivation for resolving hiatus in ChiShona is to maintain its preferred consonant–vowel (CV) syllable structure. The data that is used in this study is both intuitive and naturalistic and its analysis is couched within the CV-phonology model of syllable structure. This research is expected to broaden and deepen our understanding of hiatus resolution in ChiShona and Bantu languages in general.