



Exploring the connection between schwa dropping and vowel lengthening in Albanian

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Background



Compensatory lengthening (CL)

Target lengthened after loss of trigger

CVCV > CV:C



Gheg

definite

buka 'the bread'
/buka/

indefinite

një bukë 'a bread'
/bukə/ > /bu:k/
(historical CL)

Tosk

definite

buka 'the bread'
/buka/

indefinite

një bukë 'a bread'
/bukə/
[bukə] ~ [buk]
(Çeliku 1971)

Is CL emerging in Tosk following schwa dropping?

- ⊘ No contrastive length
- ⊘ Opposite pattern



Participants



16 speakers of **Tosk**

17 speakers of **Gheg**

Field trips Albania 2020



Analyses



acoustic analysis

1. Duration of target vowel
e.g. /u/ in *buka*, *bukë*
2. Presence/absence of schwa
(Tosk indefinites)

Material



Reading task

e.g. *buka thoni buka* (x2)

9 pairs of definite/indefinite nouns

e.g. *buka/bukë* 'a/the bread'

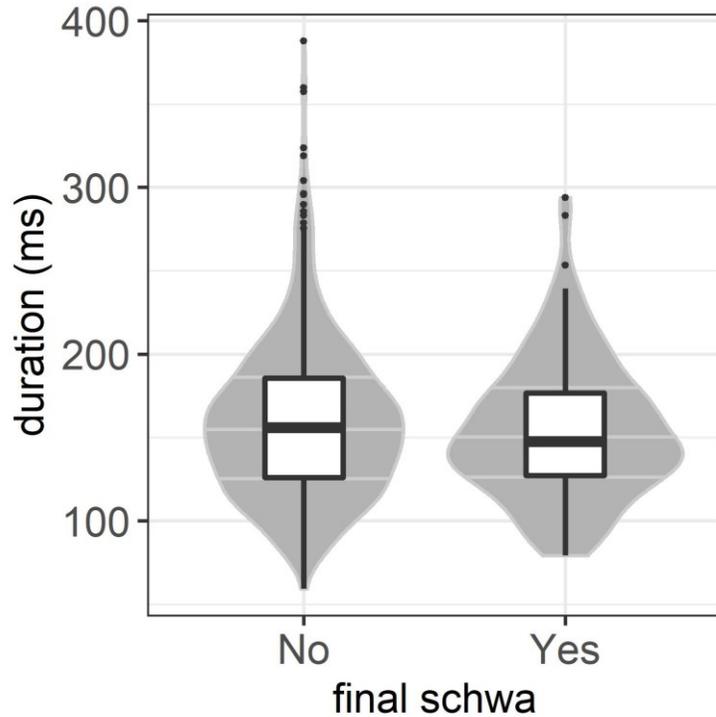
kali/kalë 'a/the horse'



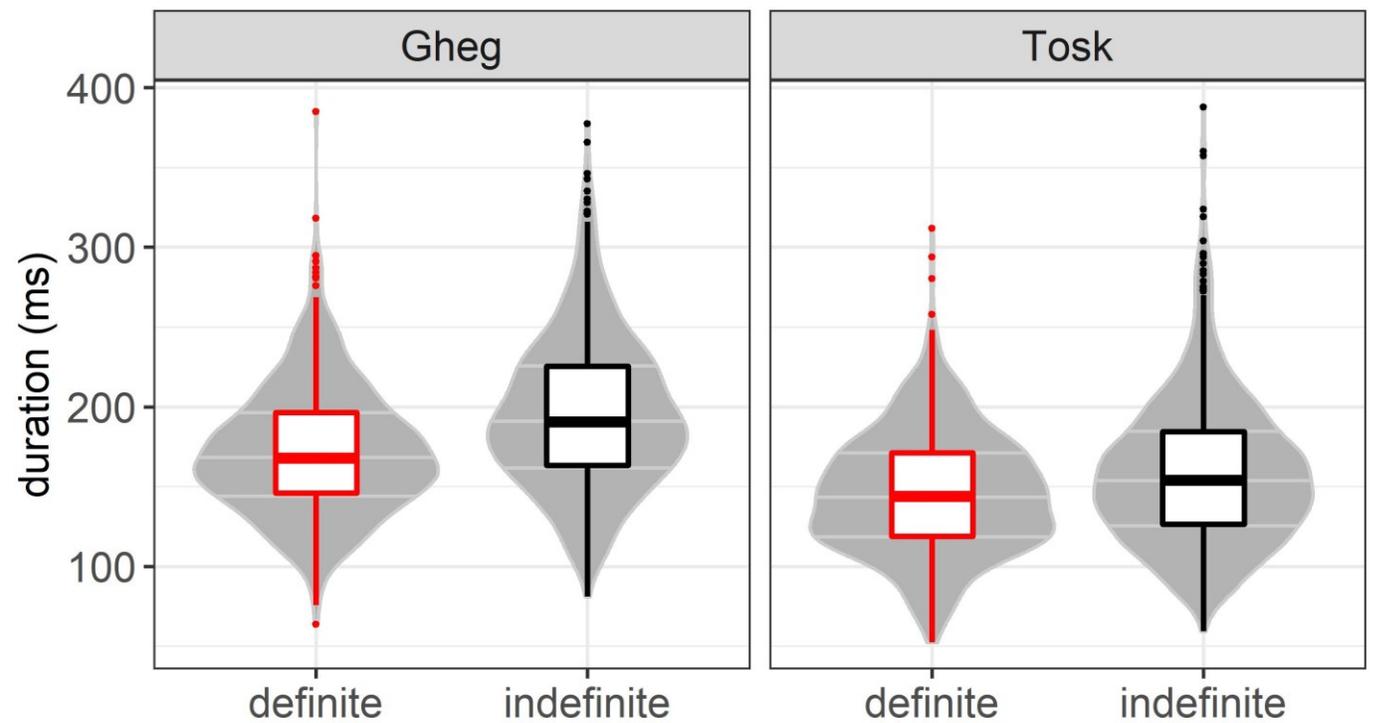
statistical analysis

1. $\log(\text{duration}) \sim \text{Schwa} + (\text{Schwa}|\text{Speaker}) + (\text{Schwa}|\text{Stem})$
2. $\log(\text{duration}) \sim \text{Dialect} * \text{Definiteness} + (\text{Definiteness}|\text{Speaker}) + (\text{Definiteness} + \text{Dialect}|\text{Stem})$

Results & Discussion



Schwa: not significant



Definiteness: significant, where indefinite > definite

Dialect: significant, where Gheg > Tosk

Dialect*Definiteness: not significant

- Tendency to drop schwa in Tosk (78%)
- No clear effect of presence/absence of schwa in Tosk indefinite nouns
- Similar length patterns in Tosk & Gheg (but Gheg vowels longer)
- No pattern opposite to CL found in Tosk (Çeliku, 1971)

