

# Phonological Variation of Vowel in Urdu: Epenthetic Schwa

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## Abstract

Phonology has played a significant role in theoretical discussion and rule formalism. In Phonological variation of Schwa, epenthesis and syncope are found in Urdu language. The term “Epenthesis” means an addition of extra vowel sound in an utterance. This process is also found in Urdu speech. Schwa is universal and considered as target less sound. This vowel systematically denoted as (ə) symbol in vowel chart. The goal of this research is to clarify the underlying status of epenthetic schwa with illustration and also highlight the phonological rule based on earlier analysis.

Originally, the data is collected from Text to speech (TTS) system for the purpose of analyzing the wave form and spectrogram. The selected words extracted from data are verified from OUD (Online Urdu dictionary) as well as Urdu Lughat. The Rule based approach is used for this research. The supra-segmental phonology and distinctive features are also used to determine the phonological rules.

Schwa is arbitrarily inserted in open class words in Urdu speech and is mainly comes from an unstressed syllable. Epenthetic schwa elides the consonant cluster of words at coda position and makes another syllable in Urdu so it can change the mono syllable words into Bi syllabic and Bi syllabic words into Tri syllabic Words and so on. It is also observed that usually schwa insertion come after anterior and back consonants in Urdu language.

**Keywords:** Epenthetic Schwa, Anterior, Back consonant, unstressed syllable, Consonant cluster