ELISIONS CORRESPONDENCE TO SPEECH RATE IN EMINEM'S *OFFENDED* SUB-VERSES

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Abstrak

Pada konteks wicara dalam kehidupan sehari - hari, produktivitas elision pada umumnya sejalan dengan kecepatan ucap. Namun, pada konteks wicara dalam rap, produktivitas elision dapat disebabkan oleh kecepatan ucap atau dialek bahasa Inggris khas masyarakat Afrika-Amerika yang juga disebut sebagai *Black English Vernacular (BEV).* Penelitian ini dimaksudkan untuk menjawab isu tersebut. Meneliti lagu rap dari Eminem yang berjudul *Offended*, tiga bait dalam lagu tersebut dibagi menjadi empat sub-bait. Empat sub-bait tersebut kemudian diurutkan berdasarkan kecepatan ucap masing – masing. Total jumlah elision pada ke-empat bait tersebut kemudian dihitung dan dibandingkan satu sama lain. Hasilnya, elision dalam sub-bait dari lagu *Offended* tidak dipengaruhi oleh kecepatan ucap, namun oleh dialek. Berdasarkan pola dari elision tersebut, ditemukan bahwa lebih dari 80 persen didasari oleh BEV. Pada proses selanjutnya, fonem dengan jumlah elision terbanyak beserta implikasi yang menyertai, dikaji lebih dalam.

Kata kunci: *Black EnglishVernacular, Elision, Eminem, Rap, Fonem, Kecepatan Ucap*

Abstract

As productivity of elisions is generally corresponds to speech rate in normal speech, it becomes a question in whether it works in the same way in raps. Ambivalence appears as the cause of elisions in raps possibly comes from speech rate or BEV (Black English Vernacular), given to the fact that raps are one of the products of African American culture. Using Eminem's song entitled *Offended*, this study delved into this issue. Four sub-verses were extracted from three verses of the song. Later, the sub-verses were ranked based on their speech rate. Every sub-verse was counted for its numbers of elisions. Subsequently, they were compared to one another. The result showed that the productivities of elisions in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses were not affected by speech rate, but a dialect. Based on the patterns of the elisions, it was found that more than 80 percent of elisions were underlain by BEV. In further examination, the most elided vowel and consonant phoneme sounds and their implications ensuing for their predominant appearance were included.

Keywords: *Black English Vernacular, Elision, Eminem, Rap, Phoneme, Speech Rate*

INTRODUCTION

Elision is a linguistics phenomenon of dismembering a sound or more in speech. It can occur in single or groups of words. It has been a prevalent phenomenon in various languages in the world, including English.

Elisions feasibly exist by canonical, cultural, and natural. In canonical cause, elisions in particular words are a grammatical mandate, such as in the absence of /h/ in the pronunciation of word 'honest'. By cultural cause, elision occurs as the way of certain communities speak. English speakers from native Atlanta, U.S.A., practice a plethora of consonant elision words 'white', 'dead' and 'people' as /waɪ/, /deɪ/, /pɪːəl/ (Harrison, 2007). In the case of natural cause, elision is involuntarily committed as by-products of less

duration limit in covering phonological units (Byrd & Tan, 1994), such as conversion of /æftərˈnuːn/ from a word 'afternoon' into /æftˈnuːn/ when it is uttered as the fastest we can.

In fast speech, elisions are byproducts. There have been scientific facts (Byrd & Tan, 1994; Davidson, 2006) saying faster speech provokes more elision. In fast speech, a speaker struggles to fits all certain numbers of phonological units in certain delivery time, thus they have to cut away one or a few to cope with the time. On that viewpoint, it should be an easy presumption that it works in the same way to raps. Nevertheless, on the other standpoint, raps are also replete with black vernacular (Edwards, 2009, pp. 47-50), which a unique way of speech that can feasibly defy the natural elision provoked by speech rate. In the 'black' dialect, elisions may be a mandatory beyond the obligation to cope with delivery time. From that viewpoint, elisions in raps can defy speech rate correlation. Regarding to the two viewpoints, they share a slice of ambiguity area, where which emerges some questions: '*is the elisions producitivy congruence with the speech rate in a rapping as well as it is in the normal speech? What makes their congruence if they are positive or negative?*'

In response to the questions, this research studied the congruence of the elisions productivity to the speech rate in raps. By research subject-wise, the selection goes to Eminem, a famous American rapper with interesting background is rapping realm. His background as the a 'white' person who practices raps which belong to 'black' culture (Jury, 2015) and are also predominantly practiced and relished by 'black' people. His racial background is contradictive with the black culture- ridden raps, while the contradiction comes in linguistics-wise as well. By research object-wise, the selection goes to one of Eminem's rap songs entitled 'Offended' (2017, track 15). The song selection background is it has the wide variety of delivery rate which is presented with syllable density value (SDV).

The research concludes two standard measuring values are employed in the research, i.e. SDV (Syllable Density Value) and EV (Elision Value). SDV is a value with 'syllable per second' (S/s) as its measuring unit (Toraldo & Lorusso, 2012; Pfitziger, 1998). In other words, the more SDV in a sub-verse refers to the capability of it to produce more syllables per second. This measuring value (SDV) is utilized to compare the delivery rate or speed from a sub-verse to the others. Meanwhile, EV is a value with 'elision per syllable' (E/S) as its measuring unit. This measuring value is utilized to measure elisions density per syllable. The elision and syllable are based on the numbers that are resulted from phonemic transcriptions, while duration (seconds) is based on the delivery footage.

Based on the SDV counting, four sub-verses are extracted from three verses in the Eminem's song as the main research objects. The sub-verses that are established in the research are: (1) SF, which stands for 'sub-verse of the fastest', is a sub-verse that contains the fastest speech rate than the other counterparts. This sub-verse is extracted from the third verse, which coincidentally bears the fastest sub-verse; (2) S1 stands for 'sub-verse 1' for extraction from verse 1; (3) S2 stands for 'sub-verse 2', which is extracted form verse 2; (4) The last is S3, standing for 'the sub-verse 3', which is taken from verse 3, but different parts of that of SF. All the sub-verses, except the SF, are selected randomly. Subsequently, these sub-verses were transcribed into two versions, i.e. Eminems's and base versions, which, eventually, put into a comparison. The comparison is purposed to find the numbers of elisions in the each sub-verse. These numbers of elisions were used to find their EV.

The SDV and EV values play the important role in concluding the congruence of elisions productivity with speech rate. If the hierarchy result of SDV of the sub-verses are aligned with the hierarchy result of the EV in the results, then, the tenet saying 'elisions productivity is congruence with speech rate' is officially debunked or pronounced to be not working in the Eminem's song, *Offended.*

Dealing with the two possibilities of being 'congruence' or 'not' as the result, there is two theories that are involved, i.e. SE (Standard English) and BEV (Black English Dialect) by Labov (1972). The SE contains phonological processes that may occurs to any English dialects, whereas the BEV contains phonological process that occurs

exclusively to 'Black' (African American) communities or any person outside them who practices BEV dialect. While SE is more constricted to general phonological reactions occurs in 'sounds to sounds' encounter such as assimilation, degemination, lenition, etc., BEV offers more arbitrariness. For instance, in BEV, the elision of /t/ in /hʌntɪd / (hunted), which eventually turns into /hʌn.ɪd /, is probable. In the general phonological standpoint, the elision of the /t/ is unnecessary since /t/ and /n/ share the same place of articulation, which means their co-existence, indeed, do not hinder each other.

The research also found the most elided vowel and consonant sound and related them with the SDV results as the legitimate measurement of speech rate, herein. As the culmination, those two results, the most elided sounds and SDV, were cross-examined to meet any correlation. The correlation(s) implies the background of Eminem's practice upon particular dialect tendency, which represents socio-phonetics standpoint (Flynn, 2014; Chambers, 2015), and his practice upon the sounds per se to obtain advantages from them to facilitate his rhyming in certain purpose, which represents technical standpoint. By subject-wise, Eminem has unique background and impressive rapping skill. With his is verbal dexterity and flexibility, Eminem's elision application in his raps comes as an intriguing object to be probed phonologically. On another side, his racial background as a white American who becomes a rapper, a profession which is predominantly occupied by African American people makes him more interesting socio-phonetically.

Concisely, there were three issues to be solved in this research with the objects Eminem's sub-verses: (1) the congruence of the elisions productivity with speech rate; (2) the background underlying the results of the 'elision on speech rate' congruence; (3) the most elided vowel and consonant elisions and the implications entail them.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE BETWEEN SPEECH RATE AND ELISIONS

Even though elisions can occur in the non-fast speech, such as underline by sociolinguistics ground (Harrison, 2007; Flynn, 2014), speech rate is still a precarious environment for elisions to occur. The reason is we need time to practice a segment of sounds to make it successfully and completely pronounced. This makes elisions that are motivated by reduced delivery duration becomes universal and prevalent.

The relevance between speech rate and elision has been a scientific proof, nevertheless the focus issues. Davidson (2006), in his study of schwa elision in fast speech, in finding of segmental (structural) or gestural overlap cause, concluded that lessen delivery duration affects schwa elision, either it is provoked by arrangement of the types of sounds neighboring schwa, or by the inability of articulatory gesture to cope with the limited duration.

Byrd & Tan (1996) in their study of elisions with the background of consonant clusters, also finds that speech rate affects the elision production, nevertheless that some particular clusters arrangements offer more prolific environment for elisions.

Shaiman (2001), in studying kinematic of compensatory vowel shortening, states that jaw movements becoming less open to anticipate the consonants clusters following the vowel. As the compensatory act, the vowels are delivered shorter than they normally do in the normal speech.

B. MEASURING SPEECH RATE

Words will not offer accurate unit in marking speech rate, thus a lot of studies employ syllable as the minimal segment to take on the role. As the result, syllable per second (S/s) becomes ubiquitous as one of standard measurement in assessing speech rate (Toraldo & Lorusso, 2012).

Some of the large numbers of phonologists use syllable per second standard speech rate measurement are Pfitzinger (1998) in studying local speech rate in German language , Toraldo & Lorusso (2012) in displaying childern reading speed rate, Goldman and Eisler in their 1961's study about setting up the standard of average English speaker

(as cited in Kendall, 2013 p.27), and Hewllet and Rendall in their 1998's study about comparing spontaneous speech to reading rate (as cited in Kendall, 2013 p. 28), Strangert in his 1993's study discussing comparation of spontaneous speech to reading rate in Swedish language (as cited in Kendall, 2013, p. 28).

C. VARIATION OF ENGLISH DIALECTS PRACTICED BY EMINEM

Since Eminem, as we do either, has a social background that shapes him linguistically, it is important to not to overlook it. Eminem is grown up in the Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A, in the African American Neighborhood. Demographically, he belonged to poor society segment, which brings to two ideas, i.e. (1) he was influenced by African American English that exists in defiance to the standard English language; (2) his economy background reinforces its canonical defiance.

In the same time, he was a Caucasian, or white by race. There should be an influence also from non-African American English practice from his family. This makes him interestingly have two linguistic ways of speech repertoires that he naturally grew up with; Black English Vernacular (BEV) and Standard English (SE) Dialect rules. General Dialect rules contain standard and prevalent sound alternations.

Black English Vernacular (BEV) is a non-standard English that is spoken by black people in the inner city (Labov, 1972, p.3).This variant of English can also be found under the name African American English, which is abbreviated to AAE (Fromklin, 2011, p.440, Green, 2002, p.7). In his study to BEV, Labov posits some BEV based rules, the rules that formulate how particular sounds can be elided in BEV, breaching that of canonical version.

On the other side, Standard English (SE) contains the sound alternations variety that can occur in general English dialects, not specifically and exclusively belong to particular groups. For example, a degemination of /r.r/ in the word *overreach*, which makes **/oʊvər.ri**:**tʃ/** turns into **/oʊvə.ri**:**tʃ/.** The rules of elision in SE in this research concluded assimilation, lenition, unstressed vowel elision, degemination, etc.

The segmentation of BEV from common English makes an indirect affiliation of SE practice lean to white people, which, therefore, is casually named as 'white English' (Lee, 1994; Labov, 1972), even though, in fact, there are various English dialects that are practiced by white people in the U.S., such as Boston, Atlanta, Savannah, New York, etc. However, as the founder of English language by historical standpoint (Baugh & Cable, 1993), it should be an extenuating statement to entitle the SE belongs to white people. The BEV per se has been spoken and nurtured by African Americans to diversify themselves from the white people and eventually become something to celebrate as their contrast identity (Gaither, Cohen-Goldberg, Gidney & Maddox, 2015; Green, 2002).The general difference between BEV and SE is that the latter is stricter in losing 'non-sound to sound related' elisions.

Still on the Labov's study about comparison between 'black' and 'white' English phonological realizations, the results of his study show the arbitrariness of the practice of elisions in the 'black' English. On the 'black' English practice, the phrase *passed him* loses its [d], *that's* loses its [t], and the name *Carrol* loses its [r]. Put the base on the SE, the losing of [r] in [kærəl] is unreasonable for the existence of a vowel ([ə]) following the [r]. The elision is practically redundant and can distort the comprehensibility of the produced pronunciation. The display reaffirms the elisions in BEV which do not need phonological agreement as restricted as the SE or even the other colloquial 'white' English dialects do.

Nonetheless, some of the BEV based-elisions have vague lines to categorize them into genuinely underlain by BEV or the other dialect. In r-dropping, for instance, Boston, New York, and Savannah are known for some of r-less dialects in the U.S. Then, the question is, "How come this research confidently categorized r-dropping as one of exclusively BEV-based elisions?" To validate this decision, we need to learn the context of the research subject, Eminem. Eminem is a citizen of Detroit, a city where he spent his formative years

and hitherto has lived (Flynn, 2014). Concisely, it is fair to say that he is highly influenced by the Detroit's dialect. The linguistic trait of white people in Detroit is sounding -r, unlike those in the Boston or New York (Flynn, 2014, p. 76). In addition, Eminem's normal speech, indeed, practices sounding –r dialect, which were proven by some of his interview with Complex (2017), CBS' 60 minutes (CBS News, 2011), and Ice-T (Martins, 2012). He was noted to rarely drop /r/, even those in the final position. Therefore, r-droppings that are practiced by Eminem in his songs become a significant. Based on that context, this research features r-dropping into BEV based-elisions.

D. RULES OF BLACK ENGLISH VERNACULAR

Black English Vernacular, or abbreviated to BEV, is the non-standard English that is spoken by black people in the inner city (Labov, 1972, p.3).This variant of English can also be found under the name African American English, which is abbreviated to AAE (Fromklin, 2011, p.440, Green, 2002, p.7). In his study to BEV, Labov posits some BEV based rules, the rules that formulate how particular sounds can be elided in BEV, breaching that of canonical version.

1. R - dropping

R-dropping is the omission of /r/. The disappearance of /r/ can be manifested as lengthening the preceded vowel or turning into a schwa. This manner of pronunciation causes some words supposedly sound different sounds alike.

The position of r-dropping can be at initial, mid, or final. Final is the most prevalent r-dropping place, which perfectly a practice of realization of 'the lengthening vowel or turning into schwa' as stated before. *Never, after, car,* and *far* can effortlessly lose their /r/, turning into /nevə /, /æftə/, / kɑː /, and / fɑː /, which is also the most prevalent r-dropping in a great number of other dialects.

Mid position r-dropping refers to: (1) pre-vocalic position where the 'r' be in the last position of an onset consonant cluster, such as in *throw* (/θroʊ/ → /θoʊ/); or (2) post-vocalic position if it is in the first position of a coda consonant cluster, such as in *fort* (/fɔːrt/ → /fɔːt/).

R-dropping in initial position refers to the coda position in a syllable, such as /rər/ in /be.rər/ (*bearer*). Commonly, this type of r-dropping occurs in an intervocalic environment, or between two vowels. Thus, /be.rər/ can turn into /beər/, with some resyllabification, as well.

The /r/ omission should not always be realized with the dropping of /r/, per se. Sometimes it can come from the sound alternation. As for instance, before the back-rounded vowel, /r/ in /tr/ or /θr/ can turn into post-alveolar sound, which is /tʃ/.

In the lateral version of /r/ sound, /l/, the pattern of its dropping is quite identic to r-dropping. Its disappearance possibly manifests as back-rounded glide sound. L-dropping can cause *toll* sounds alike to *toe* (/toʊl/ - /toʊ/), *all* sounds alike to *awe* (/ɔːl/ - /ɔː/), or *tool* sounds alike to *too* (/tuːl/ - /tuː/)

2. Consonant Clusters Simplification

This practice is commonly prevalent to sound a plosive alveolar pair (/t/ and /d/) and a fricative alveolar pair (/s/ and /z/) in any form of their clusters, such as /-st, -ft, -nd, -ld, -zd, -md/. By simplification, it means that those consonant clusters turn into simpler forms, such as /-s, -f, -n, -l, -z, -m/. As the result, it creates homonyms in some words, such as *past* and *pass*, *rift* and *riff*, *hold* and *hole*, etc. (Labov, 1972, p.15)

In a more extreme form, the simplification may bring plural grammatical defiance at some point. For example, /wɑːsp/ (*wasp*) may turns into /wɑːsɪz/ instead of /wɑːsps/ (*wasp*) as its grammatical plural form (Labov, 1972, p.16). This can occur in any other words contains consonant clusters –sps, -sts, and –sk such as *asks* (Labov, 1972, p.16)

3. Weakening of Final Consonants

Unlike consonant clusters, weakening of final consonant may elide a single consonant in coda position. In daily case, it frequently occurs to /t/, /d/, /k/, and /g/. The weakening of final

consonants process can work in two ways: (1) modifying a consonant to its weaker state as a consonant and to more vocal-wise, such as /k/ turns into /ʔ/ (see 2.1Lenition), or; (2) modifying a consonant until it disappears /k/ turns into ∅ (elided). Those practices are highly related to a sound alternations theory, lenition, albeit in lenition, there are some protocols to follow before a sound can utterly disappear. In other words, weakening of final consonants practice offers a more arbitrary process of elisions. The upside of the lenition is it provides detail of consonants weakening shift more thoroughly. The practice of this process can cause *seat*, *seed,* and *see* sound alike one another (LAbov, 1972, p.19).

4. Monophthongizations of Diphthongs

BEV offers quite an amount of sound likeness convergence which results to more homophonous as individual sound segments or as words. Vowels may also undergo the same way, and in the matter of elision, vowel elision can be categorized as reducing a single sound/monophthong or reducing double sound/diphthong. In the diphthong reduction case, it is called monophthongization.

Based on the Labov's study, *find* (/faɪnd/) and *found* (/faʊnd/) become homophonous, which both of them turns into /fɑːnd/. Through that outputs, we are able to reprehend that /aɪ/ is feasibly monophthongized into [aː] (long a), which can manifest into /ɑː/ or /ʌ/, depending on context. The same occurs to /pʊər/ (*poor*) that turns its diphthong into /ɔː/ that it can be homophonous with /pɔːr/ (*pour*). Sound /ɔɪ/ in *boil* (/bɔɪl/) is monophthongized into /ɑː/ that it sounds like *ball* (/bɑːl/).

The Labov's BEV monophthongization presents the arbitrariness by defying some phonological conditions. For instance, in the monophthongization of /aɪ/, some findings postulate the tendency of its realization in the pre-voiceless consonant position (Flynn, 2014, pp.76-77; McWhorter, 2001, pp.146- 147). However, Labov's BEV also displays resistance by showing its possibility to occur in pre-voiced consonant, such as /n/.

Monophtongizations of diphthongs in this study can be categorized into 'vowel reduction' 'monophthongization of /aɪ/' and 'Rounded Diphthong Monophthongization.' Vowel reduction reduces a diphthong into single schwa. Monophthongization of /aɪ/ reduces an /aɪ/ into any variant sound [a], and rounded diphthongs monophthongization reduces a rounded diphthong (any diphthong that inherently includes variant of sound [o] or [u]) into a monophthong.

5. Auxiliary Contraction Deletion

BEV speakers are more liable to commit auxiliary contractions deletion than non-BEV speakers (Labov, 1972; Green, 2002). This type of deletion is a practice of omitting the auxiliary contraction segment, such as *'s* in the phrase *who's.* In SE, it is impossible to eliminate *'s* since it is going to defect the grammatical composition in a sentence or phrase. For instance, *who's* turns into *who* and the *he's* turns into *he.* In extending context, the *'s,* should not always be originated from 'is'. It can be from *'has'* or 'was' such as in *she's been her'* or *'she's here yesterday'* respectively. The other instances are the deletion of *'are'* in *'you're best'* and *'have'* in *'I've been'*.

ANALYSIS

The first objective of this study is to prove the whether productivity of elisions are congruence in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses. To find the answer, it needs to find the SDV and EV. SDV can be found by dividing total numbers of syllables in a sub-verse with its delivery duration. EV can be found by dividing total numbers of elisions with the total numbers of syllables in a sub-verse. Thus, SDV is represented in S/s (syllables per second) unit, while EV is represented in E/S (elisions per syllable) unit.

The result (**Table 1**) displays that elisions in Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses did not congruent with the level speech rate. By the EV, the result culminates in random distribution of EV, in which the second fastest sub-verse, S3, holds the highest EV at 0.265 E/S. The second place goes to the lowest SDV holder, S2, achieving EV at 0.255 E/S. The SF, as the fastest sub-verse merely manages to

record 0.245 E/S. While S1, coming as the third fastest sub-verse, hit the lowest EV at 0.188 E/S.

In the perspective of SDV, S3 and S2, which manages to surpass the EV of SF, stands at 7.68 S/s and 4.89 S/s, compared to that of SF, which stands at 9.87S/s. A surprise is the SDV gap of SF and S2 is 4.98 S/s, or more two times more than that of S2. Moreover, compared to the lowest EV holder, S1, S2 has a thin gap, which is mere 0.13 S/s lower, and manage to overvalue EV of S1 distantly with 0.67 E/S. These indiscriminate EV results prove that elisions in Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses are not stimulated by the limitation of speech duration. In other words, the results debunk the tenet saying elisions are stimulated by speech rate in normal speech (Byrd and Tan, 1994; Davidson, 2006) does not work in the Eminem's rapping. Final verdict, the answer for the first research question is 'negative' for the correspondence between elisions productivity and speech rate.

Table 1. Complete results of SDV and EV

Sub-verse	Delivery Duration	Numbers of		SDV	EV
		ETS	E		
S1	25.29 s	127	24	5.02 S/s	0.188 E/S
S2	26.38 s	129	33	4.89 S/s	0.255 E/S
S3	16.65 s	128	34	7.68 S/s	0.265 E/S
SF	12.35 s	122	30	9.87S/s	0.245 E/S

**Notes:*

S *:Syllable* ***ETS*** *:Eminem's Transcription Syllables*
s *:Seconds*
E *:Elisions*

The fact the elisions in Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses has proven to be not influenced by the duration allotted, then to find their real influence is the second objective in this study. Since rap is a genuine black culture (Jury, 2015), there must be some of its influence infused to it. In the Eminem's case, he is a white-skinned rapper gets into rap businesses, which are predominantly occupied by African American people, in the production area, fan base, and artists (or rappers). Hence, there is a big possibility that Eminem also emulates or is influenced by their dialect, which is known as Black English Vernacular (BEV).

The outcome of elisions identification in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses was proven to have big influence from Black English Vernacular or BEV (Labov, 1972) in his rap. The statistics showed that 99 of 121 occurred in the sub-verses (**Table 2**). In detail of the BEV elisions distribution in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses, r-dropping topped all the other types of BEV elisions with 30 appearances, followed monophthongization type – elisions, such as monophthongization of /aɪ/, vowel reduction, rounded dipthong monophthongization which dominated with 22, 21 and 16 appearances, respectively. It made the monophthongization alone became the most prevalent type elisons with 59 combined. The other BEV type- elisions contributed insignificant numbers, such as consonant simplification, final consonant weakening, and auxiliary contraction deletion that merely made 5, 3 and 2 appearances, respectively. At the end, they made 82 percent of elisions in the sub-verses was in accordance to BEV rules.

On another side, the rest corresponded to SE (Standard English) rules, which stand merely at 18 percent from 22 appearances out of 121 total elisions in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses (**Table 3**). The appearances were distributed to assimilations, lenition, and unstressed vowel elisions with 18, 3 and 1 appearances, respectively.The results of the SE based- elisions were not utterly static, which means that some of them could replace the one another, such as in the phonemic segment **/di**:**z.hɑ**:**/** which turned into **/di**:**.zɑ**:**/,** its lost **/h/** could be underlain by progressive total assimilation (ensued with degemination in the final process) or just simply lenition process.

Table 2. Elision Based on BEV Rules

Types	App
Monophthongization of /aɪ/	**22**
Rounded Diphthong Monophthongization	**16**
Vowel Reduction	**21**
R-Dropping	**30**
Consonant Clusters Simplification of /t/ and /d/	**3**
Consonant Clusters Simplification of /s/ and /z/	**2**
Final Consonant Weakening of /n/	**3**

Auxiliary Contraction Deletion	**2**
Total	**99**

***Note**: * App = appearances*

Table 3. Elision Based on SE Rules

Types	App
Assimilations (P.T., R.T. and regular)	**18**
Lenition	**3**
Unstressed Vowel Elision	**1**
Total	**22**

The reason why this matters is because the elisions practice in BEV is more impervious to speech rate and the general sound-to-sound reaction or phonological environment. Given from the results of the consonant clusters simplification of BEV in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses, the elision of /t/ in *hunted* (SF, line 2) was found resistant to phonological environment. While losing /t/ in /hʌnt/ (*hunt*) was more prevalent and practical, the BEV elision of /t/ turns /hʌntɪd/ into /hʌnɪd/, which was unlikely to occur if the elision was based on phonological environment since there was a vowel (ɪ) following the sound /t/. This also occurred in the consonant simplification of /s/ and /z/ that, indeed, has no natural phonological basis since it and more to be grammatical violation practices. Eminem was noted to alter /straɪdz/ to /straɪd/ of the word *strides* (S2, line 8) as a breach of conjugation and /waɪvs/ to /waɪv/ of the word *wifes* (S2, line 12) as a breach of plural nouns rule. The more lenient elision process that was noted was the elision of /n/ in the final consonant weakening category, such as /floʊ.tiː.zɑː.nən/ to /floʊ.tiː.zɔː.nə/ of the phrase *floaties on and*. This practice, indeed, potentially risks the comprehensibility of it, but, for none other than BEV basis, Eminem kept his persistence in doing so.

The result of monophthongization of **/aɪ/** and rounded vowel showed the domination of their transformation long vowels instead of to short vowels. In the case of of **/aɪ/**, it was noted to be monophthongized into long **[a]** or /ɑː/ (Labov, 1972; Edwards, 1992; Anderson, 2002) with 16 times of 22 total, while those that were monophtongized into short **[a]** or /ʌ/ merely 6. Whilst, from 16 rounded diphthongs in the sub-verses, 15 of them were monophthongized into long vowels (**/ɔː/** appeared 14 times and **/ɑː/** appeared once), left merely once appearance for short vowel (**ɒ**).This results indicates the corroboration of dialect-centricness of the monophthongization practice by Eminem. This monophthongization tendency is important to point out because the process of monophthongization, indeed, can be triggered by fast speech. Fast speech cause shorter time limit to speech organs to succeed in hitting manner articulation and place of articulation accurately and decently (Byrd & Tan, 1994). Hence, a diphthong that is spoken fast can be motivated by the limitation of the speech organ (tongue) to successfully generate the second vowel sound in the diphthong. All in all, as Eminem was proven to have enough time limits to successfully produce diphthongs in the *Offended* sub-verses, he was still resistant to replace it with monophthong, which endorsed the his linguistic practice based on BEV.

Meanwhile one BEV-based elision practice was noted to superimpose the other accents' elision practice which has been prevalent, r-dropping (Labov, 1972; Flynn, 2014). Instead of the prevalence of its practice, the linguistic trait of Detroit citizens who speak a rhotic accent (Flynn, 2014) creates a significant boundary that Eminem's r-dropping practice is based on BEV. In fact, Eminem grew and is still living in the Detroit city. Hence, Detroit accent influencing his accent is highly confirmed.

Move to the third objective of this study about answering 'the most frequent elisions in vowel and consonant categories, and their implications'. Eminem had some tendencies to some particular types of sound alternations that he frequently utilized in his *Offended* sub-verses. The most frequent type of sound alternation he practiced in vowel elisions is the simplification of diphthong or monophthongization, with 61 appearances of 65 vowel elisions. The most targeted elided vowel was /aɪ/ with 41 appearances. The 22 of them were realized into [a], while the other 19 realized into schwas. The detail can be seen in the **Table 4**.

The monophthongization of /aɪ/ in the SF, as the fastest sub-verse herein (9.87S/s), tends to manifest as schwas instead of [a]. It implies that in the faster delivery environment,

monophthongization to schwa is more preferred (9 against 3 or 75% against 25%) since it offers neutral tongue and jaw position that comfortably accommodate easier shiftings in producing a sound to another. In the fast delivery, jaw and tongue undertake more intense workload in movement, thus monophthongization to schwa is more practical. Meanwhile, monophthongization to [a] is more prevalent in slower sub-verses. The S3, as the second fastest sub-verse (7.68 S/s), has 7 [a] and 6 schwas (53.85%: 46.15%). The S1, as the third fastest sub-verse (5.02 S/s), has 5[a] and 2 schwas (28.57%:71.43%). The rest one, the S2, as the slowest sub-verse has (4.89 S/s), has 5[a:] and 2 schwas (22.2 %: 77.8 %). The implication that can be taken is the speech rate has a correlation to transforming orientation of /aɪ/ in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses. The slower the speech rate, the transforming orientation of /aɪ/ tends to go schwa, and conversely, it works the other way around. However, it should be noted that this implication is based on the result of the sources which have been limited contextually (sub-verses in an Eminem's song entitled *Offended*).

Table 4. The Comparison Between schwa and [a:] in Monophthongization of /aɪ/

Sub-verses	Total /aɪ/	> schwa	> [a]	Percentage comparisons
S1	7	2	5	28.57 **: 71.43**
S2	9	2	7	22.2 **: 77.8**
S3	13	6	7	46.15 **: 53.85**
SF	12	9	3	**75 :**25
	41	19	22	

**Symbols ' > ' means 'turns into'*

On another side, the most frequent elision in consonant goes to r-dropping or /r/ elision, with 30 appearances of 56 consonant elisions (**Table 5**). This result corroborates Dougherty's 2007 study on 15 Eminem's songs, which noted extremely high rate of r-dropping at 82.1 percent (as cited in Flynn, 2014, p.76).

Table 5. R-Dropping Positions Distribution

Sub-verse	Initial	Mid	Final	Total
S1		**1**	**4**	**5**
S2	**1**	**1**	**6**	**8**
S3		**2**	**4**	**6**
SF			**11**	**11**
Total	**1**	**4**	**25**	**30**

The prevalence of the r-dropping practice in the Eminem's Offended sub-verses brings some implications. First, the realization of r-droppings is easier, mostly for /r/ that sits in the final position. R-droppings in the final position merely structurally require **CV.r** (Consonant-Vowel- r), which is more prevalent in English words. For example, /ʃʊ.gər/ (*sugar*: S3, line 2) and /bʊ.ʧər/ (*butcher*: S2, line 12) are effortlessly reduced into /ʃʊ.gə/and /bʊ.ʧə/. While it is more common to practice r-dropping after schwa as a weak vowel type (Gawron, 2006), BEV also permit r-dropping after stronger vowel or non-schwa (Labov, 1972), such as /pe.dɪs.təl.lɔːr/ to /pe.dɪs.təl.lɔː/ (S2, line 12), /suː.ʧurs/ to /suː.ʧus/ (S2, line 13) or /fɔːr/ to /fɔː/ (SF, line 2). In accordance to McMahon's (2002, p.56) and Harrison's (2007) findings, /r/ is more likely to be elided before a pause or in the ending position in a word.

Second, r-dropping practice has been ubiquitous that Eminem, as a BEV speaker, seems to be more indulgent to practice it. R-dropping has been more a popular consonants elision practice in various dialects. Albeit, it is more frequently practiced in BEV, some words has been quite ubiquitous to have r-dropping, such as *never, better, water,* or *for*, which also can be found in the Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses. Even, some American regional dialects, such as New York, Savannah, and Boston, are also noted as r-lessness dialect (Fromkin, p.433; Labov, p.40). The prevalence of a particular pronunciation in some word has been a priming model for the other speakers, and thus will be represented in that way for a long term (Pierrehumbert as cited in Cohen-Goldberg, 2015).

Moreover, hip –hop (raps) and R& B, as the music genres that are also bring 'black' linguistic sensibilities, has successfully stood as one of the dominant genre in the U.S.A. recently. The genres claimed nearly equal popularity as that of the pop and rock genres combined in American streaming demand and became the biggest music genre in 2017 (McIntyre, 2017; Mitchell, 2018). Those genres popularity, more or less, prevalently permeates

BEV sounds into customary to the public ears in U.S.A. For its generality, Eminem seems to be more indulgent to practice it more often than any other consonant elisions, regardless to his tendency to a particular BEV dialect. As the endorsement of the first statement, the results of /r/ elisions in Eminem's *Offended* sub-verses predominantly occur in final position (25 of 30 r-droppings), whereas initial and mid r-dropping only occurs once and four times respectively.

Eminem's practice propensity to BEV is emphasized in his most elided vowel (/aɪ/) and consonant (/r/) which both of them also belong to BEV based-elisions in this study (monophthongization of /aɪ, vowel reduction, and r-dropping). As a racially white person, Eminem uses the BEV in quite intensity. On that regard, some implications can be drawn. Historically, rap is originated from black cultures and still owned by them hitherto (Jury, 2015). In present, even rap industries has been more welcoming to non-African American people, they are still dominated by African Americans in various field, such as their producers, listeners, and rappers per se (Mitchell, 2017). Building a career in rap industry as a rapper, Eminem seems to adjust his rap delivery linguistically. He imitates the way of African Americans speak by infusing BEV to his rappings. The possible reason of such that doing is to get acceptance from the community who dominates rap industry, which is in accordance to the Flynn's statement (2014, p.72), and also to respect them and their culture. Despite BEV often breaches standard grammar of English and is frequently attributed as the culmination of deprived education (Labov, 1972), this dialect has been cherished and nurtured by African Americans (Gaither et al., 2015, Green, 2002). Alternatively stated, BEV is honored and regarded as the integral indentity by African Americans. To be likely welcomed by a particular community, we need to respect something that the community considers important (Greenberg, Schmader, Arndt & Landau, 2015, pp.232 - 236). As Chambers (2015, p.4601) said, 'people modify their sounds, syntax, and vocabulary based on whom they are talking to.' In this case, Eminem may adjust his language in rap with the aforementioned suggested purposes.

CONCLUSION

Unlike in normal speech, the productivity of elisions does not congruent with the speech rate Eminem's *Offended* sub-verse. It is caused by Black English Vernacular (BEV) that is predominantly practiced by Eminem. The BEV covers 82 percents of the backgrounds of all total elisions within the sub-verses, while The SE merely does 18 percents.

The most frequent phonological processes that are practiced by Eminem to conduct elisions in the *Offended* sub-verses are /aɪ/ for the vowel category and r-dropping for the consonant category.

In /aɪ/, the implication is that its realization into [a] is more prevalent to slower sub-verses, whereas its realization into schwa is more prevalent to faster sub-verses. In r-dropping, its elision in the final position highly dominates, recording 25 of 30. That result implicates that easiness of its realization and the prevalence of its practice to the non-BEV dialects makes the practice more excusable.

In general implication, Eminem emulates BEV into his rappings to respect and to get acceptance from the African American as culturally the 'owner' of 'raps' and as the majority in the rap industry.

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