

So how is the coda-onset change -kt(-) > -pt(-) a case of lenition?

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Latin	Italian	French	Galician	Spanish	Rumanian	gloss
	gemination	-kt > -jt > Vt	-kt > -jt	-kt > -jt > tʃ	-kt > -pt	
pe[kt]-	petto	poit(rine)	peito	pecho	pie[pt]	'chest'
la[kt]-	latte	lait	leite	leche	la[pt]e	'milk'
lu[kt]-	lotta	lutte	loita	lucha	lu[pt]ă	'fight'
no[kt]-	notte	nuit	noite	noche	noa[pt]e	'night'
li[ŋn]u-	legno			leño	li[mn]	'(tinder)wood'

0 Problems

-Is either -kt > -pt or -pt > -kt a case of lenition? If so, how to model it?
-Are both -kt > -pt and -pt > -kt cases of lenition? If so, how to model it?

1 Fortition and lenition are related to the sonority scale

Fortition is typically associated with changes like:

- fricative > stop (> affricate)
- voiced > voiceless
- lenis > fortis

Lenition is typically associated with changes like:

- stop > fricative
- voiceless > voiced
- reduction to zero

>> WHAT ABOUT CHANGES IN PLACE OF ARTICULATION?

2 Fortition and lenition are dependent on the context

Government Phonology predicts that in -C₁C₂-, C₁ undergoes lenition

>> Prediction: BOTH -kt > -pt and -pt > -kt are lenitions

3 Velars and labials: their representation using elements

3.1 Harris and Lindsay (1995): Government Phonology

-velars and labials have different element complexity:

- labials have U
- velars have no place defining element

>> Prediction: only -pt > -kt is lenition (through loss of |U|)

3.2 Backley (2011: 77-84): Element Theory

-velars and labials have identical complexity, but differ in headedness:

- velars = non-head |U|
- labials = headed |U|

>> Prediction: -pt > -kt is lenition (loss of headedness) and -kt > -pt is a case of "acoustic reinterpretation" (cf. Jakobson's [+grave] vs. [+acute], Liberman et al. (1952), Reetz and Jongman (2009: 261))

Problem: why does acoustic reinterpretation not work for -pt > -kt?

3.3 Carvalho (2013): cavity states

- |H| = [spread] state of the pharyngeal cavity (ATRness)
- |N| = [spread] state of the nasal cavity (nasality)
- |A| = [constricted] state of the pharyngeal cavity (pharyngeality)
- |T| = [constricted] state of the supra-pharyngeal (=oral) cavity

coronals and velars share |H|, coronals have |T|, labials have |U| as well

> neither velars nor coronals are defined by a melodic element, and are therefore unspecified for place, while labials have |U|

>> Prediction: both -pt > -kt and -kt > -pt are cases of lenition

4 Conclusions

- pt > -kt is lenition because of loss of element |U|
- kt > -jt is lenition because of loss of elements |ʔ|/|h|, and gaining |I|
- kt > -pt is lenition because of gaining sonority through element |I|

REFERENCES :

- Backley, Philip. 2011. *An Introduction to Element Theory*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- Carvalho, Joaquim De Brandão. 2013. Why there is no backness: the case for dismissing both [coronal] and [dorsal]. In: J.-L. Léonard & S. Naïm. *Backness and backing*. Lincom, pp.45-58.

Table 1: reflexes of Latin -kt- clusters

Problem: Rumanian has /pt/ after any vowel

Table 2: English shows that preceding vowel was labial for -x(C) > -f(C) to happen

English	Dutch	German
/f/ spelt <gh>	/x/ spelt <ch, g>	/ç x k/ or Ø (spelt <h>)
cough	kuch-	keuch-
enough	genoeg	genug
laugh	lach-	lach-
rough	ruig	rauh
trough	trog	Trog

Table 3: Latin loanwords in Balcanic languages

Latin loanwords in Dalmatian (extinct) and Albanian show the influence of a preceding labial context:

Latin	Dalmatian	Albanian	gloss
o[kt]u-	gua[pt]o		'eight'
co[ŋn]atu-	co[mn]ut		'male relative'
lu[kt]a-		lu[ft]ë	'fight'
pa[kt]-		pa[jt]oj	'pact'
dire[kt]-		dref[jt]ë	'direct, right'

Table 4: reductions of /kt/ > /ft/ in Dutch, independently of preceding V

		gloss	cf. German
ko/x/t	< kop-en	'buy'	kauf-
beru/x/t	< beroep-en	'notorious'	beruf-
sti[x]ting		'fund'	Stiftung
lu[x]t		'air'	Luft
za/x/t		'soft'	sanft

Proposed representations for lenition of -kt to -pt and -jt, respectively:

