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Consonantal lenition types in VC skeletons

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(1) The starting block: issues unanswered by Ségéral & Scheer (1998)

- a. why do we usually have different types of lenition in different positions?
- b. why do skeletal strings begin with an empty C (if they have empty CV at the beginning)?
- c. why do they end with an empty V?
- d. how are coda–onset clusters distinguished from bogus clusters?
- e. how are long vowels/diphthongs distinguished from hiatus?
- f. why is there no lenition before a stressed vowel?

(2) Lenition types

- a. consonantal: debuccalization, devoicing... ([t] → [ʔ]; [s] → [h]; [d] → [t])
- b. vocalic: vocalization/sonorization ([p] → [b]; [b] → [β]; [t] → [r])

(3) Conventions

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| $\mathcal{V}$ : any vowel position       | $\mathcal{C}$ : any consonant position       |
| V: vowel position associated with melody | C: consonant position associated with melody |
| v: melodically empty vowel position      | c: melodically empty consonant position      |

(4) Primitives

- a. vocalicness is inherently *loud*:  $\mathcal{V}$ s aim at being pronounced
- b. consonantalness is inherently *mute*:  $\mathcal{C}$ s aim at remaining silent  
note: the prototypical  $\mathcal{C}$  is a *stop*, a brief period of *silence*, also cf. Dependency Phonology
- c. supports the expression of the melodic elements of the target (cf. Goldsmith, 1990; Harris, 1994; Ségéral & Scheer, 1998, 1999)
- d. destroys the inherent nature of the target (i.e. a  $\mathcal{C}$  becomes louder if governed, a  $\mathcal{V}$  loses its loudness if governed)

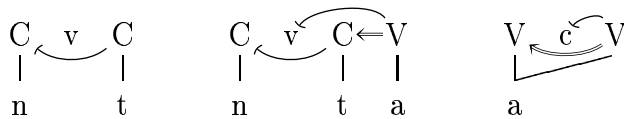
(5) Relations

- a. The direction of GOVERNMENT and LICENSING is uniformly and universally right-to-left
- b. LICENSING
  - i.  $\mathcal{V}$ s are inherently licensed
  - ii. a live  $\mathcal{V}$  licenses the preceding  $\mathcal{C}$  or may licence the preceding V (through c)
- c. GOVERNMENT
  - i. a live  $\mathcal{V}$ 
    - $\alpha$ . does not govern into a completed foot, else
    - $\beta$ . it governs the preceding v if available, else
    - $\gamma$ . it governs the preceding  $\mathcal{C}$

- ii. a C may govern the preceding C (through v)
- iii. a governed v loses its inherent properties, i.e. its loudness as well as its inherent license: it becomes silent and it cannot license or govern—it is
- iv. a governed C loses its inherent property, i.e. its muteness: it becomes louder, more sonorous—it undergoes vocalic lenition

d. : coda cluster (coda-onset), long vowel

- i. a C can govern the preceding C through a v, which thus captured is and it remains silent, i.e. it is (just like a governed v)
- ii. a V can license the preceding V through a c, which thus captured is buried
- iii. burial is lexically determined
- iv. a buried vowel may be governed under the usual conditions
- v. coda clusters, long vowel



e. The Empty Category Principle (ECP)

An empty category loses its inherent properties iff governed and/or buried, i.e.,

- i. v loses its inherent loudness, governing and licensing power iff governed and/or buried;
- ii. c loses its inherent muteness iff governed and/or buried

(6) Types of C—types of lenition

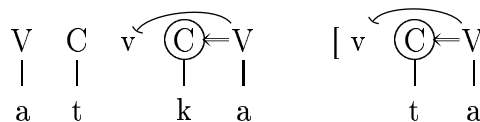
LICENSED	GOVERNED	LENITION TYPE
yes	no	none
no	no	consonantal
yes	yes	vocalic
no	yes	vocalic and/or consonantal

a. Generalizations

- i. C undergoes vocalic lenition
- ii. C undergoes consonantal lenition

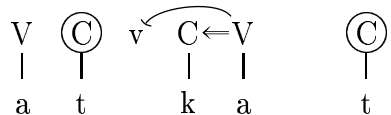
b. and C:

second in a bogus cluster or  
intervocalic coda cluster,  
word-initial



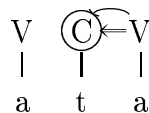
c. and C:

first in a bogus cluster,  
word-final



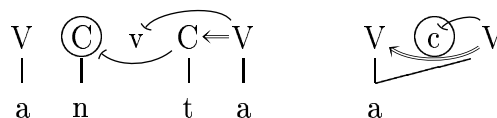
d. and C:

intervocalic



e. and C:

first in a coda-cluster,  
within long vowel



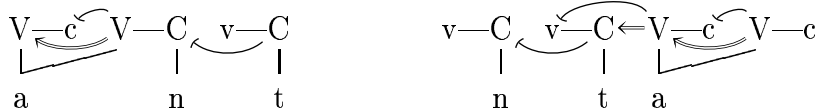
(7) Claim: **The phonological skeleton is made up of  $\mathcal{VC}$  units.**

## a. At word edges

- i. Ségéral & Scheer's word-final vs are totally inert: they neither license nor govern
- ii. the situation that word-final v is licensed to remain silent by the word-boundary is strange and lacks satisfactory explanation
- iii. alleged word-final vs are different from word-medial vs: e.g., they have to be treated differently for Charette (1992)'s license to govern
- iv. the cs in Lowenstamm (to appear)'s word-initial empty cvs are functionless, only word-initial vs are needed
- v. allowing empty cv units in a CV-theory raises the problem of the proliferation of such units (also cf. below)

## b. Within the word

- i. Licensing is the glue that cements the skeleton: Vs license Cs at unit boundaries, Cs do not license Vs because this is unnecessary, they are in the same skeletal unit
- ii. Closed syllable shortening: a skeletal unit cannot simultaneously belong to two burial domains (the two burial domains are okay the other way around; units are linked)



- iii. Comes handy in explaining nonlenition foot-initially (q.v. below)

## c. CV...CV as the unmarked skeleton

Languages prefer to mark the word boundary by a  $\bar{v}$ , i.e., by a  $vC$  unit on left and by a  $Vc$  on the right. Word-initial  $v$  is governed (therefore silent), word-final  $c$  is ungoverned (therefore not forced not to be silent).

## (8) The minimal word

- a. CV formulation: Any content word contains at least three CV units (with the word-initial empty one).
- b. VC formulation: Any content word contains a nonperipheral unit.
  - i. a V or C word is subminimal: only a peripheral unit,  $Vc$  or  $vC$
  - ii. a CV word is subminimal: only two peripheral units,  $vC-Vc$
  - iii. a VC word is ok:  $\underline{VC}$
  - iv. a CVV word is ok:  $vC-\underline{Vc}-Vc$
  - v. a VV word is ok:  $\underline{Vc}-Vc$
  - vi. a CVC word is ok:  $vC-\underline{VC}$

## (9) Phonotactics: coda clusters and bogus clusters are different

- a.  $*\#rt, *\#tn$ : word initially none of them is allowed
- b.  $rt\#$  vs.  $*tn\#$ : word finally coda clusters are okay, bogus clusters are not
- c.  $*\bar{V}rt, \bar{V}tn$ : closed syllable shortening only before coda clusters
- d.  $*arnta$ : no adjacent coda clusters (one skeletal unit cannot belong to two burial domains)
- e.  $*atkna$ : no adjacent bogus clusters (governed  $v$  cannot govern)
- f.  $*atnta$ : no bogus cluster followed by coda cluster (buried  $v$  cannot govern)
- g.  $artna$ : coda cluster+bogus cluster is the only possible type of CCC cluster

## (10) Empty skeletal positions

- a. An empty position is one that is not lexically linked to any melodic material, i.e., the second position in a long vowel, the first in a geminate consonant are *not* empty.
- b. Empty skeletal units are not allowed: \*vc (cf. Gussmann & Kaye (1993)'s Reduction; but for them it is arbitrary).
- c. Adjacent empty c and v are possible but not readily detectable.

## (11) The absence of intervocalic lenition

- a. Proposal: it is not possible to govern into a completed foot
  - i. an instantiation of the Strict Cyclicity Condition
  - ii. works only if the skeleton has VC units
  - iii. foot-initial nonlenition is in fact foot-*final*
- b. Predictions
  - i. no syncope before stressed V: cf. *séparāte* vs. \**séparāte*
  - ii. no bogus cluster before stressed V: very few counterexamples (e.g., *athlétic*, *pragmátic*)
  - iii. unfilled hiatus is more preferable before a stressed than before an unstressed V (is this so? or is hiatus filling not phonology's business?)

## (12) Summary

- a. We define what vocalicness and consonantalness mean.
- b. We elaborate on the meaning of government and licensing.
- c. We account for different lenition types at different sites.
- d. We claim that the skeleton is made up of  $\mathcal{VC}$  units, not CVs.
- e. We explain the different behaviour of coda clusters and bogus clusters.
- f. We distinguish long vowels/diphthongs and hiatus.
- g. We explain closed syllable shortening.
- h. We propose a solution to the problem of foot-initial nonlenition.

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