

David Fertig, University at Buffalo (SUNY)
Jeannette K. Marsh, Baylor University

Paradigms, perception, prosody, and palatals: Toward a comprehensive account of the origins and spread of the High German consonant shift

Recent work on the pre-Old High German shift of fortis stops – *p, t, k* – to affricates – *pf, ts, kx* – has established several important points, of which the following are especially relevant for the present study: (1) a prosodic preference for bimoraic stressed syllables played a key role in early stages of the shift; (2) "analogy", in one sense or another, accounts for much of the spread of the shift to environments where this prosodic motivation was lacking; (3) listeners' perception of the noisy releases of fortis stops in palatal environments was relevant to both the initiation and the spread of the shift (Davis, Salmons and Iverson 1999; Davis 2008; Denton and Davis 2009). This paper explores a number of remaining questions, focusing on the different types of analogical processes involved and the crucial role that *j*-triggered geminates play in the spread of the shift beyond intervocalic singletons.

Previous studies have recognized that the analogical spread of the shift presumably began with leveling in strong-verb paradigms where the prosodic motivation was present in some forms but not others, e.g. class-V *essen* 'eat' < Proto-Germanic **etanan*, with a short vowel in the root syllable of the present tense and past participle but a long vowel in the finite preterit forms. Once we move beyond such cases, however, to the many items like Gmc. **fōt-* 'foot', where the stressed syllable had always been bimoraic throughout the paradigm, the analogical mechanism is poorly understood. Elaborating on a suggestion by Schuchardt (1885), we propose that there is an essential connection between the earlier paradigm leveling and the subsequent, broader spread of the shift, in that the former gives rise to a particular type of pattern of variation that is a prerequisite for the latter.

The *j*-triggered geminates are pivotal to the spread of the shift beyond intervocalic singletons for two reasons: (1) The palatal environment meant that, phonetically, these geminates had had a noisy, affricated release all along; (2) once the initial shift had affected singleton stops after short vowels, these geminates came to participate in complex patterns of morphophonological alternation with shifted singletons in (short-stem) class-I weak and *j*-present strong verbs, such as *setzen, knüpfen, sitzen, and schöpfen*. These alternations would have reinforced learners' inclination to reanalyze the noisy geminates as phonological affricates. The strong tendency to level geminate–singleton alternations in such verbs surely added to the general confusion over which forms had phonological vs. phonetic affrication.

Finally, we propose a detailed chronology of the spread of the shift that is consistent with the multiple factors that we and others have identified as well as with the available manuscript and dialect evidence.

Davis, Garry W. 2008a. 'Toward a Progression Theory of the Old High German Consonant Shift.' *Journal of Germanic Linguistics* 20.197–241.

Davis, Garry W., Gregory K. Iverson, and Joseph C. Salmons. 1999. 'Peripherality and markedness in the spread of the High German consonant shift'. *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 121.177-200.

Denton, Jeannette Marshall and Garry W. Davis. 2009. 'Palatal Effects on the Shift of Geminates in pre-Old High German.' Presentation delivered at the 15th Germanic Linguistics Annual Conference (GLAC-15), Banff, Alberta, Canada.

Schuchardt, Hugo. 1885. *Über die Lautgesetze: Gegen die Junggrammatiker*, Berlin: Oppenheim.