Non-contrastive epenthetic segments as surface prosodic structure

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1 Segment epenthesis or prosodic features?

1.1 Epenthesis of predictable segments

Prosodically driven epenthesis

- In this talk I focus on various types of top-down epenthesis
  - Repair of dispreferred structures (onsetless syllables, hiatus)
  - Augmentation in designated positions, including ‘stress-to-weight’
  - Prosody with a morphological source (e. g. Köhnlein 2011; Zimmermann and Trommer 2013)

- Frequent approach: epenthesis of ‘the least marked segment’, although see de Lacy (2006) for a more nuanced discussion

- Typologically frequent epenthetic consonants are [ʔ], [h], [t]

- German *(ʔ).Amt

- What’s the problem?

A contrastivist problem

- Predictable segments are by definition not contrastive

- Since at least Trubetzkoy (1939) it has been assumed that [ʔ] is not part of the consonant inventory of German, precisely because its distribution is predictable
• But prosodically driven epenthesis (and perforce morphological epenthesis) must involve something phonological

• Problem for the contrastivist hypothesis (Dresher, Piggott, and Rice 1994; Dresher 2009; Hall 2007)?

• Could be construed as a Halle (1959)-like argument: focus on contrastive status obscuring phonological patterns

Some possible solutions

• Here are some potential answers

  1. Reconsider the phonological status of the phenomenon
  2. Reconsider the segmenthood of whatever is epenthesized
  3. Revise the contrastivist hypothesis to focus on features rather than inventories of ‘segments’

• All three are probably valid for different cases

• In this talk, I focus on (2) with a dash of (3)

  For more of (3), see also e. g. Kim (2013)

1.2 Glottal stop insertion in Scottish Gaelic

The proposal

• In at least some languages, ‘epenthetic glottal stops’ are instances of a laryngeal feature associated directly to a (possibly segmentally empty) prosodic node

  In both of my cases, it is the mora, but I do not suggest this must be specific either to morae or to laryngeal features


• Simple example: southern dialects of Scottish Gaelic

• See Holmer (1938); Ternes (1980); Jones (2000, 2006) for data, Smith (1999); Ternes (2006); Iosad (2013) for analysis
Gaelic glottal stops: static evidence

- The glottal stop is not a phoneme of Scottish Gaelic in the classic sense (e.g. Lamb 2001), though Bosch (2010) is more cautious.
- However, it is used to provide a second mora in a stressed syllable (stress-to-weight; Smith 1999).

1. a. Heavy monosyllables
   (i) [ˈtʰɾeɪ̯iμ] tràigh ‘shore’
   (ii) [ˈkʰlʲu̯μμ] cliù ‘fame’

   b. Subminimal monosyllables
      (i) [ˈtʰʲeʔμ] teth ‘hot’
      (ii) [ˈmɛʔμ] math ‘good’

Gaelic glottal stops: alternation evidence

- Evidence from alternations in affixation:

2. a. Open light syllables, epenthesis ensues
   (i) [kʰu̯ɾ.ɾi̯.μ] cuiridh mi ‘I will put’
   (ii) [ˈxu̯.ɾə tu̯.μ] chuireadh thu ‘you would put’

   b. Weight-by-position obviates the need for epenthesis
      (i) [ˈxu̯ɾ.μ mi] chuir mi ‘I put (past)’
      (ii) [ˈxu̯ɾ.μ u] chuir thu ‘you put (past)’

- Potential objection: can’t the glottal stop come with the morphemes?
- This also requires that [ʔ] be a segment in the lexicon

Gaelic glottal stops: postlexical phonology

- Glottal stop insertion must be postlexical; data from Jones (2000, 2006)
- Epenthesis fed by postlexical resyllabification

3. a. [ɣɛʔ.n a] dh’fhan e ‘he stayed’
   b. [stɑʔ.t əŋ kʰɑːɾ] stad an càr ‘stop the car’
   c. [koʔ.p ənʲ ɛːn] gob an eun ‘the bird’s beak’

- This must be phrase-level phonology
The proposal

- Proposed representation for [meʔ] ‘good’:

\[ (4) \]

- There is no segment: no root node, just the feature and the prosodic constituents
- The feature is more like a tone than a segmental feature
- The ‘segmental inventory’ does not come into play

Discussion

- Isn’t it just tonal?
  - Could be. Written as a stop but is often realized as creaky phonation (Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh p. c.)
  - In all probability developed from a falling tone diachronically (cf. the proposal for Danish *stød* by Riad 2000)
  - Rapid pitch fall occasionally recorded in relevant contexts in Ó Dochartaigh (1994–1997)
  - In a substance-free view of the world, ‘tonal’ vs. ‘non-tonal’ is probably not a valid distinction anyway

- How do we decide between this representation and one with a glottal stop?
  - In Scottish Gaelic, they seem empirically indistinguishable

- Jones (2006) discusses some data that seem to show lexicalization of [ʔ], which eliminates the original conundrum

2 Short vowel *stød* in Zealand Danish

2.1 Empty and filled morae

A potential contrast

- The analysis of Scottish Gaelic requires the confluence of two representational possibilities
  - A mora not dominating a root node
Not necessarily very new, cf. empty nuclei
- Association of features to suprasegmental nodes
- Tones, also laryngeal features à la Kehrein (2002); Kehrein and Golston (2004)

• A prediction: if both empty and filled morae are representationally possible, it should be possible for a language to contrast them

• Proposal: some Danish dialects do just that

The contrast

• Standard Danish *stød* requires a *stød basis*: long vowel or voiced coda, i.e. a bimoraic syllable with sonority-sensitive weight-by-position (e.g. Grønnum and Basbøll 2001; Basbøll 2005)

\[(5)\] Standard Danish *stød*: [preːʔtː] ‘width’ (*bredde*)

- Some Danish dialects on Zealand/Sjælland and Funen/Fyn contrast ‘short vowel *stød*’ and ‘standard Danish *stød*’
- Data from Zealand (Ejskjær 1965, 1967, 1970)
- The ‘short vowel *stød*’, as the name suggests, is found in syllables with a short vowel, irrespective of what follows

\[(6)\] Short vowel *stød*: [kʰlɛʰpʌ] ‘cut (pres.)’ (*klipper*)

2.2 Accounting for short vowel *stød*

Conditions for short vowel *stød*

• Only appears in disyllabic forms
For some value of ‘disyllabic’ to be discussed later

- Sometimes appears lexically distributed
- But obligatory in certain contexts

A note on disyllabicity

- The relevant Zealand Danish varieties show apocope of final [ə], but preserve the contrast between CVC and CVCə words by other means (Ejskjær 1970)
  - Historical CVCə words show later tonal peaks (»jævnere og senere rejsning«)
  - Historical CVCə words show longer duration of C₂
  - In certain conditions there is devoicing of final sonorants in CVC but not in CVCə
- Ejskjær (1970) compares this to East Funen (Andersen 1958), where apocope in CVCə is optional
- I will assume these are disyllabic with an empty nucleus projecting the prosodic structure for the the H tone (cf. Köhnlein 2011): [preːʔ.ʈ_] ‘width’ (bredde)

The distribution of stød

- In some contexts, short-vowel stød appears unpredictable and thus lexically determined

(7) a. Examples with stød
   (i) [ˈkʰɪʔtəl] kittel ‘gown’
   (ii) [ˈprœʔkɔ] brygger ‘to brew (pres.)’

b. Examples without stød
   (i) [ˈtʰæskəl] tærskel ‘threshold’
   (ii) [ˈtʰɑpʌ] taber ‘to lose (pres.)’

Incidentally, if this is lexical storage, the contrastivist hypothesis is upheld for whatever this feature is

Stød as sonority-related repair

- One regularity in the appearance of short-vowel stød is seen in suffixation
- Monosyllables with short vowels + [p t k s f] or clusters of these never bear stød
- Cf. the fact that such sequences are also not sonorous enough for the common Danish ‘stød basis’
- But in the definite singular short-vowel stød is regular in these forms:

(8) a. (i) [ˈtʰɪp] tip ‘tip’
    (ii) [ˈtʰɪʔpɛn] tippen ‘the tip’

b. (i) [ˈlɔʔstɔn] lyst ‘desire’
    (ii) [ˈlɔʔstɔn] lysten ‘the desire’
The source of *stød*

- Suggestion: *stød* licenses an empty mora inserted for a prosodic reason
- The definite article is known to show clitic-like behaviour

E.g. it does not influence common Danish *stød* or Swedish and Norwegian pitch accents
- The adjunction of the clitic builds a recursive prosodic word, which is subject to a head-dependent asymmetry requirement (e.g. Dresher and van der Hulst 1998)

The structure

(9)

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\omega'' & \omega^0 & \sigma \\
\sigma & ? & \mu \\
\mu & t^h & i & pm \\
\end{array}
\]

- The relevant consonants cannot project a mora since they are not sonorous enough

Top-down prosodic conditioning of *stød*

- The crucial point here is that the appearance of *stød* is parasitic on the addition of a mora, which is in turn driven by considerations of prosodic asymmetry
- Further support for the importance of prosodic asymmetry
  - *Stød* is obligatory in words with an unstressed prefix: [beˈsluʔtɔ] ‘to decide’, [faˈɑʔktɔ] ‘to despise’
  E.g. But not obligatory in underived forms with similar prosody: [kaˈræfɔl] ‘jug’, [aˈdræς:] ‘address’
  - *Stød* is obligatory for disyllabic elements with the right segmental structure in the second position in words with multiple stresses: [ˈap,fræˈsk:] ‘to freshen up’, [ˈsɔlt,beʔtː] ‘salt bucket’
Short-vowel *stød* and common Danish *stød*: summary

- The ‘basis’ for common Danish *stød* is a bimoraic syllable with a second mora projected by a segment with relatively high sonority
- The ‘basis’ for short-vowel *stød* is a syllable that needs a second mora but lacks the sonorous segmental material to project it
- Hence, the phonology forces the insertion of a second mora but does not associate it with a root node
- But there is a feature associated directly to that empty mora
- The same feature associates to a mora projected by a segment in common Danish *stød*
- The clear connection with prosody, mediated by sonority, makes a segmental account along Scottish Gaelic lines much less attractive

3 Discussion

3.1 Consequences for contrastivism

A contrastivist conundrum

- The Contrastivist Hypothesis as often stated relies on ‘the inventory’
- If ‘segments’ are defined as ‘whatever is dominated by a root node’, the prosodic features described above are irrelevant for the CH
- But they seem to be manipulated by the phonology
- Is there a principled distinction between features that attach to root nodes and those that attach to other prosodic constituents?
- I suggest there isn’t

Focus on features

- However, if the Contrastivist Hypothesis is reformulated to refer to *features stored in the lexicon*, the problem disappears
- There is still a prediction that the features manipulated by the phonology must be those found in the lexicon
- Borne out in both Scottish Gaelic and Danish
- This view of the CH is also reconcilable with the existence of predictably distributed segments composed of contrastive features (Moulton 2003; Kim 2013)
3.2 Storing prosodic structure

The consequences for storage

- In both Scottish Gaelic and Zealand Danish the ‘epenthetic’ glottal stops (*stød*) can be stored in the lexicon

Indeed it appears that in Danish this is necessary

- What is it that the lexicon stores here?
  - Not the feature itself: it does not have a host segment (root node)
  - Could be the mora, but how to make sure it does not just dock to the second syllable?
  - It seems that the mora must be stored together with the syllable it is affiliated to

Stored syllabic structure?

- It has been argued that syllable structure is never contrastive
- E. g. McCarthy (2007) suggests syllabification does not introduce a LUM
- Others disagree, e. g. Vaux (2003)

See Iosad (2013) for arguments that syllabic structure must be stored in Scottish Gaelic

- The general apprehensiveness about storing syllabic structure seems misplaced
  - Stored moraic structure is OK (cf. ‘distinctive weight’; Morén 2001)
  - Stored foot structure is OK (lexical stress)
  - So why not syllables?

3.3 Summary

Summary

- Some predictable epenthetic segments may not be segments but rather features attached to prosodic nodes
- Such features may attach both to lexically stored prosodic structure (including syllabic structure) and to structure built by the phonological grammar
- As long as the prosodic structure and the features attached to it are stored in the lexicon, their availability in the phonology does not violate the Contrastivist Hypothesis
- The Contrastivist Hypothesis should be formulated solely with reference to lexically stored features, rather than features used to distinguish lexically stored segments
References


Jones, George. 2000. ‘Beagan mu’n stad ghlotasach ann an Gàidhlig Ceann a Deas Earraghadheil.’ *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 20:201–211.


