

Lgcs 101: Historical Linguistics. Lecture Notes. Tues 11 Oct 2011.

0. Announcements

-TEST THIS THURSDAY.

-Know the articulatory descriptions for English phonemes, e.g., bilabial nasal.

1. Solution to Assignment 4

Exercise 2.5 (OED used for etymologies)

(a) *bride*. According to the OED, in the 15th and 16th centuries, *bride* also meant 'bridegroom', so more generally 'spouse'. This is the use in the Shakespeare quote, and thus the modern use would be an instance of **narrowing**.

However, the female meaning predates the 'spouse' use, thus 'spouse' is an instance of **widening** itself. There appear to be semantic changes prior to this sense as well: the Gothic cognate *brūþs* only means 'daughter-in-law', and the same goes for borrowings from Old High German into medieval Latin (*brūta*) and Old French (*bruy*), suggesting that 'daughter-in-law' predates 'bride'. 'Daughter-in-law' itself possibly originates from the root **brū* 'to cook, brew, make broth', 'a duty of a daughter-in-law in the primitive family' (quote from the OED).

(b) *prevent*. The earlier meaning appears to be 'to come, arrive, or appear before', cited in the OED during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. The original literal sense of the word, 'come before' appears to have changed **metaphorically** to 'anticipate', and further to the present sense 'to hinder' (through perhaps **narrowing**.)

(c) *prove*. The meaning here is 'to demonstrate the existence or reality of'. Narrowing to present meaning of 'demonstrate the truth of by evidence or argument'.

(d) *quit*. The earlier meaning is 'repay'. This meaning derives from the earlier 'to free, release, exonerate a person from obligation, payment of debt, etc', and thus an instance of both metaphor and widening.

(e) *road*. 'A sheltered piece of water near the shore where vessels may lie at anchor in safety.' Possibly originally from the verb *ride*, or the verb *ready*.

(f) *tonight*. The earlier meaning is 'last night'.

(g) *toy*. The earlier meaning is 'an act of amorous sport'.

(h) *witty*. The earlier meaning is 'having wisdom, wise'.

Exercise 5.3

(a) *sand-blind*. Probably from Old English **samblind* (half-blind), thus an instance of folk etymology.

(b) *cherry*. Borrowing from Old Northern French *cherise*, which was reanalyzed in Middle English as the combination of plural *-s*, and singular *cheri*. *Cherry* is thus a back-formation.

(c) *universe*. From Old French *univers*, itself from Latin *universum* 'the universe', noun use of the adjective *universus* 'all together', lit. 'turned into one', from *unus* 'one' + *versus* 'past participle of turn'.

(d) *sodden*. Past participle of *seethe* 'to boil'.

(e) *unkempt*. From *un* 'not' + *kempt* 'combed'. *Kempt* is the past participial of earlier Old English *cemben* 'to comb', the unlauded version of *comb* (and now displaced by *comb*, only surviving in *unkempt*.)

(f) *ecdysiast*. From Greek *ekdysis* 'a stripping or casting off, used scientifically with respect to serpents or caterpillars shedding skin'. This is an instance of metaphor.

(g) *software*. Created on analogy with *hardware*.

(h) *darling*. Derivative of *déor* 'dear' + suffix *-ling*, 'person or thing concerned with N'. Morphological structure is no longer transparent due to sound change.

(i) *outrage*. Originally from Old French *outrage* 'transgression, insult' from *outré* 'beyond' + *age* (a nominalizer). The English form was reanalyzed as 'out+rage', thus this is an instance of folk etymology, with a corresponding narrowing in meaning.

(j) *flammable*.

(k) *bugbear*. Apparently *bug* 'object of terror' + *bear*. When *bug* came to be used to mean insect, this meaning fell out of use.

(l) *workaholic*. Created on analogy with *alcoholic*.

(m) *penthouse*. From Anglo-Norman *pentiz*, from Old French *apentis* 'appendage', from Old French *apprendre* 'to append' + suffix, reanalyzed in English by folk etymology as *pent+house* (French *pente* 'sloping' + *house*).

1. Sound change review

1.1 Swiss German

Assume:

[ø] = Mid front rounded tense. [o] = Mid back rounded tense.
 [œ] = Lower-mid front rounded tense. [ɔ] = Lower-mid back rounded tense.

The Swiss German dialect of Schaffhausen has back rounded vowel /o/. Historically, this /o/ has lowered to [ɔ] (lower-mid) when followed by any non-lateral alveolar:

bogə	‘bow’	bɔdə	‘floor’
holts	‘wood’	hɔrn	‘horn’
xopf	‘head’	pɔst	‘post’

- (1) Formalize a Lowering rule to account for this change. (You are already given the conditioning environment).

In plurals, umlaut (fronting) occurs (all back vowels undergo umlaut in plurals):

Singular	Plural	
bogə	bøgə	‘bow’
bɔdə	bødə	‘floor’

- (2) Formalize an Umlaut rule to account for the vowel change in the plural, citing the environment merely as [Plural].
- (3) Must Umlaut and Lowering be crucially ordered? Show the two rules applying to yield [bødə] ‘floor’.

In the neighboring dialect of Kesswil, the effects of lowering and umlaut are also present, but the results are different:

Singular	Plural	
bogə	bøgə	‘bow’
bɔdə	bædə	‘floor’

- (4) How do the two dialects differ? Can you explain this difference in terms of tendencies we have observed for change in phonological systems? Which appears to be the original dialect?

1.2 Exercise 3.1 from the textbook, (a)-(h).

2. PIE review

- (5) What is the phonemic inventory for PIE, so far?
- (6) Consider the PIE roots **pray* ‘like’, **b^hreg* ‘break’, **b^hard^h* ‘beard’. What do we expect for the consonants in Germanic and Sanskrit?
- (7) Consider the PIE roots **k’el-* ‘cover, conceal’, **gel* ‘cold, to freeze’, **sek^w* ‘to follow’. What do we expect for the consonants in Germanic and Latin?
- (8) What is Verner’s Law?

3. Morphological/syntactic/semantic change review

Identify the type of change involved in each of the following. Be specific (name specific types of analogy, etc.)

- (9) Some English speakers pronounce *wheelbarrow* as *wheelbarrel*.
- (10) English *January* [dʒænjʊwɛri] *February* [fɛbruwɛri] has become for many speakers *January* [dʒænjʊwɛri] *February* [fɛbjʊwɛri].
- (11) Compare the Old English singular and plural forms:

Singular	Plural	
<i>boc</i>	<i>bec</i>	‘book’
<i>ac</i>	<i>æc</i>	‘oak’

Although Old English words have an umlaut plural, the Modern English forms do not. Explain how the change in plural formation could have come about.

- (12) *Shade* and *shadow* once were forms of a single OE paradigm, where *shadow* was the plural form of *shade*. What happened?
- (13) Identify the type of meaning shift from Proto-Germanic **tu:naz* ‘fence’ > *town* ‘town’.
- (14) What types of syntactic change have we observed? (Name them).