



1. Main Claim

- Phonologically Conditioned Multiple Feature Mutation (MFM) in Maskelynes ambitransitive verbs involves three different phonological changes.
- I argue for an account based on concatenative affixation of floating [+voice] and [-continuant] features.
- Purely phonological OT constraint *Twin and *G maintain modularity between phonology and morphology.

2. Theoretical Background

- Generalized Nonlinear Affixation (Bermúdez-Otero, 2012): Featural affixes $(+v)$ and $(-c)$ \leftrightarrow Ambitr
 - Containment Optimality Theory (Prince & Smolensky, 1993): No Deletion
 - Colored Containment (van Oostendorp, 2007): Morphological affiliation represented as color
- (1) RealizeMorpheme (=RM)
Count one violator for every color that is not affiliated to any phonetically visible material.

3. Maskelynes Phonology

- In Maskelynes (Oceanic, Vanuatu) prenasalization is contrastive in plosives.
 - Voicing is still phonologically active, as seen in voicing assimilations and final devoicing.
- ⇒ Prenasalized stops are [+voice] and [nasal]

(2) Consonant Phoneme inventory of Maskelynes

	Labial	Labio-dorsal	Coronal	Dorsal
Voiceless plosives	p	p ^w	t	k
Voiced prenasalized plosives	m ^b	m ^b w	n ^d	ŋg
Nasals	m	m ^w	n	ŋ
Fricatives	β	β ^w	s	x
Liquids		l r		
Semivowels		w	j	

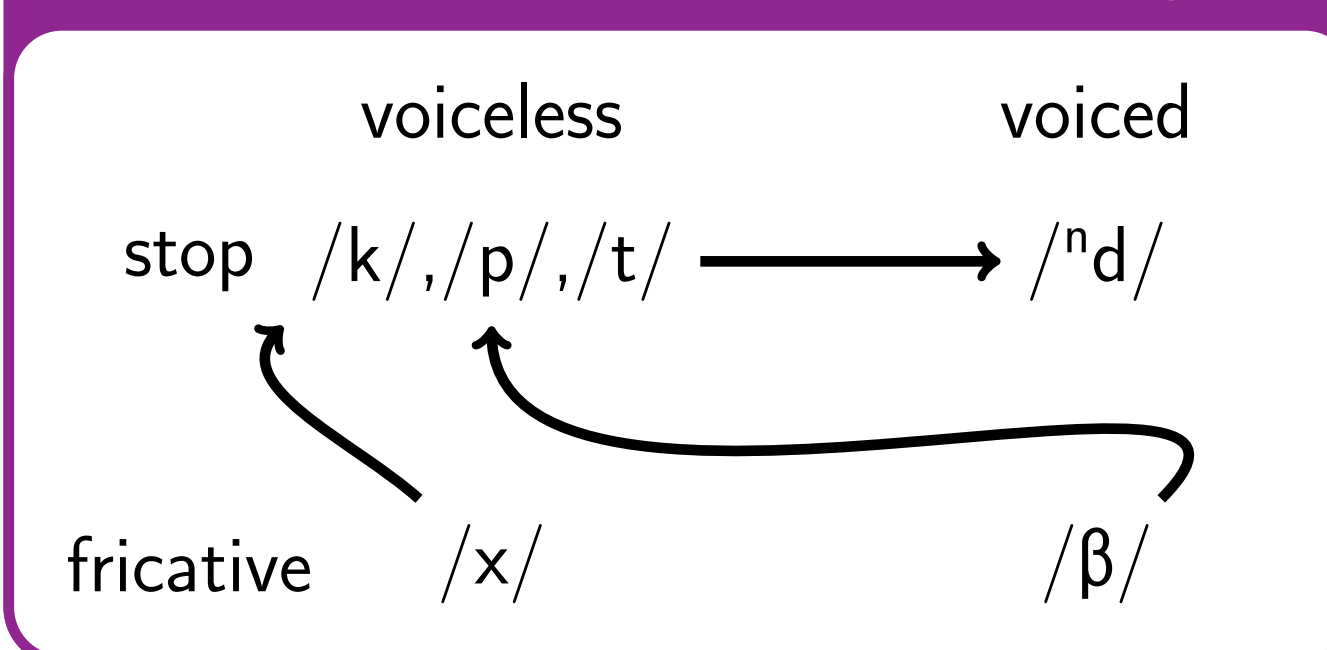
(3) Final devoicing and regressive voicing assimilation

/esi ^m b/	[esi ^m p]	'it's finished'
/pu ⁿ d/	[py ⁿ t]	'hot'
/so ^ŋ gso ^ŋ g/	[so ^ŋ kso ^ŋ k]	'midden'
/mæleβtes/	[mæleφtes]	'six'

4. Consonant Mutation

- Ambitransitive forms of some verbs are marked by **mutation of the initial consonant** (Healy, 2013).
- Non-coronal fricatives /β/ and /x/ become voiceless plosives /p/ and /k/.
- The voiceless plosive /t/ becomes voiced and prenasalized /ⁿd/.
- No other sounds are changed.

Consonant mutation in Maskelynes (4)



Example of Maskelynes mutation (Healy, 2013, 149-151)

Transitive	Ambitransitive
ti-i	ⁿ di
twist-obj	twist\ambitr
xaruβ ^w -i	karuβ ^w
scratch-obj	scratch\ambitr
βexas-i	pexas
annoint-obj	annoint\ambitr

5. Analysis

(5) Evaluation of $(-c)(+v)xaruβ^w$ / [karuβ^w]

	*G	RM	Faith
a. $(-c)(+v)xaruβ^w$	*!		
b. $(+v)karuβ^w$			*
c. $(-c)aruβ^w$	*!		*

- A markedness constraint against voiced dorsal sounds (McCarthy & Prince, 1995).

(6) *G: Count one violation for every segmental root node that is phonetically visibly associated to a [DORSAL] feature and a [+voiced] feature.

(7) Evaluation of $(-c)(+v)ti$ / [nⁿdi]

	*Twin	RM	Dep(nas)
a. $(-c)(+v)ti$	*!		
b. $(-c)^n di$			*
c. $(+v)ti$	*!		

- /t/ can only change in voicing, since it is already [-continuant].

(8) *Twin: Count one violation for each segment that is associated to the same feature with the same value twice.

(9) Evaluation of $(-c)(+v)βexas$ / [pexas]

	*Twin	RM	Dep(nas)	vd→•
a. $(-c)(+v)βexas$		*!		*
b. $(+v)pexas$				**
c. $(+v)^m βexas$			*!	*
d. $(-c)βexas$	*!			*

- /β/ becomes /p/ because inserting a [+nasal] is more costly than a floating [voiced] feature.

(10) Dep(Nas): Count one violation for every colorless (=epenthetic) [nasal] feature

6. Alternative Analyses

- Alternatives often have to make reference to specific morphological categories inside phonology:
 - Indexed constraints (Pater, 2007; Flack, 2007)
 - Cophonology Theory (Orgun, 1996; Inkelas, 1998)
 - Allomorph listing in the lexicon.
- Cophonology Theory and Indexed constraint have to postulate a process of initial voicing and prenasalization.
- An account based on listed stem allomorphs misses the empirical generalizations about the phonological properties of the mutation.
- An account based on phonologically conditioned allomorphy of floating features has to assume more complex representations with up to four different floating features.

7. Discussion

- What about underlying /ⁿg/?
→ Protected by a [nasal] → • constraint.
- What about mutation of /p/?
⊂ No markedness constraint parallel to *G possible.

(11) Hypothetical evaluation of /ⁿg/ [ŋg]

	na→•	*G	...
a. ⁿ g		*	
b. k	*!		

8. Conclusion

- Main advantage of the present account: modular and concatenative.
- The seemingly unnatural mutation pattern can be described as the effect of
 - suffixation of two floating features: [+voice] and [-continuant] and
 - a markedness constraint against voiced dorsal sounds and
 - the *Twin constraint.

References

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