

Answers to Pause and Reflect Boxes for Chapter 8 Historical Linguistics

Laura Grestenberger

Pause and Reflect 8.1

If you're a native speaker of some varieties of North American English, you may have noticed differences in the pronunciation of the diphthongs in *out*, *house*, *ice*, *write*, etc., i.e., *Canadian raising*, or the *I'm done my homework*-construction (instead of *I've done my homework*). Many varieties of British English pronounce stops as glottal stops in medial and final position (e.g., ['wɔ:ʔə] *water* and [bɔ:ʔ] *bought*). You've probably noticed many lexical differences like *soda* vs. *pop* or even the use of *coke* to refer to *any carbonated soft drink*.

Pause and Reflect 8.2

- /baɪt/ *bite*
- /praʊd/ *proud*
- /laʊs/ *louse*
- /laɪk/ *like*
- /aʊt/ *out*

Pause and Reflect 8.3

- /tʃuz/ *choose*
- /jɪld/ *yield*
- /gɒld/ *gold*
- /tʃɪn/ *chin*
- /tʃaɪld/ *child*

Pause and Reflect 8.4

1) ʔ > Ø (glottal stops are lost), 2) k > ʔ (voiceless velar stops turn into glottal stops).

1) must have taken place before 2), since otherwise Hawaiian would not have any glottal stops (if k > ʔ, and then ʔ > Ø, *all* glottal stops would have been lost).

Pause and Reflect 8.5

- i. Syncope
 - ii. f > (h >) Ø, syncope, apocope
 - iii. Monophthongization, apocope
 - iv. Progressive assimilation (consonant cluster assimilation in place & manner of articulation)
 - v. Regressive assimilation (consonant cluster assimilation in place & manner of articulation).
- The change of *e* to *i* is called vowel raising.

Pause and Reflect 8.6

- i. This is deductive change, or rule extension. The productive plural rule (by which the singular and the plural form are the same, except in contexts in which plural /-z/ surfaces through liaison) has been extended to a new context, or rather: the irregular plural has been lost. This type of change is also called analogy.
- ii. You'll probably get the regular, productive plural forms *octopuses*, *rhinoceroses* besides *octopi*, *rhinoceri*, which are the "latinate" plurals. Note that both words are originally Greek, so the expected plurals would be *octopodes*, *rhinocerotes*. Feel free to point this out to anybody who insists that *octopi* is a "better" English plural than *octopuses*. The reason these words are difficult to pluralize is because their phonetic shape is similar to other latinate loan words in -us/-os (e.g., *cactus*), which tend to have a synchronically irregular plural in -i. Since this plural is not productive, however, speakers may instead apply the productive English plural /-(ə)z/.

Pause and Reflect 8.7

This is a reflection question.

Pause and Reflect 8.8

- i. Phonological reduction, weakening: the *go*-auxiliary can be phonologically reduced (*going to* > *gonna*), but the second example shows that this is not possible with the lexical verb.
- ii. The *go*-auxiliary is less restricted than the suffix *-ly*, since it has not yet been grammaticalized to an affix/a bound morpheme. However, it is more restricted in its distribution than the lexical verb *go*, since it can only occur in future contexts (it is a tense marker), while the lexical verb can occur in a variety of meanings and contexts (past, present, future, etc.).

Pause and Reflect 8.9

In (i), there is a word order difference with respect to the position of the lexical verb and the direct object: Old English has OV order (*had* [*their king*]_{OBJ} *overthrown*_V), while Modern English has VO order (*had* *overthrown*_V [*their king*]_{OBJ}).

In (ii), you can observe that the finite verb *for* 'went' comes before the subject "the same army", so Old English allowed VS order ("(*here*) *went* *the same army*"), while Modern English has SV word order ("(*here*) *the same army went*...").

Pause and Reflect 8.10

- i. Pejoration
- ii. Pejoration
- iii. Metaphor, metaphorical use
- iv. Semantic broadening (refers to all birds, not just young ones)

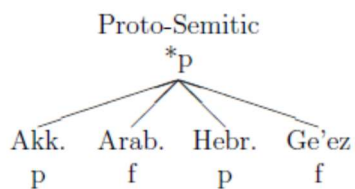
- v. Semantic narrowing (refers to a particular type of woman, not to women in general)

Pause and Reflect 8.11

Die came to mean *cease (to exist)* in sentences with *yǒu*, which was further grammaticalized to *not exist* (see **semantic bleaching**). In other words, *méi* lost its lexical semantics and became semantically more abstract and functional, eventually becoming reduced to the abstract feature [NEG] (negation).

Pause and Reflect 8.12

The tree should look something like this:



Majority wins is not helpful because we have the same number of languages for either option (*p* vs. *f*), although if we added more Semitic languages to the picture, we would see more languages with the *p*-outcome. The above reconstruction therefore has to rely on phonetic naturalness: *p* > *f* is a very common sound change (cp. the discussion of **lenition**). In general, plosives are more likely to turn into fricatives than the other way around.

Pause and Reflect 8.13

i. **fo:t* or **fu:t*. OE, OHG and Dutch all have a long vowel or diphthong. We've already seen that diphthongs can arise from monophthongs (diphthongization), so it's likely that Proto-Germanic had a long vowel (we could also assume a Proto-Germanic diphthong and assume **monophthongization** in OE and Yiddish, but note that the OHG and Middle Dutch diphthongs vary a bit). The comparison with other Indo-European languages shows that the vowel was /o:/ rather than /u:/. The final consonant must have been **t*, since it's more likely for a plosive to become a fricative than the other way around (note that majority wins is not helpful here).

ii. **apel* or **apəl*. The affricate in OHG is secondary; and most languages have a low instead of a mid front vowel at the beginning of the word. The actual Proto-Germanic reconstruction is **ap(a)la-*, but you don't see any evidence of the final vowel in this data set.

iii. **bad*. Most of the languages point to an original low vowel. The final consonant is trickier; based only on the data above you would probably pick a voiced stop (voiced stops tend to become voiceless word-finally, so this would also work for Dutch). The actual Proto-Germanic reconstruction is **baða-*, based on evidence from other Germanic (and other Indo-European) languages.

iv. **finf* or **fimf*. It's more phonetically natural to assume that OE and Dutch lost the nasal with compensatory lengthening than to assume that OHG and Yiddish acquired a nasal out of

thin air. The usual Proto-Germanic reconstruction is **fimfe*, again based on more comparative evidence.