Homework #3: More Sound Change and Relative Chronology
Proto-Kanyara to Burduna

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LING 52: Hist/Comp Ling

1 Rules

*t > d / V_V

Proto-Kanyara *t voiced to become Burduna d intervocally, as in *punkuṭi > pukuɖi ‘kangaroo’. This is an example of intervocalic voicing, a specific type of lenition, which is a very common sound change. This sound change was non-phonemic, as *t was preserved in other environments such as in *kuɳʈal > kuʈal ‘daughter’.

*Obs_vls > G / V_V

Proto-Kanyara obstruents became Burduna glides intervocally, as in *ŋaʈa > ŋaja ‘I’, *paʈ’a > paja ‘drink’, *papu > pawu ‘father’, and *mika > miwa ‘back’. This is an example of lenition, which is a very common sound change, although this change likely did not happen in one step: it is likely that the obstruents all voiced intervocally as part of the previous rule, whereupon the non-retroflex consonants then underwent spirantization and then approximation — *p > *b > *v > w.

The naturalness of this sound change is opaque and so should be laid out: both p and k share a place of articulation with w, so as approximation occurred, while they could have gone to v and uʃ respectively, it also makes sense that they went to w. That t and tʲ
go to j can be explained by them all being [+hi] consonants. Finally, the retroflexes did not undergo this change because they are more resistant to change than other stops.

This sound change was non-phonemic as these obstruents were preserved in other environments such as word initially, as seen in *papu > pawu ‘father’.

\[ *w > \emptyset / V \_x V_x \]

Proto-Kanyara *w deleted in Burduna intervocally when both vowels were the same, as in *jakan (> *jawan) > javn ‘spouse’. This is a sound change not explicitly shown in the data as Proto-Kanyara has no intervocalic *w, but I suggest this rule instead of suggesting that *k underwent this change. Since we already have a change that makes *w from *k, it seems reasonable to order that chronologically before this change, for the reasons detailed below.

The naturalness of this sound change is somewhat opaque and so should be laid out: since w is a glide, when it is between two of the same vowel, it may be physically taxing to interrupt that vowel to move to emphw and then back again. I concede that this is a somewhat weak argument, but it is superior to any possible argument involving *k.

This sound change was non-phonemic as *w continued to exist in other environments such as word-initially, as seen in *wanta > wata ‘give’.

\[ *N_{\text{aplace}} > \emptyset / _{-} C_{\text{aplace}} \]

Proto-Kanyara nasals deleted in Burduna when followed by a consonant of identical place of articulation, as in *pampura > papura ‘blind’, *pița > pița ‘mud’, *jimiru > jimit ‘scratch’, *maŋta > maŋa ‘arm’, and *nuŋkun > nukun ‘rotten’. This is an example of lenition: two consonants of identical place become just one consonant of that place. It makes sense that it was the nasal that deleted, because nasals are inherently weak sounds. This sound change was probably non-phonemic by itself as the nasals would have continued to exist in other environments. However, when taken with the following sound change and the fact that *n and *ŋ do not seem to appear word-initially or word-finally, this may have been a merger of those sounds with null.
Proto-Kanyara nasals became Burduna voiceless stops when followed by a consonant of a different place of articulation, as in *kanpar > katpar ‘spiderweb’, *mulŋikaɭa > mulatŋkaɭa ‘(a kind of parrot)’, and *waŋkan > waʃkan ‘chest’. This is an example of fortition: because nasals are inherently weaker consonants, to better distinguish the difference in place of articulation with the following consonant, the nasal became a stop. This change likely did not happen in one step: it is likely that the nasals first became voiced stops and then became voiceless stops, either through further fortition or though voicing assimilation.

This sound change was probably non-phonemic by itself as the nasals would have continued to exist in other environments. However, when taken with the previous sound change and the fact that *ŋ and *ɳ do not seem to appear word-initially or word-finally, this may have been a merger of those sounds with null.

2 Ordering

It is apparent that the sound changes from Proto-Kanyara necessary to result in Burduna must have occurred in a particular order. Here I show that intervocalic lenition of stops (I will combine the voicing of *t with the glide rule of the other stops because I believe they stem from the same sound change) must occur before both the intervocalic deletion of *w and both of the nasal changes (the ordering of these forition and lenition changes is unimportant, so I will treat them as one sound change).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>correct chronology</th>
<th>incorrect chronology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PN</td>
<td>*jakan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ivoc. stop len.</td>
<td>*jawan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ivoc. *w&gt;∅</td>
<td>*jaːn</td>
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<tr>
<td>nas. fort./len.</td>
<td>✓jaːn</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PN</td>
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<tr>
<td>ivoc. *w&gt;∅</td>
<td>*jakan</td>
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<tr>
<td>nas. fort./len.</td>
<td>×jawan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Na_place > Svls / _Cβ_place
Note that two different words, *jakan* 'spouse' and *waŋka* 'speak', had to be used as no single word clearly demonstrated the ordering necessary.

3 Notes

The more accepted notation of arrows indicating relative chronology was impossible to display as the paper with instructions on how to do it was lost. The change in the chronology that produces incorrect results was indicated by bolding, instead. Apologies should be considered made to those who might be offended by the substitution.

4 QR Code