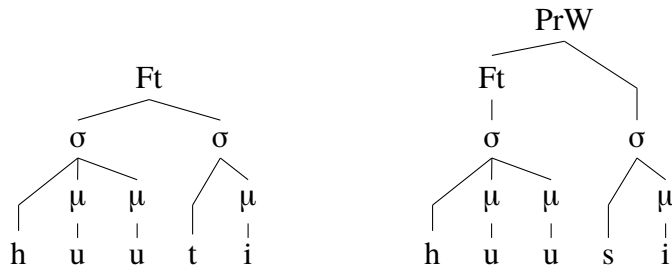


- (4) a. (húu.ti) – syllabic trochee b. (húu)si – moraic trochee



Skousen (1973) notes a similar prosodic condition on word-final vowel raising: the process occurs only in disyllabic words, such as those in (2a, b) but not e.g. /korkeute/ → *[korkeusi] ‘height.NOM.SG’. This suggests that vowel raising, if synchronic, is limited to operating foot-internally. Words that have undergone vowel raising can then feed assibilation if their stems are bimoraic (2b). Furthermore, *e~i* raising alternations were generalised to some historically non-alternating loanwords, but again only to those that were disyllabic (Skousen 1973).

- (5) piili ~ piili → piili ~ piile ‘needle’
 ryyni ~ ryyni → ryyni ~ ryyne ‘grain’
 norsi ~ norsi → norsi ~ norste ‘smelt’
 riisi ~ riisi → riisi ~ riite ‘rickets’

Therefore Finnish word-final vowel raising and assibilation are both sensitive to prosodic structure rather than morphological conditioning, making the label of ‘derived environment’ effect is an inaccurate characterisation of the conditioning factors that are truly at work in the system. This is good news as the disjunctive morphological and phonological conditions for Finnish assibilation have been particularly difficult for phonological theories to unify.

Similar processes: There are other DEEs which seem to better reanalysed as prosodic effects. For example, Northern Irish English dentalisation of coronals before /(ə)/ is said to only apply morpheme-internally, while vowel lengthening applies only across morpheme boundaries in the same dialect (Harris 1985, Bermúdez-Otero 2011). However, both dentalisation and vowel lengthening can be successfully analysed as applying foot-internally. Similarly, Turkish velar deletion is often assumed to be restricted to derived environments but in fact applies almost exclusively within two-syllable stems (Inkelas 2009).

Conclusion: In a prosodic analysis of Finnish assibilation, there is no need to make reference to any notion of ‘derivedness’, whether morphological or phonological. Typical cyclic analyses of DEEs (e.g. Bermúdez-Otero 2011) therefore cannot claim any advantage with respect to accounting for these facts. A framework along the lines of Prosodic Morphology (e.g. McCarthy & Prince 1998) would be sufficient to capture the prosodic factors relevant to assibilation.

The proposed analysis makes testable predictions about the interaction between prosody and segmental alternations in Finnish. This discussion also highlights the importance of determining the conditioning factors for phonological processes, and invites further investigation into other types of DEEs in order to determine whether prosodic and not derived environment factors are relevant in all cases.

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