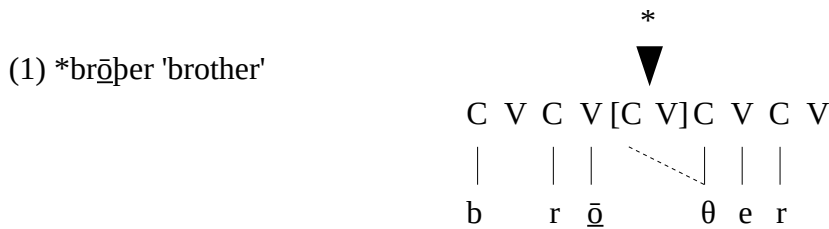


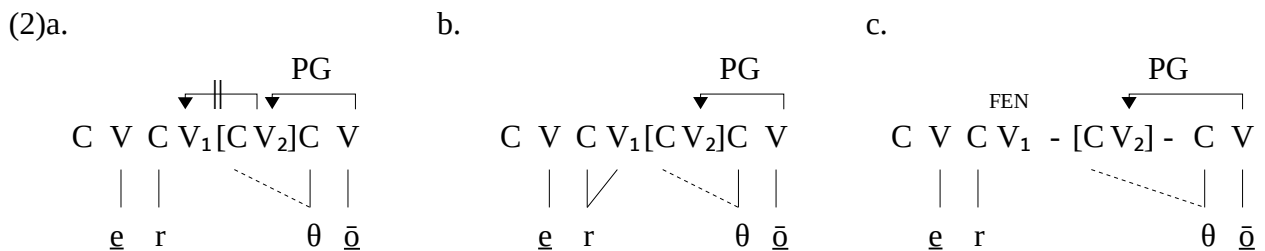
Does Verner's Law need a derivation?

Enguehard, Guillaume (Paris 7, LLF)

Following Verner's Law, Early Proto-Germanic fricatives are voiced, except after stress¹ (Verner, 1977). Scheer argues that Proto-Germanic post-tonic voiceless fricatives are underlying geminates that spread to an empty [CV] inserted by stress on the right of the tonic nucleus (underlined in 1). I argue that this analysis implies two definitions of stress on two distinct representational levels: a first one (suprasegmental) which accounts for the stress position, and a second (skeletal) which accounts for the melodic realization of stress. The fact is that these representations are not reciprocal: the stress [CV] involves the suprasegmental stress, but the reverse is not true (see Larsen, 1998). Thus, the stress [CV] is a derived unit in the sense that it is always conditioned by the suprasegmental stress. In this paper, I argue that Verner's Law does not need two representations of stress to be accounted for.



First, I show that Scheer's analysis does not account for post-coda voiceless fricatives (e.g. *er̥þō- 'earth'). Indeed, these involve two consecutive empty nuclei (2a). Following the Empty Category Principle (KLV, 1990), an empty nucleus can remain unrealized iff it is properly governed or final. Thus, the representation in (2a) is ill-formed. Moreover, this configuration cannot be explained by spreading a post-tonic coda sonorant (2b). Indeed, (2b) would also predict post-coda geminates that are not attested in Proto-Germanic: *l̥dd, *r̥bb, etc. The last solution implied by ECP is that V₁ is a Final Empty Nucleus (2c). That predicts that the [CV] unit inserted on the right of the stressed nucleus is an edge (Lowenstamm, 1999), not a [CV] provided by stress.



It must be emphasized that this prediction is verified by the diachronic data (PIE er-to > Pgrm er[CV]þō-, etc.). As a conclusion, I showed that we can do without the derivation of a stress [CV] from the suprasegmental stress if we consider the "stress [CV]" to be the representation of an edge. Moreover, such a representational approach accounts for data that are problematic with a [CV] provided by stress. Finally, notice that configurations like the one in (2a) occur not only in Proto-Germanic, but also in other languages (Livonian, Southern Saami).

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¹ The initial position is not crucial here/