Seminar 5. Sound change

1. Sound change. Describe the sound changes affecting the following words:

*OE camb /kamb/ > ME comb /kɔ:mb/ > PDE comb /kəʊm/*

Lengthening. From *a* to *ɔ:* the degree of openness (position of the jaw). Backing. Rounding > diphthongization. Loose of the consonant ‘b’ (the consonant cluster was simplifief).

*ME waps /waps/ > PDE wasp /wɒsp/*

Metathesis. Exchange of consonants from -ps to -sp. (Backing?). Assimilation.

*OE hnutu /’hnutu/ > ME nute /’nutə/ > PDE /nʌt/*

The first consonants dissapear (Simplification of the initial consonant cluster). Centralization > The final *ə* disappears. Change in openness and rounding.

*ME good /go:d/ > /gu:d/ > PDE good /gʊd/*

Rounding > Lenghthing

*ME kinred > PDE kindred*

Addition of a new consonant.

*OE wrītan /’wri:tan/ > ME writen /’wri:tən/ > write /’wri:tə/ > ModE write /rait/*

Change of the unstressed vowel. Rising > Lost of the final consonant > Lost of the initial consonant (simplification of the consonant cluster). Diphthongization. Lost of the shuá.

2. Ascribe the following labels to the examples below. Note that several labels may be relevant for one and the same example.

Br often /ˈɒftən/ > /ˈɒfn/

Simplification of the consonant cluster. Lost of the shuá: SYNCOPE

OF confort > ME comfort

Change of the consonant: ASSIMILATION.

OE stān /sta:n/ > ME stone /stɔ:n/

The vowel has been raised (moves up). Raising has to do with the closing. RAISING. ROUNDING.

ME stone /stɔ:n/ < PDE stone /stəʊn/

The long vowel becomes a dipthong. DIPTHONGIZATION.

OE byrht /byrht/ > ME bright/briht/

The ‘r’ and the vowel swipes places: METHASESIS. There is a change in the vowel: UNROUNDING.

OE cild /tʃild/ > ME child /tʃi:ld/ > PDE child /tʃaild/

Quantitative changing. LENGTHENING. > Long vowel becomes a diphthong. DIPTHONGIZATION. Great Vowel Shift (Unconditioned change).

Quantitative: has to do with the lengthening.

Qualitative: position?

OE gōdspell /’go:dspell/ > PDE gospel /ˈɡɒspl/

LENITION.

OE mōdor /’mo:dor/ > PDE mother /ˈmʌðə/

ON þar ‘there’ /θar/ > Swedish där

Latin cupa > Spanish cuba

OE godsib > PDE gossip

ME meat /mε:t/ > /me:t/ > PDE meat /mi:t/