

Re: k-like sounds in English and other European languages

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- *From:* analyst41@xxxxxxxxxxx
 - *Date:* Sun, 12 Oct 2008 10:56:51 -0700 (PDT)
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On Oct 12, 11:09 am, Nathan Sanders <nsand...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

In article
<3cf71891-3aaa-4387-a926-c686d9ddc...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,

analys...@xxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

On Oct 12, 12:06 am, "Peter T. Daniels" <gramma...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Oct 11, 5:20 pm, "wugi" <b...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

"Peter T. Daniels" :

On
Oct
11,
3:58
am,
"wugi"
<b...@xxxxxxxxxxx>
wrote:

And
then
there
is
the
softening
process
due

Re: k-like sounds in English and other European languages

to
assimilation,
eg
breakdown,
pron.
as
breagdown.

I
take
it
that
happens
in
your
Dutch
accent?
It
doesn't
happen
in
English.

... it-that it-doesn't

I half
expected
such
reaction, but
even you
will admit
that the

breakdown k

would
behave
differently
from, say,
the
breakthrough
or breakfast
or

take a

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break
ones...

Why? How often does
regressive assimilation cross
a syllable boundary?

If you'll tell me nothing at all modulates at
the above syllable contacts,
well, what one doesn't want to hear one
won't...

"it that" probably has the t moving forward to dental. "it
doesn't"
certainly doesn't turn into "iddoesn't." It likely becomes
"i'doesn't" (with glottal).

fuhgeddaboutit Petey – you are completely wrong about this.
"breakdown" with a k-sound will break down – it is unstable. If
someone were to say breagdown or iddoes in everyday speech I doubt
that anybody would find it noticeable.

A voiceless coda, like the [k] in "breakdown" is typically
glottalized, while a voiced coda is never glottalized.

Furthermore, a voiced coda causes the preceding vowel to be much
longer than a vowel preceding a voiceless coda. The difference in
vowel length is so noticeable to English speakers that it allows for
distinguishing between words like "beat" and "bead" in whispered
(unvoiced) speech.

Nathan

—

Nathan Sanders
Linguistics Program

Williams College <http://wso.williams.edu/~nsanders/> – Hide quoted text –

– Show quoted text –

If you look at the following consonant clusters in English, it seems

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to me that

- (1) kt
- (2) kd
- (3) gt
- (4) gd

Only (1) Where k can stand for (c, ck etc.) can occur in a single word
– all the others can only occur in compound words or at word boundaries.

At first I thought kd would be difficult to maintain in speech, but then we have smackdown and back down, attack dog etc. where the 'k' is easy to maintain (and substituting g would stand out as poor speech pretty obviously) and sure enough they are spelt with 'ck'.

So perhaps the 'ck' versus 'k' in spelling is not arbitrary – there might be some phonology behind it.

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