

Models of linguistic diversification

Change from below vs. Change from above

- **Change from below:** Natural linguistic changes that are internal to a language and develop within its system.
- It involves the continuous interaction of cognitive, physiological, and social factors that result in internal linguistic change.

Change from below: Incrementation

- **Incrementation:** The process whereby successive generations of speakers advance linguistic changes in a given direction beyond the linguistic model provided by the preceding generation.
- Incrementation of a change may affect its frequency, extent, scope, or specificity.
- Children are the locus of this particular set of changes.

Change from below vs. *Change from above*

- **Change from above:** Changes that resulted from the importation of elements from an external system.
- **Diffusion:** Convergence across languages that are not directly related due to linguistic contact. Diffusion is driven by adult speakers.
- **Change during the lifespan** occurs at a much slower rate, and seems to be relatively coarse.

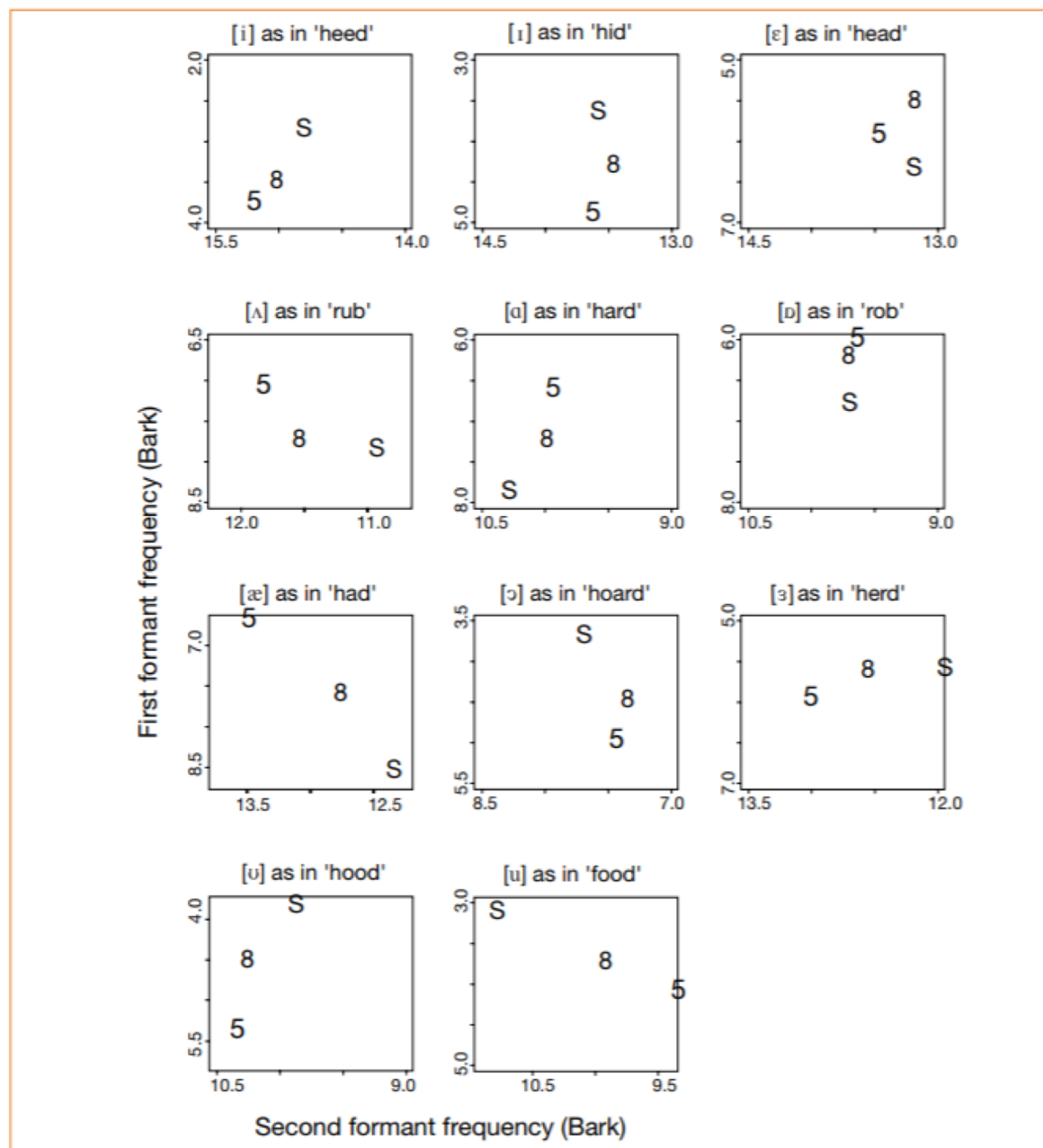


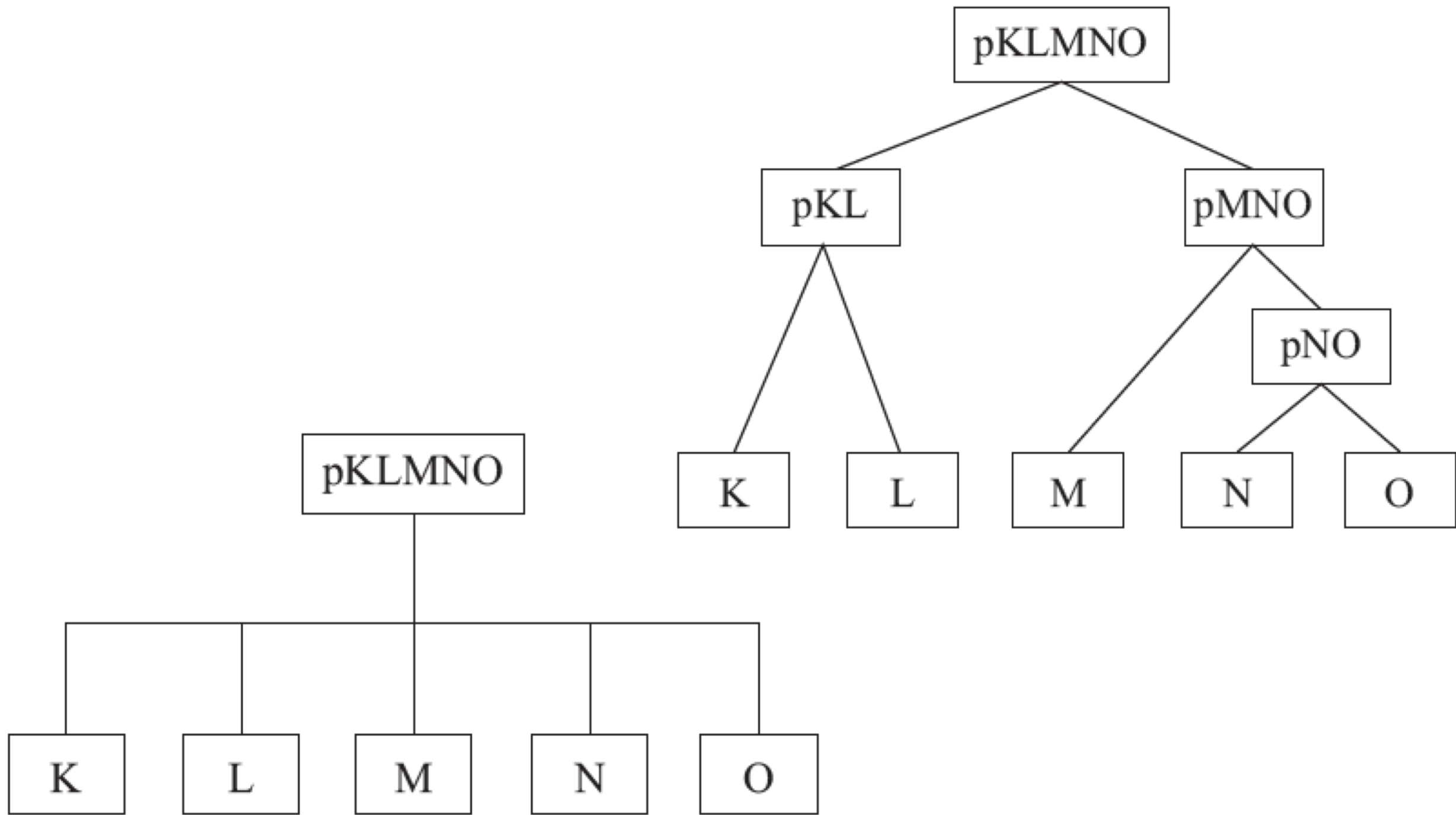
Figure 1 The three symbols '5', '8' and 'S' represent the average positions of different vowel types in the Christmas broadcasts of the 1950s and 1980s, and in standard southern British of the 1980s, respectively. The axes are the first two formant frequencies in Bark, a scale used to model the way listeners perceive vowels¹². Positions towards the top of each square correspond to less mouth opening; the left corresponds to sounds made by constricting the vocal tract nearer the lips rather than further back¹¹.

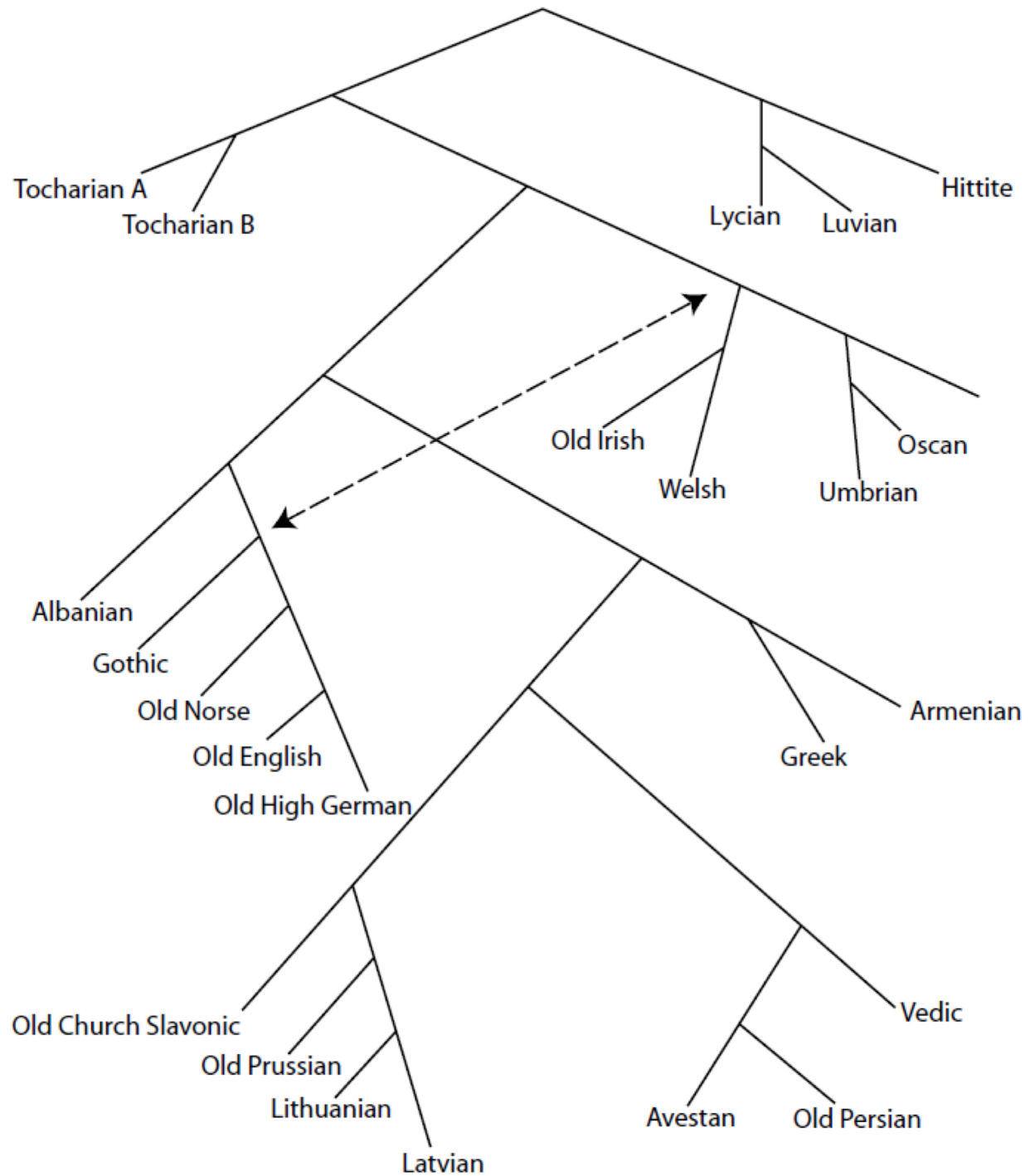
Models of language diversification

- Aggregated linguistic changes yield language diversification.
- Most authors deem both of them necessary for a complete account of linguistic change, given that they correspond to different linguistic processes.
- Two models: The **tree model** and the **wave model**.

Family tree model (*Stammbaum*)

- A cladistic representation of language diversification based exclusively on separation
- Implies the abrupt fragmentation of a linguistic community into different social groups (e.g. migration or social isolation).
- In these models, subgroups are mutually exclusive and never intersect: a member of a subgroup cannot be a member of another subgroup at the same level.
- This implies that there is no further contact between the languages after separation.





Wave model (*Wellentheorie*)

- A given change originates somewhere within the network, and expands away from that point to a broader area.
- The area covered by each change may not coincide with that covered by any other previous change.
- After the accumulation of non-shared innovations over generations, what used to be mutually-intelligible dialects will become languages.
- Wave-like effects are most notable in communities with long-spanning bilingualism, in the formation of pidgins and creoles, and in *Sprachbund* areas involving non-genetically related languages.

