

Language change: Examples for practice and discussion

(1) Sound change and Old English noun paradigms

	<i>a</i> -stems, <i>stan</i> 'stone'	<i>o</i> -stems, <i>giefu</i> 'gift'	<i>n</i> -stems, <i>guma</i> 'man'
singular			
nom.	<i>stan</i> > <i>stan</i>	<i>giefu</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guma</i> > <i>gume</i>
gen.	<i>stanes</i> > <i>stanes</i>	<i>giefe</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guman</i> > <i>gumen</i>
dat.	<i>stane</i> > <i>stane</i>	<i>giefe</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guman</i> > <i>gumen</i>
acc.	<i>stan</i> > <i>stan</i>	<i>giefe</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guman</i> > <i>gumen</i>
plural			
nom.	<i>stanas</i> > <i>stanes</i>	<i>giefu</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guman</i> > <i>gumen</i>
gen.	<i>stana</i> > <i>stane</i>	<i>giefu</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>gumena</i> > <i>gumen</i>
dat.	<i>stanum</i> > <i>stanen</i>	<i>giefum</i> > <i>giefen</i>	<i>gumum</i> > <i>gumen</i>
acc.	<i>stanas</i> > <i>stanes</i>	<i>giefu</i> > <i>giefe</i>	<i>guman</i> > <i>gumen</i>

Data from <<http://homepage.univie.ac.at/hans.platzer/spmorph/lnnom.htm>>

- Give a morphological analysis of Old English before these sound changes.
- Describe the sound changes as precisely as you can. Hint: These are orthographic (spelled) forms; the 'e' letter in the final syllable of the word actually represents a schwa [ə].
- Give a morphological analysis of these nouns after the sound changes.
- How is Modern English different from what we see here in terms of the morphology of nouns?

(2) Days of the week in Spanish

<i>Latin</i>	<i>Spanish: Expected outcome of sound change</i>	<i>Spanish: Actual forms</i>
(dies) lunae 'moon's day'	lune 'Monday'	lunes
(dies) martis 'Mars's day'	martes 'Tuesday'	
(dies) mercurī 'Mercury's day'	miercole 'Wednesday'	miercoles
(dies) jovis 'Jupiter's day'	jueves 'Thursday'	
(dies) veneris 'Venus's day'	viernes 'Friday'	

Why are the Spanish forms for 'Monday' and 'Wednesday' different from what would be expected on the basis of sound change?