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LECTURE 2

OLD ENGLISH PHONOLOGY.

Plan

- 1. Word Stress in OE.**
- 2. Comparison of PIE, PG and OE vowel systems.**
- 3. Qualitative changes within the system of vowels.**
- 4. Quantitative changes within the system of vowels.**
- 5. The system of consonants.**
- 6. The main processes within the system of consonants.**

Literature

- Расторгуева Т.А. История английского языка. – М.: Астрель, 2005. – С. 75-90.
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- Студенець Г.І. Історія англійської мови в таблицях. - К.: КДЛУ, 1998. – Tables 32-39

Word Stress in OE

- Word stress inherited from PG underwent no changes in OE.
- In EPG the stress was still movable; in LPG it became fixed on the first syllable.
- The OE period was characterized by a system of fixed stress. The stress was fixed on the first syllable.
- Due to the force of articulation the stressed and unstressed syllables underwent different changes: stressed syllables were pronounced with great distinctness and precision, while unstressed syllables became less distinct and phonetically weakened.

- In disyllabic and polysyllabic words the stress fell on the root morpheme or on the first syllable. Word stress was fixed: it remained on the same syllable in different grammatical forms of the word and as a rule didn't shift in word building as well.

e.g. *Nom. Sing. scip (ship), 'hlaford (lord)*

Dat. Sing. 'scipu, 'hlaforde

- Polysyllabic words, especially compounds, may have had 2 stresses (primary and secondary).

e.g. *OE boc-hus (a library)*

- The verbal prefixes were unstressed

**e.g. *OE mis'faran (to mislead),
and 'swarian (to answer),***

the nominal, adjectival prefixes were stressed

e.g. *'andswaru (an answer).*

PIE and PG VOWEL SYSTEMS

	PIE		PG	
	FRONT	BACK	FRONT	BACK
High	i	u	i	u
Mid	e	o	e	
Low		a		a
High	i:	u:	i:	u:
Mid	e:	o:	e:	o:
Low		a:		

OE VOWEL SYSTEM

	FRONT	BACK	FRONT	BACK
High	i	y	u	i: y: u:
Mid	e	o	e: o:	
Low	æ	a ã	æ: a:	
+ diphthongs: ea, eo, io, ie ea:, eo:, io:, ie:				

PG [a] and [a:] were fronted and, in the process of fronting, split into several sounds.

[a] > [æ] in closed syllables;

[a] > [o, ã] before a nasal;

[a] remained unchanged if it was followed by a back vowel in the next syllable.

PG	OE	Examples
	æ	Goth. þata, dags – OE þæt (that), dæg (day)
a	o, ã	Goth. manna – OE mon (man)
	a	Goth. dagos – OE dāgas (days)
	æ:	OHG slafen – OE slæpan (to sleep)
a:	o:	Oldcel. mānaðr – OE mōnaþ (month)

The tendency to assimilative vowel changes

- Under the influence of succeeding and preceding consonants some Early OE monophthongs developed into diphthongs.
- If a front vowel stood before a velar consonant there developed a short glide between them, as the organs of speech prepared themselves for the transition from one sound to another.
- The glide together with the original monophthong formed a diphthong.

OE Breaking (fracture)

- diphthongization of short vowels before certain consonant clusters.

before clusters **l, r, h + consonant**

a (æ) > ea

Goth. **a**lls – OE **ea**ll

Goth. **a**htau – OE **ea**hta

e > eo

OHG. **e**rk – OE **eo**rc

OHG. **e**rza – OE **eo**rte

OHG. **e**lcan – OE **eo**lcan

Front mutation (Palatal mutation, I-Umlaut)

Fronting and raising of root vowels
under the influence of [i], [j]
in the following syllable.

i / y < **u** Goth. **f**uljan – OE **f**yllan, OE m**u**s-m**y**s

e < **o** Goth. d**o**htar – OE d**e**hter, OE b**o**c-b**e**c

æ < **a** Goth. s**a**ljan, **ā**n – OE s**e**llan, **æ**n**i**ȝ

ie < **ea, eo** OE **e**ald – OE **i**eldra, **i**eldest

Back mutation (Velar mutation, U-Umlaut)

Diphthongization of root front vowels under the influence of back vowels in the following syllable.

i > **io** OE silufr – siolufr (silver), OE hira -hiora (their)

e > **eo** OE sifon – siofon, OE hefon - heofon (heaven)

æ > **ea** OE cæru – cearu (care)

Diphthongization due to initial palatal consonants

Diphthongization of root vowels after the palatal consonants ȝ [g'], c [k'] and sc [sk']

e > **ie**

OE ȝe fan – ȝie fan (to give),

OE ȝe ldan – ȝie ldan (to pay)

o > **eo**

OE sc ort – sce ort (short)

a > **ea**

OE sc an – sce an (to shake)

Goth. sc adus – OE sce adu (shade)

Contraction

Two vowels were contracted into one long vowel

OE*slæhan > *sleahan > slēan (to slay)

OE*sehan > *seahan > sēon (to see)

Quantitative changes within the system of vowels

- **Lengthening before fricatives (f, θ, s) due to the loss of nasals**

OE *on̥par > OE oþer (other)

OE *un̥s, ʒon̥s, mun̥p > OE ūs (us), ʒōs (goose), mūþ (mouth)

- **Loss of [χ] after a vowel**

OE * mæχden > mǽden (a maiden)

- **Lengthening in the final stressed position** OE by, swa > OE bý, swā (as)

Quantitative changes within the system of vowels

- **Lengthening before certain clusters ld, nd, mb**

OE ald, cild, wild, wind – OE āld (old), cīld (child), wīld (wild), wīnd (wind)

- **Shortening before other clusters**

OE wīfmann (wife), cēpte (kept) – OE wifmann, cepte

The system of consonants in OE

		Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar
Plosives	voiceless	p	t	k'	k
	voiced	b	d	g'	g
Fricatives	voiceless	f	θ s	x'	x
	voiced	v	ð z	y'	y
Sonorants		m w	n r l	j	ŋ

Splitting of velar consonants (Palatalization)

Before and after front vowels	In other positions	Examples
k'	k	OE cinn (chin), birce (birch), can (can), macian (to make)
g'	g	OE sen3an (to sing), ec3 (edge), 3an (to go)
x' y' (j)	x y	OE niht (night), hors (horse), OE dæ3 (day), da3as (days)

Splitting of velar consonants (Palatalization)

- The velar consonants were palatalized before a front vowel (sometimes after front vowels) unless followed by a back vowel. **OE cild** [kild] > [k'ild] (before a front vowel), **OE spræc** (**speech**), but in ***sprecan*** (**to speak**) [k] was followed by a back vowel. The differences between velar and palatal consonants were not reflected in the spelling.

Loss of consonants

n, m were lost before the fricatives

(x, f, s) Goth. **fimf**, **uns** - OE **fif** (five), **ūs** (us)

X was lost between vowels

PG ***fōhan** > ***fōan** > OE **fōn** (to catch)

3 was lost before the dentals (d, t, n)

OE **sæ3de** > **sæde** (said)

X was lost before sonorants

OE **hring**, **hnutu** > OE **ring**, **nute** (ring, nut)

Metathesis [məˈtæθəsis]

Two sounds exchange their place

There are two stages:

- 1) The vowel disappears and [r] becomes syllabic;**
- 2) Eventually the vowel reappears
on the other side of [r]**

***hros > hors (horse)**

OE þrida > *þrda > þirda (third)

OE rinnan > *rnan > irnan (to run)

- **Assibilation** is the change of **palatal consonants (not velar)** into **affricates** and **sibilants**: *g', k', sk'* change correspondingly into *dʒ, tʃ, ʃ* *bryʒʒe* – *bridge*, *cild* – *child*, *scirt* – *shirt*.
- **Long consonants in the final position** became short – hence the process of **Shortening**: *mann* – *man* (*but manna*)

**THANK YOU FOR
YOUR ATTENTION!**