



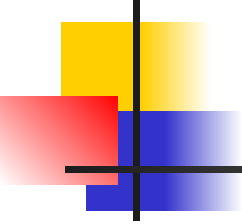
LECTURE 2

OE Morphology.
OE Syntax.



An Outline

1. Grammatical categories of the Noun in OE
2. The Grammatical Categories of the Adjective in OE
3. Grammatical Categories of the Verb in OE
4. The Morphological Classification of the OE Verbs
5. Principal Features of OE Syntax

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- PIE had been an **inflected language** and PG had retained inflections to a greater a lesser extent.
 - In grammar, OE carried out some simplifications of the PG system



Noun Grammatical categories:

- **Case**
- **Number**
- **Gender**
- **Noun declensions**



The Category of Case

- **4 cases:**
 - **Nominative** (the subject case),
Accusative (the object case),
Genitive (indicating possession)
 - **Dative** (used after most prepositions
and also as the indirect object).



The Category of Number

- Sg. and Pl.
- Nominative dæg dagas
- Accusative dæg dæg
- Genitive dæges daga
- Dative dæge dagum



The Category of Gender

- MFN

- Present-day English has only **natural gender**,
- Gender in OE is **grammatical**.

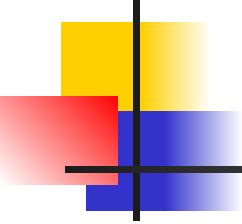
Cf. *OE moegden (girl), wīf (wife), bearn (child, son), and cild (child) are in fact neuter.*



Noun declensions

- A group of nouns which all have **the same set of inflexions** attached to them are the members of a particular **declension**.

Types of declensions in OE:



- **strong declension**
- **weak declension**
- **root declension**
- **minor declensions**



strong declension

- ***a*-stems,**
- ***ō*-stems,**
- ***ī*-stems,**
- ***ū*-stems.**



strong declension (*a*-stems masculine)

Singular

Plural

stān

stān**as**

stān**es**

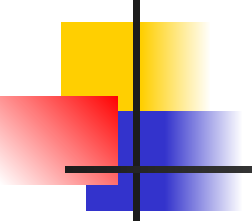
stān**a**

stān**e**

stān**um**

stān

stān**as**

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- The *a*-stems form the most important declension for the later history of the language.
 - Cf. ModE *stones* – *OE stānas*
 - the plural inflexion *-as* is the antecedent of the modern standard plural marker.



weak declension

- **n-stems nouns**
- This declension gave the later -en plural
- Cf. ModE oxen (< OE oxan)

Singular

	<i>n-stems (weak declension)</i>			<i>root-stems</i>	
	M	N	F	M	F
<i>Nom.</i>	nama	ēare	tunȝe	fōt	mūs
<i>Gen.</i>	naman	ēaran	tunȝan	fōtes	mȳs, mūse
<i>Dat.</i>	naman	ēaran	tunȝan	fēt	mȳs
<i>Acc.</i>	naman	ēaran	tunȝan	fōt	mūs

Plural

<i>Nom.</i>	naman	ēaran	tunȝan	fēt	mȳs
<i>Gen.</i>	namena	ēarena	tunȝena	fōtar	mūsa
<i>Dat.</i>	namum	ēarum	tunȝum	fōtum	mūsum
<i>Acc.</i>	naman	ēaran	tunȝan	fēt	mȳs
	(NE <i>name</i>)	(NE <i>ear</i>)	(NE <i>tongue</i>)	(NE <i>foot</i>)	(NE <i>mouse</i>)



Root declension

- Its most obvious characteristic is that they should have shown **i-mutation.**

Singular

Plural

■ **Nom.**

fōt

fēt

■ **Gen.**

fōtes

fōta

■ **Dat.**

fēt

fōtum

■ **Acc.**

fōt

fēt

■ it is the source of irregular plurals;

PDE *foot ~ feet, man ~ men, goose ~ geese.*



OE Adjectives

- **Grammatical categories:**
 - 1) Number;
 - 2) Case;
 - 3) Gender;
- Degrees of comparison.
- Declensions: strong and weak.



OE Verb

The categories of OE Verb:

- The category of Person (three persons)
- The category of Number (two numbers)
- The category of Mood (three moods)
- The category of Tense (present and past)

The progressive constructions:



Cf. Europe hio onginð... of Danai
þære ie, seo is irnende of
norþdæle...

*Europe she begins... from Don that
river, that is running from
northern-part...*



The perfect and plusperfect constructions

- Cf. *Ic hæbbe gebundenen þone feond;*
- *I have bound that enemy”*

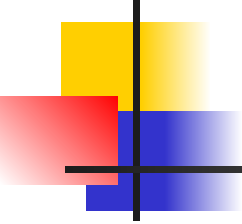


Passive constructions

- OE *he gefeaht wip Gotan, & gefliemed
weard & bedrifenen on anne tun*
- he fought against Goths and
put-to-flight was and driven into one
fortress
- PDE: *he fought against the Goths and
was put to flight and driven into
afortress;*

Morphological classes of OE verbs

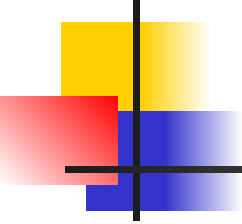
- **strong,**
- **weak,**
- **preterit-presents,**
- **irregular**

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- A peculiar feature of the Germanic languages was the division of the verb into two great classes: the **weak** and the **strong** verbs.



Strong verbs

- **7 classes** or “ablaut series”
- **Four forms**: the infinitive, the past singular, the past plural, and the past participle.
- Their major categories are formed by root-vowel alternations (ablaut).

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- I. drīfan drāf drifon (ge) drifen
 - II. cēosan cēas curon coren
 - III. helpan healp hulpon holpen
 - IV. beran bær boren
 - V. sprecan spræc sprecen
 - VI. faran fōr fōron faren
 - VII. feallan fēoll fēollon feallen



Weak verbs

- **Three forms**: present infinitive; past tense; past participle.
- They form these forms by means of the **dental suffixes**.

Principal forms Classes	Infinitive	Past Tense	Participle II ²	NE
I	-an/-ian	-de/-ede/-te	-ed/-d/-t	
	(a) <i>styrían</i> (b) <i>temman</i> (c) <i>dēman</i> (d) <i>cēpan</i> (e) <i>tellan</i> (f) <i>þyncan</i>	<i>styrede</i> <i>temede</i> <i>dēmede</i> <i>cēpte</i> <i>tealde</i> <i>þūhte</i>	<i>stýred</i> <i>temed</i> <i>dēmed</i> <i>cēped</i> <i>teald</i> <i>þūht</i>	<i>stír</i> <i>tame</i> <i>deem</i> <i>keep</i> <i>tell</i> <i>think</i>
II	-ian	-ode	-od	
	<i>lōcian</i>	<i>lōcode</i>	<i>lōcod</i>	<i>look</i>
III	-an	-de	-d	
	<i>libban</i> <i>habban</i>	<i>lifde</i> <i>hæfde</i>	<i>lifd</i> <i>hæfd</i>	<i>live</i> <i>have</i>

² Part. II of weak verbs, like that of strong verbs, was often marked by the prefix *ge-*. In the table the forms of Part. II are given without the prefix.



OE Syntax

- OE was a **highly inflected language**.
- Meaning was determined by **case endings**: that is, the relationship among words in a sentence was determined not by the word in the sentence, but by the special endings of the words