

Germanic and Old English phonological problems III/2012 Autumn/Starcevic

Homework Assignment

In this assignment you have to look at the behaviour of words in OE compounding. OE compounding involves putting together A and B to form AB. The following list contains some of the possible 'A' words you may want to look at in the OE dictionary:

<i>cyning</i> 'king'	<i>cwene</i> 'female'
<i>hæsel</i> 'hazel'	<i>ende</i> 'end'
<i>lēoht</i> 'light'	<i>wīte</i> 'punishment'
<i>gereord</i> 'banquet'	<i>ēage</i> 'eye'
<i>hnutu</i> 'nut'	<i>guma</i> 'man'
<i>bāre</i> 'bearing'	<i>steorra</i> 'star'
<i>wine</i> 'friend'	<i>scucca</i> 'devil'
<i>cyrice</i> 'church'	<i>medu</i> 'mead/beer'
	<i>heorte</i> 'heart', etc.

Answer the following questions on the basis of the words above and your knowledge of OE morphology and phonology (you will have to rely on the chapter we have covered). You may also choose any other words to support your conclusions. Answer the questions in any order you feel comfortable with (but answer all of them). Give a full characterisation and argue for your point of view. I want to see the steps that have led you to the conclusion.

1. How would you generally formulate the rules of OE compounding?
2. Which vowels can be found word-finally in recorded, classical (non-early) OE? Give a complete list with examples.
3. Which vowels are deleted? Can you reach a generalisation on the basis of vowel quality?
4. Is a generalisation possible on the basis of syllable weight before the word-final vowels?
5. Supply a phonological representation for word like *ende*, *heorte* at the point when the above method of compounding was active.
6. Look at *ende* again, for example. Does OE compounding shed new light on Hogg's discussion of the diachrony of *ende* < **endij/endī*. How does umlaut complicate matters (**andij/andī*)?
7. It is generally claimed that in classical OE distinctive vowel length was lost in inflectional endings. Do the data support this? Find a basis for cross-classifying the data you find and a way for disambiguating them with a diacritic mark. *Disambiguate all the vowel-final words cited above.*