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S. No 24, B.A.Part-3 English Hons, Topic: Changes in Spelling. Dr Umesh Prasad Singh, Assistant Prof of English, D. B. College mob 7250460920, Email-ID drumeshsingh131@gmail.com

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Changes in Spelling

Changes in spelling are mainly orthographical and do not necessarily indicate the change in pronunciation. However, in some cases the pronunciation governs the spelling to some extent. Change in spelling is one of the most noticeable features of the transition from old English to Middle English and was only due to the influence of French. The letter 'c' in French has always /s/ pronunciation but in old English and middle English it pronounced /s/ before back vowel e, o, u but 'k' before front vowel e, i, y e.g the Anglo Saxon cyng becomes king. The word having spelling combination /ch/ which pronunciation is k is from Greek origin as in character, chronic, chorus etc. Because of Greek influence the Anglo Saxon words cild give way to the change of the pronunciation and became child in the Middle English.

Under the French influence the spelling combination 'cw' gives change to 'qu' in the Middle English. Many of the words in Middle English like squire, scour are not difficult. They are of French origin.

Till late Middle English spelling remains a field open where individual can display whatever can display. Spelling neither phonetic nor fix then. Even the father English used the two spelling for the word sweet- swoote/ swete; condition was made worse because of the foreign borrowing.