

ENHG sound change

Explain in a couple of sentences and with examples the observations sketched below.

Again, we're seeing getting to the payoff of the course: You can now understand patterns in the Modern German and its dialects, some that you might notice and others that even native speakers often aren't aware of, and some that only become clear when you look at earlier historic forms. The final will be structured around this way of thinking.

1. A remarkable number of German words with a stressed vowel consist of a short vowel followed by more than one consonant or a long vowel (or diphthong) followed by a single consonant. Why is this?
2. Once you know the pattern just described, an odd-looking exception is that we don't have words with a long vowel or diphthong plus [ŋ], so German has lots of words like *lang* or *fangen* but no words like **laung* or **fehng*. (Some people find those even hard to say.) How could this be the case? Even weirder is that English has these same pattern — how can that be?
3. Standard German has the diphthong /aw/ in words like *auf*, *aus*, *draußen*, etc. But some of the most distantly related dialects of German have monophthongs, like Low German in the far north (*up*, *ut* and so on) and Alemannic in the far southwest (e.g. *uus und druus* 'up and out' in Bernese Swiss German). How do we end up with similar-looking results in such different dialects?
4. Why do so many Germans say *kucken* when we spell it *gucken* or pronounce *doll* when we spell it *toll*?
5. We learned that 'umlaut' vowels came from Germanic words with an *i/j* in the syllable following the modern umlaut. Yet sometimes we find such words with no umlaut (*suchen* < **sōkjan*) and other times we find umlaut where there was no *i/j* (*schwül* from an earlier form something like *swelen*). What's going on here?