

UKLO Round 2 March 2014

Data and questions



Vulgar Latin and the Romance languages

From 100-300 CE the Roman Empire included much of Europe, and the use of Latin spread through this empire, mainly in a spoken version called “Vulgar [= colloquial] Latin”. Later, as the empire declined, different dialects of Vulgar Latin changed and diverged so much that they became different languages: the “Romance” languages of today’s Europe, including Italian, Spanish, Catalan (spoken in the north-east of Spain), French and Romanian. English is distantly related to Latin, so there are many basic words in the two languages that have a vague resemblance; and later (in the Middle Ages) English borrowed many more words directly from Latin and from the Romance languages.

The following tables show pronunciations rather than spellings, so each letter indicates one sound only (e.g. g is always pronounced as in ‘get’, and never as in ‘gem’); some special symbols are used to show particular sounds:

- u = the sound of “oo” in “boot”.
- ə = the sound of the “a” in “about”.
- ɪ = a sound between ə and i.
- j = the sound of “y” in “yes”.
- ʌ = like the “lli” sound in “million”.
- ʃ= the sound of “sh” in “ship”.
- dʒ = the first sound of “jump”.
- œ = similar to ə but with the lips rounded like an “o”.
- ɳ = the sound of “ng” in “bang” (where some speakers of English also pronounce a distinct g).
- tʃ= the sound of “ch” in “chip”.
- y = like the sound of “ee” in “bee”, but with the lips rounded .
- ɥ = a quick version of y.
- ð = the sound of “th” in “other”.
- The symbol ~ above a vowel means that the vowel is nasalized (sounds through the nose).
- For words of more than one syllable, the symbol ' means that the stress is on the following syllable.

Note that changes in the Romance pronunciations are not always predictable; and also that occasionally a Romance language has used a different Latin word, or even one from another language clearly not related to Latin.

Table 1 shows the pronunciation of some corresponding words in Vulgar Latin and in three modern Romance languages.

Table 1

Table 1 Vulgar Latin	A	B	C	English translation
'matrem	mer	'marə	'mamə	mother
'patrem	per	'parə	'tatə	father
'filium	fis	fiλ	'fiul	son
'filiam	fij	'fiλə	'fiika	daughter
so'rorem (or ger'manam)	sœr	dʒər'manə	'sora	sister
'fratrem (or ger'manum)	frer	dʒər'ma	'frate	brother
'katum	ſa	gat	pi'sika	cat
'kanem	ſjē	ka	'kijne	dog

Q.5.1. Put the words listed below into their correct places in table 2.

bin, 'dekem, dew, dœ, dos, 'dowə, katr, 'kentum, 'kwatrə, 'kwatuor, nœf, 'novem,
'nowə, 'okto, opt, sā, sěk, seks, sen, 'septem, set, siŋ, sis, sis, 'sapte, tres, tres, 'tʃintʃi, u,
'unum, qit, vě, 'zetſe

Table 2

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C
	æ		'unul
'dues			
	trwa		trej
			'patru
'kwinkwe			
			'fase
		set	
		bwit	
		now	
	dis		
'viginti			dowə'zetſi
			'sutə

Q.5.2. Put the words below into their correct places in table 3:

Romance words

'apə, beλ, ə'skriwrə, flœr, 'floare, 'hominem, kənt'a, 'luna, 'ʌnə, o, om, 'skribere, ſā'te,
'veki, vi, 'viatsə

English words

flower, life, man, moon, sing, water, write

Table 3

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C	English translation
'akwa		'ajgwə		
kan'tare			kin'ta	
'florem		flo		
	e'krir		'skrie	
		'omə	om	
'vita		'biðə		
	lyn		'lunə	
'veklus	vjœ			old (masculine)

Q.5.3. Write the missing pronunciations or meanings in table 4:

Table 4

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C	English translation
'panem	pẽ			bread
	e'twal	ə'streɪə	'stele	star
'vekla	vjej		'veke	
	œj	uʌ	'oki	eye
'videt	vwa	bew		sees
'videre	vwar		ve'dea	
	kã	kwan	kind	when?

Q.5.4. Explain as clearly and concisely as you can how pronunciations changed between Vulgar Latin and the three languages.

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66 points, 10 marks

5.1: 33

5.2: 23

5.3: 10

Q.5.1.

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C
'unum	œ̃	u	'unul
'dues	dœ̃	dos	'dowə
tres	trwa	tres	trej
'kwatuor	katr	kwartrə	'patru
kwinkwe	sẽk	siŋ	tʃintʃi
seks	sis	sis	fase
'septem	set	set	'sapte
'okto	qit	bwit	opt
'novem	nœf	now	'nowə
'dekem	dis	dew	'zetʃe
'viginti	vẽ	bin	dowə'zetzfi
'kentum	sã	sen	'sutə

Q.5.2.

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C	English translation
'akwa	o	'ajgwə	'apə	water
kan'tare	ſã'te	kənt'a	kɪn'ta	sing
'florem	flœr	flo	'floare	flower
'skribere	e'krir	ə'skriwrə	'skrie	write
'hominem	om	'omə	om	man
'vita	vi	'biðə	'viatsə	life
'luna	'lyn	'λunə	'lunə	moon
'veklus	vjœ	beʎ	'veki	old (masculine)

Q.5.3.

Vulgar Latin	A	B	C	English translation
'panem	pẽ	pa	pijne	bread
stella(m)	e'twal	əs'treʎə	'stele	star
'vekla	vjej	'beʎə	'veke	old (feminine)
'ok(u)lum	œj	uʎ	'oki	eye
'videt	vwa	bew	'vede	sees
'videre	vwar	'bewrə	ve'dea	see
'kwando	kã	kwan	kind	when?