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English Once, Twice, Thrice

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Problem: In the sentence I saw him once last week, the word once may be replaced by twice (or two times), thrice (or three times), four times, five times. Describe the variants of the word times, and their distribution. Describe the variants of the words two and three and their distribution.

Answer: The word times may be replaced by a suffix written -ce after the words two and three. When this suffix is used, two becomes twi- and three becomes thri-.

Comment: This is an example of a problem designed to teach English as mathematics is taught. Since persons using this problem may not know phonetics or phonemics, no attempt has been made in it to distinguish between spelling and pronunciation. It would not appear advisable, in this problem, to draw attention to the relation between twice and twin, unless the teacher is prepared to go into a discussion of phonetic and/or phonemic considerations.