

Re: Rules to add -s/-es endings to English nouns

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2008-07/msg00304.html>

- *From:* John Swindle <jcswindle@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 09 Jul 2008 20:02:12 -1000
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On Wed, 09 Jul 2008 00:00:30 -0400, Padraic Brown
<elemtilas@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Tue, 08 Jul 2008 16:28:05 -1000, John Swindle <jcswindle@xxxxxxx>
wrote:

On Tue, 8 Jul 2008 18:13:58 -0700 (PDT), Visa Inquirer
<visa_desirer@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

I am trying to understand how English plurals form.

There are some rules in
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwesl/egw/crump.htm>.
But many items there cause questions.

Rule: ... (add) -es to those singulars that end in a sibilant
sound (/s/, /z/, /ts/, /dz/).
But why then quiz has plural quizzes?

If we saw quiz, quizzes, we might think the sound of the first vowel
had changed, as in "quit" vs "quite". That's probably why the "z" is
doubled. But note that the plural of "bus" is either "buses" or
"busses".

I'd naturally read a vowel change in the former, though of course can
compensate, reasoning that the writer probably doesn't actually intend
the plural of buse.

And the same of course would go for quizzes, but I wasn't arguing that
this stuff's regular. For me to accept Peter T. Daniels' view that

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the English plurals were once regular and that the exceptions can now be listed—which may of course be true—would be to accept that I should now be able to spell them, which somehow seems an unacceptable conclusion.

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