



## COURSE DATA

### DATA SUBJECT

**Code:** 35349  
**Name:** History of the English language  
**Cycle:** Undergraduate Studies  
**ECTS Credits:** 6  
**Academic year:** 2025-26

### STUDY (S)

Degree	Center	Acad. year	Period
1000 - Degree in English Studies	Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació	3	First quarter

### SUBJECT-MATTER

Degree	Subject-matter	Character
1000 - Degree in English Studies	Linguistics of the English language	COMPULSORY

### COORDINATION

HUERTAS MARTIN VICTOR

## SUMMARY

The topic of the module 'History of the English Language' is the diachronic study of the English language. The module describes the development of English from its pre-Old English stages to contemporary English. The units cover the different phases of this process, starting with a general introduction to the history of the English language and the basic issues of historical linguistics, followed by an overview of its Indo-European and Germanic ancestry. The different periods (Old English, Middle English, Modern English and Present-day English) are then presented in more detail. This module also analyses sociolinguistic and historical data, together with linguistic factors (ortho-phonological, morphosyntactic and lexico-semantic) that are relevant to the shaping of contemporary English.

## PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE SAME DEGREE

There are no specified enrollment restrictions with other subjects of the curriculum.

### OTHER REQUIREMENTS



It is recommended that students:

- Have a command of the terminology and general features of linguistics.
- Be familiar with the basic phonological, morphosyntactic and lexico-semantic features of present-day English.
- Be able to transcribe using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).
- Have a general knowledge of British and North-American geography, history and culture.
- Have achieved a B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in both oral and written production.

## COMPETENCES / LEARNING OUTCOMES

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Apply ICT and computer programs, either locally or through a network, in the field of English Studies.

Demonstrate communicative and social competence in the English language (oral and written comprehension and expression, communicative interaction and mediation that includes correct grammar and style).

Describe and explain diachronic processes in the English language and the problems associated with this field and describe the fundamental changes regarding different linguistic aspects.

Design and manage projects in language and literature in the academic and professional fields.

Interrelate different areas of humanistic studies.

Know and apply the currents and methodologies of linguistics.

Students must be able to apply their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional manner and have acquired the competences required for the preparation and defence of arguments and for problem solving in their field of study.

Students must be able to communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both expert and lay audiences.

Students must have acquired knowledge and understanding in a specific field of study, on the basis of general secondary education and at a level that includes mainly knowledge drawn from advanced textbooks, but also some cutting-edge knowledge in their field of study.

Work and learn autonomously, and plan and manage ones workload.

Work in a team in contexts related to English Studies and develop interpersonal relationships.



## DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

### **1. Introduction to the history of the English language: synchronic and diachronic aspects of languages, internal and external factors and their role in linguistic change.**

This unit provides a general overview of the evolution of the English language, taking into account both its synchronic dimension (the study of the language at a specific point in time) and its diachronic dimension (its development over time). It analyses the main internal factors (structural changes) and external factors (contact with other languages, social and historical influences) involved in linguistic change. In addition, it introduces key concepts to understand how languages transform and what processes shape their evolution.

### **2. Periodization in the history of English: Old, Middle, Modern and Present-day English periods.**

#### **Before Old English: Indo-European families and Germanic families: the origins of English.**

This unit addresses the traditional periodization of the history of the English language, distinguishing its main stages: Old English, Middle English, Modern English and Present-day English. It presents the most relevant features of each period and their importance in shaping the language. In addition, it explores the origins of the language before Old English, with special attention to the Indo-European and Germanic families from which English derives, as well as the historical and cultural factors that contributed to its development.

### **3. Old English: Historical events and salient linguistic features.**

This unit focuses on the Old English period, covering the main historical events that shaped its development, such as the Germanic migrations and the consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. It also analyses the most salient linguistic features of Old English in the phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical domains, showing how these elements laid the foundations for the later evolution of the English language.



#### **4. Middle English: Historical events and salient linguistic features**

This unit focuses on the Middle English period, highlighting the main historical events that shaped this stage, such as the Norman Conquest and its linguistic consequences. It examines the most significant linguistic features of Middle English at the phonological, morphosyntactic and lexico-semantic levels, and how these contributed to the evolution towards Modern English.

#### **5. Modern English: Historical events and salient linguistic features.**

This unit examines the Modern English period, considering the main historical events such as the Renaissance and colonial expansion, which had a decisive impact on the language. It analyses the most relevant linguistic features of Modern English at the phonological, morphosyntactic and lexico-semantic levels, and how these features reflect the evolution and standardization of the language.

#### **6. Present-day English: Historical events and salient linguistic features.**

This unit focuses on Present-day English, analysing recent historical events that have influenced its development, such as globalization and the impact of new technologies. It studies the most salient linguistic features in phonology, morphosyntax and lexico-semantics, as well as the trends and changes that characterize contemporary English.

The competences mentioned above should lead to the following learning outcomes, that is, the student should be able to:

Locate and identify the historical, cultural and geographical features, as well as other relevant characteristics from various disciplines that are of central importance to explain the diachrony of the English language.

Identify the historical, cultural and geographical features, as well as other relevant characteristics from various disciplines that are of central importance to explain the diachrony of the English language

Clearly identify the linguistic concepts and guiding principles related to the history of the English language.

Analyse and discuss scientifically both general and specific linguistic issues of the English language.

Use ICT tools effectively to locate information related to the study of the history of the English language.

Write projects and essays related to the subject ¿History of the English Language



Demonstrate an expressive ability in English close to C1 level in both productive skills: speaking and writing.

Critically evaluate and reflect on issues related to diachronic linguistics.

Communicate scientific concepts and ideas to a non-specialist audience using plain language and/or language adapted to the target audience, illustrating the message with relevant examples.

## WORKLOAD

### PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Theory	60,00
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>60,00</b>

### NON PRESENCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	Hours
Attendance at other activities	0,00
Individual or group project	15,00
Independent study and work	75,00
Preparation of lessons	0,00
Preparation for assessment activities	0,00
Resolution of case studies	0,00
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>90,00</b>

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY

### Theoretical classes:

As indicated in the summary, the theoretical classes will aim to provide a general, albeit brief, introductory study of the history of the English language, taking into account the "external" and "internal" factors of the language that have contributed to its current form, status and outlook.

Consequently, the objective of the theoretical classes is to offer an overview of the main historical stages of the English language and to show how both purely linguistic and social factors have contributed to its current form. Students are expected to supplement this information with their own readings, using the references and resources provided or recommended.

### Practical classes:

In the practical classes theoretical knowledge will be applied to textual materials, both synchronic and/or diachronic, texts and their philological analyses and exercises on word evolution.



**Other activities:**

The remaining hours and out-of-class activities include, among other things, not only general study and preparation of theory and practice but also the design, development and verification of the portfolio and group work materials with the other team members, as well as relevant administrative tasks and visits to the library.

## EVALUATION

Assessment will be carried out in two separate parts:

- a) Final individual exam: 80%
- b) Other tasks: 20%

To pass the subject, students must obtain at least 5 out of 10 points in part A. The 20% grade of part B (the portfolio) will only be counted if the student passes part A (the exam). These activities (part B) can only be completed during the course and cannot be submitted in the second exam session; the portfolio grade will be carried over to the second session.

### Evaluation Criteria

**Theory:** Students must demonstrate that they have understood the theoretical concepts explained in the classes on internal and external history.

**Practical:** Students must demonstrate that they are able to identify/reproduce some of the most relevant ortho-phonological, morphosyntactic and lexico-semantic features of the different stages of the language explained and practiced in class.

The general grading system will follow the regulations of the University of Valencia, approved by the Governing Council on 30 May 2017 (ACGUV 108/2017). Accordingly, in order to pass the subject, students must obtain an average mark of 5 out of 10.

Both in the exam and in the practical exercises, correct spelling and grammar will be required. Each spelling, typographic or expression mistake will result in a reduction of the grade obtained,



which may lead to failing the assessment.

**NOTE:**

**PLAGIARISM** IN ANY MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR ASSESSMENT IMMEDIATELY RESULTS IN FAILING THE SUBJECT.

Intellectual honesty is vital in academic communities and for the fair evaluation of student's work. All assignments submitted in this course must be original work. Assignments involving fraudulent collaboration or composition with the aid of artificial intelligence (ChatGPT or others) will not be accepted, except when its use is part of the course content and authorized by the teaching staff.

## REFERENCES

### Basic references

Rodríguez-Abruñeiras, Paula & Jesús Romero-Barranco. 2021. Long Story Short: An Interactive Journey through the History of English. València: Publicacions Universitat de València.

Tejada Caller, Paloma. 1999. El Cambio Lingüístico. Claves para interpretar la historia de la lengua inglesa. Madrid: Alianza

Freeborn, Dennis. 2006 (1992). From Old English to Standard English: A Course Book in Language Variation Across Time. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fuster-Márquez, M. & J.J. Calvo García de Leonardo. 2012 (2011). A Practical Introduction to the History of English. Valencia. PUV

### Complementary references

#### 1. Diachronic perspectives

##### 1.1. General and external histories of the English language

CRYSTAL, D. (2004). The stories of English. London. Penguin.

FENNELL, B. A. (2001). A history of English: A sociolinguistic approach. Wiley. Blackwell.



GRADDOL, D., D. LEITH & J. SWANN (1996). English: history, diversity and change. London and New York. Routledge.

GRADDOL, D, D. LEITH, J. SWANN, M. RHYS & J. GILLEN (eds) (2007). Changing English. London & New York. Routledge.

HOGG, R.M. et al (eds) (1993-1999). The Cambridge history of the English language. Cambridge. C.U.P.

JONES, R. F. (1953). The triumph of the English language. Stanford. Stanford University Press.

KNOWLES, G. (1997). A cultural history of the English language. London. Edward Arnold.

LASS, R. (1987). The shape of English. Structure and history. London and Melbourne. J.M. Dent.

LEITH, D. (1983). A social history of English. London. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

MCCRUM, R., W. CRAN & R. MCNEIL (1986). The story of English. London. Faber & Faber & BBC Publications

MILROY, J. (2002). The legitimate language: giving a history to English, in R. Watts. & P. Trudgill (eds.) Alternative histories of English. London and New York. Routledge: 7-26.

## **1.2. Historical, social and contact linguistics**

BYNON, Th. (1983/1977). Historical linguistics. Cambridge. C.U.P.

CHAMBERS, J.K., P Trudgill, & N. Schilling-Estes (eds) (2002). The handbook of language variation and change. Malden, Oxford & Victoria. Blackwell Publishing: 3-14.

COULMAS, F. (2005). Sociolinguistics: the study of speakers choices. Cambridge. C.U.P.

CRYSTAL, D. (1995). The Cambridge encyclopaedia of the English language. Cambridge. C.U.P.

CRYSTAL, D. (1997). English as a global language. Cambridge. C.U.P

DIXON, R.M.W. (1997). The rise and fall of languages. Cambridge. C.U.P.

FENNELL, B. (2001). A history of English: A sociolinguistic approach. Wiley. Blackwell.



HOCK, H. H. (1986). Principles of historical linguistics. Berlin. Mouton de Gruyter.

HOCK, H. H. & B. D. JOSEPH (1996). Language history, language change, and language relationship: An introduction to historical and comparative linguistics. (Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs 93). Berlin. Mouton de Gruyter.

JOSEPH, B. D. & R. D. Janda (eds) (2003). The handbook of historical linguistics. Malden, Oxford and Victoria. Blackwell Publishing: 3-180.

LEITH, D. (1983). A social history of English. London-Boston-Melbourne-Henley. Routledge and Kegan Paul.

MILROY, J (1992). Linguistic variation and change: On the historical sociolinguistics of English. Oxford and Cambridge, Mass. Blackwell.

ROMAINE, S. (1982). Socio-historical linguistics: its status and methodology. Cambridge. C.U.P.

SAMUELS, M.L. (1972). Linguistic evolution, with special reference to English. Cambridge. C.U.P.

SANKOFF, G. (2002). Linguistic outcomes of language contact, in J.K. Chambers, P. Trudgill & N. Schilling-Estes (eds.) The handbook of language variation and change. Malden, Oxford and Victoria. Blackwell Publishing: 638-668.

SWANN, J. (1996). English voices, in D. Graddol, D Leith & J Swann (1996) English: History, diversity and change. London and New York. Routledge: 3-40.

TEJADA, P. (2001). Capítulo 1. El cambio lingüístico, in I. De la Cruz. & Fco. J. Martín Arista (eds.) Lingüística histórica inglesa. Barcelona. Ariel (Lingüística): 29-59.

WARDHAUGH, R. (2002). An introduction to sociolinguistics. Oxford. Blackwell Publishing.

WEINREICH, U. (1968) [1953]. Languages in contact: findings and problems. The Hague, Paris and New York. Mouton.

WINFORD, D. (2003). An introduction to contact linguistics. Malden & Oxford. Blackwell Publishing.

### **1.3. Orthography and phonology**

DOBSON, E.J. (1968). English pronunciation 1500-1700. Vols I-II, Oxford. At the Clarendon Press.

EKWALL, E. & WARD, A. (1980). A history of Modern English sounds and morphology. Oxford. Basil



Blackwell.

HAARMAN, Harald (2001). Historia universal de la escritura. (versión española de José Bergua Cavero). Madrid. Gredos.

JONES, Ch. (1989). A history of English phonology. London & New York. Longman (Linguistics Library).

JURADO TORRESQUESANA, J. A. (2006). Phonological evolution from Indo-European to Modern English: the fundamentals for practice. Salamanca, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca.

PARTRIDGE, A.C. (1964). Orthography in Shakespeare and Elizabethan drama. London. Edward Arnold.

PRINS, A.A. (1972). History of English phonemes. Leiden. Leiden University Press.

ROLLINGS, A. (2004). The spelling patterns of English. München. Lincom Europa.

SCRAGG, D.G. (1974). A history of English spelling. Manchester. Manchester University Press.

WOLFE, P.M. (1972). Linguistic change and the Great Vowel Shift in English. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

#### **1.4. Morphology and syntax**

ARONOFF, M. & K. FUEDEMAN (2005). What is Morphology?. Malden-Oxford-Victoria. Blackwell Publishing.

CARTSTAIRS-MCCARTHY, A. (2002). An introduction to English morphology. Edinburgh. Edinburgh University Press.

HASPELMATH, M. (2002). Understanding morphology. London. Arnold.

JESPERSEN, O. (1965) [1909-1949]. A modern English grammar on historical principles. 7 vols. London. Allen & Unwin.

KASTOVSKY, D. (ed.) (1991). Historical English syntax. Berlin and New York. Mouton de Gruyter.

THOMAS, L. (1996). Variation in English grammar, in D. Graddol, D. Leith & J. Swann (1996) English: History, diversity and change. London and New York. Routledge: 222-258.

TRAUGOTT, E.C. (1972). The history of English syntax. New York. Holt, Rinehart & Winston.



VISSER, F. Th. (1963-1973). *An historical syntax of the English language*. (3 vols in 4). Leiden. Brill.- 1.5. Lexis and semantics

ADAMS, V. (1973). *An introduction to English word-formation*. London. Longman.

ALGEO, J. (1999). Vocabulary, in S. Romaine (ed.). *The Cambridge history of the English language*, Vol. IV: 1776-1997. Cambridge. C.U.P.: 57-92.

BAUER, L. (1983). *English word formation*. Cambridge. C.U.P.. HUGHES, G. (1988). *Words in time: A social history of English vocabulary*. Oxford & New York. Basil Blackwell.

HUGHES, G. (2000). *A history of English words*. Malden and Oxford. Blackwell Publishers.

JACKSON, H. & E. ZÉ AMVELA (2000). *Words, meaning and vocabulary: An introduction to Modern English lexicology*. London and New York. Cassell.

MARCHAND, H. (1960). *The categories and types of present-day English word-formation*. Wiesbaden. Otto Harrassowitz.

NEVALAINEN, T. (1999). Lexis and semantics, in R. Lass (ed.) *The Cambridge history of the English language*, Vol 3: 1476-1776. Cambridge. C.U.P.: 332-458.

## **2. Synchronic perspectives**

### **2.1. Before Old English**

- BERNÁRDEZ, E. (2001). Capítulo 2. Las lenguas germánicas. In I. De la Cruz & Fco. J. Martín Arista (eds.), *Lingüística histórica inglesa* (pp. 61¿108). Barcelona: Ariel (Lingüística).
- HARBERT, W. (2007). *The Germanic languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- PRICE, G. (1984). *The languages of Britain*. London: Edward Arnold.

### **2.2. Old English**

- CAMPBELL, A. (1959). *Old English grammar*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- DE LA CRUZ, J.M. (1986). *Iniciación práctica al inglés antiguo*. Madrid: Alhambra (Universidad).
- HOGG, R.M. (ed.) (1993). *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 1: *The beginnings to 1066*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- HOGG, R.M. (1993). "Phonology and morphology". In R.M. Hogg (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 1: *The beginnings to 1066* (pp. 67¿168). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- TRAUOGOTT, E.C. (1993). "Syntax". In R.M. Hogg (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. 1: *The beginnings to 1066* (pp. 168¿290). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



- MITCHELL, B. (1985). *Old English syntax*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- MITCHELL, B. (1997/1995). *An invitation to Old English & Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- QUIRK, R. & WRENN, C.L. (1957). *An Old English grammar*. London: Methuen.

### 2.3. Middle English

- BLAKE, N. (ed.) (1992). *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, Vol. II: 1066-1476. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BURROW, J.A. & TURVILLE-PETRE, Th. (1996) [1992]. *A book of Middle English*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- IGLESIAS-RÁBADE, L. (1992). *El uso del inglés y francés en la Inglaterra normanda y Plantagenet (1066-1399)*. Santiago de Compostela: Universidade de Santiago de Compostela.
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- MOSSÉ, F. (1968/1952). *A handbook of Middle English* (translated by James A. Walker). Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- MUSTANOJA, T. (1960). *A Middle English syntax*, Vol. I: *Parts of speech*. Helsinki: Société Néophilologique.
- SAMUELS, M.L. (1963). Some applications of Middle English dialectology. *English Studies*, 44, 81-94.

### 2.4. Modern English

- BARBER, Ch. (1997) [1976]. *Early Modern English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- FISHER, J.H. (1977). Chancery and the emergence of Standard written English. *Speculum*, 52, 870-889.
- GÖRLACH, M. (1991). *Introduction to Early Modern English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Original German edition (1978): *Einführung ins Frühneuenglische*. Heidelberg: Quelle & Mayer.]
- NEVALAINEN, T. & TIEKEN-BOON VAN OSTADE, I. (2006). Standardisation. In R.M. Hogg & D. Denison (eds.), *A History of the English Language* (pp. 271-311). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- PARTRIDGE, A.C. (1969). *Tudor to Augustan English: A study in syntax and style from Caxton to Johnson*. London: André Deutsch.

## 3. Dictionaries and further auxiliary materials

### 3.1. Historical, etymological and period dictionaries

- BOSWORTH, J. & T.N. TOLLER (1921/1898). *An Anglo-Saxon dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- MURRAY, J.A.H. et al. (eds.) (1933). *The Oxford English dictionary*, being a corrected re-issue with an introduction, supplement and bibliography of *A new English dictionary on historical principles* (13 vols.). Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.
- ONIONS, C.T., G.W.S. FRIEDRICHSEN & R.W. BURCHFIELD (1966). *The Oxford dictionary of English etymology*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.



- SKEAT, W. (1984). *A concise etymological dictionary of the English language*. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press.

### **3.2. Companions and resource books for students**

- BURNLEY, D. (1992). *The history of the English language: A source book*. London: Longman.
- LASS, R. (1995/1994). *Old English: A historical linguistic companion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MCARTHUR, T. (ed.) (1992). *The Oxford companion to the English language*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.
- MCINTYRE, D. (2009). *History of English: A resource book for students*. London & New York: Routledge.
- MOMMA, H. & M. MATTO (eds.) (2008). *A companion to the history of the English language*. Malden & Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

### **3.3. Anthologies**

FERNÁNDEZ, F.F., M. FUSTER & J.J. CALVO (2001). *Early Modern English texts*. Valencia: Albatros.