

ENG221 Engelsk lingvistikk: språkhistorie

(English linguistics: History of the language)

ENG261 Semesteroppgåve i engelsk lingvistikk: språkhistorie

(Term paper in English linguistics: History of the language)

History of English, spring 2019

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Teaching

This course offers an introduction to the history and development of English from its roots in Indo-European and Germanic until today. It will cover central aspects of changes in structure, morphology, pronunciation, vocabulary and spelling. Course topics include languages in Britain before English, the ancestry of English, foreign influences on the vocabulary of English and the main characteristics of Old English, Middle English (Chaucerian English) and early modern English (Shakespearean English), as illustrated in selected texts from the various periods.

The History of the language will be taught variously as lectures and as a seminar with active student participation.

The first sessions will be devoted to situating English as an Indo-European language and giving an overview of the various sources of foreign influence on English (Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian, French) and the external events to which this influence is due. The teaching here will primarily be in the form of lectures.

Next we turn to the characteristics of three of the main periods in the history of English, Old English, Middle English and Early Modern English. The language of these periods will primarily be studied by examining extracts from primary texts. These extracts are relatively brief (1–2 pp each), but will be examined in some detail. This part will be taught primarily as seminars with active student participation and **it is essential that students prepare in advance by studying the texts, using the glossaries provided and modern English translations.** There will be a certain emphasis on Old English, since this is the stage of the language that is least familiar to the modern speaker and therefore tends to pose a greater challenge than, say, the language of Shakespeare and his contemporaries (Early Modern English).

The topics in historical phonology will initially be covered in the form of lectures, but will subsequently be returned to throughout the seminars devoted to discussion of primary texts. The study of these topics relies heavily on familiarity with basic phonetic and phonological principles. Solid knowledge of these principles as covered in ENG115 or equivalent is therefore a necessary prerequisite for taking the course. Students are likewise expected to have a good grounding in the fundamentals of English grammar as covered by ENG114 and ENG107 or equivalent courses.

Preparation

Students are encouraged to read through the relevant chapters/sections in Barber et al 2009 (cf. below) before the start of the course. They are expected to prepare the assigned reading for each class, including the study of primary texts, as described above.

Assignments

Students should be prepared to give smaller presentations in class. For ENG221 students there will also be an (optional, but strongly recommended) written assignment based on previous exam questions.

Term paper

ENG261 students will be writing a supervised term paper (BA paper) on a topic of their choice (subject to approval by course teacher).

Obligatory reading

Primary texts

Rydland, Kurt & Kari E. Haugland. 2017. *Early English texts*. 4th ed. Compendium, Department of foreign languages, University of Bergen. [Will be made available at MittUiB.]

Textbooks

Barber, Charles; Joan C. Beal & Philip A. Shaw. 2009 (or later reprints). *The English language: a historical introduction*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 2 (main ideas); Ch. 3: pp 58–76 (main ideas); Ch. 4: pp 85–96, 100–104; Ch. 5: pp 105–29; Ch. 6; Ch. 7: pp 161–81; Ch. 8: pp 185–201; Ch. 9: pp 211–221.

Rydland, Kurt. 2016. *Aspects of the history of English pronunciation*. 2nd ed. Compendium, Department of foreign languages, University of Bergen. [Copies will be posted at MittUiB.]

The textbooks will be supplemented with material distributed in class/posted in MittUiB. **This material is also considered obligatory reading.**

Supplementary literature

There is a great variety of introductory text books concerned with the history of English, including:

Algeo, John. 2010. *The origins and development of the English language*. 6th ed. Boston: Wadsworth-Cengage. (Also at [http://www.kaa.ff.ukf.sk/attachments/article/39/The%20Origins%20and%20Development%20of%20the%20English%20Language%20\(Textbook\).pdf](http://www.kaa.ff.ukf.sk/attachments/article/39/The%20Origins%20and%20Development%20of%20the%20English%20Language%20(Textbook).pdf))

Baugh, Albert C. & Thomas Cable. 2002. *A history of the English language*. 5th ed. London: Routledge.

Fennel, Barbara A. 2001. *A history of English: a sociolinguistic approach*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Gramley, Stephan. 2012. *The history of English: an introduction*. London: Routledge. (The second edition will be available in early 2019.)

McIntyre, Dan. 2009. *History of English: a resource book for students*. London: Routledge.

A very good summary with useful illustrations is found in:

Crystal, David. 2003. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. 2nd ed., 4–75. Cambridge: CUP.

For an excellent version in Norwegian, see:

Bech, Kristin. 2016. *Fra englisc til English: Et språk blir til*. Oslo: Pax.