

Dette er studietilbudet for studieår 2019-2020. Endringer kan komme.

This module covers the history of the English language from the beginnings to the present day. It combines the study of language history with a specific focus on the written evidence, and on the social context of language change. We look at what texts were like in the past, who produced and read them, and how changes in language and literacy interact with social and technological change. We also address the question of present-day uses of the past: how much can we know about past languages, and how can we apply and communicate the findings of historical research? At the same time, the course provides a solid, practical introduction to earlier stages of English and addresses the major linguistic developments from Old to Present-Day English.

FACTS

Course code: MLI325_1

Credits (ECTS) : 15

Semester tuition start: Spring

Duration: 1

Exam semester: Spring

Language of instruction:

English

Offered by: [Faculty of Arts and Education, Department of Cultural Studies and Languages](#)
(<http://www.uis.no/category.php?categoryID=8335>)

Learning outcome

Knowledge:

The student will gain knowledge of:

- The traditional periods of the history of the English language and the historical, cultural and technological developments that mark them
- The main linguistic characteristics of Old, Middle, Early Modern and Late Modern English
- The major linguistic and sociolinguistic changes in the history of English, with specific reference to the written evidence
- The linguistic characteristics and historical context of specific texts chosen for study
- Text production, major genres and literacy practices in the different periods

Skills:

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- Explain the traditional periodization of English, with reference to social, cultural and technological change, and point out the major characteristics of English in the different periods
- Translate and comment in detail on the language of selected texts representing Old, Middle and Early Modern English. Comment on the language of an unseen text in an informed way, placing it in the correct historical period
- Describe major linguistic and sociolinguistic changes in the history of English and refer to well-known theories and controversies about them
- Consider critically the written evidence for our knowledge of the history of English
- Pursue a research topic dealing with historical texts

General competence:

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- Read historical English texts with better fluency and understanding
- Understand better the complexities of present-day English language
- Introduce a historical awareness into her/his own work (e.g. English teaching)

Contents

The module provides an outline of the historical development of written English from the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day, with a particular focus on issues such as standardization and the use of written texts as linguistic evidence. The module relates the history of written English to the history of literacy and text production in the English-speaking world.

Required prerequisite knowledge

None.

Exam

Written home assignment and written exam

	Weight	Duration	Mark	Supporting materials
Written home assignment	1/3		A - F	All.
Written exam	2/3	4 hours	A - F	None permitted

Written assignment: 2500 words (+/- 500), not including reference list.

In the assessment, English language and academic writing skills will be taken into consideration in addition to the course content.

Coursework requirements

- Seminars, 75% attendance
- Two short written assignments (in addition to the graded assignment)

Attendance at seminars is obligatory. Students who are absent from more than 25% of the seminar meetings will not be allowed to take part in the exam. The student has to be present for at least 2/3 of the duration of the individual seminar meeting for attendance to be recorded.

The students are to submit three written assignments during the course, at the dates specified at the start of the semester for each submission. The first two are not graded, but students will receive feedback.

Students who get one or more assignment assessed as not approved at their first attempt, are given one opportunity to hand in a revised assignment.

Course teacher(s)

Course coordinator

[Oliver Martin Traxel \(https://www.uis.no/employee/UkxBNE4vcEtyOEF3WUtVM1VTMmZlQQ==\)](https://www.uis.no/employee/UkxBNE4vcEtyOEF3WUtVM1VTMmZlQQ==),
[Merja Riitta Stenroos \(https://www.uis.no/employee/aXlhQ0s4Z3pWcFNITGRcbDUwb3VTZw==\)](https://www.uis.no/employee/aXlhQ0s4Z3pWcFNITGRcbDUwb3VTZw==)

Programme coordinator

[Signe Ekenberg \(https://www.uis.no/employee/TjVKTlgycEFnWIR0eUFqODZHzytXZw==\)](https://www.uis.no/employee/TjVKTlgycEFnWIR0eUFqODZHzytXZw==)

Method of work

Lectures and seminars

Overlapping courses

Course	Reduction (credits)
English Writing from Runes to SMS (MLI310_1)	5
Literacy from a Production Perspective (MLI100_1)	5

Course	Reduction (credits)
English Writing: Function, Form and Change (MLI315_1)	5
History of written English (MLI350_1)	10

Course assessment

Quality control by students is a central element of the UiS plan to improve teaching. In the Department of Cultural Studies and Languages this system includes student evaluation of courses.

Literature

Obligatory reading:

Books:

Kretzschmar, William A. Jr. 2018. *The Emergence and Development of English*. Cambridge: University Press.

van Gelderen, Elly. 2014. *A History of the English Language*. Rev. ed. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Smith, Jeremy J. 2005. *Essentials of Early English*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Articles and chapters (available in the course compendium on Canvas):

Clanchy, Michael T. 2013. *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*. 3rd ed. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Chapters 6-8, pp. 199-294.

Graddol, David. 1996. "English manuscripts: the development of a visual identity". In: David Graddol, Dick Leith and Joan Swann (eds.), *English: History, Diversity and Change*. London: Routledge. Chapter 2, pp. 41-94.

Recommended further reading:

Books (available at the UiS bookshop and/or library, or online):

Baker, Peter S. 2012. *Introduction to Old English*. 3rd ed. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Barber, Charles, Joan C. Beal and Philip A. Shaw. 2009. *The English Language: a Historical Introduction*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, Michelle. 1991. *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*. London: British Library.

Burnley, David. 2000. *The History of the English Language: a Source Book*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Longman.

McGillivray, Murray. 2011. *A Gentle Introduction to Old English*. Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Millward, C. M., and Mary Hayes. 2012. *A Biography of the English Language*. 3rd ed. Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Mugglestone, Lynda (ed.). 2012. *The Oxford History of English*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spearing, A.C. (ed.). 2016. *The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale*. Rev. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Upward, Christopher, and George Davidson. 2011. *The History of English Spelling*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Articles and chapters (available in the course compendium on Canvas)

Fulk, R. D., and Christopher M. Cain. 2013. *A History of Old English Literature*. 2nd ed. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons. Chapter 2 ("Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts"), pp. 58-82.

Gretsch, Mechthild. 2013. "Literacy and the uses of the vernacular". In: Malcom Godden and Michael Lapidge (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 15, pp. 273-294.

Hope, Jonathan. 2012. "Shakespeare and the English Language". In: Philip Seargeant and Joan Swann (eds.), *English in the World: History, Diversity, Change*. London: Routledge. Reading A, pp. 83-92.

Jucker, Andreas H., and Irma Taavitsainen. 2013. *English Historical Pragmatics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Chapter 5 ("For I thou thee, thou Traitor: terms of address"), pp. 73-91.

Laqueur, Thomas. 1976. "The cultural origins of popular literacy in England 1500-1850". *Oxford Review of Education* 2, pp. 255-275.

Nevalainen, Terttu. 2006. *An Introduction to Early Modern English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Chapters 4 and 5 ("Old words and loan words", "Word-formation and semantic change"), pp. 45-72.

Stenroos, Merja, and Jeremy J. Smith. 2016. "Changing functions: English spelling before 1600". In: Vivian Cook and Des Ryan (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of the English Writing System*. London: Routledge. Chapter 8, pp. 125-142.

Stenroos, Merja. 2017. "Perspectives on geographical variation". In: Laurel Brinton (ed.), *English Historical Linguistics: Approaches and Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 12, pp. 303-331.

The reading list is subject to change.

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Last updated: 15.11.2019