

Linguistic Variation and Change

Code: 100229
 ECTS Credits: 6

| Degree | Type | Year | Semester |
|-------------------------|------|------|----------|
| 2500245 English Studies | OT | 3 | 0 |
| 2500245 English Studies | OT | 4 | 0 |

Contact

Name: Susagna Tubau Muntaña
 Email: Susagna.Tubau@uab.cat

Use of languages

Principal working language: english (eng)
 Some groups entirely in English: Yes
 Some groups entirely in Catalan: No
 Some groups entirely in Spanish: No

Prerequisites

It is advisable for students to have taken the third-year courses History of English Language I and History of English Language II (or, at least, some courses on Diachronic Linguistics).

The course requires an initial level of English **C1** -Advanced- or **C2** -Proficiency- of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Students with **C1** can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning; they can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions; they can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes; they can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of connectors and cohesive devices. With **C2** students can understand almost everything they read or hear without effort; they can summarise information from different oral and written sources, reconstruct facts and arguments and present them in a coherent way; they can express themselves spontaneously, with fluency and precision, distinguishing subtle nuances of meaning even in the most complex situations.

Objectives and Contextualisation

This course introduces the student in the description and study of linguistic change and variation in English. Different kinds of linguistic change will be considered (sound change, semantic, lexical, morphological and syntactic change) both from a theoretical and a practical point of view, as well as geographical and social variation (dialects of English).

The aim of the course in relation to the degree is:

- To describe and analyse different kinds of language change and their relation with processes of analogy, grammaticalisation and lexicalisation.
- To describe and explain some synchronic features of contemporary English and its varieties in relation to the different historical periods of the language and language change.
- To describe and explain the main characteristics (shared and unique) of some selected varieties of English.

Skills

English Studies

- Demonstrate a comprehension of the relationship between factors, processes and phenomena of linguistics, literature, history and culture, and explaining it.
- Demonstrate a general comprehension of the historical evolution of the English language.
- Develop critical thinking and reasoning and knowing how to communicate effectively both in your mother tongue and in other languages.
- Distinguish and contrast the various theoretical and methodological models applied to the study of the English language, its literature and its culture.
- Rewrite and organize information and arguments coming from several sources in English and presenting them in a coherent and summarised way.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills in order to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Working in an autonomous and responsible way in a professional or research environment in English or other languages, in order to accomplish the previously set objectives.

Learning outcomes

1. Applying the acquired methodologies of work planning to work in an environment in the English language.
2. Applying the acquired scientific and work planning methodologies to the research in English.
3. Appropriately assessing and applying the information contained in reference books in terms of diachronic linguistics and the studies based on the main linguistic corpus, in order to interpret and analyse texts in early English and analysing data from other forms of contemporary English.
4. Assessing the different theoretical models that explain the phenomena of language change and properly applying them to the study of the English language.
5. Communicating in the studied language in oral and written form, properly using vocabulary and grammar.
6. Demonstrate a master of the specific methods of individual academic work that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
7. Effectively communicating and applying the argumentative and textual processes to formal and scientific texts.
8. Examining the relation between language change and variation.
9. Explaining in a comparative way the grammatical, phonological, orthographical, and lexical characteristics of the contemporary variety of the English language.
10. Explaining the functional and social causes of variation and language change.
11. Mastering the advanced knowledge and scientific methodologies related to linguistics, literature, history and culture that prepare the student for a postgraduate specialised education in the same or a different field of study.
12. Observing, analysing and interpreting in a comparative way synchronic and diachronic linguistic real data.
13. Recognising the sociolinguistic phenomena according to the demographic, political, economic and sociocultural causes.
14. Students must be capable of comprehending advanced academic or professional texts in their own language or the another acquired in the degree.
15. Students must be capable of precisely arguing ideas and opinions in their own language or another acquired in the degree.

Content

UNIT 1. Linguistic change (I): sound change, semantic and lexical change.

UNIT 2. Linguistic change (II): morphological and syntactic change.

UNIT 3. Geographical and social variation.

UNIT 4. The relation of geographical variation to diachronic variation.

Methodology

50 hours of directed class work: 30 hours of theory + 20 hours of practice.

50 hours of autonomous work: 25 hours of reading + 25 hours of revision.

25 hours of in-class supervised work.

Activities

| Title | Hours | ECTS | Learning outcomes |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|---------------------------------------------|
| Type: Directed | | | |
| Lectures (introduction to the study of variation and linguistic changes; characterisation of different kinds of linguistic change and contemporary varieties of English) | 30 | 1.2 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 8, 10, 13 |
| Practical classes (class discussion on topics from the readings and the syllabus) | 20 | 0.8 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 11, 12 |
| Type: Supervised | | | |
| Individual work and class discussion | 25 | 1 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 11, 6, 9, 10, 7, 5, 12, 13, 3 |
| Type: Autonomous | | | |
| Personal study and exercises | 50 | 2 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 7, 5, 4 |

Evaluation

Assessment

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Two tests: 60% of the final grade (30% per test. Mid- and end of the semester).
- Two assignments: 40% of the grade.

Please note:

A student will be considered *No evaluable* after not completing all assessment items if s/he has not handed in / sat more than one Assignment (20%) and a Partial exam (30%).

The level of English (between C1 and C2) will be taken into account in the correction of written work and in the final evaluation

VERY IMPORTANT: Total or partial plagiarism of any of the exercises will automatically be considered "fail" (0) for the whole course, not only for the plagiarized item. Plagiarism is copying one or more sentences from

unidentified sources, presenting it as original work (THIS INCLUDES COPYING PHRASES OR FRAGMENTS FROM THE INTERNET AND ADDING THEM WITHOUT MODIFICATION TO A TEXT WHICH IS PRESENTED AS ORIGINAL). Plagiarism is a serious offense. Students must learn to respect the intellectual property of others, identifying any source they may use, and take responsibility for the originality and authenticity of the texts they produce.

Procedure for reviewing grades awarded

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

Evaluation activities excluded from reassessment

The following activities are not eligible for reassessment:

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2

Reassessment:

Only ONE partial exam (30%) can be reassessed provided that the student has submitted all evaluation items and has achieved a final course mark of **3.5/10** at least. Reassessment cannot be used to upgrade the course final grade.

The final grade after re-assessment can be up to 6/10.

Evaluation activities

| Title | Weighting | Hours | ECTS | Learning outcomes |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-------|------|------------------------------------------------|
| Assignment 1 (mid October) | 20% | 7.5 | 0.3 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 11, 6, 7, 5 |
| Assignment 2 (beginning of December) | 20% | 7.5 | 0.3 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 8, 9, 7, 5 |
| Partial exam 1 (end of October) | 30% | 5 | 0.2 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 11, 8, 10, 7, 5, 12, 13, 4 |
| Partial exam 2 (beginning of January) | 30% | 5 | 0.2 | 1, 2, 15, 14, 11, 8, 9, 10, 7, 5, 12, 13, 4, 3 |

Bibliography

Aitchison, Jean (1991). *Language Change: Progress or Decay?*. Cambridge: CUP.

Anderwald, Lieselotte (2002). *Negation in Non-Standard British English. Gaps, regularizations and asymmetries*. London: Routledge.

Green, Lisa (2002). *African American English: a linguistic introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Humanitats library, 2nd floor. 802.0(73) Gre)

Kortmann, Berndt & Edgar Schneider (eds.). (2004). *A handbook of varieties of English: A multimedia reference tool*. Mouton: de Gruyter. (Humanitats library, 2nd floor. 802.0-087 Han). The book cannot be checked out. It must be consulted in the library's reading room.

McMahon, April (1994). *Understanding Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Humanitats library, 2nd floor. 800.1 Mcm)

Trudgill, Peter (1990). *The Dialects of England*. Oxford: Blackwell. (Humanitats library, 2nd floor. 802. 0-087 Tru)