

English in a Global Context: Linguistic Varieties and Literary-Cultural Productions

Code: 45346

Credits: 5

2026/2027

Degree programme	Type	Course
English Studies: Linguistic, Literary and Sociocultural Perspectives	OB	1

Contact lecturer

Name : David Owen

Email : david.owen@uab.cat

Teaching staff

David Owen

Group languages

You can consult this information at the [end](#) of the document.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take this course.

Objectives

This subject studies English as a literary, cultural and global language, paying particular attention to the historical development, social variation and creative uses of different Englishes. It offers a linguistic and literary description of written and spoken varieties of English, including vocabulary, pronunciation, accent, grammar, morphosyntax, register and style, and considers how these forms are shaped by geography, class, age, ethnicity, gender, education, migration and cultural identity.

The course approaches English not as a single fixed or neutral language, but as a changing, contested and highly creative medium. Through examples drawn from literary and cultural texts-including poetry, fiction, drama, speeches, music, film, spoken word, digital culture and other forms of performance-students will explore regional varieties, accents, creoles, code-switching, slang, invented literary languages and global Englishes. Particular attention will be given to the relationship between standard and non-standard English, to the ideological meanings attached to ideas of "correctness", and to the ways in which literary texts challenge inherited assumptions about linguistic authority.

The subject also examines the role of English in education, culture, empire, postcolonial contexts and global communication. It asks who is allowed to claim ownership of English, how literary language represents voice, accent and identity, and how other languages, translation, multilingualism and digital media continue to

transform English from within. By combining linguistic analysis with literary and cultural interpretation, the course invites students to reflect on the limits of literary language and on the future of English as a plural, mobile and politically charged form of expression.

Learning outcomes

- CA04 (Formulate research proposals on the application of the study of varieties of English to speeches and social debates.) Formulate research proposals on the application of the study of varieties of English to speeches and social debates.
- CA05 (Participate effectively in working teams that reflect linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary diversity, both in terms of their composition and their approach to the content of the work.) Participate effectively in working teams that reflect linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary diversity, both in terms of their composition and their approach to the content of the work.
- KA03 (Identify the various approaches (language, literary, cultural, and social) based on which the different varieties of English can be studied.) Identify the various approaches (language, literary, cultural, and social) based on which the different varieties of English can be studied.
- KA04 (Recognise historical and contemporary standard and non-standard varieties of English (written and spoken) in literary and cultural productions.) Recognise historical and contemporary standard and non-standard varieties of English (written and spoken) in literary and cultural productions.
- KA05 (Relate the use of varieties of English in literary and cultural productions to the representation of issues related to social class, age, ethnicity, and gender in these productions.) Relate the use of varieties of English in literary and cultural productions to the representation of issues related to social class, age, ethnicity, and gender in these productions.
- SA06 (Apply knowledge about varieties of English to the study and the interpretation of literary and cultural texts.) Apply knowledge about varieties of English to the study and the interpretation of literary and cultural texts.
- SA07 (Describe how the use of English and its varieties reflects the intersections of social class, age, ethnicity, and gender in the formation of identity.) Describe how the use of English and its varieties reflects the intersections of social class, age, ethnicity, and gender in the formation of identity.
- SA08 (Use tools for linguistic analysis and critical thinking in the study of the different uses and varieties of English in a global multilingual context.) Use tools for linguistic analysis and critical thinking in the study of the different uses and varieties of English in a global multilingual context.

Contents

Unit 1. From Chaucer to Stormzy: Literary Englishes Through Time

Unit 2. Tongues of Rebellion: Youth, Slang and Invented Literary Englishes

Unit 3. Creoles, Code-Switching and the Politics of Literary English

Unit 4. Literary Limits: Who Owns English?

Unit 5. Voice, Accent and Identity in Literary Global English

Unit 6. Standard English and Its Discontents: Grammar, Power and Literary Authority

Unit 7. Writing Across Borders: Translation, Untranslatability and English as Contact Zone

Unit 8. Page, Stage, Screen: Performance, Sound and the Afterlife of Literary English

Unit 9. Digital Englishes: Memes, Platforms and the New Literary Vernaculars

Unit 10. Writing the Future of English: Creative, Critical and Global Literary Practice

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Reading, personal study, assignment preparation and exercises	55	2.2	
Lectures	15	0.6	
Individual and group work and class discussion	25	1	
Practical classes	5	0.2	

Autonomous activities

Reading, personal study, assignment preparation and exercises

Directed activities

Lectures and practical classes

Supervised activities

Individual and group work, and class discussion

Annotation: within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Assignment 1	25%	6	0.24	CA04, CA05, KA03, KA04, KA05, SA06, SA07, SA08
Assignment 4	25%	6.5	0.26	CA04, CA05, KA03, KA04, KA05, SA06, SA07, SA08
Assignment 2	25%	6.5	0.26	CA04, CA05, KA03, KA04, KA05, SA06, SA07, SA08
Assignment 3	25%	6	0.24	CA04, CA05, KA03, KA04, KA05, SA06, SA07, SA08

Continuous assessment

- Assignment 1: On a first topic connected with weeks 1 to 5 (essay, 25%)
- Assignment 2: On a second topic connected with weeks 1 to 5 (personal reflection, 25%)
- Assignment 3: On a topic connected with weeks 6 to 10 (essay, 25%)
- Assignment 4: On a second topic connected with weeks 6 to 10 (personal reflection, 25%)

All assignments will be done individually.

The student will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

Single assessment

Submission of the 4 Assignments on a date specified at the beginning of the course (Assignment 1, [essay], 25%; Assignment 2, [personal reflection], 25%; Assignment 3, [essay], 25%; Assignment 4, [personal reflection], 25%), following the same typology as under continuous assessment.

The student will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than

30% of the assessment items.

Procedure for Reviewing Grades

After completing each assessment activity, the teacher will inform the student about the date and review procedure of the grades.

Reassessment

The same re-assessment system applies to both continuous and single assessment.

Re-assessment for this subject will be undertaken on an item-by-item basis, for which the following conditions are applicable:

- Students taking ongoing assessment must previously have submitted a minimum of two-thirds of the course-assessment items.
- Students taking the single-assessment option must have submitted *all* required course work.

Any item awarded a grade of less than 4 may be re-assessed. The grade for those items awarded 4 or higher will be included in the calculation of the global average grade for the subject.

Re-assessment of eligible items will take the form of a new assignment on the same topic.

VERY IMPORTANT: Total or partial plagiarism of any of the exercises will automatically be considered a fail (0) 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.

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject. Irregularities refer, for instance, to copying in an exam, copying from sources without indicating authorship, or a misuse of AI such as presenting work as original that has been generated by an AI tool or programme. These evaluation activities will not be re-assessed.

AI

This subject entirely prohibits the use of AI technologies in all of its activities. Any submitted work that contains content generated using AI will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade will be awarded a zero, without the possibility of reassessment. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Exchange Students

Exchange students who request to sit an exam early must submit a written document to the lecturer from their home university justifying their request.

Bibliography

Achebe, Chinua. "The African Writer and the English Language." *Morning Yet on Creation Day*, Heinemann, 1975.

Adams, G. Brendan. 1977. The dialects of Ulster. In Diarmaid Ó Muirthe (ed.), *The English Language in Ireland*. Dublin: Mercier Press, 56-70.

Aitchison, Jean. 1991. *Language Change: Progress or Decay?*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Alvi, Moniza. "Presents from My Aunts in Pakistan." *Carrying the Words*, Bloodaxe Books, 2000.
- Bauer, Laurie. 2002. *An Introduction to International Varieties of English*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bennett, Louise. *Selected Poems*. Sangster's Book Stores, 1982.
- Branford, William. 1994. English in South Africa. In Robert W. Burchfield (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Vol. V: English in Britain and Overseas, Origins and Developments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 430-496.
- Burgess, Anthony. *A Clockwork Orange*. Blake Morrison (ed.). London: Penguin Books. [1962]
- Burns, Robert. "To a Mouse" and "A Man's a Man for a' That." *The Complete Poems and Songs of Robert Burns*, Collins, 2009.
- Butler, Susan. 2001. Australian English - an identity crisis. In David Blair and Peter Collins (eds.), *English in Australia*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 151-161.
- Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Reeve's Tale. The Riverside Chaucer*, Oxford UP, 2008.
- Das, Kamala. "An Introduction." *The Vintage Book of Modern Indian Literature*, Vintage, 2004.
- Dickens, Charles. *Sketches by Boz*. Oxford World's Classics ed., Oxford UP, 2009.
- Filppula, Markku. 1999. *The Grammar of Irish English*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Johnson, Linton Kwesi. *Mi Revalueshanary Fren: Selected Poems*. Penguin Modern Classics, 2002.
- Kortmann, Berndt & Edgar Schneider (eds.). 2004. *A Handbook of Varieties of English: A multimedia reference tool*. Mouton: de Gruyter.
- McClure, J. Derrick. 1994. English in Scotland. In Robert W. Burchfield (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Vol. V: English in Britain and Overseas, Origins and Developments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 23-93.
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. James Currey, 1986.
- Nichols, Grace. *The Fat Black Woman's Poems*. Virago, 1984.
- Noonuccal, Oodgeroo. *My People: A Kath Walker Collection*. Jacaranda Press, 1970.
- Shakespeare, William. *Henry V*. Edited by T. W. Craik, Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury, 1995.
- Smith, Zadie. *NW*. Hamish Hamilton, 2012.
- . *White Teeth*. Hamish Hamilton, 2000.
- Thakur, Sophia. *Somebody Give This Heart a Pen*. Walker Books, 2019.
- Trudgill, Peter. 1990. *The Dialects of England*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wells, J.C. 1982. *Accents of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Welsh, Irvine. *Trainspotting*. Vintage, 1994.
- Wolfram, Walt and Natalie Schilling-Estes. 1998. *American English*. Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell.
- Zephaniah, Benjamin. *Talking Turkeys*. Puffin, 1995.
- . *Too Black, Too Strong*. Bloodaxe Books, 2001.

---. "Miss World." *Wicked World!*, Penguin, 2000.

Software

Not applicable.

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this [link](#). To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TEM) Theory (master)	1	English	first semester	morning-mixed