

Introduction to the history of English

Start date	1 July 2016	End date	3 July 2016
Venue	Madingley Hall Madingley Cambridge		
Tutor	Dr Elizabeth Solopova	Course code	1516NRX120
Director of Programmes	Emma Jennings		
For further information on this course, please contact	Public Programme Co-ordinator, Clare Kerr clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237		
To book	See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262		

Tutor biography

Dr Elizabeth Solopova is a research fellow at the English Faculty, University of Oxford. She has published on medieval manuscripts and Old and Middle English literature and language. Her current research is on the Wycliffite Bible, the first complete translation of the Bible in English.

Course Programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and Coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	Historical study of English
22:00	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Old English language and literary tradition
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Old English manuscripts: <i>Beowulf</i>
13:00	Lunch
14:00	Free
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	Middle English: cultural and linguistic changes after the Norman Conquest
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	Middle English: linguistic diversity. Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
21:30	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Early Modern English
10:30	Coffee
11:00– 12:30	Modern English
12:45	Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

The course serves as an introduction to

- (1) the major periods and events in the history of the English language and
- (2) the methods and important concepts for the historical study of language.

Students will become familiar with the origin and development of English from the first written records to the present day. The course will include a discussion of methods within historical linguistics and sources of evidence for the early stages in the development of language.

Content:

The course will offer an overview of the important developments within each period in the history of English, including changes in pronunciation, spelling, grammar, syntax and vocabulary. Linguistic changes will be studied in conjunction with historical and cultural events, such as the Benedictine reform, the Norman Conquest or the introduction of printing in England. The emphasis will be on the most influential and interesting events within each period, such as: the adoption of runic and later Latin writing by the Anglo-Saxons; the multilingual situation in England after the Norman Conquest; the Great Vowel Shift; the standardisation efforts in the Early Modern period (including the publication of Johnson's dictionary); and the development of English as an international language and a language of electronic media in modern times. Attention will be given to the character of literary tradition during the medieval period, such as the literary nature of Old and Middle English prose and verse, translation activities, and the influence of Latin and European cultural tradition. The course will include the reading of texts to illustrate the characteristics of language within each period. The study of medieval English will also cover such topics as the development of literacy, the nature of surviving documents and methods for their study.

Presentation of the course:

The course will include presentations given by the tutor, as well as discussion and small exercise/research tasks that the students will be asked to complete in class. All topics will be illustrated by examples from literary and non-literary texts from different periods of the history of English. The texts will be studied in facsimiles and editions, read and translated in class.

Outcomes:

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the major events in the history of English;
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the historical and cultural context of significant linguistic changes;
- read and analyse texts, representative of different periods in the history of English.

Reading and resources list

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Baugh, Albert Croll & Cable, Thomas	<i>A History of the English Language</i>	5th edition (London: Routledge, 2002, ISBN 0415280990)
Freeborn, Dennis	<i>From Old English to Standard English</i>	3 rd edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, ISBN 1403998809)
Fennell, Barbara A.	<i>A history of English: a sociolinguistic approach</i>	(Oxford: Blackwell, 2000, ISBN 0631200738)

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of May 2016