THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE
This course surveys the historical development of the English language from its Indo-European past to the present day.
Considering first the prehistoric changes from Proto-Indo-European to Germanic, we will then study the structure and vocabulary of the earliest English and subsequent changes in:

- **Spelling (Orthography)**
- **Phonetics (Phonology)**
- **Grammar (Morphology & Syntax)**
- **Vocabulary (Lexis)**
- **Semantics**
through the major periods of the English language:

— Old English (449 – 1066)
— Middle English (1066 – 1475)
— Early Modern English and Modern English (1475 – to the present day).

Brief attention will also be given to the external history of the language.
The first term (the 6th) covers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Seminars</th>
<th>Self-Independent work</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Introduction to the course. Generalities about language and language change. Linguistic Features of Germanic Languages Language Families and Indo-European</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. Chronological Divisions in the History of English</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, essays, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Old English. Historical Background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Old English Phonology.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>№</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Seminars</th>
<th>Self-Independent work</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Introduction to the course. Generalities about language and language change. Linguistic Features of Germanic Languages Language Families and Indo-European</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. Chronological Divisions in the History of English</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, essays, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Old English. Historical Background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Old English Phonology.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Old English Written Records</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>PowerPoint Presentations of the Old English Phonology (continued)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Written Projects, Presentation essays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The second term (the 7th) covers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Lectures</th>
<th>Seminars</th>
<th>Self-Independent work</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1. Middle English Period in the History of the English Language.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Scandinavian and the Norman Conquest Major Middle English dialects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2. Middle English Phonology. Diphthongs in Middle English. Main Changes of Vowels and Consonants in Middle English.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3. Middle English Grammar. Changes within the System of the Noun, the Adjective, the Pronouns. Numerals in Middle English.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4. Middle English Grammar. The Verb. The Adverb. Syntax in Middle English. Middle English Vocabulary.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New English Phonology. Main Historical Events. Great Vowel shift.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New English Grammar. The Nominal Part of Speech. The Verb. The Adverb. Development of Vocabulary. Specific Feature of Syntax</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussion, tests, PowerPoint presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Altogether</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE. SOME THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE HISTORY
Aims:

- To develop your appreciation and respect for the complexity and beauty of the English language;
- To get familiar with basic linguistic and methodological concepts and terms relevant to studying the history of English: language structure, variation, use and change;
- Understand the process of language change and be able to illustrate this process in English.
Points for discussion:

- Subject and Aims of the History of English;
- Sources of Language History;
- Evolution of Language and Scope of Language History;
- Statics and Dynamics in Language History;
- Language Structure and Use.
KEY WORDS

- Language
- Communication
- Synchronic
- Diachronic
- Internal
- External
- English
- Germanic
- Statics
- Dynamics
- Language
- Evolution
- Lexicon
- Comparative linguistics
- External
- Reconstruction
- Internal
- Reconstruction
Recommended Literature

Obligatory

- David Crystal. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language.– Cambridge, 1994.— PP. 1-3
- Valery V. Mykhailenko. Paradigmatics in the evolution of English. - Chernivtsi, 1999.- PP. 9-20

Additional:

- Аракин В. Д. История английского языка. - М., 1985. - С. 5-8
‘The structure of language is nothing but the unstable balance between the needs of communication, which require more numerous and more specific units and man’s inertia, which favours less numerous less specific and more frequently occurring units.’

(A. Martinet)
Language is a fundamental human means of face-to-face communication, creative activity, scientific inquiry and many other purposes.
It is estimated that there are from 6,000 to 7,000 languages in the world. But the number of them is decreasing rapidly as some languages disappear and a few others — English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Hindi — become more widespread as a result of globalization.
The word “English” has a number of widely different meanings. For instance, it describes the people from a particular part of Great Britain. It also refers to a particular language, the English language, and is this sense. English is Germanic in origin but roughly half of its words derive from contacts with French & Latin.
As we will see, English has expanded from having a few speakers in one area to having many speakers in many geographical areas.

The VERY way to define English is through its origins and history.
The English language of today reflects many centuries of development. As F. Engels wrote: "Substance and form of one's own language, however, become intelligible only when its origin and gradual evolution are traced, and this cannot be done without taking into account, first, its own extinct forms, and secondly, cognate languages, both living and dead" (Anti-Duhring. ML, 1959, p. 441).

The aim of this course is to provide the student with a knowledge of linguistic history sufficient to account for the principal features of PDE (Present-day English).
1. Subject and Aims of the History of English

- The evolution of its grammatical system
- The growth of its vocabulary
- The history of its phonetic structure and spelling

Historical conditions of English-speaking communities

Language History

Morphology
Syntax
A. The history of its phonetic structure and spelling

The written form of the English word is conventional rather than phonetic. The values of Latin letters as used in English differ greatly from their respective values in other languages, e.g. French, German or Latin.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bit</td>
<td>[bit]</td>
<td>three letters, three sounds, full correspondence between Latin letters and English sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bite</td>
<td>[bait]</td>
<td>four letters, three sounds, no correspondence between the vowels and their graphic representation: the final e is not pronounced, but conventionally serves to show that the preceding letter has its English alphabetic value which is [ai], not [i] as in other languages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The history of English sounds and spelling accounts for these and similar peculiarities.

This resulted in a growing discrepancy between letter and sound and in the modern peculiar use of Latin letters in English.
B. The evolution of the grammatical system

Supplies explanations for general regular features

- Indefinite Tenses
- Perfect Tenses
- Subjunctive Mood

Supplies explanations for its specific peculiarities and exceptions

- modal verbs do not take -s in the 3rd person singular;
- some nouns add -en or change the root vowel in plural instead of adding -s (e.g. oxen, feet)
C. The growth of its vocabulary

Another illustration may be drawn from the vocabulary. Since English belongs to the Germanic group of languages, it would be natural to expect that it has many words or roots in common with cognate Germanic languages: German, Swedish, Danish and others. Instead, we find many more words in Mod E having exact parallels in the Romance languages: French, Latin, Spanish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Other Germanic languages</th>
<th>Romance languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give</td>
<td>G geben, Sw giva</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace (OEfrid&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>G Frieden, SWfred,vrede</td>
<td>Fr paix, L pace, IL pace, Sp paz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army (OE here&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;)</td>
<td>G Heer, Sw har</td>
<td>Fr armee, It armata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first word - *give* - is of native, Germanic origin, which is confirmed by the parallels from other Germanic tongues; the other words — peace and army — are borrowings from Romance languages (note that in OE the respective words were Germanic.) In present day English the proportion of Romance roots is higher than that of native roots. The history of English will say when and how were made and will thus account for the composition of the modern vocabulary.
A LANGUAGE CAN BE CONSIDERED FROM 2 APPROACHES

**Synchronic**
- Regard the language as fixed in time (phonetics grammar or lexis)
  - E.g. English of the age of W. Shakespeare (XVI – XVII c.)
  - The age of J. Chaucer (XIV c.)
  - The age of J. Fowles (XX c.)

**Diachronic**
- Every linguistic fact (e.g. phonetics) interpreted as a step in the never-ending evolution of language
  - E.g. the development of the sound “æ” in different periods of the English language
    - e.g. OE, ME and NE
2. Language History Sources

Written records of different periods

The earliest records in other Germanic Languages go back to the 3rd or 4th C. AD

The earliest written texts in English are dated in the 7th c.

Work of ancient historians & geographers, especially Roman, Greek & German Julius Caesar “Commentaries on the Gallic War”; 1c. BC; Pliny the Elder “Natural History”; 1 c. BC; F. Engels “On the History of the Ancient Germans”
3. Language History
(Theoretical questions)

- Evolution of Language & Scope of Language History
- Linguistic & Extralinguistic Factors Statics & Dynamics in language
The Evolution of language (historical development) has two structures:

a. **Internal**

The internal or structural development of the language system is presented in accordance with the division of language into linguistic levels:

- The phonetic & phonological levels
- The morphological level
- The syntactic level
- The lexical level
b. External

— The spread of the language in geographical and social space; the differentiation of language into functional varieties (geographical variants)

  e.g. British English
  American English
  Australian English
  Canadian English

— Dialects (e.g. Cornish, Welsh, Irish)

— Contacts with other languages
## Comparative linguistics of the 19th century

| The founders          | Franz Bopp, a German scientist  
|                       | Rasmus Rask, a Danish scientist  
|                       | Jocob Grimm, a German scientist |
| The main method       | comparison                      |
| The main procedures   | comparison of different languages;  
|                       | establishment of correspondences in cognate languages;  
|                       | establishment of similarities and differences in cognate languages reconstruction of initial forms (archetypes);  
|                       | comparison of forms at different stages of development;  
|                       | comparative description of a language |
| The main motions      | comparison, archetype, parent language,  
|                       | cognate languages, genealogical classification,  
|                       | language family (branch, group, subgroup) |
4. Statics and Dynamics in Language History

LINGUISTIC & EXTRA LINGUISTIC FACTORS

Stable (statics)
- Permanent universal properties to be found in all the languages at any period of time, e.g., the division of sound into vowels and consonants, the distinction between the main parts of speech, and the part of the sentence.

Changeable (dynamics)
- Some grammatical categories undergo little alteration, e.g., degrees of comparison of adjectives.
- Some grammatical categories undergo profound alteration, e.g., case or gender of noun.

They exist in synchrony and diachrony.
5. Language Structure and Use

One of the alternative theories on language history studying has been proposed and developed by Professor David Crystal, one the world's foremost experts on the subject of language. Let’s analyse his approach to the internal and external processes in the history of English.
The Two Facets of The English Language: Structure and Use
## A. Language Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Text</strong></th>
<th><strong>Sign</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A coherent, self-contained unit of discourse. Texts, which may be spoken, written, or signed, vary greatly in size, from such tiny units as posters, captions, and bus tickets, to such large units as novels, sermons, and conversations. They provide the frame of reference within which grammatical, lexical, and other features of English can be identified and interpreted.</td>
<td>A visual language used chiefly by people who are deaf. This book refers only to those signing systems which have been devised to represent aspects of English structure, such as its spelling, grammar, or vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graphology
The writing system of a language. Graphological (or orthographic) study has two main aspects: the visual segments of the written language, which take the form of vowels, consonants, punctuation marks, and certain typographical features; and the various patterns of graphic design, such as spacing and layout, which add structure and meaning to stretches of written text.

Phonology
The pronunciation system of a language. Phonological study has two main aspects: the sound segments of the spoken language, which take the form of vowels and consonants; and the various patterns of intonation, rhythm, and tone of voice, which add structure and meaning to stretches of speech.
Lexicon

The vocabulary of a language. Lexical study is a wide-ranging domain, involving such diverse areas as the sense relationships between words, the use of abbreviations, puns, and euphemisms, and the compilation of dictionaries.

Grammar

The system of rules governing the construction of sentences. Grammatical study is usually divided into two main aspects: syntax, dealing with the structure and connection of sentences; and morphology, dealing with the structure and formation of words.
B. Language Use

Social variation

Society affects a language, in the sense that any important aspect of social structure and function is likely to have a distinctive linguistic counterpart. People belong to different social classes, perform different social roles, and carry on different occupations. Their use of language is affected by their sex, age, ethnic group, and educational background. English is being increasingly affected by all these factors, because its developing role as a world language is bringing it more and more into contact with new cultures and social systems.
Temporal variation

Time affects a language, both in the long term and short term, giving rise to several highly distinctive processes and varieties.

- **Long term:** English has changed throughout the centuries, as can be seen from such clearly distinguishable linguistic periods as Old English, Middle English, and Elizabethan English. Language change is an inevitable and continuing process, whose study is chiefly carried on by philologists and historical linguists.

- **Short term:** English changes within the history of a single person. This is most noticeable while children are acquiring their mother tongue, but it is also seen when people learn a foreign language, develop their style as adult speakers or writers, and, sometimes, find that their linguistic abilities are lost or seriously impaired through injury or disease. Psycholinguists study language learning and loss, as do several other professionals, notably speech therapists and language teachers.
Regional variation

Geography affects language, both within a country and between countries, giving rise to regional accents and dialects, and to the pidgins and Creoles which emerged around the world whenever English first came into contact with other languages.

- **Intranational** regional varieties have been observed within English from its earliest days, as seen in such labels as 'Northern', 'London', and 'Scottish'.

- **International** varieties are more recent in origin, as seen in such labels as 'American', 'Australian', and 'Indian'. Regional language variation is studied by sociolinguists, geographical linguists, dialectologists, and others, the actual designation depending on the focus and emphasis of the study.
CONCLUSION

The history of English is a fascinating field of study in its own right but it also provides a valuable perspective for the contemporary study of the language. The historical account promotes a sense of identity and continuity and enables us to find coherence in many of the fluctuations and conflicts of present-day English language use. Above all it satisfies the deep-rooted sense of curiosity people have about their linguistic heritage. People like to be aware of their linguistic roots.
HOME ASSIGNMENTS:

Comment on the following quotations from the works of prominent modern linguists and speak on the problems of linguistic change:

a) ‘One may say with R. Jakobson, a little paradoxically, that a linguistic change is a synchronic fact.’;

(A. Sommerfelt)

b) ‘Visible change is the tip of an iceberg. Every alteration that eventually establishes itself had to exist formerly as a choice. This means that the seedbed for variation in time is simply the whole landscape of variation in space.’;

(D. Bolinger)
c) That two forms, the new and the old, can occasionally exist in wholly free variation is a possibility that has not yet been disprove but, as Bloomfield rightly remarked “when a speaker knows two rival forms, they differ in connotation, since he has heard them from different persons under different circumstances.”;

(M. Samuels)

d) ‘All the big trouble spots of the world in recent decades have been monolingual countries—Cambodia, Vietnam, Rwanda, Burundi, Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland.’

(D. Crystal)
Questions for Self-Control

- What factors of the language development are called linguistic?
- What factors of the language development are called extralinguistic?
- Give examples of some extralinguistic factors.
- What does “diachronic study” mean?
- What does “synchronic study” mean?
- What languages are called synthetic?
- What languages are called analytical?