



Rare photo of Old English speakers

English 3720: Development of Modern English Fall 2009, MW 12:00-1:50 p.m. in 3037 Brown

Instructor: Dr. Lisa Minnick

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Course web page: <http://www.retroflexive.com/3720main>

Course description: English 3720 traces the history of the English language from its prehistory through its beginnings in Britain and its continuing development to the present day, including the development of American English as well as English(es) spoken around the world. The course explores sociohistorical and linguistic influences on the language and explores theories and mechanisms of language change.

Learning objectives: Students who complete the course successfully will acquire the following:

- language description skills, including phonetic transcription using the International Phonetic Alphabet.
- working knowledge of terminology used in the discipline of linguistics.
- understanding of the external (social, political, intellectual) influences on language change.
- understanding of the internal (linguistic) mechanisms of language change.
- awareness of how standard varieties are authorized and institutionalized.
- understanding of English as a global lingua franca and the implications of its influence.

Required Texts:

- Dan McIntyre, *History of English: A Resource Book for Students* (Routledge, 2009).
- Supplemental readings on electronic reserve (link on course webpage).

Assignments and values:

Final exam	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Term paper	20%
Homework	15%
IPA quiz	10%
Attendance and participation	10%

In order to participate in online discussions and complete electronic assignments, all students will need to join our class Facebook group: English 3720, Fall 2009.

Exams: The midterm will include material covered during the first half of the semester and the final will cover the second half. Both exams will include identifications, short answers, and phonetic transcriptions.

Term paper: This is an opportunity for you to apply concepts from class and to present the results in journal-article format. I will provide assignment guidelines, and we will discuss these in class. Please note that this course requires college-level research and writing skills, that I will expect your paper to achieve the quality appropriate at the 3000 level, and that papers will be graded accordingly. You will need to research, develop, draft, revise, and edit conscientiously over the assignment period in order to complete this assignment satisfactorily. I encourage you to meet with me to discuss your ideas and go over your drafts.

Homework: Learning the discipline of linguistics is a cumulative process. Homework assignments engage the skills and knowledge you will need for the course, as well as make it possible to explore topics beyond our classroom readings and discussions, and to collaborate and exchange ideas in creative ways.

IPA quiz: In this course, you will learn the International Phonetic Alphabet. The quiz applies this knowledge as a step in your preparation for the advanced instruction in English linguistics that occurs in ENGL 3720.

Course Policies

Attendance and participation: The Development of Modern English is interesting but demanding, requiring a solid set of skills and base of knowledge that you will have to master early on, so active participation is a must. This means you need to be present every day to the extent that it is humanly possible. Readings, discussions, and activities complement each other, so you need to be in class in order to participate in all components of the course. We will cover a tremendous amount of material during each class meeting. If you must miss class, my policy is to permit three “free” absences. By “free,” I mean no questions asked and that I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. I also mean that’s all you get. Exceptions can only be made in cases of serious illness (such as those requiring hospitalization) and other documentable emergencies. If you miss additional class meetings, there may be a substantial deduction in your course grade. Five or more absences may result in a course grade of E. It is each student’s responsibility to stay on top of all course material and assignments if class is missed. Missed classes cannot be made up in office hours or at any other time. Leaving at the break counts as an absence.

Being late to class and leaving early should be kept to a minimum. If you’re late, you risk missing important course content which may be over by the time you get there, and it can be distracting to other students and the instructor. The same goes for leaving early. If you are late, please stay after class to make sure you have been marked present. Habitual lateness will result in a reduction of your attendance and participation score and hence your course grade.

Late work is generally frowned upon in college and elsewhere, and this class is no exception. Arrangements must be made *in advance* (and you’ll need a documentable explanation). Unexplained late work (or excuses after the fact) will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be assessed.

Makeups: Quizzes and in-class assignments and activities cannot be made up if missed because of lateness or absence. Makeups on major assignments, such as exams or papers, must be arranged with me in advance of due dates in order to avoid penalties, and you will have to make a pretty strong case in order to be granted an extension.

Classroom etiquette: You are encouraged to read and think critically and of course not required to agree with everything you read or hear in this class. In my experience, learning works best when an open dialogue is encouraged. All thoughtful contributions are welcome; I ask only that everyone be respectful during class discussions. The goal is for our classroom to be a safe place to flex your intellectual muscles, where everyone feels comfortable generating, expressing, and challenging ideas. Your help in reaching this goal is essential. Also, please familiarize yourself with the Western Michigan University code of student conduct, available online at <http://www.osc.wmich.edu/studentcode/conduct.html>. Students who are not willing or able to abide by the code and respect the rights of everyone to a comfortable teaching and learning environment will be asked to leave.

Other etiquette issues: Sleeping, eating, grooming, reading non-course materials, doing homework, having conversations, using any kind of electronic communications device, and other such activities are discouraged because of their disruptive and impolite nature, and also because they impede full participation. Your active participation is part of your course grade, of course, but also, nothing interesting will happen in class without your input. That is, the class will be as interesting as you make it.

No recording of any kind – audio, video, photographic, or otherwise – is permitted in this class without the informed consent of all students and the instructor. Everyone in this class has a right not to have their voices and/or likenesses recorded without their knowledge and permission, including the instructor.

If you would like extra help with course material, there is no need for an appointment if you would like to stop by during my office hours (Mondays 3-5 p.m.), but please let me know if you are not free during office hours so that we can set up a time. Also, please email me any time if you have questions or concerns. Learning the discipline of linguistics is a cumulative process. Gaps in your knowledge early on can cause problems later. Please arrange to meet with me if you feel that you are getting behind.

Grading scale for all assignments:

A	= 4 points for excellent work (not merely good or above average); work of the highest quality.
BA	= 3.5
B	= 3
CB	= 2.5
C	= 2
DC	= 1.5
D	= 1
E	= .5 for work that does not meet minimum standards; 0 for work not turned in.

University Policies

Religious Observances Policy: The University is a diverse, multicultural enterprise and, as a community, we jointly embrace both individual responsibility and dignified respect for our differences. It is WMU's general policy to permit students to fulfill obligations set aside by their faith. It is the University's intent that students who must be absent from scheduled classes to fulfill religious obligations or observe practices associated with their faith not be disadvantaged. However, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her instructors in advance. It is in the student's best interests to approach each instructor expeditiously and with sufficient notice so that the rights and responsibilities of the instructor are not disrupted. I ask to be informed early in the semester if you must miss class for religious reasons.

Students with disabilities should contact Beth Denhartigh at 387-2116 or beth.denhartigh@wmich.edu so that any physical, learning, vision, hearing, or other disability can be documented and accommodations arranged. Please note that a determination must be made by Ms. Denhartigh's office before accommodations can be made.

Academic honesty: All work you turn in for this class must be your own, with all outside reference sources properly cited and acknowledged. Plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, any kind of falsification or forgery, computer misuse, multiple submission, complicity, and any other type of academic dishonesty on any exams or work assigned for this course, will not be tolerated in any form. **All students are required to read and comply fully with the policies and definitions outlined in the WMU statement on academic integrity, available online at <http://www.osc.wmich.edu/academicintegrity/catalog.html/>.** If there is reason to believe any student has been involved in academic dishonesty, he or she will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. The student will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s) and have the opportunity for a hearing. Please consult with me if you are in doubt about how to cite a source in your paper, whether a source is appropriate, whether a citation is needed, if you are not sure what level of help on an assignment constitutes complicity or collusion, or with any other academic integrity questions. As I am also required to uphold the standards of academic integrity, my policy is zero tolerance for any type of deception, and I do not want for any of you to find out the hard way how seriously I take this.

Schedule of Reading and Writing Assignments

Everyone is encouraged to refer frequently to our Facebook Group page and our class updates page at <http://www.retroflexive.com/3720updates> for news, announcements, and schedule changes. These things happen. Lectures and discussions will not be recapitulations of readings, so please come to class each Monday having read the week's assignments unless otherwise noted.

Week 1: Introduction to the History of English and how to study it.

Sept 09

Wednesday, Sept 09: Introduction to course.

Week 2: The sounds of language: introduction to the phonetic alphabet.

Sept 14-16

Monday, Sept 14: Come to class having read Meyer, "The Study of Language" (online reserve).

Discussion topics:

- Why the history of English is important.
- How and why languages change over time.
- What every student of the English language needs to know about linguistics.

Wednesday, Sept 16: Algeo and Pyles, "The Sounds of Current English" (reserve). Discussion topics:

- The International Phonetic Alphabet.
- Places and manners of articulation.
- Fun with IPA: Learning phonetic transcription.

Week 3: Continue work on IPA and places/manners of articulation.

Sept 21-23

Continue to work through Algeo and Pyles, "The Sounds of Current English." Discussion topics:

- Review places and manners of articulation.
- Relationship between speech and writing, and between spelling and sound.
- Practice transcription.

Week 4: Before English: the Indo-European hypothesis and language relatedness. IPA quiz Wednesday.

Sept 28-30

Read Singh, "Language Families and the Pre-history of English" (reserve), and McIntyre, chapter C1.1 (pp. 80-4).

Discussion topics:

- Historical linguistics and language families.
- The development of Indo-European and the Indo-European hypothesis.
- From Indo-European to Germanic.
- Practice transcription.
- Paper assigned (due Week 12: Wednesday, Nov 19).
- IPA quiz Wednesday, Sept 30: transcription and articulatory descriptions.**

Week 5: Old English, or “This is English? It looks like a foreign language!”

Oct 05-07

Read McIntyre, chapters A1-A2 (pp. 2-11) and D1-D2 (pp. 128-39). Discussion topics:

- England before English.
- Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian influences.
- The place of English among Germanic languages.

Week 6: Old English continued.

Oct 12-14

Read McIntyre, chapters B1-B2 (36-47) , C.1.2-C.1.3 (pp. 84-5), and C2 (pp. 86-91). Discussion topics:

- Grammar, morphology, and phonology of Old English.
- Variation within Old English and the impact of language contact.

Week 7: Midterm exam week. Review Mon., exam Wed. on all material up to and including Old English.

Oct 19-21

Monday, October 19: Complete discussion of Old English. Make sure you are up to date on all reading assignments. Review for exam.

Wednesday, October 21: Midterm exam.

Week 8: Middle English, or “This *still* looks like a foreign language!”

Oct 26-28

Read McIntyre, chapters A3 (pp. 11-6), C3 (pp. 91-5), and D3 (pp. 139-43). Discussion topics:

- The Norman Invasion.
- French and English in England.
- Social change and linguistic consequences.

Week 9: Middle English continued.

Nov 02-04

Read McIntyre, chapter B3 (pp. 47-53). Discussion topics:

- Language change and linguistic characteristics of Middle English.
- Language variation and language contact in Middle English.

Last date to withdraw from classes: Monday, November 9 (not that you’d want to).

Week 10: Evolution and revolution: Early Modern English.

Nov 09-11

Read McIntyre, chapters A4 (pp. 16-20), B4-B5 (pp. 53-66), and D4 (pp. 144-54). Discussion topics:

- How Modern English became modern.
- Phonological, morphological, and syntactic changes to the language.
- The Great Vowel Shift (and the Great Great Vowel Shift Game!).

Week 11: Prescriptivism and standardization: Early Modern English continued.

Nov 16-18

Read McIntyre, chapter A5 (pp.20-5), C4-C5 (pp.95-108), D5 (pp. 154-60) and Bodine, "Androcentrism in Prescriptive Grammar" (reserve). Discussion topics:

- The rise of prescriptivism and linguistic authority.
- Language variation and standardization.

Week 12: Later Modern English and Present-Day English...at last!

Nov 23-25

Papers due by midnight on Tuesday, November 24.

Read McIntyre, chapters A6-A7 (pp. 25-31), and D7 (pp. 166-77). Discussion topics:

- Social and political change and the development of English.
- English in the United States and Britain.
- No class on Wednesday–Happy Thanksgiving!**

Week 13: Postmodern English? American English and English around the world.

Nov 30-Dec 01

Read McIntyre, chapters A8 (31-4), B6-B7 (pp. 66-76), C6 (pp. 108-13), and D6 (pp. 160-6). Discussion topics:

- Establishing an American English.
- A new global standard?

Week 14: Last week of class before final exam. American English continued; the globalization of English.

Dec 06-08

Read McIntyre, chapters B8 (76-8), C7-C8 (pp. 113-25), and D8 (pp. 178-82). Discussion topics:

- Language contact and English around the world.
- The politics and economics of English.
- The future of English.
- Review for final exam.

Week 15: Final Exam: Thursday, December 17, 12:30-2:30 p.m.
