



Rare photo of actual speakers of Old English

English 3720: Development of Modern English Spring 2011, MW 2:00-3:50 p.m. in 3037 Brown

Instructor: Dr. Lisa Minnick

Office: 923 Sprau

Office hours: Mondays 4-5:30 p.m. and by appointment

Email: lisa.minnick@wmich.edu

Course web page: <http://www.retroflexive.com/372omain>

Class Facebook group: English 3720, Spring 2011

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 and other materials:

- Baugh and Cable, *A History of English*, 5th edition (Prentice Hall, 2001, or Routledge, 2002).
- Additional readings available electronically.
- \$5 fee card, available at the WMU bookstore at the Bernhard Center.

Assignments and values:

Research project	25%
Final exam	25%
Midterm exam	20%
Quizzes	10%
Homework and activities	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, Spring 2011.

Exams: The midterm will cover the prehistory of English through Old English, and the final will cover Middle English and beyond. Both exams will include phonetic transcriptions, articulatory descriptions, identifications, and terminology, and both will incorporate material from lecture, discussion, and readings.

Research project: As the final course project, students will work collaboratively on an inquiry into some aspect of the history of the English language. This is an opportunity for you to apply concepts from the course in an experiential way and to present your findings to the class as well as in writing, in the form of an 8-10 page research paper. Extensive guidance will be provided and expectations for quality of work will be high.

Quizzes: In this course, you will learn the International Phonetic Alphabet and other language description skills and linguistic terminology. Quizzes are opportunities for you to practice applying this knowledge as you acquire it as part of the instruction in English linguistics that occurs in ENGL 3720.

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 discussions and to collaborate and exchange ideas in creative ways.

Course Policies

Attendance and participation: I think the Development of Modern English is fun and interesting, but it is also 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, and we will cover a tremendous amount of material during each class meeting. So you need to be in class in order to participate in all components of the course. 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. Excessive absenteeism will result in a substantial deduction in the 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 and get the notes from a classmate following an absence. Missed classes cannot be made up in office hours or at any other time. Leaving at the break counts as an absence.

Arriving 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. Late arrivals can also 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 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 or extensions on major assignments, such as exams or project deadlines, must be arranged with me in advance of due dates in order to avoid penalties, and you will have to make – and document – a pretty strong case in order to be granted an extension or makeup.

Classroom etiquette: You are encouraged to read and think critically and of course are not required or even expected to agree with everything you read or hear in this class. In my experience, learning works best when an open dialogue is encouraged. We don’t all always have to agree, but we do always have to treat one another with respect. Our classroom should be a place 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 Student Code at http://osc.wmich.edu/docs/WMU_studentcode.pdf. Students who are not willing 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 for you 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.

Learning the discipline of linguistics is a cumulative process. Gaps in your knowledge early on can cause problems later. Let me know as soon as you can if you feel like you're getting behind. My job is to help you learn this stuff, so by all means take advantage of this resource by coming to office hours, talking with me after class or during the break, or making an appointment to meet. Don't put it off.

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 Ms. 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 Western Michigan University statement on academic integrity, available at <http://osc.wmich.edu/academichonesty/definitionsofviolations.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 for your project, 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

Please refer frequently to our class updates page at <http://www.retroflexive.com/3720updates> and our Facebook Group page for news, announcements, and schedule changes. These things happen. Also, please be aware that lectures and discussions will not be recapitulations of readings; rather, readings, lectures, and discussions complement one another. Therefore, it is important that you **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.

Jan 10-12

Monday, Jan 10: Introduction to course.

Wednesday, Jan 12: Come to class having read Baugh and Cable, chapter 1. Discussion topics:

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

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

Jan 17-19

Come to class Monday having read Algeo and Pyles, "The Sounds of Current English." Discussion topics:

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

Week 3: Before English: The Indo-European hypothesis and language relatedness.

Jan 24-26

Homework 1 is due Monday, January 24.

Come to class having read Baugh and Cable, chapter 2, and Singh, "Language Families and the Pre-history of English." Discussion topics:

- Historical linguistics and its genesis.
- Language relatedness and theories of language change.
- Proto-Indo-European and the Indo-European hypothesis.
- Practice transcription and articulatory descriptions.

Week 4: English as a Germanic language (no, really!) and the First Sound Shift.

Jan 31-Feb 02

Quiz 1 is Wednesday, February 02.

Continue to work through Baugh and Cable, chapter 2, and Singh, "Language Families and the Pre-history of English."

- From Indo-European to Germanic.
- The First Sound Shift.
- Research projects assigned (due Week 15).

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

Feb 07-09

Homework 2 is due Monday, February 07. Quiz 2 is Wednesday, February 09.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 3. Discussion topics:

- England before English.
- Invasions and external influences on the language.
- Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian influences.
- English as a Germanic language.
- The earliest literature in English.

Week 6: Old English phonology, grammar, and lexicon.

Feb 14-16

Homework 3 is due Wednesday, February 16.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 4. Discussion topics:

- Grammar, morphology, and phonology of Old English.
- Phonological features and sound change in Old English.
- Synthetic and analytic languages and the grammatical system of English.
- Variation in Old English and the impact of language contact.

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

Feb 21-23

Monday, Feb 21: Complete discussion of Old English and review for exam.

Wednesday, February 23: Midterm exam

Week 8: Spring break!

Feb 28-Mar 02

No school! Enjoy all the good reading assigned for Week 9 during the break!

Week 9: Middle English, or “Wait, this *still* looks like a foreign language!”

Mar 07-09

Read Baugh and Cable, chapters 5-6. Discussion topics:

- The Norman Invasion.
- French and English in England.
- Norman influence on the English language.
- Social change and linguistic consequences.

Week 10: Middle English phonology, grammar, and lexicon.

Mar 14-16

Homework 4 is due Wednesday, March 16.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 7. Discussion topics:

- Sound changes, grammatical shifts, and new words.
- Variation, change, and contact in Middle English.
- Middle English literature.

Week 11: Evolution and revolution: Early Modern English.

Mar 21-23

Last date to withdraw from classes: Monday, March 21 (not that you'd want to).

Quiz 3 is Monday, March 21.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 8. Discussion topics:

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

Week 12: Prescriptivism and standardization: Early Modern English continued.

Mar 28-30

Homework 5 is due Wednesday, March 30.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 9, and Bodine, "Androcentrism in Prescriptive Grammar." Discussion topics:

- Language consciousness, prescriptivism, and linguistic authority.
- Variation and standardization.
- Literature in Early Modern English.

Week 13: Later Modern English and Present-Day English...at last!

April 04-06

Homework 6 is due Wednesday, April 06.

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 10. Discussion topics:

- New social and political impacts on language development.
- The sounds, structure, and vocabulary of Present-Day English.
- English in North America and beyond.

Week 14: Postmodern English? American English and English around the world.

April 11-13

Read Baugh and Cable, chapter 11. Discussion topics:

- American English: A new global standard?
- English in the twenty-first century.
- The politics and economics of English around the world.

Week 15: Last week of class! Presentations, the future of English, and review for the final exam.

April 18-20

- Project presentations Monday and Wednesday.
- What's next for English?
- Review for final exam.

**Research projects due electronically by midnight on Thursday, April 21.
Please refer to project assignment handout for complete instructions.**

Final Exam: Wednesday, April 27, 12:30-2:30 pm
