GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Dutch Linguistics: The History of Dutch (A005716)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 1) Dutch Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

De Wulf, Chris LW06 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - English)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - French)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - German)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Greek)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Italian)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Latin)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Spanish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Swedish)	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - English)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - French)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - German)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Italian)	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - Spanish)	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

Historical linguistics, language change, internal language history of Dutch, external language history of Dutch, historical phonology, historical morphology, historical syntax, linguistic analysis of historical texts

Position of the course

This course is aimed at the deepening of students' knowledge of the historical development of Dutch, with a focus on phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Contents

After an introduction to the external history of Dutch, this course offers an in-depth exploration of the main types of changes that have taken place in the various components of the Dutch language system since Old Dutch/Early Middle Dutch, as well as the mechanisms of language change underlying these developments. We successively examine the phonology, morphology, and syntax of Dutch from a diachronic perspective.
Both major changes that have had a significant impact on the structure of the

Dutch language system (e.g., changes in the Dutch vowel system, deflection, fixation of word order) and examples of minor changes that occurred within specific niches of the language system (e.g., changes in constructional semantics, the emergence or disappearance of individual syntactic constructions) are discussed.
Considerable attention is given to geographical variation (and to a lesser extent, social and stylistic variation) in earlier stages of the language. An important goal of the course is that students should be able to apply the acquired knowledge and insights to understand, roughly date, and localize old texts.
Part of the lectures is therefore devoted to the linguistic analysis of concrete historical texts of various kinds (official documents, chronicles, personal letters, scientific prose, etc.). Students prepare for these text analyses through group assignments and/or are given time during class sessions to identify and comment on textual features in small groups.

Initial competences

Basic knowledge of the Dutch language system and use (cf. Bachelor)

Final competences

1 Have and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the historical development of Dutch in the areas of phonology, morphology, and syntax.
2 Have insight into the main mechanisms of phonological, morphological, and syntactic language change, and into their influence on the Dutch language system.
3 Have and be able to demonstrate knowledge of patterns of regional variation in earlier stages of the Dutch language.
4 Have insight into the relationship between regional and diachronic language variation.
5 Have insight into the possibilities and limitations of various sources and tools for historical-linguistic research on Dutch.
6 Be able to approximately date and localize historical texts based on their linguistic characteristics, and to discuss their phonological, morphological, and syntactic properties.
7 Be able to understand historical texts and translate them into contemporary Dutch.
8 Be able to recognize and analyze concrete textual examples of specific phonological, morphological, and syntactic phenomena.
9 Have knowledge of important moments, actors, and processes in the external history of Dutch.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Seminar

Extra information on the teaching methods

In the course, roughly half of the time is devoted to presenting theoretical material, and the other half to applying that theory to concrete examples or texts. Students are often first required to complete an exercise on their own, which is then discussed collectively in class.
Through guided independent study, students work through two or three scholarly articles.
In addition, there is an online discussion group in which the solutions to more complex exercises are discussed. Some of the exercises and concrete text analyses are prepared by the students through group work.
Classes are not recorded.

Study material

None

References

Course content-related study coaching

Via Ufora, or private via Teams

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment open-book

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is not possible

Calculation of the examination mark