Greek Linguistics: Specific Problems (A001415)

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

    Credits 5.0   **Study time**   150 h

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027	crdts	offering

Teaching languages

    English

Keywords

    Classical Greek, Post-classical Greek, Medieval Greek, Linguistic correctness, Linguistic identity, Literary prose, *diglossia*, *koinè*, Sociolect, Digital Humanities, John Tzetzes, Maximos Planoudes, Manuscripts, Greek Palaeography

Position of the course

    In this course, the knowledge and skills acquired in the bachelor program are deepened on the basis of a thorough study of Attic literary prose from the classical to the medieval period, and of close reading of Attic Prosa of XI and XIV cent. CE.

    During this course, students (i) learn to perform linguistic studies on the Greek language, (ii) consolidate, and (iii) broaden their knowledge of Attic Greek and Greek Literature.

Contents

    In SS 2023, the **Special Research Questions in the field of Ancient Greek Linguistics course** will be dedicated to the theme: **The Sociolinguistics of Atticism**. The classes focus on how the concept of linguistic correctness and Atticism was born among the Greeks, and examines various pieces of evidence of self-reflection on language. By discussing some realizations of Attic prose in later authors (from the second sophistic to the Byzantine period), the course will particularly focus on: (a) how some functions of the language (e.g. modality) have been influenced by the spoken and other lower-registered substrates of Greek; (b) how textbooks (e.g. grammar books and lexica) impacted on language use; (c) the role of Medieval Greek grammarians in shaping Atticism; (d) how the concept of Attic prose changed throughout the centuries. By commenting upon a variegated selection of texts, the course focuses on concepts such as *diglossia*, *koinè*, sociolect, and the role of the digital humanities in linguistics.

    A detailed overview:
    Background information
    Introduction to the course - didactic goals - scientific skills - assessment criteria

    Introduction
    The first classes provide students to the necessary linguistic skills and theoretical background in linguistic research on Atticized Greek.
    • Part I Ancient Greek: from classical Athens to contemporary linguistic research via Byzantium.

- Part II The Greek language in the Byzantine Middle Ages: a methodological overview.
- Part III The long twelfth century - the ms. Ambrosianus C 222 inf. - Ioannes Tzetzes (*Ein byzantinisches Schulgespräch* and the concept of grammar as a scientific discipline)
- Part IV Intertextuality and Textual Semiotics (intertextual irony; double coding)

The core of the course

By reading and commenting on Ioannes Tzetzes' and Maximos Planoudes' Letters and Chiliades, we are going to touch upon the concept of Attikismos from a diachronic perspective, comment on the Greek language of Ancient Authors (e.g. Aristophanes, Lucianos), and familiarize ourselves with key themes such as: (i) Metalinguistics; (ii) Creation and negotiation of norms; (iii) Socio-semiotics; (iv) Intertextuality and cognitive linguistics.

The theoretical framework and the development of the method

This session addresses question such as: (i) What do the Greeks know about their language? (ii) How could contemporary linguistics be used to investigate ancient linguistic approaches?
Furthermore, it deals with themes such as: (i) History of Hellenismos/Linguistic purism/Standardization; (ii) Greek attitudes to language and modern attitude to Greek; (iii) Modern sociolinguistics on ancient texts.

Initial competences

The students have successfully followed Ancient Greek Linguistics I and II or acquired the relevant competencies otherwise. Students also have a background in Ancient Greek literature. A thorough command of Attic Greek (morphology and syntax) is presupposed. However, each every source presented in class is translated into English and accompanied by explanations.

Final competences

1 Be able to apply modern linguistic theories and methods to to the study of high-register Greek texts.
2 Be able to understand the phenomenon of Atticism in its diachronic dimension.
3 Acquire a thorough knowledge of the sociolinguistic evolution of Atticism.
4 Understand why writing, and even speaking, in the purest Greek language (the high-register Greek, or Atticized Greek) was important to the Greek speakers of various times.
5 Actively participate in critical discussions of primary and secondary literature.
6 Orally present individual research and collaborate with fellow students.
7 Be able to read Ancient and Medieval Greek high-register texts, by spotting the differences between the 'Attic' Greek of various eras.
8 To make responsible use of AI: this skill will be learned during the weekly assignments and during an ad-hoc designed lesson.

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

Group work, Seminar, Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Introductory classes and guest lectures by the lecturers and guest lecturers. An important part of the classes is devoted to student presentations.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Anthology of Texts and Resources for Greek Linguistics: Special Research Questions 2025
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no
Language : English
Available on Ufora : Yes

Online Available : Yes

Additional information: The instructors provide students with all material they need. Any resource used is either open access available on the internet or via UGent. Students are not expected to have costs as far as resources are concerned. Nevertheless, they need access to the TLG, internet, and UGent library services.

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References will be listed on Ufora by beginning of the semester

Course content-related study coaching

Feedback before, during and after the student presentations

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Written assessment

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

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Peer and/or self assessment, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

- Active participation in the seminars: preparing, taking notes, discussing texts.
- The students give an oral presentation of a topic chosen from a list of possible authors/genres/texts. Topics will be assigned at the beginning of the course.
- Written exam based on the topics discussed in class.

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodic evaluation: written exam (60%)
Permantn evaluation: preparation and participation (10%), oral presentation (30%)

The instructor welcomes the opportunity of providing students with extra material, feedback, and exercises in preparation for the written exam.

Facilities for Working Students

1 Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance
2 Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
3 Feedback can be given during an appointment during office hours