

French Linguistics: Diachronic Morphosyntax and Text Analysis (A006670)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1) French Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Van Acker, Marieke	LW06	staff member
Lauwers, Peter	LW06	lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Linguistics and Literature)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject Dutch - French)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - English)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - German)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Greek)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Italian)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Latin)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Scandinavian Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Linguistics and Literature(main subject French - Spanish)	5	A
Master of Arts in Historical Linguistics and Literature	5	A
Exchange Programme Linguistics and Literature	5	A

Teaching languages

French

Keywords

Language change, phonetics, morpho-syntax, grammaticalization, word order, determination, historical socio-linguistics

Position of the course

This course is part of the program of the Master HTL and of the Master Language and Literature, French. It aims to give an insight into the major changes that the French language has undergone since the 9th century, esp. on the morpho-syntactic and socio-linguistic level.

Contents

The course consists of two parts :

- a theoretical part, which deals with the main morpho-syntactic evolutions : the disappearance of the case system, the evolution of word order, the developing of articles and other determiners, the cliticisation of pronouns, grammaticalization and the development of adverbs
- an applied part, in which these evolutions are observed in text excerpts from the ninth to the seventeenth century and which also focuses on socio-linguistic evolutions.

Students also translate and analyze texts themselves and realize a research paper, in which they apply the developed knowledge and skills. They can count on guidance for this.

Initial competences

The course links up with "French Linguistics: historical development of French"

(Ba2). Students also need to have a basic linguistic knowledge of French morphosyntax (as provided in "French Linguistics: Introduction" (Ba1)). The students are expected to have a language proficiency level B2/C1.

Final competences

- 1 Have insight into the main morpho-syntactic and socio-linguistics evolutions of French
- 2 Understand and analyze French texts from different periods
- 3 Situate texts within the evolution of French and apply theoretical models on texts
- 4 Present research results, both in oral and written form
- 5 Build scientific argumentations
- 6 Master academic writing (expected language level C1)

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, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

The theoretical part consists mainly of seminars, which comment on the main linguistic evolutions from Latin to French. These evolutions are illustrated in examples and short text fragments.

The applied part consists of a seminar with guided exercises, in which texts from the 9th to the 17th century are read collectively. Linguistic evolutions are observed in texts and discussed from a socio-linguistic perspective.

The guided tutorial consists of the reading of scientific articles on specific aspects of language evolution. References to these articles are made in class and there is room for questions.

The individual paper consists of an autonomous analysis of a text fragment, which is presented orally and in a written paper.

The classes take place partly on campus, partly online (via Bongo or MS Teams).

If needed because of Covid restrictions, online teaching may be provided (via Zoom).

This course assumes the responsible use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI).

During the lessons, what this means will be explained.

No lecture recordings are provided for this course (interactive teaching format).

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Diachronie de la morphosyntaxe & Analyse de textes

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Number of Pages : 71

Oldest Usable Edition : 2026-2027

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: Recueil de textes

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : Other

Number of Pages : 82

Oldest Usable Edition : 2026-2027

Available on Ufora : Yes

Type: Reader

Name: 4 articles (theoretical part)

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Language : Other

References

- Buridant C. 2000, *Grammaire nouvelle de l'ancien français*. Paris, Sedes.
- Carlter A. 2006. Du démonstratif à l'article défini : le cas de *ce* en français moderne. *Langue française* 152, 96-113. http://www.cairn.info/article.php?ID_ARTICLE=LF_152_0096
- Fournier N. 2001. Expression et place des constituants dans l'énoncé en français classique : la relation sujet-verbe et la relation verbe-objet. *Langue française* 130, 89-107. http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/lfr_0023-8368_2001_num_130_1_1028
- Marchello-Nizia C. 2001. Grammaticalisation et évolution des systèmes grammaticaux. *Langue française* 130, 33-41. http://www.persee.fr/web/revues/home/prescript/article/lfr_0023-8368_2001_num_130_1_1025
- Prévost S. 2006. Grammaticalisation, lexicalisation et dégrammaticalisation : des relations complexes, *Cahiers de Praxématique* 46, 121-139. <http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/docs/00/08/79/98/PDF/prevost-biblio14.pdf>

Course content-related study coaching

Interactive support via Ufora (forums, e-mail), personal support by (e-) appointment

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Oral assessment

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

Oral assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

The individual paper consists of (i) a written analysis of a text fragment in Old or Middle French, which deals with both literary-historical aspects and linguistic changes ; (ii) an oral defense of the paper, consisting of a short oral presentation by the student, followed by a discussion with the supervisors, in which the student's knowledge of the course contents are evaluated.

Not only the content of the paper and its presentation is evaluated, but also the grammatical correction and the stylistic accuracy, both in writing and orally.

The participation consists of active participation in the on campus or online seminars.

Second examination session: idem

Calculation of the examination mark

(1) Exam 60%

(2) Participation 15% + Paper 25%

To pass this course, one must get at least 10/20 for both the period-based evaluation and the paper. If one has less than 10/20 for one of the two evaluation items, one can no longer pass the entire course. This means that if the final score would still be a mark of 10/20, it will be lowered to the highest unsuccessful mark (i.e. 9/20).

Transfer of passed partial marks from the first examination period to the second examination period is possible.

Facilities for Working Students

None. Mandatory attendance is required.

No lecture recordings are provided for this course (interactive teaching format).

