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Problem-Based Learning in Classical Languages and Linguistics

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0. INTRODUCTION

In this portfolio, I critically and reflectively review teaching undertaken in Hilary and Trinity Term 2016 as part of the Teaching Fellowship Preparation programme at the Oxford Learning Institute.[1]

The first section is a reflection on a Latin language class, in part based on observations by Dr William McKenzie, and contains my thoughts on issues and their potential solutions in this class, some of which are inspired by insights gained from observing Dr McKenzie.

In the second section, I review a linguistics module currently taught at the University of Manchester, analysing its strengths weaknesses, and making suggestions as to how it might be improved.

Along similar lines, section three explores how my own teaching might be improved by means of various kinds of student evaluation.

Section four draws together the insights won through observation, review, and evaluation in the form of a linguistics course designed by me.

The last section briefly sums up my teaching philosophy.

[1] I am grateful to Drs Julia Horn, William McKenzie, and George Walkden for their constructive comments, insights, and kind help in the preparation of the portfolio. All errors and oversights are, of course, my own.

1. Widening the Bottleneck

Learning from Peer-Observation

Out of the classes and tutorial courses I currently teach, I asked my observer (Dr William McKenzie; henceforth: WM) to attend a Latin syntax and style class for first-year undergraduate students of Classics with an A-level in that language. At the time of observation, I had taught the group, consisting of four women and seven men, for one term already, and was reasonably well-acquainted with their individual abilities, both well-developed and yet to improve.

Owing to the level of the class and the course curriculum, numerous different teaching methods can be employed efficaciously. Yet, the comparatively early start (8.45am) and amount of material to be covered bear two potential dangers: an inattentive or tired group,[2] and a lack of motivation or achievement due to a perceived overly heavy workload, resulting in a surface approach to learning.[3] Given the goal of the course, namely to be able to recognise, evaluate, and produce *idiomatic,* viz. not just correct, Latin, a deep approach is necessary and must be modelled in good teaching.[4]

In order to investigate this potential bottleneck,[5] I asked that WM in his observation pay particular attention to student reaction, interaction, and involvement in order to gauge whether my teaching promotes an atmosphere conducive to self-regulated, attentive, and deep learning and an engaged and solidary community of practice, as advocated by *inter alia* Cassidy (2011:990, 996) and Wenger (1998:7–8).[6]

Classes begin with a very short faculty-mandated test on vocabulary and morphology, which students tend not to enjoy. I would prefer beginning class on a more upbeat note, and having some pre-class conversation with students, which this test somewhat inhibits. Yet, conversations with colleagues suggest that postponing it to the middle or end of class is similarly disruptive and problematic, creating both additional time pressure and preventing me from ending class on a summary note, which has proved useful in the past.[7] There have been suggestions to use electronic means of testing, which students could peruse outside of class; if properly implemented, I think this would be preferable as it saves time and creates a less tense learning atmosphere.

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2 cf. Biggers (1980:46).
3 Lizzio *et al.* (2002:31, 40, 43); Marton & Säljö (1976).
4 cf. van Houdt (2007) on teaching Latin.
5 Middendorf & Pace (2004:4–5).
6 cf. Appendix A, #1.
7 cf. Angelo & Cross (1993).

Upon the test follows a discussion of the homework assignments (translations from English into Latin) which I hand back before class commences. While students are given a few minutes to go through my comments and ask individual questions, the latter arise relatively rarely; I am as yet unsure whether this lack of questions is genuine and owed to my quite explicit comments on their work, or related to the early start or the (potentially concomitant) quietness of the class, on which WM commented.[8] When questions did arise, however, they usually laid open deeper misunderstandings which I could then resolve; for this reason, I think it is worth maintaining this slot.

I usually structure homework discussions as problem-solving exercises:[9] an English phrase that a number of students struggled to translate is presented on the whiteboard for discussion, most commonly with guided questions as a scaffold.[10] Although the problems presented are high-level synthetic/creative and evaluative problems in both BLOOM *et al.*'s (1956) and ANDERSON & KRATWOHL's (2001) taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain, they always fall within the Zone of Proximal Development of the students,[11] who (should) have a good or very good grasp of the core material. Therefore, it is imperative that all members of the group feel free to contribute and are unafraid of making mistakes;[12] to use RICHARDSON & RADLOFF's (2014) term, teacher and student should be 'allies in learning'. Accordingly, I am gratified that WM perceived the atmosphere to be thus.[13] Still, as he points out, I rely on nominating or 'cold-calling' students who do not participate as actively as others, partly to include them in class discourse, but also to check their understanding.

Given the age and level of the learners, I view the role of instructor in these classes as that of a guide or skilled practitioner,[14] who through scaffolding and modelling leads the learner to their desired destination of deeper understanding. I use humour and share my own stories of learning with the students, and through this 'relational talk'[15] create an atmosphere of trust and illustrate to students that with motivation and engagement, their goals are achievable.[16] To that end, when questions arise I 'never simply g[i]ve the answer', as WM points out.[17] Although student-centred learning in the sense of NORTHEDGE (2003:170), like other constructivist

8 see Appendix A, #4.
9 cf. COWAN (2006:117–8).
10 PRATT (2002:10-11).
11 WASS & GOLDING (2014).
12 see WM's comment, Appendix A, #2.
13 cf. APPENDIX A, #2.
14 FOX (1983:156-7).
15 BROOKFIELD & PRESKILL (1999:125).
16 cf. LIZZIO *et al.* (2002).
17 see Appendix A, #3.

approaches, is time-intensive, students benefit more from solving these problems on their own, with my guidance, than by simply being given the material. To some extent, this justifies covering less material but with greater focus on the intellectual process behind it.[18] Such a discursive approach also allows me to elicit additional material, on which WM commented positively, be it in relation to grammar (e.g. the difference between 'post', 'postea' and 'postquam' mentioned),[19] history, or literature, and thus makes the classes feel a little less like just grammar revision.

After the discussion of assignments, we proceed to some translation exercises; in these, as well as in the later discussion of grammatical points, I frequently rely on cold-calling, as already mentioned above. To some extent, I assume this relates to the way that the students have been taught Latin in school, where grammar—unfortunately—often plays a subordinate role, while translation dominates; accordingly, some students may not be as comfortable in talking about grammar as others.

While 'cold-calling' may put students on the spot, it is a means to ensure active participation and allows me to understand better, in which areas each student may need further support;[20] moreover, it allows me to manage the class,[21] esp. by drawing attention from some very eager students, who might otherwise take over the conversation entirely. This practice has arisen, to no small extent, from student feedback after the first time I taught this course, which asked for more student involvement, interactivity, and moderation of answers; accordingly, I continue to strive for more participation from all students.

Although some colleagues had mentioned to me when I started teaching this course, that I ought to pay particular attention to the participation of young women, I have not noticed a gender-related differential in class participation thus far – there have always been both quiet and vocal women and men. While WM remarks that women and men naturally segregated on this particular occasion, it is not always so; even if this segregation were common, I don't think asking students of this age to stick to a particular seating plan would be sensible, particularly since no problems concerning interaction between the genders have ever arisen.

The topics dealt with in this class usually revolve around a grammatical feature, frequently with fine-grained differentiations of meaning and style. For this reason, I provide students with handouts in advance, so that they can familiarise themselves with the topic before class, and

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18 cf. KUGEL (1993:320).
19 see Appendix A, #5.
20 LANG (2005:27-8).
21 see WM's comment, Appendix A, above #2.

the discussion can focus purely on problems arising; in practice, few students take the time to prepare for class properly, wherefore I often have to rely on systematically introducing these points through questioning, and on occasion challenging received concepts in the form of a Socratic dialogue,[22] thus encouraging students to come up with the answers themselves. Why some students approach these classes so lackadaisically is not entirely clear to me. In part, it may be the (often overconfident) assumption that the grammatical material will be familiar already; for others, it could be the perception that other classes or tutorials are more important. To remedy this issue, it may be sensible for college tutors to re-emphasise the importance and value of these classes, and to take measures if attendance and attainment is deemed insufficient.

The theoretical points made in this discussion are then put into practice through translation into the target language. This most frequently occurs in pairs or small groups, allowing the students to learn from one another and fostering self-evaluation abilities through peer-assessment.[23] During group work, I check with each group whether any issues have arisen, and give hints through questioning.[24] Each group then presents their solution in turn; the answers undergo oral, formative co-assessment, first by the plenary of students, and—if more guidance or feedback is necessary—by me.

Overall, I think the current format of this class works quite well, notwithstanding the timing of the class, the shyness of some of these first-years, and some attitude problems, and I am glad that WM agrees with this estimation. On future occasions, I shall ask observers to pay closer attention to the group work scenario and following plenary discussion, which I think could benefit from some structural improvement.

From my observation of WM's tutorial with two fourth-year students of French, in turn, I would adopt two strategies for both class and tutorial teaching that struck me as particularly sensible and efficient: one is a mid-way summary of the content discussed so far;[25] even in a syntax and style classes, this provides a good tool to check general understanding, if delegated to learners, and could be done in the form of a minute-paper,[26] allowing me to provide further formative feedback later.

Secondly, WM has demonstrated neatly the integration of praise as positive reinforcement and a means of feedback by justifying his praise explicitly,[27] thus facilitating the development

22 cf. COWAN (2006:103–5).
23 DOCHY *et al.* (1999).
24 cf. SANDERS (1966:ix).
25 cf. Appendix B, #1.
26 ANGELO & CROSS (1993:148-153).
27 cf. Appendix B, #2.

of students' self-assessment abilities.[28] In like manner, I will aim to expand my often unqualified praising remarks ('Good!', 'That's it!', etc.) to include more information as to why this praise was deserved. Similarly, I shall use corrections of wrong answers more effectively (rather than 'Hmm, not quite!', use 'Okay, that doesn't quite work, but helps us to realise something very important').

Clearly, SHULMAN's demand that peer-observation 'should also have positive consequences for the processes and persons being evaluated' (1993:7) may be amended to include the observer as a beneficiary party. While WM's observation has been helpful in confirming my approach, in this instance I have learnt more from observing him, and shall seek further opportunities to observe others.

The potential 'bottleneck' in learning, on the other hand, caused by the combination of early classes, the amount of material, and the high standards expected, is best overcome by engaging students in the learning activities as much as possible, whilst encouraging them to become self-regulated learners through home-study and effective preparation.

[28] NICOL & MACFARLANE-DICK (2006:205).

2. ADDRESSING THE FEEDBACK PROBLEM
A PBL-Oriented Module Review

2.1. Description of Module

The paper described in what follows is taught at the University of Manchester as an optional module in the final year of a three-year B.A. in Linguistics. While the module, entitled 'Historical Syntax' bears no course prerequisites, it is suggested that previous knowledge of historical linguistics and formal syntax may be of advantage. Historical Syntax is a, relatively speaking, young sub-discipline that deals with trends and constraints in the diachronic development of syntactic expressions and systems, and attempts to systematically capture them in formal frameworks. Owing to its reliance on corpus analysis and the numerous opportunities of doing original research, it is frequently taught 'hands-on', with a strong emphasis on individual research.

The discipline-specific aims of the module include the exploration of syntactic change over time, the systematic processes involved therein, and the investigation of their theoretical and formal underpinnings. In true investigative fashion, the course prospectus further lists specific questions,[29] and thus prepares potential participants for the type of material and methodology with which they will have to engage.

The envisaged learning outcomes of the course are subcategorised neatly into four different sets: knowledge and understanding; practical skills; intellectual skills; and transferable skills.[30] It is noteworthy, that the online version of the prospectus further lists a category 'employability';[31] especially in the Humanities, this factor has become more important for course selection in the recent past.[32]

Teaching occurs over the course of one twelve-week term, and includes eleven two-hour lectures by the same lecturer, and six fortnightly one-hour practical sessions.[33] The last two practicals are dedicated to project workgroups and are used to provide formative feedback on both practical skills and work undertaken towards the final assessment.

The module is assessed by an essay-based exam (90 minutes, one question) worth 40% of the total mark, and a research report of between 2,000 and 4,000 words based on corpus studies conducted during term-time.

29 cf. Appendix C, #1.
30 cf. Appendix C, #2.
31 cf. LELA.
32 cf. e.g. CASSIDY (2011:2; 2006).
33 cf. Appendix C.

By both design and implementation, this module is research-driven in two senses: on the one hand, the lecturer (Dr George Walkden; henceforth: GW) is actively researching and publishing on developments in the historical syntax of English and other Germanic languages;[34] on the other, students are encouraged and required to conduct a small piece of research on their own. As indicated by LESTON-BANDEIRA (2013), FINK (2013:45), GRIFFITHS (2004), and others, research-driven teaching (in both of those senses) may lead to an increase in teaching and learning quality, which in turn can have a positive effect on both deep learning and student achievement.[35]

My review is going to focus on two core topics: the teaching methods employed in this course, and in the discipline of linguistics in general; and on the interaction of feedback and assessment. Overall, the module integrates both theoretical knowledge and practical application thereof, which is in and of itself beneficial to both knowledge retention, deep learning,[36] and the development of metacognition.[37] Yet, based on GW's comments and my own observations,[38] I will suggest that a shift in the structure and content towards Problem-Based Learning (PBL) approach might positively affect learning in this course.[39] Further, I shall suggest an integration of more opportunities for formative assessment in the course to improve confidence and provide additional input for course development to the lecturer.[40]

2.2. Teaching Methods

The fact that the module involves two different kinds of teaching environments—lectures and practical sessions—is in itself an acknowledgement that students need to be actively, practically involved in their own learning in order to take charge of it and become self-regulated learners.[41] As such, the practicals address all practical and transferable skills listed in the learning objectives, while the lectures cover knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, and also some transferable skills.[42]

The strategy underlying this approach accordingly includes aspects of experiential learning in the practicals, where students prepare a research report based on their interests with the

34 cf. GWP.
35 LIZZIO *et al.* (2002:39–40).
36 MARTON & SÄLJÖ (1976); ENTWISTLE (1998:81–2).
37 COWAN (2006:187).
38 cf. Appendix D.
39 cf. DUCH *et al.* (2001:4–5); MCPARLAND *et al.* (2004) for a shift to PBL in undergraduate psychiatry.
40 YORKE (2003:482); IRONS (2008:98–100).
41 CASSIDY (2011).
42 cf. Appendix C.

guidance of the lecturer,[43] but also shows elements of a transfer approach to knowledge,[44] as indicated by lecture handouts including various worked-through examples, and correspondence with GW.[45] Such an approach favours surface learning and stands to be improved, as suggested in 2.2.1 below.

GW mentions that some students, at least initially, struggle with aspects of formal syntax which are introduced during the module; since there are no formal course prerequisites,[46] not all students will have previously encountered similar concepts in previous modules. While these difficulties do not seem to have caused insurmountable trouble for students, it may be worth considering whether aspects of peer-teaching could facilitate the introduction of formal concepts for students new to this aspect of syntax.[47]

Turning to the practical sessions, it is noteworthy that out of six sessions, four are earmarked for the introduction of practical skills such as the use of manuscripts and linguistic corpora, and only two remain for the discussion of research projects. Given the weighting of the project in the overall assessment of the course (60%), it would seem appropriate that students should be provided with more opportunities for feedback than two one-hour session in groups can provide, and may need to develop their report-writing skills. At the same time, as GW emphasises, the practical sessions are used to introduce and practice basic skills, for which sufficient time needs to be available. In 2.2.3 below, I suggest that with the help of, e.g., video recordings or screencasts, some sessions currently used for introductory purposes may be freed up to provide more feedback, or additional guidance as regards the report format.

Apart from methods of or approaches to learning and teaching, it may be worthwhile considering at least one content-related matter, specifically that of diversity. Black and ethnic minority students looking for greater diversity in curricula[48] might find the current course prospectus somewhat Anglo- and Eurocentric.[49] This is, to some extent, a discipline-specific issue, since less work has been done on non-European languages in the field of Historical Syntax, and extant work may be composed in less readily accessible languages. Nevertheless, it is possible to diversify the pool of examples without excluding well-known textbook cases, as suggested in 2.2.4 below.

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43 cf. TOOHEY (1999:59–63).
44 FOX (1983:152-3).
45 see Appendix E, and cf. GWH.
46 see 2.1 above.
47 see 2.2.2 below.
48 cf. CRAE (6–7).
49 see Appendix C,Appendix E.

This Historical Syntax module, as it stands, is already trying to get students actively involved in their learning through practical sessions and research-based assessment. In what follows, however, I propose that, with a few improvements, it is possible to make the course even more student-centred, diverse, and motivating.

2.2.1. Concerning Lectures and Handouts

At present, lectures and the accompanying handouts present students with fully analysed examples, and a received explanation of how such examples are solved, without necessarily going into the details of the inquisitive research process involved.

To encourage students to participate more actively in lectures, it may be worth considering a different approach, e.g. providing only partly solved problems, the solution to which the lecturer either models, or engages in jointly with the students. This would further allow them to critically engage with the material and processes through active application and observation, rather than by reading or listening alone.

While it is necessary for all students to develop a grasp of the basic tenets and problems of Historical Syntax, a different, less knowledge-focussed approach in the lectures may also be advantageous in a number of respects. Through the suggested communal resolution of one actual problem in the field of Historical Syntax in great detail, or a number of aspects of different problems, students are introduced to the processes underlying active enquiry into the nature of real-life problems and, with appropriate scaffolding, can come up with their own solutions, thus taking ownership of their learning.[50] Rather than presenting them with *faits accomplis*, this PBL approach creates a student-centred learning environment; the lecturer could use various teaching methods such as buzz-groups, student presentations on potential solutions or comparable problems, or open discussion to foster greater motivation in the students,[51] providing more opportunities for feedback,[52] which may lead to higher student achievement and satisfaction.[53] While these methods are by no means restricted to PBL approaches, the emphasis on the resolution of an actual issue rather than a textbook example is likely to heighten their effectiveness by mirroring real-life research scenarios (team-meetings, brain storming, conference presentations) and thus emphasises the applicability of the skills acquired.

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[50] BOUD & FELETTI (1998); OWENS (2007:31).
[51] BROOKFIELD & PRESKILL (1999) on discussion; O'NEILL & MCMAHON (2005) on student centred-learning.
[52] see 2.3 below.
[53] FINK (2013:98); LIZZIO *et al.* (2002:40).

Additionally, this approach allows for the lecturer to model in real-time a viable approach to solving a discipline-specific problem, which will be of use for the students when engaging in their own research project.[54] In implementing this strategy, the course seeks to develop the students as researchers by allowing for the usage and practice of more skills (esp. interpersonal, problem solving) in a variety of settings as described above. The proper development of such soft and hard skills, e.g. navigating a difficult team-meeting, defending one's point of view, or preparing a report, is desirable not only in the context of this module, but also for future employment and as part of life-long learning.[55]

2.2.2. Concerning the Skill Differential

The adaptation of the lectures to a more problem-focussed approach also brings with it the opportunity of a certain degree of specialization, which may be advantageous in resolving some of the issues GW describes with regard to the understanding of formal syntax.

By putting a problem at the centre of attention and involving all students actively, the introduction of such theoretical notions could be taken over by those students who have already acquired some mastery of the topic (e.g. in other modules) and might be, communicatively speaking, in a better position to explain it to their peers than the lecturer.[56]

The flexibility of such a take on teaching Historical Syntax requires both great expertise and teaching experience from the lecturer, particularly regarding what aspects of formal syntax are covered, and to which student they might be entrusted. It does, however, enable them to model different types of solutions to a problem, including, for instance, approaches which do not involve (much) formal syntax, thus putting at ease students with a less firm grasp of this specific subject.

2.2.3. Concerning Practicals

With regard to practicals, I queried above whether they gave sufficient opportunity for formal feedback. In order to assure that provision is adequate, it may firstly be sensible to allow students to submit a draft chapter or excerpt of their research report for written comments by the lecturer, and see them in office hours should questions arise. Inevitably, this entails more work for the lecturer, wherefore a strict submission schedule for such drafts and a word-limit

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54 cf. CHICKERING & GAMSON (1987:3); CASSIDY (2011:996).
55 ZIMMERMAN (2002:66); KNIGHT & YORKE (2003:89).
56 NICOL & MACFARLANE-DICK (2006:211).

need to be implemented.[57] This, I suggest, could either replace the essay submission GW mentions,[58] or be implemented in addition to the latter.

To achieve these goals without increasing the number of hours or staff, which are unlikely to be available,[59] and without increasing the workload of students or lecturers in the long-term, I would suggest making use of electronic resources such as videos and screencasts to model the usage of manuscripts and corpora; students would peruse these resources in self-study or in reading groups.[60] To ensure adequate mastering of the skills presented, each topic would require students to solve a skill-based problem, either individually or as a study group, and to submit their solution for formative assessment. In practice, this may take the shape of students being asked to read a text on, for instance, statistical analysis, and watch a pre-recorded video of the lecturer modelling a particular method on a data set while commenting on potential issues. For their assignments, students or groups would be asked to produce a statistical analysis of a different data set, applying the methods demonstrated and taking into account what they have learnt from reading and the video.

In this manner, the lecturer can address misconceptions and other skills-related issues in one or two practical sessions, using the problems set and his feedback as well as queries from students to focus on improving skills and methodology on a more fine-grained basis. This structure would allow for double the time to be spent on task,[61] namely discussing and giving feedback on research projects, in which the skills acquired before are also actively used, and for the discussion of the dimensions of reports and how to write them.

The composition of the necessary resources may, in the first instance, require more time than other teaching methods, but has the advantage of being accessible repeatedly[62] and annotatable.[63] Similarly, the employment of such resources puts learning in the students' hands, can foster interpersonal and peer assessment skills if intended for group work, and thus aids the students in becoming more self-regulated learners. The inclusion of problem sets will, of course, require additional marking; yet, since these assignments are skills-based, only a limited

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57 see also my module design, 4 below.
58 see Appendix D, #1.
59 Blair *et al.* (2013:66–7) on student-staff ratios cuts in this context.
60 cf. Railton & Watson (2005) on their benefits.
61 Gibbs & Simpson (2004–5:14–16); Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick (2006:209).
62 e.g. for revision, Bach *et al.* (2007:142); cf. Bennett & Lockyer (2004:233–7 on online teaching.
63 for instance with links to FAQs; cf. Leston-Bandeira (2013:213).

amount of different answers is possible, and feedback can be given on the basis of samples,[64] whilst still offering individuals the opportunity of enquiring about their specific issues.

2.2.4. Concerning Diversity

Returning to the question of content diversity, I suggest that encouraging student participation is key once more. In a problem-based lecture course, the lecturer could focus on current research from all over the world, with an emphasis on potentially less readily accessible languages and contexts as their central examples and models. More ‘traditional’, viz. readily accessible and often European language data, in turn, could be provided by the students themselves, e.g. in presentations or discussions based on readings;[65] this does, of course, not prevent students from presenting examples from a wider variety of languages.

GW already strives for greater diversity by pointing out corpora of non-European languages;[66] these, together with brief introductions to the most pertinent points of the respective language’s grammar, could be used key examples in lectures or practicals. In this way, learners are made aware of both typical textbook cases through their reading or presentations, and more diverse, real-life examples under active investigation.[67]

2.3. Feedback and Assessment

As stated above, summative assessment of this module is based on an exam and a research report. While both require good knowledge of the subject, analytical and argumentative skills, and clarity of expression, the research report makes higher demands on data analysis, presentation, and originality.

The latter assessment is likely to motivate students more, since they present their own work, and have thus taken ownership of their subject.[68] In the practical sessions, they have had opportunity to discuss with the lecturer potential issues that may have arisen in their research, and together with them and their peers can identify bottlenecks of understanding or skill;[69] as such, then, a part of the practicals acts as a scaffolding mechanism and gives multiple opportunities to receive verbal feedback from a number of sides.

64 IRONS (2008:72–3).
65 IRONS (2008:58).
66 In a document detailing requirements for the coursework assignment, GW lists a number of corpora that students could use, including those containing Arabic and Chinese data.
67 cf. RUST (2007:230); DOCHY *et al.* (1999:332).
68 FRY *et al.* (2008:16).
69 cf. DOCHY *et al.* (1999:338–40).

Yet, verbal feedback can prove problematic since not all students may perceive talking to the lecturer or their peers as a feedback mechanism *per se*, and might not take advice given verbally as seriously as written comments. Consequently, such occasions ought to be specifically pointed out as opportunities to receive and ask for feedback, not 'just' help.[70]

At the same time, the question arises whether verbal feedback on this type of work, and at this stage of the students' study, is sufficient. Given that most, if not all, are unlikely to have engaged in primary research before, and that a research report and a discursive essay are very different types of texts and require different types of academic literacy,[71] feedback on written work, whether a draft or an outline, is necessary, and would likely improve understanding and achievement.[72] Ideally, the lectures and practical sessions should also include elements of learning and modelling directed at discipline-specific presentation of data, analysis, and argument appropriate for a research report.[73]

GW acknowledges a similar lack of formative feedback in preparation of the exam paper, and has attempted to remedy this by asking for practice essays in week 3.[74] Given the number of takers, even timely marking and thus feedback may be assumed to take more than one week, but still leaves sufficient time for students to take into account the feedback received in good time for the exam.

Next to the question of providing sufficient formative feedback for exam preparation or on real-life tasks such as the report, which NICOL & MACFARLANE-DICK (2006:204) and RUST (2007:230) deem most critical for student satisfaction and general achievement, it is worth considering the structure of the exam itself. As it stands, students need only answer one essay question; although the type of questions asked requires multiple skills and aspects of knowledge, as mentioned above, and clearly falls within the higher levels of the cognitive domain, a single question centering around the core tenets and issues of the module is unlikely to foster deep learning,[75] but will have students adopt a strategic, more superficial approach. In 2.3.2 below, I suggest once more that a PBL-style exam question may, to some extent, remedy this potential shortcoming.

An issue that may prove hard to tackle is the clustering of summative assessment towards the end of the course, as flagged by GW.[76] The research report is due in the week before

70 BLAIR *et al.* (2013:76); IRONS (2008:8).
71 LEA & STREET (2000).
72 WINGATE (2010:531); also see 2.2.3 above.
73 MIDDENDORF & PACE (2004).
74 cf. Appendix D, #1.
75 LIZZIO *et al.* (2002).
76 cf. Appendix D, #2.

Christmas, while the exam paper is scheduled for the January exam period and may thus fall immediately after the holidays. Even if the lecturer were unfailingly to mark and return all 20–40 reports right after the break with appropriate feedback to ‘feed forward’ and aid improvement,[77] this would leave preciously little time for students to work on the suggestions made.

Equally, inverting the order of assessments is unlikely to yield different results; only a postponement of one or earlier date for the other would change this situation, but both have distinct disadvantages, namely less time to cover or prepare the material, or covering less material (but not in greater depth).

Without changing exam timetables, decreasing the amount of material taught, or giving up on the synergies practicals following on lectures,[78] little can be done to relieve the assessment-heavy end of this module. Consequently, it is vital that the amount of formative feedback preceding the two points of assessment be increased.

2.3.1. Concerning Formative Feedback

As indicated above already, the amount of feedback currently provided seems to be rather little, as GW acknowledges. To improve on this situation, further feedback mechanisms could be introduced, for instance short student presentations, either of core theoretical ideas or examples of their application (in the current approach), or in the form of suggestions for a potential solution to (one part of) a problem discussed in a lecture in a PBL setting. This would give the lecturer opportunity to assess individual students’ or groups’ strengths or misconceptions, and to address them in a timely manner.[79] As with most forms of assessment, student numbers will make or break the process: while 20 students might be given the opportunity to present in the course of 10 lectures (excluding the first, introductory one) if paired, greater numbers are going to be less readily accommodated, and would require group work. The latter adds the benefit of peer assessment possibilities, but also brings with it issues concerning less active group members and less individualised feedback.

[77] COWAN (2006:144).
[78] FINK (2013:37).
[79] cf. RUST’s suggestion of slow learning with ‘early failure’ (2007:230).

2.3.2. Concerning Summative Feedback

I have suggested above that an essay-based exam of 90 minutes with only one question may not be sufficiently apt to assess a student's learning. An increase in questions and thus in workload is unlikely to lead to an improvement,[80] especially if the timeframe of one and a half hours is maintained.

Here I return to the proposal made above concerning PBL. As suggested by TOOHEY (1999:57–8), an exam assessing a course directed in such a fashion might involve the presentation of a complex problem (involving data, suggested solutions, etc.) and sees the student take the role of problem-solver, evaluator, or assessor. Such a task is likely to be more challenging for learners, since, as opposed to foreseeable exam questions, it demands more than regurgitation of knowledge and concatenation of facts loosely held together by argument; rather it requires the application of the appropriate methods, in combination with acquired knowledge and evaluative skills, to a complex, real-life, and unrehearsed problem. Still, if presented with appropriate practice opportunities and feedback in good time, this type of exam should not present an insurmountable hurdle.[81]

Exam essays of this type should similarly be no more or less complicated to assess than those of the former type, provided clear assessment criteria have been formulated. On the example of an exam that asks for a review of a data set and its accompanying analysis, these criteria ought to evaluate, amongst other aspects, skills of qualitative analysis (e.g. appraisal of consistency of parsing or framework continuity), quantitative analysis (for instance, evaluation of the statistical analysis), and problem-solving skills (e.g. spotting and correcting mistakes in approach or interpretation; providing evidence-based or theory-based counter-arguments against the suggested analysis; etc.), but could also involve aspects of form, for example by asking that the essay be framed as a peer-review.

[80] cf. e.g. WINGATE (2010:520); LIZZIO *et al.* (2002:31).
[81] cf. the achievement data presented by OWENS (2007:36–7) on a PBL-type course.

3. ‘HUMOUR HELPS ME PAY ATTENTION’

Improving Teaching through Student Evaluation

Over the last two terms, I have a given a number of classes, tutorials, and a lecture series. From among them, I shall discuss three settings in more detail here, for which I have used two different evaluation techniques for reasons I shall lay out below, and with different results and extents of success. In each case, I discuss the purpose, general setting, and attendance of the lecture etc., will present my evaluation method and reasons for choosing it, the data I have gathered from student evaluations, and a brief consideration of what can be improved in each individual case regarding both teaching and means of evaluation, and how this might be achieved.

3.1. Written Evaluation

3.1.1. Lecture: Introduction to Historical Linguistics

In Trinity Term 2016, I gave my first lecture series (Introduction to Historical Linguistics), comprising four one-hour-long lectures scheduled on Monday afternoons in the first four weeks of term. This (supposedly) compulsory series is intended for first-year students of Modern Languages and Linguistics (MLL) and Psychology, Philosophy, and Linguistics (PPL). Following on from a number of introductory lectures on other core disciplines within linguistics (Syntax, Semantics, Phonology, etc.), this series was the last in the cycle and took place just before students would sit Prelims.

Each lecture, accompanied by slides which were simultaneously accessible online, tackled one or two particular aspects of Historical Linguistics, both in theory and applied to two or three actual cases. In the second lecture, for instance, I discussed both the regularity of sound change, the process of analogy, and their interactions; examples included the development of palatal velars in Indo-Iranian, the rise of subtractive plurals in Hessian German, and the interaction of umlaut and analogy in Old English.

As this was the first lecture series I had the opportunity to give, I was particularly keen to elicit as many responses from the students as possible to enable me to improve in general, and adapt to their needs as necessary. Primarily, this took the shape of a feedback form, print copies of which were laid out in three locations of the lecture theatre, and an electronic version of which was accessible through a link in the slides provided online, or by means of a QR code at the end of the slideshow (see Appendix F, Appendix G). I pointed out this opportunity to students at the beginning and end of each lecture in the hope of attracting frequent and relevant responses, especially since feedback is deemed most helpful when given soon after the performance.[82] In addition, I suggested that those with questions or issues could come and see me after the lecture, or send me an email. In the last lecture, I also distributed evaluation forms to all students present, and gave them 5 minutes at the end of the lecture to fill out a form.

Before any evaluative questions, the form requests three pieces of information intended to allow me to glean something about the background of the student; these include degree course, course year, and which part of the lecture series their evaluation refers to. Since the form was available throughout the series, the latter question was crucial in so far as students were able to give feedback immediately after the lecture, and I could address at least some of their concerns in the next lecture.

The next question regards the lecture experience itself and asks the student to evaluate five first-person statements on a five-point scale, from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. The statements relate to aspects of pre-existing knowledge ('I have learnt about aspects of linguistics about which I knew little before') on the one hand, and low-inference teaching behaviours on the other hand ('I could follow the lecture(s) without any problems', 'I thought the examples provided were relevant for my course'), in order to gain clear, quantifiable results of criteria deemed important for good teaching.[83]

Responses to these general questions, I hoped, would allow me to gauge whether my approach was generally effective,[84] or whether the style of presentation, the level of knowledge at which the lectures were pitched, or my engagement with students ought to be changed in some way.

The four final short-answer questions give students the opportunity to reflect on the lecture and state what aspects they found most memorable, whether there was something they would like to learn more about, and whether certain aspects needed to be explained more clearly or ought to be done in a different way, and whether they had any other suggestions. Whilst guided in a specific direction, these last questions are intended to give the students space for free comment, particularly on things I would not normally think of.[85] On the online form, the last three questions are optional, since not every student is likely to have the patience to think of

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[82] cf. BRINKO (1993:580–1).
[83] cf. MURRAY (1983:140-1).
[84] cf. SVINICKI & MCKEACHIE (2011:270).
[85] cf. SVINICKI & MCKEACHIE (2011:340).

and write something, and might not submit their evaluation at all if they think it will take too long.

I expected that answers to these questions would allow me, on the one hand, to address any issues of content or lecturing practice as soon as possible, and on the other hand would show whether in future repetitions of this lecture series, certain topics ought to be treated in more or less detail, and whether certain modes of presentation of a topic would be preferred over others.

Over the four weeks of the course, I collected twelve individual evaluations; eight were submitted online, and four on paper. Given the numerous opportunities for evaluation and the repeated prompts, I would have liked a higher return rate than 30%; yet, since enthusiasm for such evaluation seems to be limited in students, I am glad to have received this many, but will nevertheless strive for higher return rates in order to obtain more meaningful data.[86] To do so, I am considering either distributing one-minute papers with one or two specific questions after each lecture,[87] or using post-its or index cards and asking students for general comments, questions, or suggestions after each session. Reacting to their comments or questions will, in turn, hopefully show that students' reactions are taken seriously, and prompt greater involvement in the evaluation process.[88]

The results of the evaluation forms were, overall, very pleasing. Out of the 12 submissions, four students are reading PPL, seven MLL, and one is doing a doctorate in linguistics. With the exception of the latter, all students were in their first year; owing to the uniformity of answers, I will likely not include this question in the questionnaire on future occasions. Students responded very positively to the statements tied to scalar evaluation, with 56 out of 60 data points registered as 'agree' or 'strongly agree';[89] the four outliers were recorded as 'neither agree nor disagree'. I take these results to mean that my approach to lecturing was generally well received, and that no major problems of content, style, or delivery were apparent.

The kind of answer to the short-answer questions varied widely between different respondents;[90] some provided none, others a word or two, and yet others a bullet-pointed list of more complex answers, showing a deeper engagement with the subject. In the short term and for my purposes, the most critical question concerned areas or topics that students felt they

86 cp. RICHARDSON (2005:405–7).
87 cf. ANGELO & CROSS (1993:148-153).
88 cp. ROWLEY's (1995) criticism of evaluation at the end of courses, which are retrospective and thus cannot influence the current students' experience.
89 see Appendix H.
90 see Appendix I for a list of responses.

had not quite understood. These were usually very short answers, e.g. 'haplology' or 'Jespersen's Cycle (just because it felt a bit rushed)', but gave me opportunity to start the next lecture with a brief revision of the basics of these issues, thus hopefully improving the students' learning experience.[91] This was not possible in every instance, since the amount of material to be covered was rather large; in such cases, I acknowledged that fact,[92] and instead of going into the topic again, provided a reference to a textbook that would clarify the situation.

The question which two or three aspects of the lecture(s) stuck with students most was understood in different ways: some commented on matters of content, e.g. 'semantic change (fun!)' or 'the effects of analogy, mechanisms behind contact-induced changes', while others focussed on matters of delivery, esp. logical structure of the lectures, the number and variety of memorable examples, and the 'refreshing use of humour', which another student suggested helped them 'pay attention'. Once more, I was pleased that students had identified as memorable some of the key principles and mechanisms that I had addressed, and equally that lectures and slideshow were generally well received. While I am keen to know the topics that they are interested in, or that cause difficulties, performative evaluations are similarly welcome to improve (or reinforce) aspects of my practice.[93]

The question regarding what students would like to know more about (e.g. practical applications of Historical Linguistics, the development of individual languages, etc.) will be the most difficult to address in future repetitions of the series. In part, this is again due to the set content requirements, which allow for only limited flexibility), and to the at times very specific nature of the requests (one student enquired specifically about the notion of 'language suicide', for instance). At the very least, however, I will be able to include references to papers or books that address some of those questions.

Requests for improvement, were very varied. One student commented on the time of the lecture, which made them late for a tutorial; since the slot is regulated by the faculty, and tutorial times are more flexibly arranged, no action seems due in this regard. Others suggested a slower, or more even pace through the slideshow; given the amount of data that they contain, I empathise with this suggestion. I am reluctant to reduce the material covered in the slides or to treat topics more superficially, as I would like to provide more than 'minimal working examples' in each case, and students need to be aware of diversity and flexibility in language

[91] cp. NARASIMHAN (2001), and HARVEY (2003) on reacting to evaluations.
[92] cp. ANGELO & CROSS's recommendation (1993:31).
[93] cp. BRINKO (1993:580).

change. I do take on board, however, that not every example needs to be discussed in a lecture, and that some can be skipped intentionally, leaving students to review them on their own later.

One comment in this section called for ‘perhaps more audience participation, but that's mostly our own fault’. I had planned each lecture in such a way that there would be numerous opportunities for student input, either in the form of short answers to questions (‘Can anyone tell me about the negation in Old and Modern French?’, ‘Can anybody think of an English word that has changed its meaning over time?’), or by forming buzz-groups and giving them two to three minutes to think of a solution to a problem (‘How can we summarise this type of development of negations as shown in the case of French?, ‘What do you think are the most important factors in contact-induced language change?’). In general, students were rather hesitant to contribute to the discussion, particularly if the question involved elements of critical thinking or educated guessing rather than drawing on their factual knowledge. To some extent, I believe this may relate to the physical environment of the lecture room (intended for a much larger audience, with a raised podium and rostrum); a smaller, more intimate setting may have been more conducive to discussions. On the other hand, not all lectures in Oxford require active student participation, wherefore my prompts may have been unexpected. In future, I plan on allowing for more time for such interactive elements, and to encourage students more insistently to participate.

Although I was, overall, content with the results of the evaluation and had not anticipated any grave issues, I shall try to implement some of the suggestions made by students into future lecture plans in so far as possible, particularly regarding pace and greater emphasis on certain crucial topics; at the same time, I will continue my use of humour and examples, since it chimed well with all respondents. The evaluation form I employed has yielded the kind of data I had been looking for, and can therefore stand (almost) as is;[94] as noted above, however, I will in future also include shorter, more focused methods of evaluation, and leave out the question regarding their year of study.

3.1.2. Class: Latin MILC

In a different setting, namely the class observed by WM and discussed above, I re-used an evaluation form that had proven helpful in previous years.[95] Like in the form just discussed,

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94 In line with the suggestions of FITCH (2004), it may be worth exploring the idea of electronic real-time feedback: students are provided with an online portal in which to ask questions during the lecture, which could be addressed at a summary point in lecture, or at its end.

95 see Appendix J.

students are first offered five personal statements for rating on a five-point scale; in this case, the statements relate to clarity of articulation (specifically of Latin), the addressing of questions, their perceived gain in knowledge of Latin, and the usefulness of grammar handouts and feedback on homework. Thereafter follow a number of short-answer questions, asking students to think about good and less successful elements of teaching, the choice of topics, and the difficulty of homework assignments.[96]

In previous years, I have found this questionnaire, which I usually employ at the end of the first term of teaching, to be very helpful. Student comments have made me be more interactive in my teaching, planning for more group and pair work, and reserving more time for plenary discussion, as opposed to lecturing more and asking only short, factual questions.

This year, my group was more heterogeneous in their pre-existing knowledge, general ability, and commitment to the class than in previous years. Accordingly, I had been looking for opinions on the difficulty of the homework, and wanted to confirm that my grammar and style handouts were still useful for all students; although they are very detailed, as WM has remarked, I presuppose a certain amount of basic knowledge (A-level standard), that I was not sure all members of the group possessed to the same degree.

The general outcome of this evaluation was fairly positive as well, with all scalar questions in the range of ‘agree’ to ‘strongly agree’.[97] Opinions on which part of class was the most useful diverged somewhat:[98] one student wrote that they didn’t like ‘spending a lot of time going through the handout’, while another thought that this was rather useful. As there was no clear majority opinion on this matter, it may be worth attempting a more diversified approach: going through the handout in some detail in weeks with more complex topics, while being briefer in the case of less difficult ones and instead focussing on exercises.

Others suggested I make class ‘more fun’ by playing ‘more games’; I appreciate that gamification can be useful in encouraging students to participate and develop enthusiasm for a class, but find it difficult to apply on a regular basis in this setting, since time is at a premium, and games not necessarily the most effective method of helping students to understand complex grammatical issues.

Regarding the handouts, all students agreed that they were useful and could remain as they are. Similarly, most suggested that homework was ‘about right – always a bit tricky, but not

[96] I agree with TIMPSON & ANDREW (1997) that all-purpose questionnaires are unlikely to be as effective as those adapted, even if ever so slightly, to the specific learning situation, since they do not allow for enquiries into specific aspects of the learning situation.

[97] see Appendix K.

[98] see Appendix L.

too much’ or ‘challenging, but not too much, which was really useful’. I found their agreement somewhat surprising, given that at least half seemed to struggle with not only the more demanding parts of the homework assignments. Consequently, I did not adjust the difficulty of the assignments, but instead have on occasion added notes, either in the form of vocabulary aides, or by making suggestions about how to approach a particular passage. The majority of students who had previously struggled took this help on board and improved to one extent or another; others ignored it. As with the question regarding the use of the handout above, it is evident that one cannot satisfy everyone all the time.

Overall, I am still happy with this evaluation form developed a few years ago. I might in future break the short-answer questions down into multiple-choice ones (‘Which of the following elements of class were more/less useful?’), allowing multiple selections and providing an ‘other (specify)’ category. This might give a clearer perspective on where students’ needs and interests lie than their free answers do. In addition, I may replace the question concerning homework difficulty with one asking for the amount of time spent on homework and other preparation; this may be a clearer indicator of whether the amount and level of homework given is appropriate.

3.2. Oral Evaluation

3.2.1. Class: Elementary Greek

In the two learning situations described above, I have had contact with the students for only one hour a week, and wanted to get their input on a pre-defined set of issues. For this purpose, a written, pre-set evaluation form strikes me as the most effective way of obtaining such information.

In two other settings, that is Elementary Greek language classes (5h/week) and tutorials, I prefer a different, more personal approach. In the case of the Elementary Greek classes, I use the time before and after each lesson in the last week of term to meet with every group member (there are usually no more than ten) for a ‘debrief’; ideally, this takes the form of a short, free conversation where I ask students to tell me how I could make classes more appealing or effective for them, and where in turn I give some specific, detailed feedback that goes beyond my written reports.[99]

[99] cp. the recommendations of HARVEY (2003:14–16).

This form of evaluation has distinct advantages in being bi- rather than unilateral, allowing me to react to student evaluation, e.g. by asking for more details or specifics if an answer is unclear, and feels more appropriate to this setting, since teacher and student (can) get to know one another better owing to the frequency of classes. The flexibility of such conversations accordingly enables both participants to get as much usable, constructive criticism out of one another as possible.[100] As opposed to a printed form, however, its effectiveness depends on the character of the student, as some will feel uncomfortable voicing criticism in fear of adverse repercussions. Although a situation like this has not yet arisen for me, in such a case I would offer all students to leave me an anonymous, written note instead, should they prefer that.

These 'debriefs' have been very helpful in finding out, for instance, that students wanted written tests more frequently – which, of course, may have come up in written forms as well. The conversation format did make it possible, however, to ask quite specific questions, e.g. about speed and pace, problems of understanding, and other students. So it emerged, for instance, that one student asked that I write up on the whiteboard the technical terms I use; I had presupposed these, and all but this student seemed comfortable working with them, wherefore they didn't dare ask for clarification. Multiple students asked that I slightly curb the enthusiasm and eagerness to answer of one of the more advanced students so as to give everyone else a shot at the answer to a question as well. I was then able to take up this issue with the student in question, and resolved it to everyone's satisfaction – they agreed to answer only once a few others had tried, unless specifically asked first. This, in a small way, confirms BRINKO's suggestion that '[f]eedback is more effective when it allows for response and interaction' (1993:584).

Since this method has been effective, and given the close(r) relationship one develops in daily classes, I am rather happy with conversational evaluations. For my Elementary Greek class, I may have them even more frequently, e.g. in the middle of term as well, to improve reaction times to issues such as overly eager group members, or unclear terminology.

3.3. Conclusions

Overall, it has become clear to me that different methods of evaluation are appropriate for different learning contexts and environments, and that each context requires its evaluation criteria to be tailored to the areas on which one wishes to elicit comment; this is, to some extent, opposed to the 'one size fits all' model for evaluating good teaching expounded by

[100] Contrast, e.g., the potential pitfalls of rigid questionnaires detailed in KIMBER *et al.* (2002:421–2).

RICHARDSON (2005:404–5), since the emphasis is not on evaluation as such, but on finding vectors of improvement for the practitioner. Even a ‘bespoke’ evaluation form, however, can repurpose certain approaches or questions. At the same time, I agree with RICHARDSON’s conclusion that without evaluation, there is unlikely to be any improvement in teaching.

My primary goal for the future is to increase the return rate of evaluation forms in a lecture setting, e.g. by using post-its or index cards and short questions, and to continue honing and improving both my evaluation forms and my teaching on the basis of student opinions and needs.

4. ‘Language Contact and Change’

A Mixed-Assessment Approach to Seminar Teaching at Oxford

Since I have experienced first-hand the advantages of research-oriented teaching,[101] I have designed a course that relates to one of my key areas of interest, language contact studies.[102] The advantages of such an approach are manifold: on the one hand, the course convenor can rely on their pre-existent, in-depth knowledge and materials (including, e.g., research papers, handouts, summaries, etc.) and can thus ensure that students are confronted with recent, state-of-the-art research as well as classical and seminal papers; on the other hand, the teacher can profit from students’ fresh perspectives, which—in my limited experience—can lead to interesting new approaches and ideas, and is equally made to expand their knowledge of the field in helping students find and deal with their portfolio projects.[103]

The course as outlined in Appendix M is intended for undergraduate students in MLL and PPL at the University of Oxford, who would take this course as part of their FHS (Final Honour School) papers. In what follows, I shall discuss the reasoning behind designing the course as it stands, the advantages and potential issues with some of its elements, and—where necessary—alternative arrangements. I shall follow the order outlined in Appendix M.

4.1. Course description

A course description is supposed to provide sufficient information for students to have a reasonable idea about what topics, methods, and in this case also languages the course will deal with; at the same time, it is meant to raise the students’ interest in the subject in order to ensure a good intake.

To achieve the former, I have included a short paragraph introduced by a well-known quote that gives a general overview of the kind of topics and issues the course might deal with. This account is supplemented by a number of questions that will be directly addressed as part of the course. These questions are kept very general and do not presuppose any specialist knowledge so as not to discourage those unfamiliar with technical terminology.

[101] The term is used here to refer to learning and teaching that both engages students in original research, and is closely related to the lecturer’s own research focus.

[102] Language contact studies refers to a sub-discipline of linguistics that focusses on discovering the mechanisms underlying language change and language acquisition in situations where multiple languages are regularly used in a particular speech community; typical subjects include the study of loanwords, code-switching behaviour, and the role of socio-economic factors in language change.

[103] see 4.4 below.

For similar reasons, both the first and final paragraph contain examples, viz. what sort of borrowings might be talked about (‘Engl. *garage, beef, chair*’), and to what languages student might expect course material to relate. Both of these instances reference knowledge that students already possess, namely that English has borrowed certain words (in the above cases from French), and their knowledge of one or more languages involved in language contact. This is meant to reassure students that they will not be surprised by entirely new and foreign language material all the time, and that they already have some—if minimal—knowledge of the subject.

In contrast, the questions provided and the references to presumably lesser known languages (‘Cappadocian Greek’, ‘the French and Cree based language Michif’) are intended to stir interest in students to learn about new and less studied languages and settings.

In its current form, the course description is relatively short and might appear somewhat basic or superficial. Yet, I am hesitant to make it much longer by providing more information or including more examples in fear of putting students off. To my mind, those who are taken by the description have the opportunity of consulting the rest of the material provided (Aims and ILOs, lecture and seminar schedules, reading list) to confirm or re-evaluate their initial interest.

4.2. Prerequisites

Although it is not unheard of for courses in MLL and PPL to have prerequisites, it seemed unwise to demand that students have taken a particular combination. The primary reason behind this lies in the fact that all of the sub-disciplines mentioned (‘phonology, morphology, syntax, and historical linguistics’) are—to my mind—of equal importance for the study of language contact, wherefore, if prerequisites were demanded, all of those subjects should be listed. Yet, it is rare for students to have taken the same interest in all these subjects beyond the Prelims requirements, and the potential uptake would be quite low. Secondly, on a practical note, requiring advanced knowledge in all of these sub-disciplines would mean that this course could only be offered at the very end of the degree course, and could clash with other subjects students may wish to take up.

This intentional waiver of prerequisites accordingly has to affect lecture and seminar preparation and structure. The lecturer has to take into account that certain new concepts may have to be explained in some detail, either in the lecture/seminar, or by making available material for students to prepare,[104] and consequently needs to account for such explanations in their lesson plan.

4.3. Aims & Intended Learning Outcomes

Although the Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) sections fulfil slightly different functions, they clearly cohere conceptually in presenting to students an idea of what this course will teach them. Like the course description above, they cannot stand alone but have to be read in the context of the lecture and seminar topics.

I have taken Aims to refer to the general purpose of the course, and as reflecting my intentions for the kind of knowledge and skills students will be introduced to. Conversely, the ILOs reflect more closely and specifically the kind of task a student will be expected to undertake as part of the course, and upon which is dependent its successful completion.

In line with the recommendations of JACKSON *et al.* (2003), I have kept the ILOs to short expressions, beginning with a verb that is (more or less) clearly attributable to one tier in the Cognitive Domain of BLOOM (1956) or ANDERSON & KRATWOHL (2001). As appropriate for the later part of a degree course, the ILOs emphasise the upper tiers of the Taxonomy, specifically analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. These intrinsically require, of course, that the material and concepts in question be known and understood.

Next to their function as guidelines for students, they equally play a role as precursors to marking criteria; in formulating them as I have, I set myself clear goals but also boundaries for my expectations: if these are the qualities and skills I want students to develop, I have to plan my teaching and assessment accordingly, and cannot in the end expect more than I have set out here.

While I have sub-divided the ILOs into three sections to make clearer what is involved in the course and what students will gain from it with regard to specific abilities, I have not separately specified which skills are transferable as, e.g., GW did in the prospectus discussed above, since the individual points as formulated indicate with sufficient clarity which skills are course specific (e.g. ‘explain the mechanisms of borrowing and pattern replication applicable to most language contact situations’), and which are transferable (‘interpret the results presented in research papers with respect to the received tenets in the field’, ‘apply appropriate quantitative methods to data sets’, etc.).

[104] see 4.5 below.

Having not yet had the chance to teach this course, I struggle to predict whether these ILOs are realistic, and have thus refrained from being any more specific or adding more. As with most aspects in teaching, I expect insight will come through practice and reflection, and I shall have to revisit them once I have taught the course.

4.4. Assessment

To appropriately assess the skills I have set out in my ILOs, written exams alone seem insufficient, for one because they rarely provide enough time to think about complex new data, and secondly because they would rely too heavily on rote memorisation of comparative data.

Splitting up assessment into two components allows me to assess both the students’ retention of elementary knowledge and concepts (the ‘explain’ section in ‘Knowledge & Understanding’) as well as some elementary data analysis skills (from the ‘Practical Skills’ section). Asking that students answer two questions, one from each section, ensures that a variety of skills is assessed.

I am conscious of the fact that including a data analysis question may be quite laborious for the setter of the exam, since more than one set has to be provided each year, and since they have to be accessible enough to be dealt with by students in a 90-minute exam. Yet, I believe this task to be feasible since literature is plentiful and the size of the required data sets is relatively small. An alternative would be to provide only one dataset with a short, but problematic analysis thereof, and ask students to comment on said analysis and suggest vectors of improvement.

Next to the possibility of assessing higher level analytical skills, the portfolio also enables students to find a topic or language about which they are passionate, thus—one would hope—increasing the effort and thought they will put into this project.[105] Finding an appropriate and manageable topic, of course, requires some input from the lecturer, and accordingly the search for a topic must be begun and encouraged early on in the course. In the worst case scenario, the lecturer must have a few topics prepared for those students struggling (or unwilling) to find one of their own.

The guidance required to successfully master both exam and research report portfolio forms part of the formative assessment of the course. For each of the seminars, students will be asked to prepare small pieces of work (e.g. problem sheets, abstracts of articles, qualitative or

[105] cf. CUTHBERT *et al.* (2012) on the benefits of engaging students in research projects, thus fostering their ownership of their learning.

quantitative analyses of data sets) on preset problems, and will receive oral or written feedback on those, as appropriate.[106] The skills practiced thereby are then summatively assessed in both exam and portfolio, as assignments will prepare students for the kind of work they have to do for their portfolio project—although not all types of assignment will necessarily also feature in the portfolio. The final seminar is used to check and approve topics, to discuss best practice and, for instance, to look at example portfolios. Students then have time to complete a first draft over the break, and will receive written feedback and an opportunity for tutorial discussion of their portfolio at the beginning of the next term, with plenty of time for alternations before the submission date.

An additional advantage of avoiding purely exam-based assessment lies in the opportunity it provides for students who deal less well with exam pressure; if indeed this does disproportionately affect female students, then this kind of mixed summative assessment can also serve to close the (perceived)[107] gender gap in attainment.

Once more, lacking the experience of teaching for and assessing portfolios, I am unsure whether the formative feedback provided will be sufficient; yet, given that opportunities are provided to attempt each component twice (once as part of the seminar assignments, once in the draft), I expect that this will prove adequate for most students.[108]

4.5. Lectures and Seminars

I have decided against teaching this course in the typical tutorial style for which Oxford is known best. I believe small groups to be pedagogically more sensible for discussions of data sets and associated theoretical issues, since they allow for greater diversity in opinions and backgrounds of students, and for the inclusion of more data in general (e.g. by giving smaller groups or individuals within the seminar group different tasks or languages to look at and then present). Other linguistics subjects which rely less on the traditional essay as formative assessment, but on e.g. problem sheets, are similarly often taught in slightly larger groups.

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[106] cf. ANDERSON (2010) on the use of frequent submissions of work samples to foster students' engagement and taking responsibility for their learning.

[107] This adjective seems appropriate since a gender gap is not (or no longer) evident in all subjects at Oxford; furthermore, studies suggest that differences in attainment may rather be due to 'interactions between gender-linked characteristics, such as anxiety, and the demands of an individual academic assessment system' (MELLANBY *et al.* 2000:389). Assessing part of this module by portfolio, it is hoped, will attenuate the effect this as yet unexplained gap might have on individual candidates' results (also cf. EDC for a list of disproven gap hypotheses).

[108] Since students receive feedback on every piece of writing, quantity of feedback is unlikely to be an issue, as long as it is timely, relatable to the task criteria, and focusses on learning rather than just correction (cf. BLAIR *et al.* 2013; GIBBS & SIMPSON 2004).

In view of the recent rise in university fees, however, some students might be reluctant to accept this style of teaching, since it could be perceived as being less 'value for money'.[109] Still, it might be pointed out in this model's defense that the number of contact hours (22 hours, of which 12 hours lecture, 9 hours seminar, and 1 hour tutorial) exceeds that of standard tutorial courses.

Conceptually, lectures and seminars in this course are intended to complement one another. Lectures will aim to discuss the basics of the subject, providing plenty of examples and discussion of theoretical approaches and scholarly literature; student involvement will, however, be intentionally limited to recaps of the previous week's lecture, some factual or evaluative questions, and short buzz group sessions. This is to ensure that more than just the bare minimum of data and concepts can be discussed.

The seminars, on the other hand, serve to train the practical skills required to meet the ILOs. They relate to the material discussed in the lectures, and require students to complete assignments practicing such skills. In contrast to the lectures, the seminars will, ideally, be student-led, with the lecturer acting mainly as a facilitator or mediator.

To give an example: lecture 2 deals with the borrowing of lexical material between contact languages, and will provide numerous examples of and constraints on borrowing, for instance: the borrowing of French lexis into English in Britain after 1066 CE, or in the Berlin dialect of German after the arrival of French Huguenot refugees; or relative constraints against borrowing core vocabulary barring particular socio-economic factors. In preparation of the first seminar, students will be asked to read two research papers concerning lexical borrowing in a particular language or about the linguistic theory behind borrowing constraints, and are asked to write a short commentary on a relevant data set; depending on their readings, students are likely to come up with potentially quite different results. In the seminar, the prepared commentaries will be compared and analysed, and potential issues and discrepancies addressed. Ideally, time will suffice to consider another data set or (supposed) constraint in the seminar and, jointly as a group, discuss potential approaches.

Such a setting requires, of course, that the lecturer be able to steer the discussion to such an extent that it doesn't deviate too far from the topic or problem, and so that they encourage all members of the seminar group to participate. Depending on group size and dynamic, this may not be achieved easily. To promote inclusivity and ensure that even less extrovert students

[109] To my knowledge, no such complaints have arisen in comparable courses. Yet, with the increasing treatment of students as consumers of higher education, such attitudes are not inconceivable (cf. BUNCE *et al.* 2016).

receive an equal chance at being heard, the lecturer may want to work with a rota, according to which everyone has to do a short presentation at least once during the seminar series.

As mentioned in 4.2 above, depending on the students' linguistic background, certain concepts and terminology will have to be explained in some detail. Where necessary, this would take place in lectures; for the most part, however, such explanations could be planned for the seminar sessions, and should be handed to students as part of their assignment, resulting in a short presentation as part of the rota just described above. As already mentioned in a previous chapter, it can be advantageous for students to explain new concepts to their peers, since their knowledge would still be 'fresh', and they might be better able to understand the locus of comprehension problems in others than their lecturer would be, for whom these concepts would be more familiar or even quotidian.

4.6. Inclusivity

As a final point, it seems relevant to discuss briefly questions of inclusivity in this course. I have addressed two issues of inclusivity above already (the gender gap 4.4, and matters of equal chances at seminar participation in 4.5). A quite different issue lies in the room chosen for this seminar, which is not wheelchair accessible; should it be required, a different location would have to be (and is relatively easily) found. The room does, however, have an induction loop and would thus be appropriate for students with hearing difficulties.

With the help of Student Services, all materials could be provided in formats accessible to students with sight-related disabilities, either through braille processing or through magnification. All material will be provided online in time for lectures and seminars on WebLearn or another VLE, and photocopies will be available on non-white, easy-to-read paper. Should students request it, they can make audio or video recordings of the lecture for private purposes.

Since most of the material is bound to be new to students and there are no formal requirements, few issues arise as regards the advantages or disadvantages of prior knowledge or lack thereof. All students will have a basic knowledge of other linguistic disciplines, and different specialisations or strengths; the lecturer ought to be aware of these, and encourage students with different backgrounds and strengths to co-operate, so that they may complement and learn from one another. This encourages group cohesion, a certain degree of peer-teaching and allows for students to take charge of their own learning.

Next to matters of assessment methods, and location, the course will be inclusive also as regards its content. Examples of language contact will be taken from all over the world, featuring prominently famous and less well-known case studies from all inhabited continents; while examples from Western Europe are also discussed, they are not given undue prominence so as to avoid the Euro-centricity justly admonished in, e.g., CRAE (2014).

4.7. Summary

I have strived to develop an inclusive and balanced course that, in the spirit of problem-based learning, aims to introduce students to both basic knowledge of and the essential skills required for language contact studies. As it is untried, there are bound to be unforeseen issues. Despite opting for an alternative to the typical Oxford tutorial system, I believe that this course is well-suited to teaching this sub-discipline of linguistics, both in encouraging group discussion and formative peer assessment, and in confronting students exclusively with real-life examples of the kind of phenomenon they can expect to encounter.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In the course of the last four sections, I have reflected on a variety of aspects concerning my own teaching and that of other practitioners. As a general tendency, I consider a problem-based learning approach to be most appropriate for my subjects, viz. language teaching and linguistics. It requires the learner, under the guidance and with the modelling of the teacher as a skilled practitioner, to face such problems as they might encounter outside the classroom, that is in their reading, research, or 'real life'.

In this apprenticeship model of learning and teaching, I strive to use examples and material that learners would encounter as future practitioners, while making sure that the skills and knowledge needed to tackle these problems fall within their Zone of Proximal Development.[110]

Especially in language teaching, this approach is not always without problems, as it requires learner to be self-motivated as well as able and willing to cover certain basics, such as vocabulary and morphology, on their own, rather than relying on the teacher to 'transmit' such knowledge; they are, however, not left completely alone, since ways and means to acquire this type of knowledge are frequently discussed in class.

From observations and self-reflection over the past two terms, I have learned that more responsibility can be entrusted to the students, both as regards the actual structure of classes and the focus on aspects of content; by leaving more room for discussion of topics they are interested in or struggle with, I hope to create an even more student-centred learning atmosphere conducive to the development of self-regulated learners.

Similarly, from my first lecturing experience and the accompanying evaluations, I have learned that less can be more; for future lectures, I shall endeavour to process less material, and focus on the details, discussion, and understanding of some selected problems.

Overall, therefore, I believe that the learners' perspective and input are key to facilitating effective, practice-oriented, and engaging learning in most if not all situations.

[110] cf. PRATT & COLLINS (1998).

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Appendix A Observation of RM by WM

Observation guidelines

Observer: *Dr William McKenzie* **Person being observed:** *Robin Meyer*

Some brief notes on successful observation of novice teachers

- Do plan in advance where the observer will sit and whether you will introduce him/her to the students. You may want to make it clear to students that they are not being judged.
- Finding out what you do well is as useful as finding out what is not going so well. Do ask for and give positive feedback.
- It is very easy for the observer to watch the teacher, but it is usually more helpful for the observer to focus on student behaviour. This is because if the observer and person being observed share a disciplinary background the observer may easily understand aspects of the session which are not so clear to students.
- There are many different approaches to teaching and for very valid reasons you and your observer may not always agree. This is why we suggest that the person being observed specifically directs the focus of the observer, and that the observer notes for later discussion any strategies that he/she has never tried.
- It is best to have a discussion about the observation within 24 hours of the observation taking place – preferably immediately afterwards.

This section is for the person being observed:

Course/Session title: Latin MILC (syntax and style)

Number of students: *11* **Course year:** *1*

About the session:

What do you hope to achieve in this session?
- *discussion of homework assignments and common issues*
- *reading and translating practice, with syntactic/stylistic analysis where prompted*
- *introduction/repetition of grammar: gerund, gerundive, supine I & II*
- *practice grammar points through translation into Latin*

What do you expect students to gain from the session?
- *increased familiarity with grammatical structures discussed through practicing translation into Latin*
- *ability to distinguish grammatical structures discussed, and use them correctly*
- *practice in problem-solving through paired translation*
- *confidence in translating unknown texts from Latin*

Do you have any comments for the observer about how you expect the session to unfold?
- *morphology and vocabulary test (5 mins)*
- *discussion of homework on whiteboard, solving problems together (15 mins)*
- *reading, translation, and analysis of unseen text (15 mins)*
- *detailed discussion of new grammatical points, sample sentences, questions (10 mins)*
- *paired work on one sample sentences, translating into Latin (10 mins)*
- *discussion of Latin translations on whiteboard (5 mins)*
- *students should be familiar with the basics of the topic from A-levels*

- *students have been sent course material during the previous week for preparation*
- *the group knows me from the previous term*

What specific aspects would you like to be observed or get feedback on?

- *pace and time management – too fast, or a lull?*
- *student engagement – is there sufficient interaction, does everyone get a say?*
- *clarity of exposition – am I making myself clear, do the students understand?*

#1

This section is for the observer to fill in during/straight after the session. It should act as the basis for post-observation discussion.

1. In your opinion, are the students likely to have gained what the tutor expected them to achieve?

Absolutely. The class was extremely well structured and time-managed, with a good blend of tutor-centred guidance and student-centred exercises to introduce and develop knowledge of the chosen grammar points.

2. Did you note any differences between students in the class?

#4

Quite quiet, all of them...

Sometimes students were reading while tutor was talking, but sometimes this can aid instead of distract understanding (when the tutor's remarks correspond with a certain passage in the text-book, for example).

One student ('George') seemed lost when talking about certain forms of infinitives.

I noticed, interestingly, that the group divided naturally according to gender; the seven men on one side of the central table, the four women on the other. For the pairwork exercise at the end of the session, however, there was no problem when a man and women worked together (one woman decided to work alone).

There was the usual mixture of quiet and more vocal students: second student back on left hand side ('Marcus') seemed strong, but in the post-observation discussion the tutor said that written work was not to the same standard.

3. Highlight what the tutor did particularly well during the session

Handout (circulated to observer before session) excellent and very detailed: as I suspected the tutor had put a lot of work into it. — 2 latecomers, handled well.

The tutor, very effectively I thought, nominated students ('Charlie', 'James', Marcus') who had not yet contributed to give responses to the (frequent) lead-in or checking-understanding questions; this was good classroom management.

#2

Gentle approach, humour ('ars bibendi' to gloss a grammar point – the art of drinking, referring to the odd student 'left over' in the pair work activity as 'lone warrior' the students are clearly very comfortable with the tutor and, crucially, are not afraid of making mistakes in front of their peers, which can be a real issue in an institution like Oxford).

Very detailed lead-in and concept-check questions: the kind of systematic approach which I would appreciate very much doing a language like Latin. The tutor is clearly very knowledgeable about his topic.

This was evident throughout the session: in the homework (8.50-9.05), the reading/real-time translation exercise (9.05-9.20) and the grammar-points and back-up exercises (9.20-end).

For the homework the translation issues were clearly signalled in red and potential answers, once elicited from the class, given in blue. One translation topic ('after the battle was fought') gave the tutor the chance to elicit from students the nuanced difference between 'post', 'postea' and 'postquam'; another 'on this account' that between 'propter' and 'quod'. Other issues arising included the implication of using the present participle (a characteristic, rather than a temporal action), and how, stylistically, to avoid an over-repetition of infinitives (one student suggested 'ablative absolute'). #5

For the reading/translation exercise the tutor similarly never simply gave the answer: he always asked guiding questions to help the students arrive at the answer for themselves (i.e. why was Philip omitted from the narration, when glossing 'nam ut omittam Philippum' or 'do you think that "incendit" is literal or metaphorical?'). The tutor elicited interesting incidental contextual and historical detail about Antiochus and the Seleucid army. #3

The grammar questions included the difference between 2 supines (one formed without 'm' in the stem); and the difference between gerund and gerundive (the former a verbal noun; the latter a passive adjective). The handout supplemented the tutor's comments in great, useful detail.

4. Give feedback on the particular aspects of the session that the tutor wanted you to observe

5. Did you observe the tutor using a teaching strategy that is new to you? If so, what is this and what effect do you think it had with students?

I thought the extensive in-class debrief was useful: it is something I can try with my own students.

6. Do you have any other comments or feedback about the session?

Not really.

Appendix B Observation of WM by RM

Observation guidelines

Observer: *Robin Meyer* **Person being observed:** *Dr William McKenzie*

Some brief notes on successful observation of novice teachers

- Do plan in advance where the observer will sit and whether you will introduce him/her to the students. You may want to make it clear to students that they are not being judged.

- Finding out what you do well is as useful as finding out what is not going so well. Do ask for and give positive feedback.

- It is very easy for the observer to watch the teacher, but it is usually more helpful for the observer to focus on student behaviour. This is because if the observer and person being observed share a disciplinary background the observer may easily understand aspects of the session which are not so clear to students.

- There are many different approaches to teaching and for very valid reasons you and your observer may not always agree. This is why we suggest that the person being observed specifically directs the focus of the observer, and that the observer notes for later discussion any strategies that he/she has never tried.

- It is best to have a discussion about the observation within 24 hours of the observation taking place – preferably immediately afterwards.

This section is for the person being observed:

Course/Session title: *Tutorial (French Literature 1530–1800)*

Number of students: *2* **Course year:** *4*

About the session:

What do you hope to achieve in this session?
- *Go through texts that use 'honnêteté' and 'galanterie' [handouts]*
- *Practice stylistic analysis of important 17th-c. Writers [Bruyère, Sorel]*

What do you expect students to gain from the session?
- *Suggestions for improvement on structure, style and scholarly presentation [marginal comments]*
- *An understanding of, as frequently used, ambivalent terms that help illustrate gendered anxieties in French 17th-c. Culture*
- *Exercise in 17th-c. style and vocabulary – which will help in other papers of the students' course*

Do you have any comments for the observer about how you expect the session to unfold?
- *essay debrief: work sent in advance [only one student in this session] and annotated; used as basis of discussion [pair talk to me rather than each other]*
- *discussion of pre-circulated handout: revision of key ideas*
- *further discussion of new material provided [dictionary definition; text by Sorel]*
- *confirm topic for next week*

What specific aspects would you like to be observed or get feedback on?

- *time keeping and pace*
- *involvement of students in discussion*
- *clarity of transmission of concepts/ideas in question*

This section is for the observer to fill in during/straight after the session. It should act as the basis for post-observation discussion.

1. In your opinion, are the students likely to have gained what the tutor expected them to achieve? Did you note any differences between students in the class?

- *both students have gained a clear idea of the subject, through their own work and WM's questions, clarifications, and summaries*
- *students showed clear character differences (S1 rather quiet; S2 quiet, but a little over-zealous), that WM managed effectively, drawing both students into the discussion*
- *the style exercise may have benefitted from more time in the lesson*

2. Highlight what the tutor did particularly well during the session

- *excellent time management and pace – never a lull, always to the point*
- *eliciting and integrating the views of two rather quiet students, addressing both equally*
- *excellent interpersonal relationship – student seemed at ease, even under unusual observation*
- *summary of discussion after first half of class v. good transition to next part, and good check-point for any questions/issues* #1

3. Give feedback on the particular aspects of the session that the tutor wanted you to observe

- *time keeping was v. good – paced, not too fast, with time for thinking and reading as appropriate*
- *both students where keen and involved – the discussion went via WM, but they still addressed each others views*
- *discussion of complex concepts was v. well managed and guided – handouts with further texts were great idea, and worked well to further other aspects of the subject (translation, analysis, etc.)*
- *the stylistic analysis may have benefitted from more time / guidance as regards expectations*

4. Do you have any other comments or feedback about the session? #2

- *good use of positive reinforcement – praise for good/precise/insightful answers*
- *making v. good use of student work and springboard for discussion*
- *good balance between student involvement, and both take copious notes on discussion*

- *suggestion 1: mid-way summary might be enhanced by signposting ("that's where we are, now a different perspective / approach")*
- *suggestion 2: make clearer what is expected in stylistic analysis, and exemplify; if desired / necessary, repeat technical terminology*

Appendix C Historical Syntax Course Outline

course information

Syntax is often thought of as being one of the more stable areas of any language. Nevertheless, syntactic change frequently occurs. This course aims to provide students with the means to investigate it, drawing for the most part on data from the history of English. Key questions include:

- How do we analyse the syntax of dead languages without access to judgement data?
- Why does syntax change?
- Is syntactic change a 'random walk', or does it follow fixed pathways?
- To what extent does syntactic theory shed light on change?

Pre-requisites: none, though modules in historical linguistics and syntactic theory will come in useful.

reading

- Harris, Alice C., & Lyle Campbell. 1995. *Historical syntax in cross-linguistic perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McMahon, April M. S. 1994. *Understanding language change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Roberts, Ian G. 2007. *Diachronic syntax*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

#1

aims

The course's aim is to provide students with the tools to analyse the syntax of languages that are no longer spoken, and to understand syntactic change.

objectives
(Learning Outcomes)

Knowledge & understanding
Approaches to syntactic change; different attested pathways of syntactic change.

Practical skills
How to use corpora to analyse naturally occurring language; how to deal with source texts.

Intellectual skills
Application of syntactic theory in diachrony; reading research papers.

Transferable skills
Quantitative analysis of data; ability to assess competing explanations for a change; use of new software.

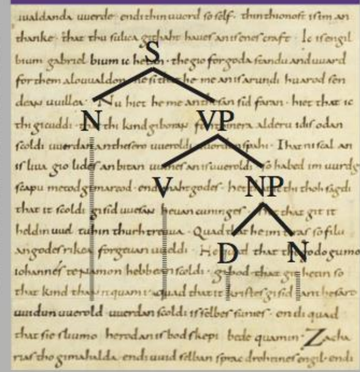
assessment

Essay-based exam (40%); report on a corpus-based study, 2-4,000 words (60%). This will normally focus on English; work on other languages is very welcome, but please check with the lecturer.

#2

MANCHESTER 1824

The University of Manchester



LELA30961

Historical Syntax

Third year course
Department of Linguistics & English Language

Lecturer: George Walkden

course structure and timetable

Week 1

Introduction to historical syntax
- Diachronic linguistics
- Historical syntax
- Actuation, diffusion and change

Week 2

Reanalysis
- Actualization and extension
- The Transparency Principle
- Critiques of reanalysis

Practical

Sources for syntax
- Texts, manuscripts and editions

Week 3

Parameters and parametric change
- Principles & Parameters
- Parameter change

Practical

Introduction to corpora
- Use of corpora in historical syntax

Week 4

Grammaticalization
- What is grammaticalization?
- What causes grammaticalization?
- The grammaticalization debate

Week 5

Pathways of change
- Cyclical change
- What drives pathways?

Practical

Searching parsed corpora, I
- Basic queries

Week 6 - No lecture

Week 7

Formal approaches to grammaticalization
- Specifiers, heads and movement
- Features and grammaticalization

Practical

Searching parsed corpora, II
- More advanced queries

Week 8

Competing grammars
- S-curves in syntactic change
- The Constant Rate Effect
- Alternatives to competition

Week 9

Sociohistorical syntax
- The diffusion of changes
- Syntax above and below the level of social awareness?

Practical

Project workgroup
- Lecturer present to provide advice

Week 10

Typology and syntactic change
- Typology and diachrony
- Drift: typology as causal
- Functional factors

Week 11

Contact and syntactic change
- Types of contact-induced change and transfer
- Scales of borrowability

Practical

Project workgroup
- Lecturer present to provide advice

Week 12

Syntactic reconstruction
- The reconstruction debate
- The correspondence problem
- The directionality problem

Deadlines

- **Coursework:** End of week 12
- **Exam:** January exam period

Appendix D Correspondence I with GW

Dear Robin,
[…]
Attached are some of the course materials. I love teaching this course - it's right up my street in terms of research, of course, and the students mostly seem to like it too (at least I have had above-average evaluations in recent years). Some quick background: the theoretical lectures are mostly based on a course taught by David Willis at Cambridge, though I've also added quite a lot of my own stuff, and broken things up a bit (since I have eleven lectures to play with rather than eight). I'm not sure this sort of course would work at many institutions, as it relies on having enough good, keen students taking it. In Manchester it's not huge - I usually have between 20 and 40.

I'm happy with the assessment methods. The exam essay is intended to assess deep knowledge of one of the areas in the course. The coursework assesses
#2 the practical strand as well as their ability to apply the theoretical strand. The only potential problem (and one that students have mentioned) is that it's a bit end-heavy: there's no ongoing assessment during the course. I can't think of a way round that, though this year I have tried to mitigate
#1 it by giving them a chance to submit a practice essay in week 3.

The feedback has been quite varied over the years. Some students think the level of the course is too high - especially the level of syntax assumed (which is tough, as I really try to start from no background at all, but it's difficult to get to reading the literature from there, which is where I want them to be). There are also complaints about trying to cram too much stuff into the lectures. That's probably fair - initially I was overcompensating because of nervousness, but now I'm considering cutting quite a lot of stuff from the theoretical parts and going more slowly.

I think the practical sessions are absolutely necessary to get across what I want to convey, but they perhaps don't have to be in the format they have now. At present they are in one-hour slots. A suggestion I've received, but not acted on, is to have fewer but longer sessions. I might do that in future. […]

On 28 Mar 2016, at 21:10, R. Meyer <robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk> wrote:

Dear George,
[…]
I had a look at Manchester's 'Historical Syntax' module, and wondered whether you would be so kind as to briefly tell me about your experience of teaching this course. I'd be particularly interested in your thoughts on three aspects:
- assessment methods: do you think they work as they stand, or would you change anything?
- feedback: are there any common issues that you have to address?
- teaching: how effective / necessary do you think the practical sessions are?

I would be very grateful indeed for any and all insight you can provide, or for any materials you have (e.g. course outline, assessment criteria, etc.), but equally understand that you have quite enough to do already and might not be at liberty to share certain materials. […]

Appendix E Correspondence II with GW

Dear Robin,
[..]
Most of the time, it's just me talking to the students. Quite often (about every 10 minutes, I guess), I'll throw a question out into the audience, just to make sure they're still awake. But the lectures are not very interactive and don't involve the students doing much. The practical classes are the opposite (though the first two of those also start out with quite a lot of me talking in order to set the scene. There's one lecture that involves a pseudo-board-game, and that's attached (3a), but it's fairly atypical in actually involving audience participation.

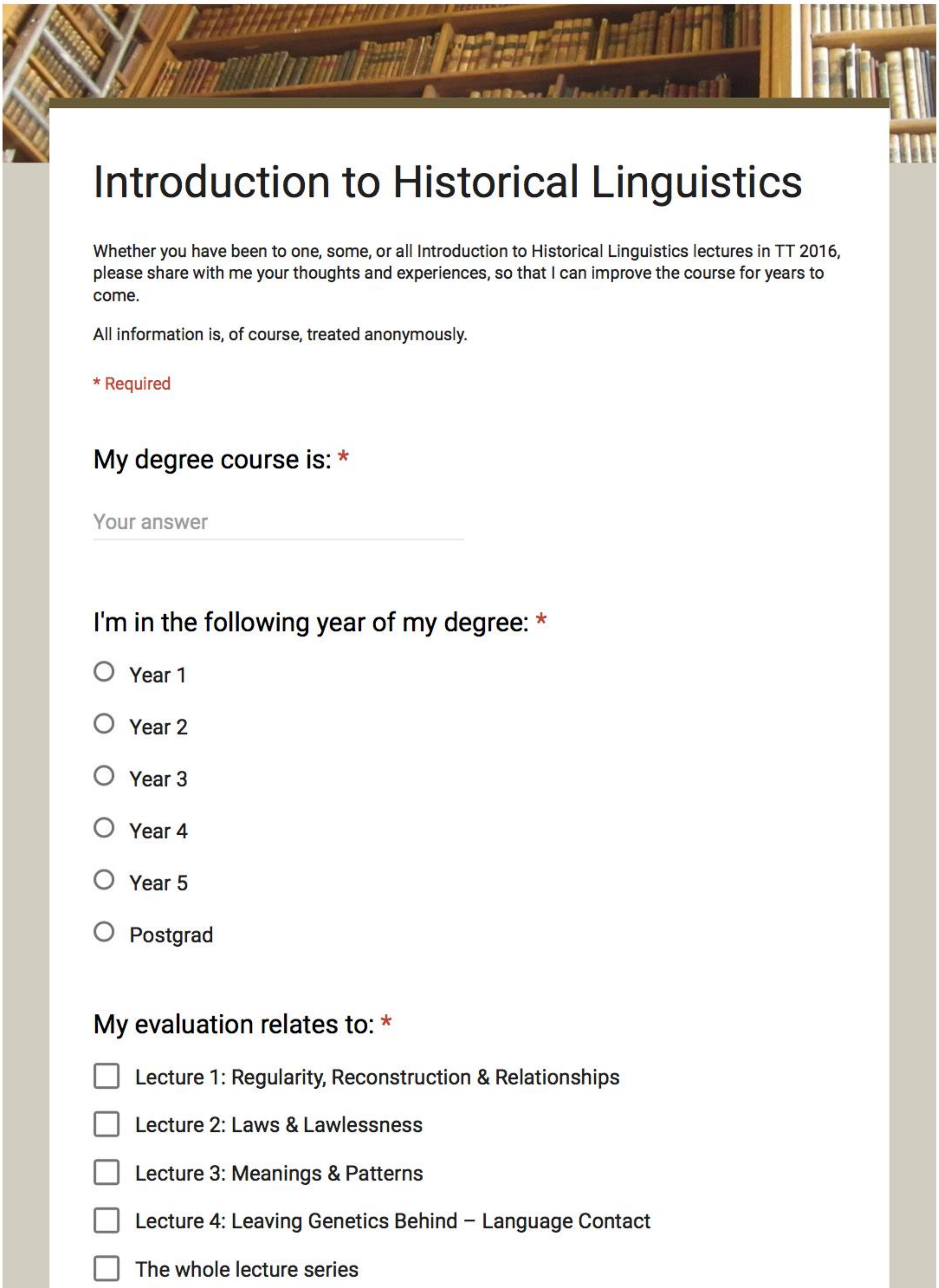
I don't give preparatory readings, but I do suggest 2–4 follow-up readings for each lecture. Nothing in the taught materials is predicated on them having read and understood those, but they will do better in the exam and coursework if they can show that they've read and understood them and can apply the ideas intelligently.

Each lecture is 2 hours, of which the first hour (general historical syntax) is from a handout and the second hour (case studies from the history of English) is from a presentation. I've attached 3b so you can see how this works. Honestly, this isn't super-well thought through - I inherited the handouts from David Willis - but the students usually respond well to the change in modality halfway through. The practicals are a real mix of whatever works: photocopies of manuscripts, handouts, slides, depending on the task.
[..]

On 01 Apr 2016, at 10:26, R. Meyer <robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk> wrote:

Dear George,
[..]
I only have a few more simple question:
- to what extent do you involve students in the lectures, that is are they actively participating, or mainly listening?
- Do you give them preparatory reading for each session?
- Finally, do you work with handouts, screen presentations, or something else – and might I be so cheeky as to ask for a (random) copy?[..]

Appendix F Online Student Evaluation Form (Lecture)



Introduction to Historical Linguistics

Whether you have been to one, some, or all Introduction to Historical Linguistics lectures in TT 2016, please share with me your thoughts and experiences, so that I can improve the course for years to come.

All information is, of course, treated anonymously.

* Required

My degree course is: *

Your answer

I'm in the following year of my degree: *

- ○ Year 1
- ○ Year 2
- ○ Year 3
- ○ Year 4
- ○ Year 5
- ○ Postgrad

My evaluation relates to: *

- ☐ Lecture 1: Regularity, Reconstruction & Relationships
- ☐ Lecture 2: Laws & Lawlessness
- ☐ Lecture 3: Meanings & Patterns
- ☐ Lecture 4: Leaving Genetics Behind – Language Contact
- ☐ The whole lecture series

My lecture experience *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have learnt about aspects of linguistics about which I knew little before.	○	○	○	○	○
I could follow the lecture(s) without any problems.	○	○	○	○	○
I thought the examples provided were relevant for my course.	○	○	○	○	○
I felt I could ask questions if anything was unclear.	○	○	○	○	○
I now want to learn more about Historical Linguistics.	○	○	○	○	○

The following 2 or 3 aspects of the lecture / course stuck with me the most: *

Your answer

I would like to know more about:

Your answer

I still don't entirely understand:

Your answer

If I could change something about the lecture(s), it would be:

Your answer

SUBMIT

Appendix G Printed Student Evaluation Form (Lecture)

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS FEEDBACK

1.) My degree course is: ____

2.) I'm in the following year of my course:

☐ year 1 ☐ year 2 ☐ year 3

☐ year 4 ☐ year 5 ☐ postgraduate

3.) My evaluation relates to:

☐ Lecture 1: Regularity, Reconstruction & Relationships

☐ Lecture 2: Laws & Lawlessness

☐ Lecture 3: Meanings & Patterns

☐ Lecture 4: Leaving Genetics Behind – Language Contact

☐ The whole lecture series

4.) My lecture experience:

	strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree
I have learnt about aspects of linguistics about which I knew little before.	○	○	○	○	○
I could follow the lecture(s) without any problems.	○	○	○	○	○
I thought the examples provided were relevant for my course.	○	○	○	○	○
I felt I could ask questions if anything was unclear.	○	○	○	○	○
I now want to learn more about Historical Linguistics.	○	○	○	○	○

5.) The following 2 or 3 aspects of the lecture / course stuck with me the most:

____

____

____

____

6.) I would like to know more about:

____

____

____

____

____

7.) I still don't entirely understand:

____

____

____

____

____

8.) If I could change something about the lecture(s), it would be:

____

____

____

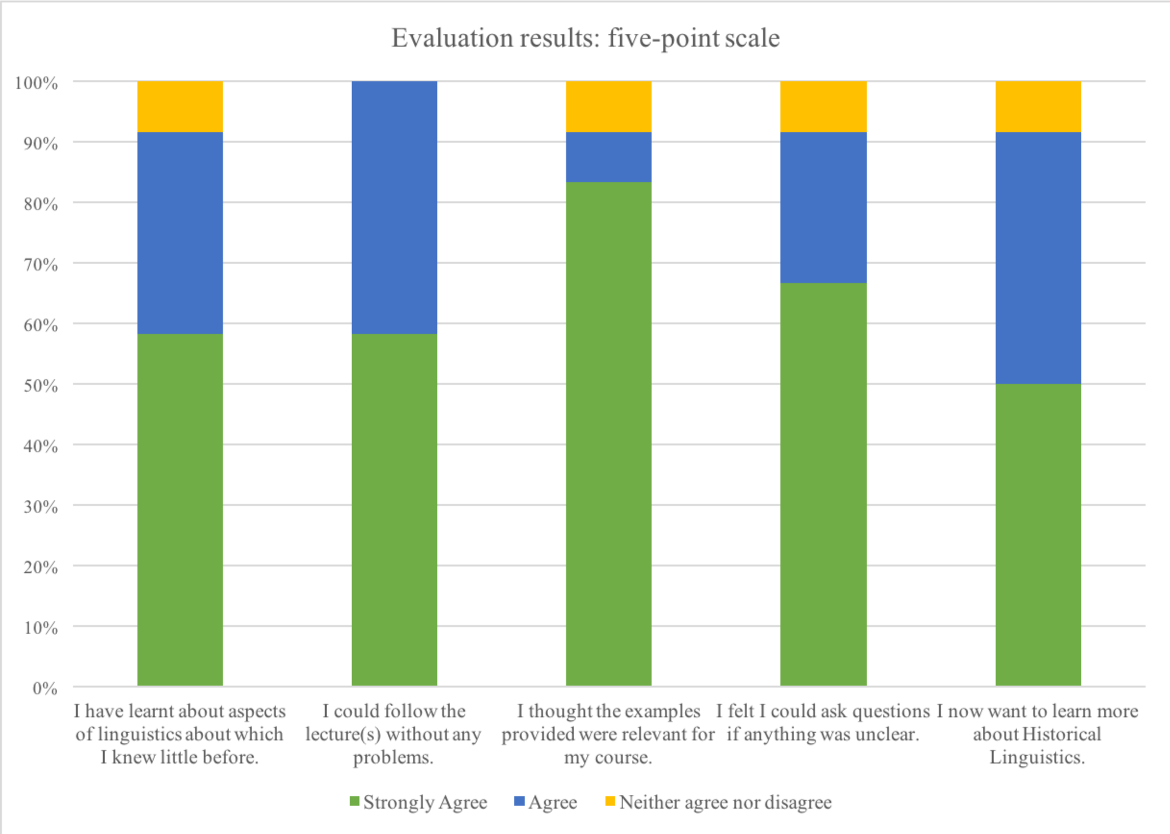
____

____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

Would you rather fill out a survey online?
Scan this QR code, or go to:
http://goo.gl/forms/LwV1haU87b

Appendix H Lecture Evaluation Results, Scalar Questions



Appendix I Lecture Evaluation Results, Responses

<u>Responses to question 5: ‘The following 2–3 aspects of the lecture(s) stuck with me the most’</u>

- How language change is difficult to observe, predict and explain
- Approachable lecturer, humour helps me pay attention!
- Beispiele waren alle gut ausgewählt, besonders anschaulich sind natürlich die englischen (so whenever there is one, use it!)
- The process of grammaticalisation as a possible explanation for how languages change and the Neogrammarian sound change laws
- Semantic change (fun!), how well the lectures were structured and delivered, the variety of examples from different languages.
- grimm's law, jespersen cycle
- 1. The lecturer's charming accent (especially his prosody), his refreshing use of humour, and his occasionally theatrical diction.

2. The large amount of material covered (especially in comparison with the sociolinguistics lectures last term, which seemed to cover little) and the overall clarity of the material.
3. The logical subdivision of the material into sections to be covered individually, as well as the numerous examples presented from various languages across the world.

- the effects of analogy, mechanisms behind contact-induced changes, lots of cool examples
- the examples are well-clarified and often humorous; the slides are useful; examples are relatable
- Grimm's Law; Borrowing systems, calques

<u>Responses to question 6: ‘I would like to know more about’</u>

- Studying how a couple of particular languages have changed in depth
- What we can use Historical Linguistics for, in a practical sense.
- 1. The different language families in the world as well as language isolates (so, more about language classification in general)
  2. What exactly causes language (explanations at the microlevel, e.g. at the level of the individual utterances produced by an individual speaker on a particular day, rather than explanation which pertain to general tendencies that languages exhibit)
  3. Language reconstruction (how the comparative method allows one to arrive at meaningful conclusions, rather than just random guesses).
- Language suicide (?) I came across this term in some book and it would be nice to have just a brief overview of what it's about
- pidgins and creoles
- Chain shifts, Jespersen Cycle

<u>Reponses to question 7: ‘I still don’t entirely understand’</u>

- What haplology is
- Das Problem der Unidirectionality - das Schema lexical → functional ist klar, aber ob nun etwas ein clitic oder affix ist.. Sind das nicht sowieso beide recht grammatical phenomena?
- Grimm's Law.
- 1. The different kinds of language contact (e.g. shift vs. imposition vs. borrowing etc.)

  2. How languages can be said to evolve in such a way that they become ‘easier’ for their speakers, in light of how some languages gain what others are eliminating.
  3. The compromise between the tree model of language change and the wave model.
- Jespersen’s Cycle (just because it felt a bit rushed)
- some sound changes

<u>Responses to question 8: ‘If I could change something about the lecture(s), it would be’</u>

- I always have a tutorial at 3pm so have to leave early when the lecture runs over, which can be annoying – so perhaps timing.
- Alles gut – einiges erscheint ein bisschen oberflächlich, aber mehr kann in diesem Format wahrscheinlich einfach nicht geboten werden.
- Perhaps more audience participation, but that's mostly our own fault.
- 1. I would even out the pace of the lectures (they seemed to slow down and speed up at different points in their progression, sometimes in such a way as to leave insufficient time for their completion).
  2. I would include more material about language classification and reconstruction and less material about specific kinds of language change - the latter seemed as though it were repeating itself to an extent in the third lecture (or had alternatively been discussed at least briefly in Paper X lectures).
- I think too much was packed into the last lecture (but I understand it kinda had to be like that). Other than that, everything was awesome; a healthy dose of education and banter. Would do it all over again
- Having more examples from languages I am familiar with, or at least examples which are easy to remember and explain for an exam.
- make it longer b/c not all of the slides are discussed in lecture
- Slightly slower speed through the slides

Appendix J Printed Student Evaluation Form (Class)

STUDENT EVALUATION FORM

Name of instructor: …………………………………….

Course: ………………………………………………….

Year of study: ………………………………………….

1. Please rate the following statements on the scale provided:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) My instructor spoke clearly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b) My questions were addressed and answered.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c) My knowledge of Latin has improved through this class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d) The grammar handouts were helpful.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e) I have been given sufficient and useful feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Which elements of class did you find most engaging and helpful?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

3. What aspects of teaching did you find less useful? Can you give an example?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Have you any suggestions how teaching may be improved?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

**5. Were the topics covered helpful in improving your language skill?
If not, which other topics would you want to see addressed?**

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

6. How would you evaluate the homework? Was it (too) easy, about right, (too) challenging?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

7. Have you any other suggestions to make this class better?

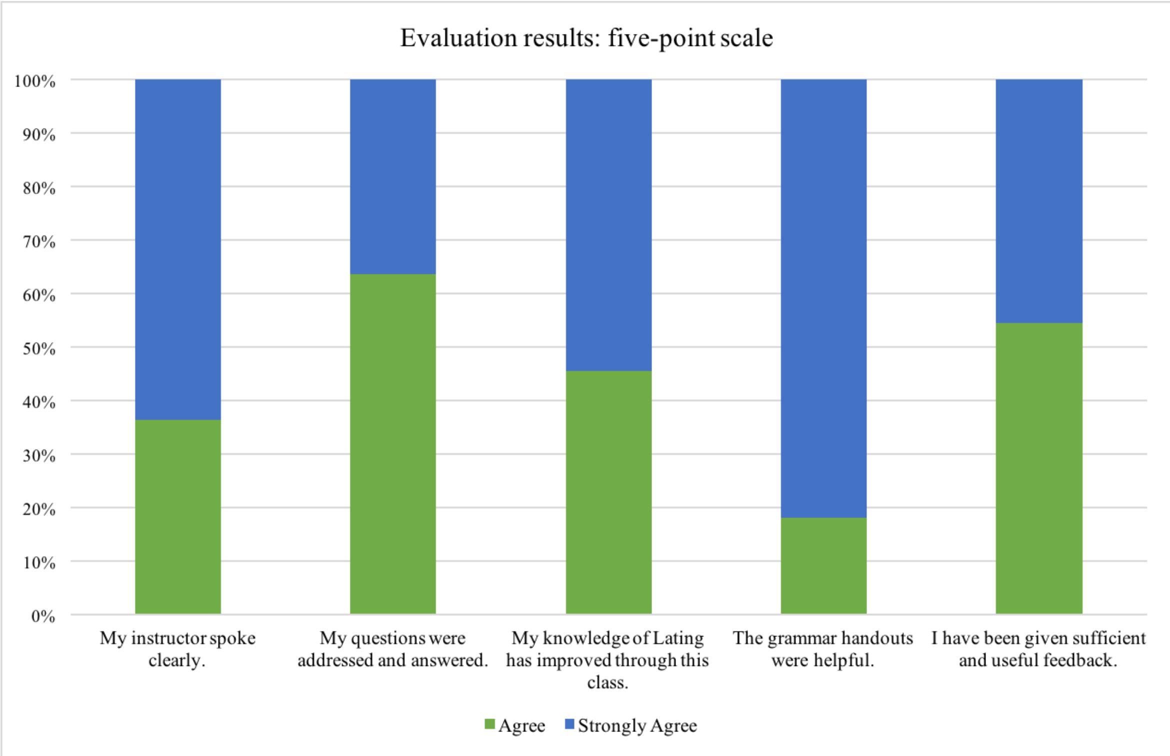
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

THANK YOU!

Appendix K Class Evaluation Results, Scalar Questions



Appendix L Class Evaluation Results, Responses

<u>Responses to question 2: 'Which elements of class did you find most engaging and helpful?'</u>

- In class discussion of grammar handouts, examples in class
- Detailed feedback + explanations of common mistakes in homework
- Practice in translation of grammar constructions was most helpful
- Doing the proce comps
- Plenty of example sentences; it was good to have the handouts in advance of the class
- Handouts + feedback on homework particularly thorough + useful.
- Class discussion on the pre-prepared handouts
- Translation, prose comp, going through texts
- Going through phrases and constructions from the prose comp
- Learning vocab / grammar for testing; also group work
- Going through sentences in groups

Responses to question 3: 'What aspects of teaching did you find less useful? Can you give an example?'

- Tests, classes in general early in in Michaelmas when no one contributed
- Everything was mostly if not completely useful
- Spending a lot of time going through the handout
- Well, Harry Potter in Latin. Inevitably, grouping students leads to time-wasting, of course.
- Sometimes the pace was too quick – perhaps more time would be good for note-taking or particularly tricky grammatical points
- Not much
- N/A
- Syntactical analysis – translation + prose comp are better.
- Morphology / Pterodactyl tests
- When classes were only the teacher speaking, because nobody said anything
- I don't like working in groups.

Responses to question 4: 'Have you any suggestions how teaching may be improved?'

- Make people talk more, particularly in the beginning
- Perhaps spend longer on more difficult points and come back to them in more detail when they overlap, e.g. conditionals + oratio obliqua
- Mix things up a little bit
- More time for tests, classes a bit later, with more coffee
- Perhaps more use of passages of original text, rather than just individual sentences.
- I enjoyed the collective exercises – it made it feel like learning much more than testing.
- Perhaps a few more comments on how to be stylish in prose writing.
- Play more games / make it more fun
- N/A
- Teaching itself very good; perhaps 'force' us to contribute more?
- Not really, other than that grammatical practice was generally more useful that theory (obviously they are inter-dependent though).

Responses to question 5: 'Were the topics covered helpful in improving your language skill? If not, which other topics would you want to see addressed?'

- Somethings seemed a bit OTT (doing a.c.i.) but overall good; perhaps more on Latin idiom/stylistic aspects, but I suppose this is mainly a language class.
- Yes, although perhaps a lesson/handout on some general essential idioms would be useful
- Yes
- More oratio obliqua? Obscure & interesting things?
- It would be good to have more time to practice oratio obliqua.
- Yes very much.
- They were helpful and clearly expressed.
- Yes
- N/A
- Yes
- Yes

Responses to question 6: 'How would you evaluate the homework? Was it (too) easy, about right, (too) challenging?'

- About right, challenging enough but not impossible
- About right
- It was challenging but not too much, which was really useful
- Not to say that I did brilliantly, but it could have been harder
- For the most part about right.
- About right, challenging but with room to think.
- It was about right – always a bit tricky but not too much.
- Usually about right
- Homework was challenging – which is a good thing!
- Challenging, and took quite a lot of time each week; found myself often getting low marks when I'd still tried quite hard.
- About right

Responses to question 7: 'Have you any other suggestions to make this class better?'

- Not at 8.45am – people would be more alert and willing to contribute. Do sporcle (google it) in final lesson.
- N/A
- Perhaps more of a focus in class on translation
- N/A
- N/A
- The only improvement I could think of would be to delay it by an hour or two, just so we could be more awake. The teaching itself was fantastic.
- Hard to think of anything really obvious. Perhaps a few more basic examples of new constructions before going into the more difficult ones.
- I hate early mornings. Make it 10:00.
- N/A
- N/A
- Nope. The classes were generally very helpful and entertaining.

Appendix M Language Contact and Change, Course Outline

<u>Course Title:</u> Language Contact and Change

<u>Course Type:</u> FHS

<u>Course Description:</u>

'There is no such thing as an unmixed language' (Schuchardt 1884)

To one extent or another, every natural language has at one point in time interacted with neighbouring or invading languages. Some have emerged almost 'unscathed' from this contact, and have only borrowed the occasional word (Engl. *garage, beef, chair*); others have undergone more profound changes, altering the very way the language construes (e.g. Cappadocian Greek under the influence of Turkish). In yet other situations, contact has given rise to completely new languages, for instance the French and Cree based language Michif in Canada.

This course addresses both practical and theoretical issues in language contact studies, for example:

- How do languages exchange material and patterns?
- Who borrows what from whom, when, and why?
- Are there limits to the way languages can change in contact situations?
- What is more important in language contact, linguistic factors or social circumstances?

The course discusses numerous examples and case studies from a great number of different regions and times (including, e.g., the Balkan *Sprachbund*, Michif in Canada, Light Walpiri in Australia, Mednyj Aleut on Bering Island, Anglo-Norman in Britain, dialects of Neo-Aramaic, etc.) without requiring prior knowledge of the languages involved.

<u>Prerequisites:</u>
There are no formal prerequisites, but a basic understanding of phonology, morphology, syntax, and/or historical linguistics is useful.

<u>Aims</u>
The course aims to introduce students to the basics of language contact studies, both in theory and practice, and to familiarise them with common contact mechanisms and their workings, as well as a number of well-known case studies.

Intended Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Knowledge & Understanding

- explain the mechanisms of borrowing and pattern replication applicable to most language contact situations
- compare the roles of formal linguistic factors and social environments for the outcome of language contact

Intellectual Skills

- compose a report on the development and outcome of language contact in situations involving at least one familiar language
- interpret the results presented in research papers with respect to the received tenets in the field

Practical Skills

- analyse glossed data sets from language contact scenarios
- apply appropriate quantitative methods to data sets

Assessment
This course is assessed by written exam and portfolio.

The exam (40%) is 1.5 hours long, and essay-based. Students will have to answer two questions: one concerning data analysis, and another on theoretical questions in contact studies.

The portfolio (60%) is a 4,000–6,000 word long report on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the convenor. Reports should demonstrate skills of data analysis and critical evaluation as well as a familiarity with contact theory and comparable case studies.

Lecture Schedule

W1:	General Introduction to Language Contact
W2:	Lexical Borrowing & Calques
W3:	Phonological & Morphological Borrowing
W4:	The Borrowing of Syntax: pattern replication
W5:	Scenarios of Language Contact: Maintenance, Shift, and Convergence
W6:	Results of Contact I: Attrition & Language Death
W7:	Results of Contact II: Pidgins & Creoles
W8:	Dynamics of Language Contact: Linguistic vs Social Factors

(Time: Monday W1–8, 14.15–15.45; Venue: Centre for Linguistics, R207)

Seminar Schedule

W3: Data Analysis I: Lexis
W4: Data Analysis II: Morphology & Phonology
W5: Data Analysis III: Syntax
W6: Data Analysis IV: Quantitative Methods
W7: Applying Theoretical Frameworks
W8: Portfolio Workshop

(Time: Thursday W3–8, 15.00–16.00; Venue: Centre for Linguistics, R207)

Tutorials

Tutorials to discuss a draft of the portfolio will be arranged on an individual basis for weeks 1–3 of the term following the lecture series. Please email robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk to arrange a time.

Deadlines

The portfolio topic must be approved by the end of W8.

Drafts to be read in time for the individual tutorials must be submitted by email one week before the tutorial.

The final portfolio is due for submission to Examination Schools by Friday, 12.00pm, of W6 of the term following the lecture series.

Appendix N Language Contact and Change, Reading List

You should endeavour to read at the very least the items set in **bold**. For further reading on specific topics or languages, use the references in Thomason & Kaufman (1988) or Aikhenvald (2001); if you have trouble finding material, do write to me at: robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk

<u>Textbooks</u>

Harris, Alice C. & Lyle Campbell, 1995. *Historical syntax in cross-linguistic perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [a very good introduction to historical linguistics in general, frequently touching on language contact]

Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva, 2005. *Language Contact and Grammatical Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matras, Yaron, 2009. *Language Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [particularly good on bilingual speech acquisition]

Myers-Scotton, Carol, 2002. *Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [offers a more formalist approach to language contact; very theoretical]

Romaine, Suzanne, 1988. *Pidgin and Creole Languages*. London: Longman. [distinctly worth reading, but after a more general introduction to contact linguistics]

Thomason, Sarah Grey, 2001. *Language Contact: An Introduction*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. [excellent introduction by one of the foremost experts in the field; very socially driven]

Thomason, Sarah Grey & Terrence Kaufman, 1988. *Language Contact, Creolization, and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford: University of California Press. [by now a little dated, but still one of the standard reference works]

<u>Theoretical approaches</u>

Golovko, Evgeniy V, 2003. Language contact and group identity: The role of ‘folk’ linguistic engineering. In Yaron Matras, ed., *The Mixed Language Debate: Theoretical and Empirical Advances*, 177–208. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva, 2008. Constraints on contact-induced linguistic change. *Journal of Language Contact* 2: 57–90.

Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva, 2003. On contact-induced grammaticalization. *Studies in Language* 27(3): 529–572.

Heller, Monica, 1995. Code-switching and the politics of language. In Lesley Milroy, ed., *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Code-switching*, 158–174. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matras, Yaron & Peter Bakker, eds., 2003. *The Mixed Language Debate: Theoretical and Empirical Advances*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Meakins, Felicity, 2013. Mixed Languages. In Peter Bakker, ed., *Contact Languages*, 159–228. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Müller, N., 1998. Transfer in bilingual first language acquisition. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 1: 151–171.

Müller, Natasha & Katja Francesca Cantone, 2009. Language mixing in bilingual children: code-switching? In Barbara E. Bullock, ed., *The Cambridge Handbook of Linguistic Code-switching*, 199–220. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Muysken, Pieter, 1995. Code-Switching and Grammatical Theory. In Lesley Milroy, ed., *One Speaker, Two Languages: Cross-disciplinary Perspectives on Code-switching*, 177–198. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Muysken, Pieter, 2000. *Bilingual Speech. A Typology of Code-Mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Poplack, Shana & Stephen Levey, 2010. Contact-induced grammatical change: a cautionary tale. In Peter Auer, ed., *Language and Space: An international handbook of Linguistic variation, vol. 1, Theories and Methods*, 391–419. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Ross, Malcolm, 2007. Calquing and Metatypy. *Journal of Language Contact* 1: 116–143.

Ross, Malcolm, 2013. Diagnosing Contact Processes from their Outcomes: The Importance of Life Stages. *Journal of Language Contact* 6: 5–47.

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Teaching Fellowship Preparation Programme Marking Criteria Sheet

All applicants must complete the following tables to provide details of how each of the three teaching practice areas and six learning outcomes are met within the portfolio.

Teaching Practice	Portfolio Section	Page(s)
Design of teaching	§1, §3.1.1, §4	5–9, 20–24, 29–37
Assessment of and feedback to students	§1, §2.3, §3.1.1, §3.2.1, §4.4, §4.5	5–9, 16–19, 20–24, 26–7, 32–3, 33–35
Evaluation of teaching	§1, §2.2.1, §2.3.1	5–9, 13–14, 18–19

Learning Outcomes	Portfolio Section	Page(s)
Describe your own teaching goals and values, relate them to your own teaching context and discuss your overall approach to teaching (your teaching philosophy).	§1, §2.2.1, §2.2.3, §2.3.1, §3.1.1, §4.3, §4.4, §5	6, 9, 13–14, 14–16, 18, 23–24, 27, 31–32, 32–33, 37
Critically consider alternative approaches to teaching and learning, e.g. at other institutions or in other disciplines.	§1, §2, §4.5	8–9, 10–19, 33–35
Explain why you teach the way you do rather than another possible way, and how your chosen strategies might affect your students.	§1, §2.2.1, §2.2.3, §2.3.1, §3.1.1, §3.1.2, §3.3, §4.4, §4.5, §5	6–8, 13–14, 14–16, 18, 23–24, 25–26, 27–28, 32–33, 33–35, 37
Connect relevant key ideas in educational literature to your own teaching and your students' learning.	§1, §2.1, §2.3, §3.1.1, §3.2.1, §3.3, §4.3	3, 4, 9, 11, 17, 21, 27, 28, 31, and passim in footnotes
Articulate how (and why) your own teaching practice and understanding of learning and teaching has evolved over time and your ideas for future development.	§1, §3.1.1, §3.1.2, §3.2.1, §5	8–9, 23–24, 24–26, 26–27, 37
Critically consider issues of student diversity as they may affect your subject area/institution and explore ways in which your teaching can be responsive to a heterogeneous student body.	§1, §2.2.4, §4.6	7, 12–13, 16, 34–5, 35–6

The TFP Programme is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA) at Descriptor 2. Successful achievement of the criteria below leads to the award of Fellowship of the HEA (FHEA).

Name of Candidate..

Presentation

Portfolios must:

	Yes	No
A. Consist of a collection of pieces of work or chapters that amount to 7,000 to 12,000 words (excluding appendices).		
B. Be well presented, using a consistent system of referencing and footnotes, and including a bibliography.		
C. Include a submission cover sheet.		
D. Include a completed marking criteria sheet summarising how each of the three teaching practice and six learning outcomes criteria listed below are met.		

Teaching practice

Portfolios must include substantial discussion of the following three areas of teaching practice:

	Yes	No
1. Design of teaching		
2. Assessment of students and feedback to students		
3. Evaluation of teaching		

Learning outcomes

Portfolios must clearly meet the following outcomes:

	Yes	No
4. Describe your own teaching goals and values, relate them to your own teaching context and discuss your overall approach to teaching (your teaching philosophy).		
5. Critically consider alternative approaches to teaching and learning, e.g. at other institutions or in other disciplines.		
6. Explain why you teach the way you do rather than another possible way, and how your chosen strategies might affect your students.		
7. Connect relevant key ideas in educational literature to your own teaching and your students' learning.		
8. Articulate how (and why) your own teaching practice and understanding of learning and teaching has evolved over time and your ideas for future development.		
9. Critically consider issues of student diversity as they may affect your subject area/institution and explore ways in which your teaching can be responsive to a heterogeneous student body.		

Overall assessment: PASS / FAIL

Continue over

Please include further feedback here. If any areas of the portfolio do not meet the criteria, please indicate how these issues might be addressed if candidate wishes to resubmit.

If the portfolio has passed, please include feedback comments to the candidate, including particular strengths of the portfolio and areas for future development.

Assessor name: .... Date:.......................................