



高等院校英语语言文学专业研究生系列教材（修订版）

总主编 戴炜栋

英语史

—— 从古英语到标准英语

第 3 版

From Old English to Standard English

A Course Book in Language Variation Across Time

Dennis Freeborn

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研究生

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总 序

随着我国经济的飞速发展，社会对以研究生为主体的高层次人才的需求日益增长，我国英语语言文学专业的研究生教育规模也在不断扩大。要使研究生教育持续健康地发展，培养学生创新思维能力和独立研究与应用能力，必须全面系统地加强基础理论与基本方法的训练。而要实现这一目标，就必须有一套符合我国国情的、系统正规的英语语言文学专业研究生主干教材。

基于这一认识，上海外语教育出版社于21世纪之初邀请全国英语语言文学专业各研究领域中的知名专家学者，编写了“高等院校英语语言文学专业研究生系列教材”，迄今已陆续出版了二十余种。这套系列教材集各高校之所长，优势互补，形成合力，在教材建设方面，把我国英语语言文学专业的研究生培养工作推上了一个新的台阶，规范了我国英语语言文学专业的研究生课程，为高校培养基础扎实、知识面广、富有开拓精神、符合社会需要的高质量研究生提供了条件。

该系列教材的编写结合了我国英语语言文学专业研究生教学的实际情况与需要，强调科学性、系统性、先进性和实用性，力求体现理论与应用相结合，介绍与研究相结合，史与论相结合，原创与引进相结合，全面融会贯通。每一种教材都能够反映出该研究领域的新理论、新方法和新成果。系列教材推出后不仅被作为我国英语语言文学专业研究生的主干教材，也被作为中国语言文学专业的教师与学生的参考用书。

在多年的使用过程中，全国各高校的英语语言文学专业的专家学者和教师对该系列教材提出了许多建设性的建议。近几年，英语语言文学研究也有了新的发展。为了吸纳这些建设性建议及最新的学科研究成果，进一步完善教材，我们对该系列教材进行了修订。此次修订的主要方面有：内容上查漏补缺，进一步提升教材质量；理论上与时俱进，反映最新的学科研究成果；体例上规范统一，提高学术的严谨性；资料上充实丰富，增加教学资源；版式上全新设计，增强教材的易教性。此外，我们还对该系列教材的选题进行了拓展和延伸，在邀请国内专家学者编写原创教材的同时，精选国外原版教材引进出版。修订后的“高等院校英语语言文学专业研究生系列教材”在选题上中西合璧，覆盖了英语语言文学专业各学科的主要课程，学科方向将更齐全，更能满足我国英语语言文学专业研究生教育在学科建设方面的需求。

教材建设是学科建设的一项重要基本建设，对学科发展有着深远的影响。我们相信，在新世纪推出的这套系列教材，必将大大推动我国英语语言文学专业研究生教育事业的发展，促进我国英语语言文学研究水平的提高。

戴炜栋

2009年5月

Preface to the third edition

The principal changes in the third edition of the book are:

- The use, in the transcriptions and quotations, of new fonts that more accurately reproduce the letter shapes of handwriting in Old English and Middle English manuscripts, and also an early printing font that is used for some 17th- and 18th-century texts. The transcription of the originals with their abbreviations (intended to be more or less exact) is followed by another transcription using the conventions of modern printed versions of Old and Middle English texts. However, please note that, while care has been taken to reproduce the handwriting as exactly as possible, the available fonts do not contain all the scribal variations in the shape of letters and abbreviations to be found in the manuscripts. Sometimes, therefore, there cannot be a completely exact match in some of the detail.
- The addition of an outline of the development of writing hands in six sections: Sections 3.2, 7.4, 12.2, 14.2, 15.1 and 17.3.
- A number of illustrative facsimiles have been added, and the whole text has once more been thoroughly checked and revised.
- Extensive supplementary materials are now provided on a new companion website.

Companion website

Lecturers, teachers and students have access to a companion website for the book at: www.palgrave.com/language/freeborn/.

Audio Downloads

MP3 files are provided containing readings of extracts from a selection of the OE, ME and MnE texts.

A broad phonetic transcription follows each recorded text in this book.

The readings are by Dr Alison Wray and Dennis Freeborn.

Text Commentary Book

This contains the worked examples and textual analyses of many Activities from the book. It also provides additional material on:

- Old English pronunciation
- Old English grammar
- Additional transcriptions and translations of selected facsimiles
- English spelling today (previously a postscript chapter in the second edition)
- The development of English spelling (previously a postscript chapter in the second edition).

Word Book

This contains a complete word-list in alphabetical order for each Old and Middle English text, and for selected Early Modern English texts from the 15th to the 18th centuries. The lists for the Old English texts give the base form of inflected words and a translation, so that students can refer to an Old English dictionary or grammar more easily. Those for the Middle and Early Modern English texts include the derivation of each word. The *Word Book* also contains lists of loan-words from the early 13th to the 20th centuries. These are collated and reproduced again under each language of origin.

There is also a list of words in present-day English which are derived from Old English (reflexes).

Preface to the second edition

The text of the first edition has been completely revised and enlarged to include nearly two hundred historical texts, of which more than half are reproduced in facsimile. The facsimiles are primary sources of our knowledge of the language, illustrating the development of handwriting, printing, punctuation and spelling in a way which is not possible using modern printed versions of old texts.

The practice of modernising the spelling of modern printed texts of earlier English like, for example, the 15th-century *Paston Letters* and Shakespeare's late 16th- and early 17th-century plays has obscured important and interesting changes that have taken place. Literary texts are generally printed with modern spelling and punctuation, and though editions of Old and Middle English retain much of the original spelling, they usually add present-day punctuation.

The texts

The core of the book is the series of texts exemplifying the changes in the language from Old English to the establishment of Standard English. The texts have been selected for a number of reasons. The Old English texts are almost all from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and so provide something of the historical context of the language a thousand years ago. Some texts have aspects of language itself as their subject. As we have no authentic records of the spoken language before the invention of sound recording, letters and diaries of the past are included, because they are likely to provide some evidence of informal uses of English. Some literary texts have been chosen, but the series does not constitute a history of English literature.

Readership

The first edition was intended for students of English Language at Advanced Level, but since publication in 1992 the book has been used in university departments of English, both in Britain and in over thirty overseas countries. As a result, the enlarged text aims to provide more material and commentary which is suitable for study in higher education. For example, Chapter 6 demonstrates how a relatively short extract from an early Middle English text can be analysed to demonstrate the evidence for changes from Old English in spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar that had occurred. The Text Commentary Book contains a short chapter

which takes the opening lines of Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* as data for a practical exercise in using the evidence of rhyme to discover changes in pronunciation.

Activities

The Activities are designed to encourage students to find out for themselves – to answer the question 'how do you know?' and to consider possible reasons for what they observe. They are able to study data at first hand and to consider hypotheses, rather than to accept the answers to problems of interpretation that others have given. The process of analysing the texts in itself demonstrates how our knowledge of earlier English has been arrived at. The surviving corpus of Old and Middle English texts is all the evidence we have about the language as it was. There are no grammar books, descriptions of pronunciation, spelling books or dictionaries of English before the 16th century. The tasks in the Activities are no more than suggestions, and teachers will omit, modify and add to them as they think useful.

Many of the simpler, basic activities in the first edition have, however, been omitted, and teachers will readily devise them if they are needed.

Levels of study

It is helpful to consider three levels of study which may be followed according to students' needs, or to the amount of time available for study.

- At the first, observational level, features of the language can be simply noted and listed as interesting or different.
- At the second, descriptive level, such features are identified more specifically, using appropriate descriptive terms from a model of language.
- At the third, explanatory level, they are placed in their relation to general processes of language change, and in their social, political and historical context.

Language change

The English language, like all living languages, is in a continuous state of variation across time. The language of one generation of speakers will differ slightly from another, and at any one time there are 'advanced' and 'conservative' forms, whether they belong to regional, educational or class dialects. Change takes place at every level of language:

- Lexical level – new words are needed in the vocabulary to refer to new things or concepts, while other words are dropped when they no longer have any use in society.
- Semantic level – the meaning of words changes – *buxom* once meant *obedient*, *spill* meant *kill*, and *knight* meant *boy*.

- Syntactic level – a word-for-word translation of some Old English is unlikely to read like grammatical contemporary English, because word order and grammatical structure have changed as well as vocabulary.
- Phonological level – pronunciation in particular is always being modified and varies widely from one regional or social group to another.

The process of change has, however, considerably slowed since the 18th century, because the spelling system and grammatical structure have been standardised and are therefore highly resistant to further change.

Standard English

Standard English has a unique and special status. Its prestige is such that for many people it is synonymous with ‘the English language’. This book sets out to show what the origins of present-day Standard English were in the past. It is concerned principally with the forms of the language itself, and makes reference to the historical, social and political background to the establishment of Standard English in outline only.

Commentaries

Analytic commentaries are provided for some of the texts in the book. Each commentary is a case-study based upon the text itself, which provides some of the evidence for change in the language. Other texts are provided without commentary.

Symbols

Languages

OE	Old English
CE 1	Transcription using Old English letter shapes and abbreviations
CE 2	Transcription using present-day printing conventions and filling out abbreviations
ME	Middle English
EMnE	Early Modern English
MnE	Modern English
Fr	French
OF	Old French
ONF	Old Northern French
AN	Anglo-Norman
ON	Old Norse
MS	manuscript
fr	from
WW	word-for-word translation

Grammar

m	masculine (gender)
f	feminine
n	neuter
nom	nominative (case)
acc	accusative
gen	genitive
dat	dative
sg	singular (number)
pl	plural
S	subject (in clause structure)
P	predicator
C	complement
O	object
Od	direct object
Oi	indirect object
A	adverbial
cj	conjunction
ccj	co-ordinating conjunction
scj	subordinating conjunction
Ø	stands for a deleted element in grammatical analysis
RP	Received Pronunciation

Writing and printing

Letters in caret brackets identify written letters of the alphabet, e.g. <e>.

Letters in square brackets identify spoken sounds, using the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), e.g. [ə], [ʃ], [i:].

An explanation and list of IPA symbols can be found in *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*, 5th edition revised by Alan Cruttenden, (London: Edward Arnold, 1994), p. 32, and in Dennis Freeborn with Peter French and David Langford, *Varieties of English: An Introduction to the Study of Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1993), Ch. 4, pp. 67–8.

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Ye knowe eek that in forme of speche is chaunge
With inne a thousand yeer and wordes tho
That hadden prys now wonder nyce and straunge
Us thinketh hem: and yet hey spake hem so
And spedde as wel in love as men now do.

Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, Prologue to Book II

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