

3-year evaluation of ENG339/339L (Selected topic in English linguistics I) 2021-2023

This is a specialised course in a topic from English linguistics. The content of the course varies from year to year. ENG339 is a 10 credit points course offered to students with a BA in English, and ENG339L is 5 credit points course offered to students in the teacher training programme.

The main learning outcomes are that students “have detailed insight into the theoretical and methodological approaches within the field covered by the course and are familiar with current research in this field”, and that they “can apply their knowledge and skills in teaching, for the dissemination of research and other information purposes”.

ENG339/339L is taught as an intensive course, with two sessions per week, so that the teaching does not overlap with the L students’ teaching practice. ENG339L is taught over three weeks, and ENG339 normally over four weeks. In 2021 the classes were held online, in Zoom. The topics in the three years were Language attitudes (2021), Grammaticalization, lexicalization, degrammaticalization (2022) and Multilingualism in individuals, society, and education (2023).

The assessment form is a four-hour school exam for ENG339 and a three-hour school exam for ENG339L. A school exam does not allow for long in-depth discussions, but lets students practice writing independently and efficiently. Three students took the ENG339 exam in 2021, six in 2022, and five in 2023. In ENG339L, 14 took the exam in 2021, 15 in 2022, and 13 in 2023. For both course codes the average grade was C for all years, with the exception of 2023, when the average grade for 339L was B. Across the three years, only two students did not pass the exam.

In all three years, the course focused on active learning, student participation, discussions in class, and practical exercises. This worked well in 2022 and 2023, but was more challenging in 2021 when the course was digital.

The course did not have a student evaluation in 2021 and 2022. The main reason for this was that the course was over before the end of September, and the online evaluation form which is normally distributed once a course is over, was not sent to the students. The evaluation in 2023 was generally very positive. The majority of the students found the course relevant and interesting, and they particularly liked the class discussions. Some students felt that the course was a bit rushed due to its intensive nature.

ENG339/339L is a course that generally works well in terms of content and teaching activities. The main challenge these three years has been the intensive mode of the course, with two sessions per week. With the new redesigned teacher training programme, it will no longer be necessary to have a separate course for L students or to adapt the teaching to their practice period.