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## Prof Nikolas Gisborne *Chair of Linguistics*

[School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences](#)

### Overview

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[n.gisborne@ed.ac.uk](mailto:n.gisborne@ed.ac.uk)

Phone: 0131 650 3600

Willingness to take Ph.D. students: Yes

### Research Interests

My work falls at the intersection of theoretical linguistics and the study of the English language, both diachronic and synchronic. I have worked on lexical semantics, predication, and verb argument structure, as well as noun phrase structure, nominal predication, and relative clauses. I have looked at the synchronic analysis of present-day English; historical data from Old English to early Modern English; and Hong Kong English. I have been concerned to present my findings within a robust and well theorised formal framework, and to see how a declarative monostratal theory of grammar needs to be adapted to encompass facts of language change and variation. My main theoretical commitments are to cognitive and functionalist frameworks. I am also concerned with how an understanding of the structures of other languages informs our understanding of English.

### Biography

I was educated at University College London, in the English Department and the Linguistics Department.

### Visiting and Research Positions

2012-	Professor of Linguistics
2002-2012	Lecturer then Senior Lecturer, University of Edinburgh.
1997-2001	Assistant Professor, University of Hong Kong.
1994-1997	English Language Adviser [=Teaching Fellow in English Language], Faculty of English, University of Cambridge.

### Teaching

Syntax, semantics, and lexical semantics from pre-Honours to MSc.

### Administrative Roles

At different times I have had various administrative roles, including

### Research outputs

#### The semantics of definite expressions and the grammaticalization of THE

Research output: Contribution to journal › Article

#### Theory and data in cognitive linguistics INTRODUCTION

Research output: Contribution to journal › Editorial

#### Grammaticalization and Construction Grammar

Research output: Chapter in Book/Report/Conference proceeding › Chapter (peer-reviewed)

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### Research activities & awards

#### Edinburgh Studies in Theoretical Linguistics

Activity: Editorial work or peer review of publications › Editorial activity

#### Language Sciences

Activity: Editorial work or peer review of publications › Editorial activity

#### New Reflections on Grammaticalisation V

Activity: Participation in conference, seminar or training course › Participation in conference

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### Research projects

#### English Predicative Constructions

Project: Research

#### Linguistics of Contemporary English first

Director of Studies/Personal Tutor  
Convenor of Board of Studies  
Member of School Management Committee  
Member of College Undergraduate Studies Committee  
Director of MSc English Language (several times)  
Director of MSc Applied Linguistics  
PG Advisor for Linguistics and English Language  
Member of the committee of the LAGB

**international conference**

Project: Research

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**English Historical Linguistics 13th International Conference 2004**

Project: Research

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## Research Groups

Meaning and Grammar Research Group

English Language Research Group

## Qualifications

1989 BA in English, First Class Honours, University of London (University College).

1991 MA in Modern English Language, University of London (University College).

1996 PhD in Linguistics, University of London (University College).

## Websites

[School webpage](#)

[Personal webpage](#)

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