

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Veranstalter | Prof. Dr. Thomas Berg |
| Thema | Adjectives [AA-V2a/b, ENG-11, AA-W, AA-M1, AA-M3, AA-M9, AA-M10] |
| Art der Veranstaltung | Seminar II |
| Veranstaltungsnummer | 53-518 |
| Zeit | 2st. Di 16-18 |
| Raum | Phil 1269 |
| Beginn | 5. April 2011 |

Adjectives are intriguing objects which exhibit strange, if not contradictory behaviour. Although they usually assign properties to nouns (e.g. *the tall building*), they may fully ignore this function in cases like *animate noun* for example where the noun is anything but animate. Adjectives occur in different syntactic positions with highly different functions. In *an old friend*, we do not know whether the referent is old in age or whether the friendship has lasted long. However, no such ambiguity arises in *my friend is old*. Some adjectives occur only predicatively (**an ill child*), others only attributively (**the entrance is main*). Many show a skewing one way or the other. The attributive and predicative meaning of some adjectives may diverge radically, as in *the late president – the president is late*. Adjectives may turn into nouns (e.g. *the poor*), may behave like adverbs (e.g. *a quick cigarette*) and even resemble (relative) clauses in functional terms (e.g. *the people present*). In English, they bear a stronger resemblance to nouns than to verbs. The order of adjectives is subject to rather subtle constraints (e.g. *a grey crumbling tower*).

These and many other features of adjectives will hopefully whet your appetite for this course. We will examine whether all these traits can be incorporated into a unified theory of adjectives and determine the place that adjectives occupy in the overall system of word classes in English.

Course requirements:

Regular attendance
Oral report
Term paper

Recommended reading:

Bhat, D.N. Shankara: The adjectival category. Criteria for differentiation and identification. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1994.
Ferris, Connor: The meaning of syntax. A study in the adjectives of English. London: Longman, 1993.
Warren, Beatrice: Classifying adjectives. Göteborg: Göteborg University Press, 1984.

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit: | Di und Mi 18-19 Uhr, Phil 101 |
|---|--------------------------------------|