

Veranstaltungskommentar

## **Seminar Ia: Einführung in die englische Linguistik**

Prof. Dr. Robert Fuchs

Language is arguably the most fascinating characteristic of humankind, since it is our essential means to relate to each other as social beings. As such, it is an expression of how we perceive, construct, and interact with our environment, and its use comprises a range of cognitive processes, from spontaneous, almost unconscious choice of words to planned and well-reflected discourse. In this introductory class, we will take the example of the English language as one of the most extensively researched languages of the world to describe the nature of language in its structure, conceptual quality, and socio-communicative function. In detail, the class will commence with the basic design features of human language and the history of English.

We will investigate the sound system of English, basic meaningful units of meaning, take a look at how morphemes, words and phrases are combined, and discuss general theories trying to account for the meaning of words and utterances. Beyond these core concerns of (English) linguistics, we will introduce communicative and functional principles of language and survey key concepts of sociolinguistics. The class will be held as an interactive lecture, leaving space for discussions and in-class tasks. Materials will be distributed throughout the semester and a list of relevant literature will be handed out at the beginning of the class. Students will need to read an assigned chapter from a textbook in preparation for most of the sessions.

Participation in one of the two tutorials is obligatory. They take place on Wednesdays 10 am - 12 pm and Thursdays 4 pm - 6 pm. Students who are not available during at least one of these times cannot take this course.