

Vorlesungsverzeichnis Sommersemester 2022

Prof. Siemund

Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik

II	Varieties of English (2 SWS) – auf Englisch Do 10-12	Siemund, Peter
----	---	----------------

Varieties of English

Whoever has travelled the British Isles will know that people there just do not talk English the way it is taught abroad. A mere 10 to 15 percent speak Received Pronunciation (RP), the accent used for most official communication and the representation of Britain abroad. Even worse, once one has mastered the accent of a particular region, such as Yorkshire or Merseyside, one is often confronted with special vocabulary and, worst of all, with unfamiliar grammatical constructions or familiar constructions in unfamiliar usage: *Herself is after returning from Dublin* (Irish English). Looking beyond Britain opens the door for many additional complications, especially when considering the New Englishes of India, Africa, and Southeast Asia as well as the various Pidgin and Creole Englishes.

Of course, many of these differences in relation to standard English can be explained by taking recourse to the historical development of English including its colonial expansion. One could plausibly argue that regional varieties represent the English of an earlier historical stage, or are products of contact with the indigenous languages spoken in the former colonies. Such an approach, for instance, can easily explain the differences in pronunciation across varieties of English. However, it is also valuable to assess English non-standard varieties against the backdrop of other languages, as they often turn out to follow the cross-linguistic mainstream more closely than standard English.

The aim of this seminar is twofold. First of all, it intends to familiarize you with the 'real' Englishes of the British Isles and other parts of the English speaking world (America, Australia, India, Singapore, etc.) and the wealth of striking phenomena found across them. Secondly, we will make an effort to go beyond a discussion of the various regional and historical data in isolation, but rather draw together the general tendencies and regularities always with a language universal perspective in mind.

Course requirements: Presentation + term paper

Burchfield, Robert (ed.) (1994) *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Volume V. English in Britain and Overseas: Origins and Developments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Siemund, Peter, Julia Davydova and Georg Maier (2012) *The Amazing World of Englishes: A Practical Introduction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Siemund, Peter (2013) *Varieties of English: A Typological Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.