

Veranstalter:	Tayo Takada
Thema:	Syntax
Art der Veranstaltung:	Seminar Ib
Veranstaltungsnummer:	53-512
Zeit:	2st., Fr 12:15 - 13:45
Raum:	Phil 1219
Beginn:	04. April 2014

Course description:

This course will familiarize students with the structure of English sentences such as the following:

One morning, I shot an elephant in my pajamas. How he got in my pajamas I don't know. (Groucho Marx in *Animal Crackers* 1930)

This old joke is based, not on the double meaning of an individual word, but a group of words. (Specifically, *in my pajamas* can be used to describe the location of the elephant or the location at which the shooting took place.) Syntactic ambiguities like this can be resolved by drawing tree diagrams to visualize dependencies between groups of words and we will learn to do just that.

Having mastered the tools of the trade we will put them to the test when trying to answer some broader questions in syntax: How do young children acquire the ability to understand and produce sentences? How are syntactic structures stored in and retrieved from the brain anyways? What are major differences between English and German syntax?

Special attention will be given to a comparison between formal vs. functional approaches to syntax. (Formal approaches focus on mathematical elegance, whereas functional approaches emphasize that, just like words, syntactic structures are meaningful.)

Requirements:

Regular attendance, active participation, written summaries of and comments on reading assignments, term paper

Suggested reading:

Burton-Roberts, Noel (1986). *Analysing Sentences: An Introduction to English Syntax*. London and New York: Longman.

Sprechstunde während der Vorlesungszeit:	Fr 15–16 Uhr, Phil 1163
Sprechstunden während der Semesterferien:	To be announced