

Veranstalter	JP Dr. Eva Berlage
Thema	Differences in British and American Grammar [AA-V1ab, AA-V2ab, ENG-10, ENG-11, ENGAGE M4, ENGAGE M6, MOTION]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar III
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-517
Zeit	Mi 10-12
Raum	Phil 1219
Beginn	31. März 2016

Note: This course runs for a full two hours each session (10:00-12:00am on Wednesdays).

In addition, we will have the following four sessions:

Thursday, 31 March and Friday, 1 April 2016: 8:30-10:00 and 10:15-11:45

The course finishes with a final exam on 11 May 2016.

It is well known that British and American English show systematic contrasts on the levels of pronunciation (e.g. the use of postvocalic /t/ in North American English), spelling (e.g. *theatre* vs. *theater*) and vocabulary (e.g. *boot* vs. *trunk*). What is less well known is the fact that the two varieties of English also differ on the levels of morphology and syntax. This course sets out to explore such differences on the basis of current empirical research (e.g. Rohdenburg/Schlüter (eds.) 2009).

We will discuss different cases of grammatical variation in British and American English, focussing on the strength of the respective contrast. Among the contrasts to be discussed are

- the regular and irregular past tense formation of verbs such as *learn* and *dream*
- differences involving the use of the present perfect and the preterite (e.g. *he has learnt* vs. *he learnt*)
- the use of the subjunctive, which has been claimed to be a genuine American feature (e.g. *He insisted that Peter go*).

The systematic study of such phenomena forms the basis for a theoretical classification of British and American English along a set of different parameters.

Students will be expected to base their presentations on their own corpus studies. Questions on how to retrieve the data (with the help of online corpora) will be answered in the course.

Requirements: Regular attendance, Oral presentation, Term paper

Selected Literature:

Rohdenburg, Günter and Julia Schlüter (eds.) 2009. *One Language, Two Grammars? Differences between British and American English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

A comprehensive list of references will be provided in the course.