

Veranstalter:	<b>Steffen Schaub, M.A.</b>
Modul:	<b>Comparing British and American English</b> [AA7, AA9, ENG 04, ENG 10, ENG 11, ENG 5, ENGAGE M01a, ENGAGE M02, IAA 20, LAA 11, LAA, MuB-E]
Art der Veranstaltung:	<b>Seminar II</b>
Veranstaltungsnummer:	<b>53-513</b>
Zeit:	<b>2st. Fri 10-12</b>
Raum:	<b>(online)</b>
Beginn:	<b>15.10.2021</b>

### Description

“England and America are two countries divided by a common language.”  
(George Bernard Shaw)

British and American English are, arguably, the two most influential standard varieties of English in the world, at least from a historical and cultural perspective. American English began at the same time as William Shakespeare was writing his plays: English (in the form we now call ‘Early Modern English’) established a permanent presence in North America from 1607 onwards. The two English-speaking communities were geographically distant and living under very different conditions. They would eventually detach – not just culturally or politically, but also linguistically.

Today, humorous and professional observers note that British and American English are quite different: George Bernard Shaw is claimed to have said that “England and America are two countries divided by a common language”, while Oscar Wilde wrote in 1887 that “[w]e have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of course, the language”. Even speakers with no linguistic training will have little trouble telling British and American speakers apart, and there is a plethora of Internet videos highlighting the differences between American and British English.

In this seminar, we will take a closer look at the differences (and commonalities) between British and American English. We will explore features on various levels of linguistic description, ranging from differences in sound and pronunciation, lexis as well as grammar. The seminar will also include diachronic and dialectological perspectives. We will compare the two varieties mainly using representative corpora of British and American English, including the Brown family of corpora, GloWbE, the British National Corpus (BNC 1994 and 2014) as well as the Open American National Corpus (OANC).

This seminar is suitable for anyone who has completed an *Introduction to (English) Linguistics* course. Prior knowledge of corpus-linguistic methodology is helpful, but not required.

### Credit

Depending on the degree program and module, students can earn credit by (a) recording a short video presentation on a course-related topic, (b) completing written assignments, or (c) writing a term paper on a sociolinguistic research topic of their choice. Some modules may need a combination of these requirements for successful credit.

### Meetings

The course will be conducted entirely online. We will meet in video conferences (on Zoom) during the course time listed above. All course materials and links will be provided in an OpenOlat course. The link to the course will be sent via E-Mail (STINE) after the course registration period. The course will be held in English.

Sprechstunden im Semester:	<b>s. Sprechstundenliste</b>
Sprechstunden in der vorlesungsfreien Zeit:	<b>s. Sprechstundenliste</b>