

<b>Veranstalter:</b>	<b>Prof. Dr. Peter Siemund</b>
<b>Thema:</b>	<b>The Structure of English – An Introductory Survey [AA-A1, ENG-4, ENG-5, AA-W] – Kernzeit</b>
<b>Art der Veranstaltung:</b>	<b>Vorlesung</b>
<b>Veranstaltungsnummer:</b>	<b>53-503</b>
<b>Zeit:</b>	<b>2st., Di 16-18</b>
<b>Raum:</b>	<b>Phil B</b>
<b>Beginn:</b>	<b>18. Oktober 2011</b>

**Course description:**

The English that we speak today has very little in common with the West Germanic dialects that were taken to the British Isles some 1500 years ago when Frisians, Angles and Jutes began to fill a power vacuum left by the receding Roman Empire. Once implanted there, English came under the influence of Celtic, Danish, Norwegian, and French. When English was taken to North America, Australia and many other parts of the world, contact with other languages continued.

Celtic, Scandinavian and Romance influence is easily detectable in today's English. Words like *palatable*, *divorce* and *beef* are imports from Romance. The pronouns *they*, *them* and *their* are Scandinavian in origin. *Glen* and *bog* can be traced to Celtic. Influence from these languages on English phonology, morphology and syntax is less easily detectable, but it is clearly there. Some scholars have called English a Creole language, as language contact is such a dominant part of its development.

Its history as a contact language can also be held responsible for the fact that English has significantly developed away from German, even the two languages are closely related genetically. The advanced learner of English with a German background is often puzzled by the intricacies of English grammar. For instance, does the phrase *the man in the tree's hat* mean that there is a man in the tree with a hat on his head or that there is a hat in the tree with a man on it, or both? Why can't we translate *My guitar broke a string* into German using the same syntactic structure? Is it an accident that we can passivize indirect objects in English, but not in German: *I was given a book* / *\*Ich wurde ein Buch gegeben*. Why can we say *This bed has been slept in by Queen Victoria*, but not *\*This bed has been slept in by me*? Most of these subtle problems and differences are not accessible to the uninitiated observer.

This lecture series offers a comprehensive overview of the architecture of the English language. We will survey important components of the English grammar with the aim of characterising English as a language type. The focus will be put on the phenomena themselves rather than the technical apparatus necessary to analyse them. We will primarily discuss data from English, but also include other languages, notably German, where appropriate.

The lecture series is particularly suitable for B.A. students who need some first orientation, but will also prove helpful for senior students in their preparation for the final exam.

Textual basis:

Brinton, Laurel J. (2000): *The Structure of Modern English: A Linguistic Introduction*.  
Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Brinton, Laurel J. and Donna Brinton (2010): *The Linguistic Structure of Modern English*.  
Amsterdam: Benjamins.

**Sprechstunde während der  
Vorlesungszeit:**

**Di und Do 14-15 Uhr (mit Anmeldung),  
Phil 107**

**Sprechstunden während der  
vorlesungsfreien Zeit:**

**Di 16.8.11, 30.8.11, 13.9.11, 11.10.11,  
15 Uhr (mit Anmeldung), Phil 107**