

English Linguistics

Instructor: Kurt Erbach
Time: Tuesday, Wednesday 8:15-9:45
Place: HG-RPW5 / 1.002 (Übungsraum C)

Office: RPW 5, 2.005
Office hours: Wednesday 12:00 – 1:00 or by appointment
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Course description

This course surveys key topics in English linguistics relevant to Masters of Education in English students. This course takes a descriptive approach to the study of the English language and its characteristics that seem particularly idiosyncratic. In particular, we will look at characteristics of English phonology and morphology that superficially look like irregularities but underlyingly contain information about the way that English has changed over time. We will also look across dialects of English to see the variety that has emerged and persisted since speakers of the language have left the island on which the language developed. Additionally, we will look at the sociological factors that have shaped these dialects. In sum, students will engage in linguistic description and analyses of English in order to deepen their understanding of the language they teach.

Learning goals

- Develop an understanding of English Linguistics and its relevance to English language teaching.
- Develop skills in linguistic description
- Develop skills in academic writing
- Develop skills in academic discourse

Course materials

The textbook used for this course is [Smith and Kim \(2017\), *This Language, a River*](#). Students need not purchase the textbook, as all of the relevant material will be covered in class. If a student cannot attend class for any reason, the relevant section of the book will be made available to them so they can review what was missed in class.

Course requirements

Studienleistung will be based on course content. Question sets will be given periodically throughout the semester, and students will be given the opportunity to answer the questions in groups during class, or individually at home. Students must complete 5 question sets by the end of the semester in order to pass the class and take the exam. Alternatively, students may choose to prepare a short essay (0.5-1 page) on both an original question prompted by the content of the class and a work-in-progress answer to the question based on independent research. If a student is unable to attend class the day a question set is given, then the questions (assigned or independently conceived) can be written-up and submitted to the teacher by the start of the following day of class, or at another time agreed upon by student and the instructor.

Prüfung: This course will culminate in a written, take-home assignment. The assignment is to use the skills gained in this class to characterize the English used in a piece of literature. The students are allowed to choose the piece of literature and the characteristics of the language that will be the focus of the analysis. For example, the student might choose *The Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys and characterize the British English or the Jamaican English used by different characters or the language of the author herself by analyzing particular lexical items, morphosyntax, etc. Alternatives can be negotiated.

Accessibility

If for any reason a student finds it difficult to access the classroom or course materials, or a student's personal needs are not being met in some way, then please contact the instructor in order to resolve the issue.

Common courtesy

Students are expected to behave in accordance with the [LSA Revised Ethics Statement](#). In summary, students are expected to maintain an organized and respectful learning environment for your peers. It is expected that discourse will occur without interruptions, aggression, or harassment. Additionally, please do not hold private conversations in class. If there is any urgent matter that you must attend to, please feel free to leave class and follow up with the instructor in order to find out what was missed. Please silence phones and other electronic devices during class, and please do not use messengers or social media.

Course schedule

(subject to change)

Week 1: Oct 8: Part 1: Introduction
Oct 9:

Week 2: Oct 15: Part 2: Key Categories, Morpho-Syntactic and Semantic
Oct 16:

Week 3: Oct 22: Part 3: Historical Linguistics
Oct 23:

Week 4: Oct 29: Part 4: Phonetics
Oct 30:

Week 5: Nov 5: Part 5: Comparative Linguistics: English and German
Nov 6:

Week 6: Nov 12: Part 6: Review
Nov 13:

Week 7: Nov 19: Part 7: Germanic, Roman, and Norse Sources of Irregularity
Nov 20:

Week 8: Nov 26:
Nov 27:

Week 9: Dec 3:
Dec 4:

Week 10: Dec 10: Part 8: French and Latin Sources of Irregularity
Dec 11:

Week 11: Dec 17:
Dec 18:

Week 12: Jan 7: Part 9: Phonetic and Morpho-Syntactic Irregularities
Jan 8:

Week 13: Jan 14:
Jan 15:

Week 14: Jan 21: Part 10: Global Englishes
Jan 22:

Week 15: Jan 28:
Jan 29: