

## English in Contrast with the Languages of the World

BA Language Science - WP1

Europäische Sprachen: Sprache im Gebrauch - mit Bezug auf das Englische

Hauptseminar 2 SWS ECTS-Punkte: 6

Dinstag, 10-12 Uhr - R. 1.27 **Tuesdays 11-12 MS Teams**

Lecturer: Annemarie Verkerk

First class: (07-04-2020) 05-05-2020

Last class: 14-07-2020

Examination deadlines: tba

Moodle key:

### **Description**

We may think of languages such as Maori, Tagalog, Swahili, Lakhota or even Hungarian as exotic or unfamiliar, however, when we take a cross-linguistic perspective on the world's languages we can observe systematic commonalities and differences. In this course, we consider the English language from a cross-linguistic point of view and study some of these commonalities and differences in morphology and syntax. The main handbooks to be used are Velupillai's 2012 "An Introduction to Linguistic Typology" and Huddleston & Pullum's 2005 "A Student's Introduction to English Grammar". In addition, we will read recent papers on relevant topics, including on the World Englishes, WEIRD societies and languages, and areal typology.

### **Selected readings**

Huddleston, Rodney, and Geoffrey K. Pullum. 2005. *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Siemund, Peter. 2008. *Pronominal Gender in English: A Study of English Varieties from a Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. London: Routledge.

Velupillai, Viveka. 2012. *An Introduction to Linguistic Typology*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

### **Requirements**

Active participation in class

Weekly assignments

Written exam

This class is graded through a written examination, either a term paper or an exam. I have chosen to assign you an exam, as I think this covers the breadth of the course better than a term paper. Given the corona virus situation, it might not be possible to sit the exam 'live' at Uni, in which case I'll prepare a take-home exam. The questions from the weekly assignments, in one way or another, will form the basis for the exam.

## Course Schedule

Due to the corona virus situation, the summer semester of 2020 at the UdS has been postponed to start in the week of 04-05-2020. Nevertheless, there are **non-obligatory** course offerings for week 1-4 that have been 'cancelled'. Please see below.

	date	class	reading Velupillai (2012)	reading Huddleston & Pullum (2005)
1	07-04-2020	Intro	-	-
2	14-04-2020	Categories of grammar	-	-
3	21-04-2020	English, a WEIRD language	-	-
4	28-04-2020	English, a Standard Average European language	-	-
5	05-05-2020	Typology and universals	chapter 1&2	chapter 1&2
6	12-05-2020	Morphology	chapter 5	chapter 16
7	19-05-2020	The lexicon and its classes	chapter 6	chapter 6
8	26-05-2020	Nominal categories and syntax	chapter 7	chapter 5
9	02-06-2020	Prepositions and preposition phrases	DeLancey (2005)	chapter 7
10	09-06-2020	Verbal categories	chapter 8	chapter 3
11	16-06-2020	Simple clauses	chapter 9	chapter 4
12	23-06-2020	Word order	chapter 10	chapter 15
13	30-06-2020	Complex clauses	chapter 11	bits of chapter 10-14
14	07-07-2020	Speech acts and politeness	chapter 12	chapter 9
15	14-07-2020	Negation and related phenomena	Miestamo (2007)	chapter 8

Several of the videos below come from this set of E-Lectures by Jürgen Handke:

Linguistics 201 – The Structure of English

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLRIMXVU7SGRLxULxRrVjWbn-XwaUjgz-B>

### 1. 07-04-2020 Introduction

**You will receive** an introduction e-mail about the course.

**There are two lectures to watch on youtube.** The first was made for the purpose of this course and is an introduction to linguistic typology:

<https://youtu.be/af2T3nTsGFI>

The second one is called “Long and Short Words: Language Typology”, and it is an informal short lecture on morphological typology:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxARj07jFp0>

**Then there is an assignment:** 1 Organizing your knowledge on English grammar.

### 2. 14-04-2020 Categories of grammar

**Watching:** Videos on parts of speech in English, select them yourself

**Reading:** Martin Haspelmath. 2001. "Word Classes and Parts of Speech." In: Baltes, Paul B. & Smelser, Neil J. (eds.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Amsterdam: Pergamon, 16538–16545.

**Assignment:** 2 Categories of grammar

### 3. 21-04-2020 English as a WEIRD language

**Watching:** “Fantastic Features We Don't Have In The English Language”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYIVJlmjLEc>

**Reading I:** Cysouw, Michael. 2011. ‘Quantitative Explorations of the World-Wide Distribution of Rare Characteristics, or: The Exceptionality of Northwestern European Languages’. In *Expecting the Unexpected: Exceptions in Grammar*, edited by Horst J Simon and Heike Wiese, 411–31. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

**Reading II:** Henrich, Joseph, Steven J Heine, and Ara Norenzayan. 2010. ‘The Weirdest People in the World?’ *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33: 61–135.

Feel free to skim through this as it’s very long, but read in detail the commentary by Asifa Majid and Stephen C. Levinson on the last page.

**Assignment:** 3 English as a WEIRD language

### 4. 28-04-2020 English as a Standard Average European language

**Watching:** “Language Contact”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6qiGbuPp60>

“Standard Average European: The European Sprachbund”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwCfFrskwPk&t=182s>

**Reading:** Haspelmath, Martin. 2001. ‘The European Linguistic Area: Standard Average European’. In *Language Typology and Universals: An International Handbook*, edited by Martin Haspelmath, Ekkehard König, Wulf Oesterreicher, and Wolfgang Raible, 2:1492–1510. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

**Assignment:** 4 English as a Standard Average European language

### 5. 05-05-2020 Intro to Typology and universals & Intro to English grammar

**Watching:** (in case you haven’t watched it yet) “What is linguistic typology?”:

<https://youtu.be/af2T3nTsGFI>

“SYN106 – The Sentence I” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ble3vCdHWU4>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapters 1 & 2 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapters 1 & 2

**Assignment:** 5 Introduction

### 6. 12-05-2020 Morphology

**Watching:** “Words and morphemes”:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMbi\\_KyZg\\_s&list=PLKgdsSsfw-fYcJ90tLikJRbXv174g6FUw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMbi_KyZg_s&list=PLKgdsSsfw-fYcJ90tLikJRbXv174g6FUw)

(“Morphological processes”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDh2W7Gztes> )

“Structural Typology”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ka5oH7gHOlw>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 5 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 16

**Assignment:** 6 Morphology

### 7. 19-05-2020 The lexicon and its classes

**Watching:** “Word classes and syntactic constituency”:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld0hSrPl3aA&list=PLKgdsSsfw-fYCJ90tLikJRbXvI74g6FUw>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 6 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 6

**Assignment:** 7 The lexicon and its classes

## 8. 26-05-2020 Nominal categories and syntax

**Watching:**

“Head Nouns - Noun Classes”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTWPtIHG2LQ>

“Head Nouns - Noun Features”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o672gnPZiec>

“The Noun Phrase in PDE”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrpF\\_IiRHQA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrpF_IiRHQA)

This is about 50 minutes of video watching, if that is too much, I would suggest to have a quick look at their topics and decide which topic you should focus on given what you already know.

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 7 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 5

**Assignment:** 8 Nominal categories and syntax

## 9. 02-06-2020 Prepositions and preposition phrases

**Watching:** nothing to watch

**Reading:** DeLancey, Scott. 2005. ‘Adpositions as a Non-Universal Category’. In *Linguistic Diversity and Language Theories*, edited by Zygmunt Frajzyngier, Adam Hodges, and David S. Rood, 185-202. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

& Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 7

**Assignment:** 9 Prepositions and preposition phrases

## 10. 09-06-2020 Verbal categories

**Watching:** “The Verb in PDE, Part I, II, III”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORHKhzmUSKc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUIC2uG6Q7w>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=othmJr4mKuQ>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 8 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 3

**Assignment:** 10 Verbal categories

## 11. 16-06-2020 Simple clauses

**Watching:** “Syntactic Functions in PDE” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb\\_RuFzK7Ao](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb_RuFzK7Ao)

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 9 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 4

**Assignment:** 11 Simple clauses

## 12. 23-06-2020 Word order

**Watching:** “Word order” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHacpFB2kK4>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 10 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 15

**Assignment:** 12 Word order

## 13. 30-06-2020 Complex clauses

Other topics on complex clauses covered by Huddleston & Pullum (2005) include Chapter 12, on **grade and comparison**, and Chapter 13, on **non-finite clauses and clauses without verbs**. Unfortunately we don't have time to cover these.

**Watching:** nothing to watch

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 11 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 10, 11, 14 (bits and pieces)

**Assignment:** 13 Complex clauses

#### 14. 07-07-2020 Speech acts and politeness

**Watching:** "Speech acts and communicative maxims"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMaNGweLPyo&list=PLKgdsSsfw-fYCJ90tLikJRbXv174g6FUw&index=12>

**Reading:** Velupillai (2012) chapter 12 & Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 9

**Assignment:** 14 Speech acts and politeness

#### 15. 14-07-2020 Negation and related phenomena

**Watching:** "The negation system": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g98hPwW1KTo>

"Sign language negation: From gesture to grammar":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bMgbsoFsf4>

Alternative viewing: „niet en geen, learn Dutch negation“

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvSIC\\_ZhPxs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvSIC_ZhPxs)

**Reading:** Miestamo, Matti. 2007. 'Negation: An Overview of Typological Research'. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 1 (5): 552–70.

& Huddleston & Pullum (2005) chapter 8

**Assignment:** 15 Negation and related phenomena