

Beispiele für Projektbeschreibungen:

Beispiel 1 (qualitative Forschung)

Project Name: Non-verbal Communication in Malta

Team Members: Adam Schwarz, Eva Weiß, Abel Grau

Hypothesis: "Non-verbal communication in Malta shows elements of both Arabic and British culture."

Description: There are already a number of descriptions of British and Arabic gestures (cf., e.g., Miller 1999 and Ben Nemsı 1998). However, it hasn't been analyzed so far whether the British occupation of the originally Arabic nation of Malta has had any effect on the use of gestures. We will carry out a qualitative study with three exchange students from Malta. On the basis of two language guides, for English (UK) and for Arabic (no subclassification), we will select ten typically British and ten typically Arabic gestures. We will then interview the three informants separately and ask whether they know each of the gestures and what they mean to them (i.e. we will check their passive knowledge, not their active usage). We will also give the informants the chance to comment on the use of the gestures (When is the gesture used? Who uses the gesture? Etc.). (In addition, we will look for informants on various discussion forums on the internet and send the scanned pictures out to the volunteers). We will then determine to what degree Maltese non-verbal communication is a mixture of British and Arabic communicative habits. We will discuss our results with the three informants together and might thus get some more information.

Form of Publication: brief video contribution for the local university TV station

Beispiel 2 (nicht-experimentelle Forschung)

Project Name: Address Form in English Letters

Team Members: Adam Schwarz, Eva Weiß, Abel Grau

Hypothesis: "The use of *Dear sir(s)* as an address form in American, British and Irish letters has by now died out."

Description: In 1985 Baker et al. analyzed letters to three university administrations (one in the US, one in the UK and one in Ireland), which showed that apart from gender-sensitive address forms (e.g. *Dear madam or sir*) and neutral address forms (e.g. *To whom it may concern*) the purely male address forms *Dear sir(s)* were still used not infrequently (especially in Ireland). We will use the same method that Baker et al. used and check whether the purely male and politically incorrect forms have died out now after 20 years.

Form of Publication: internet website

Beispiel 3 (experimentelle Forschung)

Project Name: American and British Greetings

Team Members: Adam Schwarz, Eva Weiß, Abel Grau

Questions: "Do American and English students differ in their choice of greeting forms in formal situations?"

Description: The difference between national varieties is hardly shed light on as far as pragmatic differences are concerned. Although there are some studies on American greeting habits and some studies on British greeting habits (e.g. the bibliography by Brown 2000), there are no comparable data because the studies are from different decades, pursue different methods or observe different situations. This void shall be filled by the following study. The study wants to check whether Americans and English students choose different forms of salutations in a specific situation. We will carry out the following experiment. Eva Weiß and Abel Grau will look for 20 American

exchange students and 20 British exchange students and claim that our “professor” needs help in a sociological study on American/British culture. We will then give each of them a specific time when they should show up in the “professor’s” “office”. The “professor” will be played by Adam Schwarz, who has gray hair and is already in his 16th semester, the “office” shall be one of the professors’ offices. When the American or English volunteer enters after the “professor’s” *Come in* we will note each form of salutation and introduction. We will not only look for exclusive differences between AmE and EngE, but also for statistical differences (a phenomenon often forgotten in works on national varieties).

Form of Publication: seminar paper