

HS GEOGRAPHICAL, SOCIAL AND FUNCTIONAL VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

Summer Semester 2008

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Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. and 4:00-5:00 p.m.
Class Time:	Wednesdays, 8:30-10:00 a.m.
Room:	HS 1132 KG I
Overview:	The seminar will delve into various aspects of variational linguistics with respect to English. We will also connect the fact of language variation with political issues.
Credit:	leading a section in class; exam or seminar paper

SYLLABUS

<i>Apr 23</i>	organizational issues; RA: Kortmann 2005: 191-252, introductory paper
<i>Apr 30</i>	sociolinguistic methods, models of Englishes; RA: to be announced
<i>May 07</i>	English in the “inner circle”: Standard Englishes in the UK, Ireland, the US, Canada and Australia; RA: to be announced
<i>May 14</i>	<i>no class (Whitsun)</i>
<i>May 21</i>	language variation within the US; RA: WSE ch. 5
<i>May 28</i>	social varieties: African-American Vernacular English, Chicano English, genderlects; WSE ch. 6 + 7.5–7.8
<i>Jun 04</i>	Englishes from the “outer circle”: India, South Africa, Nigeria, Jamaica, Hong Kong; RA: to be announced
<i>Jun 11</i>	functional varieties I: English as a lingua franca; RA: Grzega 2005a
<i>Jun 18</i>	functional varieties II: journalese and headlines, advertising language, legal and administrative style, expert-layperson communication; RA: Crystal 1995: ch. 21 (the relevant sections!)
<i>Jun 25</i>	student projects
<i>Jul 02</i>	student projects
<i>Jul 09</i>	student projects
<i>Jul 16</i>	student projects
<i>Jul 23</i>	student projects

RA = reading assignment

Seminar papers: Those who write seminar paper will have to hand it in by August 31. Project designs are due on June 20.

Exam: Those who write an exam will have to take it on July 25, 2-6 p.m. (room to be announced).

Joachim Grzega, *Regional, Social and Functional Varieties of English Dialects – Introductory Paper*

1. The General Idea of the Course

The seminar will delve into various aspects of variational linguistics with respect to English. In the section on geographical varieties, focus will be on national varieties around the world and on regional variation within American English. Among social varieties, we will particularly deal with African American English and Chicano English. The section on functional varieties will comprehend the following issues: English as an international language, journalese and headlineese, advertising language, legal and administrative style, expert-layperson communication. We will also connect the fact of language variation with political issues.

2. Some Facets

Language comes in different **varieties** (i.e. dialect in a broad sense) that are a sum of **variants** (i.e. concrete linguistic forms of, or for, an abstract entity) for specific **variables** (i.e. abstract entities), e.g. the variable (*dance*) has the phonetic variant [da:ns] in the EngLE variety and the phonetic variant [dæns] in the AmE variety, the variable (*potato*) has the lexical variant *Kartoffel* in the German Standard German variety (GSG) and the lexical variant *Erdapfel* in the Austrian Standard German variety (ASG).

The factors that determine a speaker's choice of variants are, among others, speaker's **origin, profession, place of living, nationality, education, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender, age**—these factors are sometimes called sociolinguistic variables—, but also by factors of a specific **communication situation**, for which Hymes (1964) has created the formula “SPEAKING”: Setting, Participants, Ends (i.e. objectives), Act sequence (i.e. form and content of what is said), Key (i.e. manner, tone, spirit), Instrumentalities (written or oral, formal or informal), Norms of interaction and interpretation (i.e. specific behaviors and properties that attach to speaking), Genre (e.g. sermon, prayer, lecture). To be able to select the right variant in a specific situation speakers need to have **pragmatic, or communicative, competence** (Hymes 1972), i.e. the knowledge of certain conversational maxims and principles. The importance that speakers give to the various maxims decides what linguistic forms or styles are selected, or when the styles are shifted (four basic theories on style-shifting are Labov's “attention to speech” theory, Giles's “speech accommodation” theory, Bell's “audience design” model, and Coupland's “speaker design model” [cf., e.g., Wolfram/Schilling-Estes 1998]).

Varieties cannot only be described **in (ortho)graphic, phonetic (and phonotactic), phonemic, morphological, syntactical and lexical respects**, but also **in pragmatic respects**. By pragmatics we mean the how's and why's of language use, in other words: the analysis of discourse strategies (although the branches of text analysis and discourse analysis—the terms are also used synonymously—are meeting with growing interest, there still remains a lot of research to be carried out). Such analyses require that we strictly **distinguish between form and function**. We can ask what meaning or function a specific linguistic form is supposed to express (**semasiological aspect**) or what linguistic form is needed to express a specific meaning, a specific function (**onomasiological aspect**). Furthermore, in the description of varieties, linguists should not only take into account **exclusive, or qualitative, differences, but also statistical, or quantitative, differences**; moreover, they should not only take into consideration **semantic differences, but also stylistic differences**, or, more generally, not only **denotative differences, but also connotative differences**.

Given this introductory overview we see that there may come up numerous questions for which people may want to get a linguist's assistance, that there are aspects that the layperson may have a misconception of and that there are even crucial phenomena that may go unnoticed in people's conception of language. One example is the realization and acceptance of the phenomenon of **national standard varieties**. For several decades time American, Australian, Canadian English were looked on as regional dialects of English, not as a valuable as the “original” English of Britain (this

was all the more true of English in India, South Africa, Nigeria, etc.). In older studies several linguists denied the existence of separate national varieties, saying that most of the forms of one country would also occur in the other country; they did not distinguish between qualitative and quantitative differences and denotative and connotative differences. Meanwhile, it has been acknowledged by the majority of linguists and language teachers that national varieties have their own rules for both formal and informal situations and should be respected as equally valuable standards. At best, there are separate dictionaries and grammars for each national variety. A lot of scholarly work has already been done on national varieties of English (cf., e.g., CHEL, Hansen/Carls/Lucko 1996), leading to entire models for the development of national Englishes (cf. Kachru 1985, Schneider 2007). However, the studies have mainly focussed on sounds, grammar and vocabulary, while there's still a lot to do as far as the **pragmatic descriptions of national varieties** is concerned. For American and English English the LGSWE includes a few remarks. The differences between national varieties may not be underestimated; they may even lead to communicative breakdown, or at least discomfort.

Furthermore, it can be observed that both natives of English English as well as natives of American English are nowadays in the minority and linguists have come to see non-native English, or rather non-native Englishes, as a phenomenon worth dealing on its own (cf., e.g., Seidlhofer 2004 and Grzega 2005a). We may ask to what degree the observations made with NNE should be integrated into foreign language teaching in a grown EU and globalizing world and whether the growing use of English as an academic language for non-natives of English should also have impact on the selection of communicative patterns.

Within a nation we do not only find regional variation (which was the interest of traditional dialectology), but also social variation (which has been the focus of dialectology since Labov's landmark study in 1966). Among social variation we find the different speech habits of men and women. We should see how we can describe their different styles and cure communicative breakdowns (three basic approaches of gender linguistics are the "female deficit approach," the "cultural difference approach" and the "dominance theory"—cf., e.g., Tannen 1990, Coates 1998 and Grzega 2001a). The generation gap, too, can be felt on the linguistic level: on the one hand studies have focussed on **youth language(s)** (cf., e.g., Stenström/Andersen/Hasund 2002, Neuland 2003), on the other hand there are studies that include analyses of the active or passive linguistic deficiencies (a field known as **linguistic gerontology**), which can be both pathological and non-pathological (cf. Coupland/Coupland/Giles 1991, Thimm 2000). Age-oriented studies should also include the question of how language is used to discriminate against specific social groups or to distance oneself from other social groups. These identity-related goals also play a role for other social varieties, such as ethnic varieties. Among **ethnic varieties** of English African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Chicano English and American Indian English seem to be the best-studied (cf., e.g., Wolfram/Schilling-Estes 1998), while others still lack more thorough field-work. The problem of in-group language leads us to still another aspect: the **communication between the expert and the layperson**, or, in a more general way, **registers and styles**. The issue of expert-layperson communication is especially vital in a knowledge society and it has already become a daily issue for many people due to Wikipedia, an encyclopedia where everybody around the world can contribute (cf. Grzega 2006). The issue of intelligible language has also been part of the so-called "plain English movement", which concerns particularly the use of language in legal and administrative texts (cf., e.g., Cutts/Maher 1986, Cutts 1996).

This decision of using everyday terms or expert terms, or technical terms, is a little bit like **informing vs. advertising**. And the boundaries are not always clear to see, e.g. to what degree does Colgate make your teeth brilliant white? Questions that occur here are: how did advertising language work in former decades, how does it work now, what do people expect of commercials? Although there have been quite a number of works on advertising language, there are still various questions to be answered (cf. Goddard 1998, Gieszinger 2001).

3. Structure of the Course

The first part of the seminar will be dedicated to the elaboration of a core knowledge. The second part shall be dedicated to student projects. For a project, a student should find a specific, still unanswered “pragmatics-oriented” question to be answered in a seminar paper or a project website.

In order to find relevant literature on the topics chosen students are referred to section 4 of this introductory paper. Topics may be of qualitative nature (e.g. historical questions) or of quantitative nature (e.g. the use of specific language forms in different speech (sub-)communities). In the latter instance, empirical analyses will normally be required (cf. Albert/Koster [2002]; for chi-square tests, including Yates correction, cf. also <http://www.unc.edu/~preacher/chisq/chisq.htm>); empirical data can be gathered—depending on the topic—through

- text analyses (i.e. “text” in a broad sense)
- questionnaires
- interviews (with interviews that want to record “natural” speech, interviewers must find means to reduce the monitoring effect to a minimum, as did Labov [1966]) (transcription of speech should conform with one of the usual systems [cf., e.g., system in the Reader]).

All students must hand in their project design at the latest by the date indicated in the syllabus.

Each student will get 40 minutes for the presentation of a topic in class. In these 40 minutes, the student should

- (a) impart the basic knowledge of their research field, i.e. not in the form of a lecture up front, but in the form of activities of all participants (i.e. Jean-Pol Martin’s *Lernen durch Lehren* method, as described in Grzega [2003b, 2005a]) (e.g. x min. group work and 1½x min. plenary discussion of results and production of *linearity a posteriori*)
- (b) present the own project design and first results
- (c) be open for discussing results in class.

The final version of a project will have to be handed in by the date indicated in the syllabus. Contents and form of a project should be based on the style sheet available on my Course Website. The projects can be presented in an academic or in a non-academic language, but the method must always be academic. Model student projects are gathered on the website “Sprachwissenschaft für die Öffentlichkeit” (<http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVgISW/schule.htm>).

4. Quoted and Recommended Literature

- Brown, Steven / Attardo, Salvatore (2000), *Understanding Language Structure, Interaction, and Variation: An Introduction to Applied Linguistics and Sociolinguistics for Nonspecialists*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- CHEL = Hogg, Richard M. et al. (eds.) (1992-2001), *Cambridge History of the English Language*, 6 vol., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Coates, Jennifer (ed.) (1998), *Language and Gender: A Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Coupland, Nikolai / Coupland, Justine / Giles, Howard (1991), *Language, Society and the Elderly: Discourse, Identity and Ageing*, Oxford / Cambridge (Mass.): Blackwell.
- Crystal, David (1995), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, David (1997), *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, David (2002), *English as a Global Language*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cutts, Martin (1996), *The Plain English Guide*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cutts, Martin / Maher, C. (1986), *The Plain English Story*, Stockport: Plain English Campaign.
- Gieszinger, Sabine (2001), *The History of Advertising Language*, [Münchner Universitäts-Schriften – Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie 23], Frankfurt (Main): Lang.
- Goddard, Angela (1998), *The Language of Advertising*, London: Routledge.
- Goffman, Erving (1955), “On Face-Work: An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction”, *Psychiatry* 18: 213-231.
- Grzega, Joachim (2000), “On the Description of National Varieties: Examples from (German and Austrian) German and (English and American) English”, *Linguistik Online* 7 (<http://www.linguistik-online.de>).
- Grzega, Joachim (2001a), “Feministische Linguistik: Anmerkungen zur soziolinguistischen Variable ‘Geschlecht’”, in: Grzega, Joachim, *Sprachwissenschaft ohne Fachchinesisch: 7 aktuelle Studien für alle Sprachinteressierten*, 27-40, Aachen: Shaker.
- Grzega, Joachim (2001b), “Sprache, Kommunikation und die ältere Generation: Einige Beobachtungen”, in: Grzega, Joachim, *Sprachwissenschaft ohne Fachchinesisch: 7 aktuelle Studien für alle Sprachinteressierten*, 41-56, Aachen: Shaker.
- Grzega, Joachim (2005a), “Reflections on Concepts of English for Europe: British English, American English, Euro-

- English, Global English.” *Journal for EuroLinguistix* 2: 44-64.
- Grzega, Joachim (2005b), “Towards Global English via Basic Global English (BGE): Socioeconomic and Pedagogic Ideas for a European and Global Language (with Didactic Examples for Native Speakers of German)”, *Journal for EuroLinguistix* 2: 65-164. (www.eurolinguistix.com)
- Grzega, Joachim (2006), “How Onomasiologists Can Help with Contributing to Wikipedia”, *Onomasiology Online* 7: 1-15. (<http://www.onomasiology.de>)
- Hansen, Klaus / Carls, Uwe / Lucko, Peter (1996), *Die Differenzierung des Englischen in nationale Varianten*, Berlin: Schmidt.
- Hymes, Dell H. (1964), “Toward Ethnographies of Communication: The Analysis of Communicative Events”, *American Anthropologist* 66,6,2: 1-34.
- Hymes, Dell H. (1972), “On Communicative Competence”, in: Pride, J. B. / Holmes, Janet (eds.), *Sociolinguistics*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Kachru, Braj B. (1985), ‘Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: The English language in the outer circle,’ in: Quirk, Randolph et al. (eds.), *English in the World: Teaching and Learning the Language and Literatures*, 11-34, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kortmann, Bernd (2005), *English Linguistics: Essentials*, Berlin: Cornelsen.
- Labov, William (1966), *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*, Diss. Washington.
- LGSWE = Biber, Douglas et al. (1999), *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*, London: Longman.
- Seidlhofer, Barbara (2004), “Research Perspectives on Teaching English as a Lingua Franca”, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 24: 209-239.
- Schneider, Edgar W. (2007), *Postcolonial English: Varieties Around the World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stenström, Anna-Brita / Andersen, Gisle / Hasund, Ingrid Kristine (2002), *Trends in Teenage Talk: Corpus Compilation, Analysis and Findings*, [Studies in Corpus Linguistics 8], Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Tannen, Deborah (1986), *That’s Not What I Meant! How Conversational Style Makes or Breaks Relationships*, New York: Ballantine.
- Tannen, Deborah (1990), *You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation*, New York: Random House.
- Trudgill, Peter / Hannah, Jean (2002), *International English: A Guide to Varieties of Standard English*, 4th ed., London: Arnold.
- Wolfram, Walt / Schilling-Estes, Natalie (1998), *American English*, [Language in Society 24], Malden (Mass.)/Oxford: Blackwell.
- WSE = Wolfram/Schilling-Estes 1998

Information on specialized literature can be found in the most encompassing linguistic bibliography, the MLA bibliography, available via the university library’s website. Don’t forget to search the internet for valuable information, but don’t forget either that there are more and less trustworthy as well as more and less scholarly websites. For several areas internet links are listed under <http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/jg-web.htm>.