Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg

Department of English and American Studies

Master Studies English Language, Linguistics and Applied Linguistics

2016/2019

Doctor Professor Judith Huber

Teaching HEL in the ESL Classroom

Gustavo Rubino Ernesto

Schubertstraße 7, Erlangen, Germany

gustavorernesto@gmail.com

Student Registration: 22280284

MA English Studies, Linguistics and Applied Linguistics

Submission date: 02.05.2019

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
   …… 3
2. Research goals …… 3
3. The many different Englishes …… 4
4. Things that students must know …….. 5
   - 4.1 The Basics of a Language System …….. 5
   - 4.2 Internal and External History …….. 6
   - 4.3 Synchrony vs. Diachrony …… 7
   - 4.4 Content vs. Structure ……... 7
   - 4.5 Levels of Change …… 7
   - 4.6 Conscious and Unconscious variations and change …… 7
   - 4.7 Stability vs. Instability ……. 8
   - 4.8 Dictionaries …….. 8
   - 4.9 Indo European tree …….. 9
5. How, whether and why teach HEL to ESL students? …… 10
6. Conclusion ……. 12
7. References ……. 12
8. Affidavit …… 15

1. Introduction

The main point of this paper is to present a stimulating approach of HEL to ESL students. One major issue in an English as a Second Language (ESL) course that a teacher confront its students with the diversity of English around the globe. Many students already know that English is spoken in many countries but how it came to happen, and its differences are unknown territory to most of them. This paper highlights the most important aspects that should be tackled by students and ESL teachers when facing World Englishes.

In this paper I argue that in order to explain World Englishes teachers need to elucidate the history of the English language and its many changes. Many students lack the knowledge of German and/or Latin to start a HEL course with Old English and because of that many authors suggest that Late Modern English as a more realistic and practical starting point.

Linguistic terms are not very often easy to be taught to those who are not interest in it, but some basic linguistic aspects such as phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax and semantics need to be explained before addressing the History of the English Language (HEL) but with limited coverage. The course should engage students on the ethical stakes involved in the spread of English, both historically and contemporarily. It should also organize HEL at the same time around a textual tradition chronology. Covering the main points in its history, social and cultural influences, pressures from other languages, internal and external history, synchrony and diachrony, content and structure, conscious and unconscious variations, stability and instability, language difference and identity.

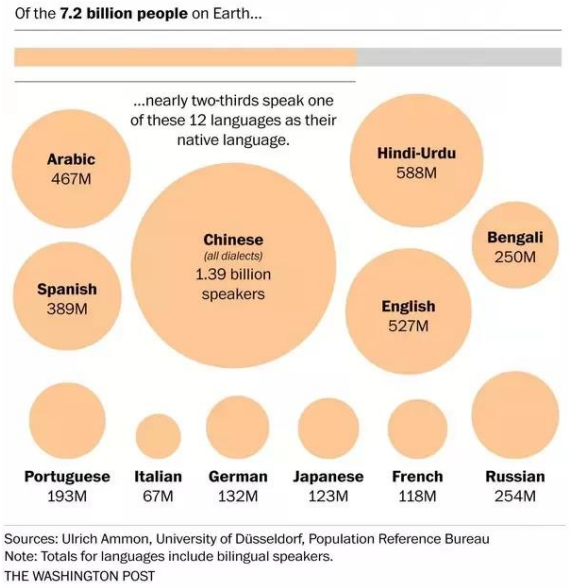
2. Research goals

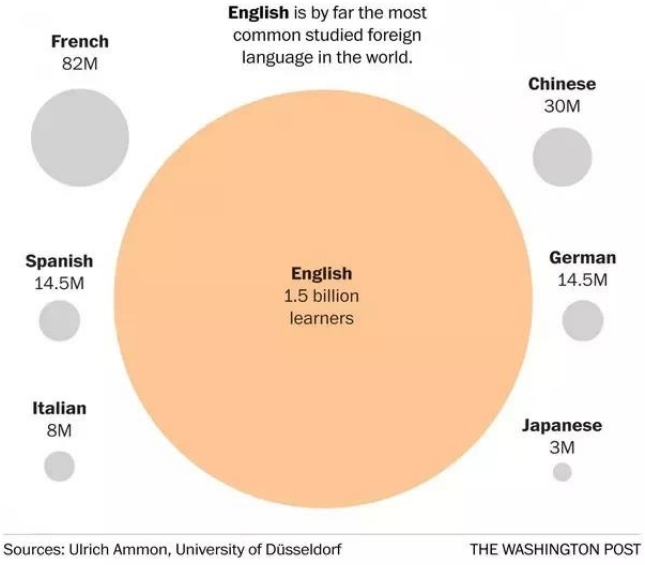
The goal of this paper is to contextualize to intermediate second language students of English a deeper knowledge of the many different Englishes around the world. Students are not taught the minutiae of the English language; they are usually taught to learn by heart some features of the language and accommodate that with their ongoing understanding of it. In order to achieve a better comprehension of the language, students must create a memory around every construction they encounter in their study and there is nothing better to do that with than frequency and a good story.

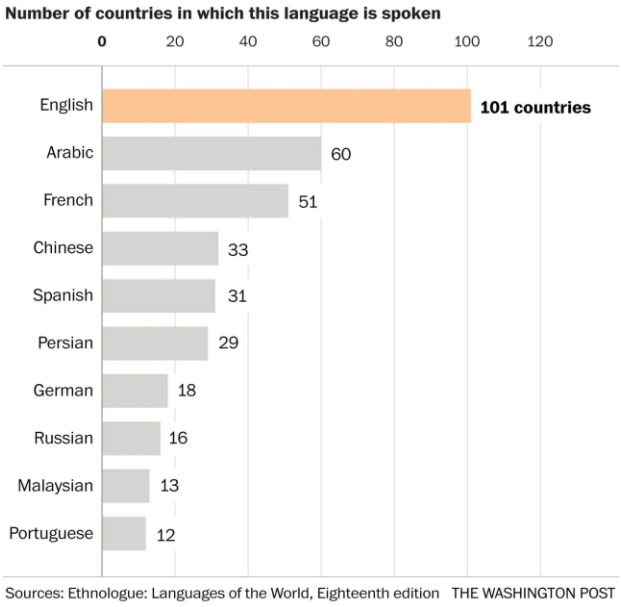
Mixing ESL teaching with HEL's most important occurrences and characteristics will provide the environment necessary for memories to be create and stored.

3. The many different Englishes

It is believed that to spark the curiosity of students to HEL is to show them an overview of the importance, relevance and differences of the English language and graphics, such as the following: [17]







Once students see how massive the English language's presence is around the world, they are more likely to understand that the language has many varieties. It is thought that a great starting point to present these varieties would be to show that even in a small territory such as the British Isles English has massive differences. It has commonly been assumed that presenting students with Cockney, Irish and Scottish accents is funny, entertaining and educational and once they are hooked, it is a good idea to present the South African, American, Australian, Indian and Caribbean varieties of the English language. They will probably wonder how that comes to happen and this is the time to present them with HEL. But before doing that it is important to present them with a few linguistic jargons.

4. Things that students must know

According to Natalie Gerber in the article *Engaging Multimedia in the HEL Classroom* [14], a blended course design that introduces students to internal language systems and to the notion of external history and which then connects the highlights of major changes in internal history to highlights of major changes in external history, with special emphasis on Global English today, should be the base to the studies of HEL. Teaching the basics of each language system (phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, semantics) is not an easy task~~,~~ but limiting coverage of internal language changes to the highlights and taking a problem-based approach, inviting comparative engagement with "historical" and "contemporary" language debates while maximizing the use of new media to engage students in these debates and focusing on the status and changing fortunes of English as a global language may help students engagement in the course.

4.1 The Basics of a Language System

It is believed that the first set of information that students need to know before entering HEL is a quick explanation of the basics of a language system and dictionaries such as the OED are straight to the point when explaining phonology, morphology, lexicon, syntax, semantics and a few examples follow:

Phonology, according to the OED, is the system of contrastive relationships among the speech sounds that constitute the fundamental components of a language and an example follows. "*Differences in phonology can usually be associated with the geographic location of the speaker."* A second entry should make it even clearer. *"The branch of linguistics that deals with systems of sounds (including or excluding phonetics), within a language or between different languages."*

The same perspective mentioned before should go for morphology (the study of the forms of words, in particular inflected forms)[1], lexicon (the vocabulary of a person, language, or branch of knowledge)[2], syntax (the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-formed sentences in a language)[3] and semantics (the meaning of a word, phrase, or text)[4][1].

The second part is direct from HEL itself. It concerns itself with internal and external history, synchrony vs. diachrony, content vs. structure, levels of change, conscious and unconscious variations and change, stability vs. instability, language difference and identity, dictionary entries and the Proto-Indo-European family tree of languages.

4.2 Internal and External History

The traditional pattern of the HEL course divides the subject matter into two parts, the internal history of the language and the external history of the language (William A. Kretzschmar 2017). To present such aspects of a language, it is necessary to explain that external history is the history of migrations, wars, colonization, economies, etc. Some examples like the coming of Germanic mercenaries to defend the Romanized British population of Britain, the Norman invasion by William the Conqueror, the introduction of Christianity may perform well illustrating students to what is to come and how far English has come. The other part of HEL to clarify for students is its internal history and a simple sentence like *is just about the language itself* may help students understand the changes better. Examples like how the personal pronouns changed, from the OE feminine hē to she and the plural hīe to they, might be great examples to excite students in this early stage.

[1] [1],[2],[3],[4] entries from the OED online version, accessed on April 25th, 2019

Showing theses events and changes gives students an idea of the changes that occurred in the not so distant past that led English to have so many varieties.

4.3 Synchrony and Diachrony

When Matthew Giancarlo suggests that students need to be aware of the difference in synchrony and diachrony when confronting the language at “points of time” versus “through time” or “across time”, a difference intrisic in the very anatomy of the HEL class, but also fundamental to the theoretical awareness of the conditions of critical understanding and intellectual frameworks, and for much of the inquiry into related issues it shows the importance of this distinctions. [8]

4.4 Content and Structure

The same author (Matthew Giancarlo 2017) [8] points out the importance of content versus structure. Students will innately tend to have a lexicon-centric view of language, but languages are composed of words and sounds, and this content-focus requires a clash dialectically with the more elusive linguistic notions of language as structure(s). These include lexical and lexicon structures that shift over time, syntactic structures, usage structures, and more, showing at every level the changing structures of HEL which World English will show how it diverge between communities.

4.5 Levels of Change

Displaying the levels of change is equivalent to making explicit how change occurs at different degrees. It has commonly been assumed that HEL is the ideal place to showcase not only phonetic/phonemic changes but also semantic changes, changes in usage and syntax, changes in social lingual patterns, and changes in social lingual ideology. Language change in HEL, then, is the result of the ongoing process. All living languages continue to change in response to changing conditions.

4.6 Conscious and Unconscious variations and change

HEL is an excellent field for introducing students to historical questions and issues of semiotics, acts of meaning-making, which are both linguistic and cultural, intended and unintended, and culturally determined. These grounding contrasts, simple but challenging and conceptually powerful, can provide further scaffolding for several more like the "philological unconscious": not only that language/English changes and adapts without our being aware of it as "we" change and adapt it, but also that English is consciously deployed as well, as choices, usages, and interactions enact social codes of communication. (Matthew Giancarlo 2017) [8]

4.7 Stability vs. Instability

An important fact that students should be familiar with is that languages change over the long historical horizon and across large geographical spaces (time-depth and space-width). They need to know how to identify English not as a stable and positive object of knowledge but as an ongoing process from Old English to Middle English to Modern English to Global Englishes. These ideas shall prompt students to exuberant the external history of the English language.

4.8 Dictionaries

Most students are familiar with simple and straight to the point dictionaries, online or hard copy. A good approach to a HEL class is to introduce students to the OED. It is thought that dictionaries are largely misunderstood, they are full of historical facts and judgments about English. In their etymologies, they tie English to other languages; in their sense analysis, they reveal not just different meanings but often implicitly the cultural basis for those meanings. Their quotations amplify voices from the past into the present day, allowing students to think about the relationships between meaning and register, both historically situated. Etymologies in the OED are generally more accurate and are increasingly thoughtful, complex, discursive and reliable. (Michael Adams 2017) [9]

The OED also enables students to perform small-scale research projects at an early stage and to experience the fulfillment of finding out something new for themselves using a dictionary to look

up affixes from the Richmeister skit (like -ator, -stress, -meister) – it becomes a more engaging way of leading students to discover that the contents of dictionaries include morphemes and roots as well as words. [9]

4.9 Indo European tree

It is well known that one of the most impressive images in the world of linguistics is the Proto-Indo-European tree.

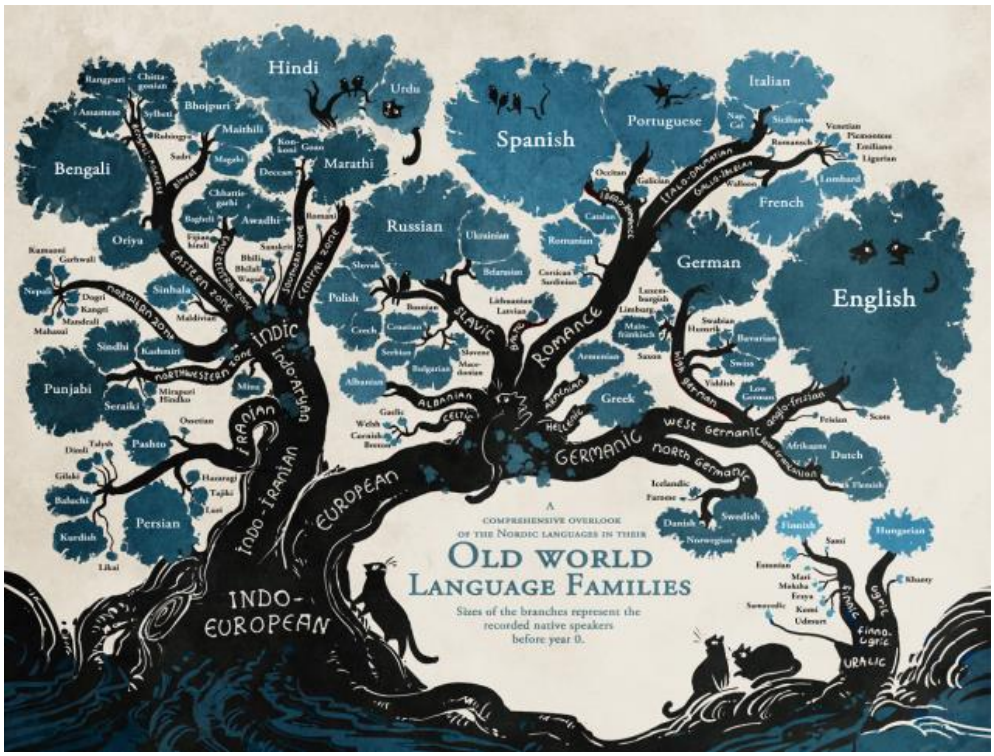


Figure 1 https://chriskbacon.com/2014/12/03/english-language-family-tree/ (accessed 25/04/2019)

It is the sort of image that explain in a few seconds how the languages that we know and speak came to be and to this day, it is thought that an important part of the HEL course is the discussion of the sound changes that created the separate Germanic language group from Indo-European, and other changes that eventually created English as a separate branch. (William A. Kretzschmar 2017) [6]. In the tradition of Indo-European studies, which rely on lexical and morphosyntactic correspondences to establish genetic classification, the language is considered Germanic, this

genetic classification has not been disputed, even though a great deal of Modern English vocabulary is from Latin and French, and the latter supposedly trigger the Great Vowel Shift. [13]

5. How, whether and why teach HEL to ESL students?

People tend to talk like the people nearby, either physically or socially near, and we tend to use the same linguistics tools that others do when we are writing or saying the same kind of thing. We know, for example, when to use you guys or y'all or you and every language professional should have a well based linguistic knowledge to facilitate its comprehension on the subject that its teaching as well as to evaluate what is relevant to teach students. (William A. Kretzschmar 2017) [6] As seen before there are many aspects that make language learning accomplishable, but it's believed that one of the most important thing in language teaching is to help creating a memory in the student mind of each single construction that they may encounter and not have them remember by heart the infernal irregular verbs list for example. One of the beliefs of this author is that, classes on the history of the language should spark the students' curiosity about the diversity of English language around the globe; it should strongly problematize the assumption that there is or can be a standard English or even a set of standard Englishes.

Teaching World Englishes can be a great distraction to make students engage in a HEL class and it is a good break from the traditional class, where vocabulary, frequency and grammar are always the theme. When teaching the History of English, it might well be worth following Strang's example and starting the course with Late Modern English before moving into less familiar territory (Joan Beal 2017). To get students accustomed, using Modern English passages with verbs at the ends of sentences, objects fronted, and dative and accusative endings pasted on to nouns where appropriate may help familiarize them. Passages from modern pop song lyrics are great and translating them into Old-English-style morphology and syntax, the students can get used to "funny" things which otherwise would confuse them while the vocabulary itself will be transparent. [7]

After some exercises and explanations on World Englishes it's good to focus a lecture or two on one or two varieties of English, say, AAVE and Jamaican Englishes. The idea is to go around into English just as one would dig into Middle English, covering the external history, social and cultural

influences, linguistics features (phonology, grammar, etc.), lectal relations (acrolect, mesolect, pidgins and creoles), pressures from other languages, and diachronic changes. This approach has the advantage of giving students an in-depth understanding of one variety and introduces them to methods that they can then apply to other varieties or use to contemplate general theories about English as a global language. After implementing the knowledge that students already have from the first classes to make this strategy work, one might instead begin the course with an introduction to World Englishes and follow it up immediately with Old English and the subsequent historical stages of the language in chronological order. [12]

Teaching also means to let students teach their peers and student-based research into linguistic circles can be prosperous and assigning students to select, research, and present to class one variety of English is a great way to do that. This not only gives each student an in-depth look at a variation of English but also gives the other students a broader overview of several varieties and the dynamics of their histories. The core of the assignment consists of presenting the noteworthy hallmarks of a variety of the English language (including its "outer" and "inner" histories) and conducts in-depth research into one aspect of complexity (e.g., lexical borrowings or grammatical influences from a local language or the effect of a political event on the use of English in the region). [12]

After presentations on World Englishes are done, it is time to get students to Old English. The proximity between the lessons on World Englishes and Old English gives students a contemporary inroad to understanding the diversity of Indo-European languages back in the mists of time (it also help them memorize the first classes where the Proto-Indo-European language tree was presented). And it invites concomitant discussions about whether, for instance, what we currently observe in World Englishes is comparable to the process by which the Romance languages surfaced from Latin; it helps to problematize the foreignness associated with Old English, which is often the sole or primary basis for distinguishing Old English from other forms of English: if it looks odd or difficult or different, it is Old English. (Saltzman, Benjamin A 2017) But by inscribing World Englishes, and especially creoles, first, students can learn to question this paradigm from the start and become more attuned to the striking differences between varieties of English. In the long run, we can begin to think about the meaning of otherness and difference through the lens of language:

for every encounter with Old English or Spanglish, Malaysian English is an experience with a unexpected paradox of foreignness and familiarity.

It is the belief of this author that once Old English is introduced, a chronological external and internal approach should suffice students' curiosities and give them a better understand on the many varieties of the English language that cover the globe.

6. Conclusion

The main point of this paper was to present a stimulating approach of HEL to ESL students. Teaching HEL it is not a main concern for any ESL teacher. Most curriculums do not mention a single passage of it and many students continually approach the English language as just as any subject taught in school, but second language learning is the base for the continued contact that one shall have with others in a globalized world. Once students identify that all languages have specific characteristics and learn how to identify those, it becomes easier to learn a third, fourth and possibly a fifth language.

As a result, while we can still apply ordinary terms and concepts of modern language study and linguistics to generate a well-aimed report of periods in HEL, the true tale of the language will be about recurrent emergence and re-emergence of lexical, phonological and grammatical patterns of English out of the interaction of its speakers and the eventuality of their history

7. References

[1] Mesthrie, Rajend *Teaching the History of English a South African Perspective*, Chapter 4 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[2] Lanehart, Sonja L. *How is HEL Relevant to Me?*, Chapter 5, Chapter A in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[3] Dressman, Michael R. *Finding the History of the English Language in the Class*, Chapter 8 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[4] Arnovick, Leslie K. *Historical Pragmatics in the Teaching of the History of English*, Chapter 9 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[5] Trousdale, Graeme *Using Principles of Construction Grammar in the History of English Classroom*, Chapter 10 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[6] Kretzschmar Jr., William A., Michael R. *Addressing "Emergence" in a HEL Classroom*, Chapter 11 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[7] McWhorther, John *German, Handwriting, and Other Things I Learned to Keep in Mind When Teaching the History of English* Chapter 2 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[8] Giancarlo, Matthew *Philology, Theory, and Critical Thinking Through the History of the English Language* Chapter 6 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[9] Adams, Michael *Dictionaries and the History of English* Chapter 11 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[10] Hayes, Mary *Serving Time in "HELL": Diachronic Exercises for Literature Students* Chapter 16 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[11] Beal, Joan *Starting from Now: Teaching the Recent History of English* Chapter 18 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[12] Saltzman, Benjamin A. *From Old to World Englishes* Chapter 19 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[13] Mufwene, Salikoko S. *An Ecological Account of the Emergence and Evolution of English* Chapter 20 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[14] Gerber, Natalie *Engaging Multimedia in the HEL Classroom* Chapter 28 in the Book Edited by Mary Hayes and Allison Burkette *Approaches to Teaching the History of the English Language Pedagogy in Practice*, Oxford University Press 2017

[15] The British National Corpora website was accessed many times during the making of this thesis http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml (last accessed in March 2019) the BNC

[16] "Useful phrases in Old English" https://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/oldenglish.htm (accessed in 01/04/2019)

[17] Graphics from the Washington Post presented on section 3. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/04/23/the-worlds-languages-in-7-maps-and-charts/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.855aa8beacfb (accessed on 25/04/2019)

8. Affidavit

I hereby truthfully declare that

1) I wrote the submitted paper independently and without illicit assistance;

2) I did not use any materials other than those listed in the bibliography and that all passages taken from these sources in full or in part have been marked as such and their origin has been cited individually in the text stating the version (edition and year of publication), the volume and page of the cited work, and in the case of Internet sources stating the complete URL and the date of access;

3) I have listed all institutions and persons that supported me in the preparation and production of the paper;

4) I have not submitted the paper to any other institution and that it has never been used for other purposes, neither in full nor in part.

I am aware that any violation of this declaration will result in a fail grade

(*nicht bestanden*).

Erlangen, ...

Signature