

# **Two perspectives on Namibian English pragmatics: Contrastive and intracultural aspects of Pragmatic Profiling**

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In 2022, the Pragmatic Profile of Namibian English (PraProNE) project set out to investigate the pragmatics of Namibian English by developing a Discourse Completion Task (DCT) questionnaire maximally suited for gathering pragmatic performance data in English from Namibian university students (Schröder, Sickinger, and Schneider 2024). This questionnaire enabled us to collect large quantities of DCT data and thus to carry out thorough quantitative analyses of realisation strategies for the performance of APOLOGIES, OFFERS, REQUESTS, and RESPONSES TO THANKS in this emerging variety of English. Following the principle of contrastivity in variational pragmatics (Schneider 2021: 672), the same DCT questionnaire was employed to collect comparable data from students at three universities in the United Kingdom (UK). This contrast set allows us to make visible the distinctive features of Namibian English pragmatics in contrast to English English.

However, an in-depth understanding of the pragmatic choices and preferences of any speech community can only be achieved by complementing such contrastive and – by nature – etic perspective with an emic one. In PraProNE, we implemented this in the form of three series of qualitative interviews that informed our methodology, data analysis, and interpretation of quantitative results for Namibian English (Schröder and Sickinger 2025).

In this talk, we will give an overview of our quantitative findings, focusing on the specificity of Namibian English pragmatics in comparison to a variety of English spoken in the UK. Beyond the comparison of quantitative results for speech act realisation strategies, we will further exemplarily demonstrate how the specific combination of contrastive and intracultural research

perspectives has led to a more fine-grained understanding of central aspects of Namibian English pragmatics, and how it also raises new questions that will be addressed in future research.

## References

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## Anne Schröder

Anne Schröder is a professor of English linguistics at Bielefeld University. She studied English and French at the universities of Caen, France, Bristol, UK and Freiburg i. Br., Germany, where she also received her PhD in English linguistics. Her research interests include varieties of English around the world, with a focus on Cameroon Pidgin English, Tense and Aspect, and morphological productivity. More recently, she has investigated several aspects of Namibian English. Her latest project, funded by the DFG, is "A Pragmatic Profile of Namibian English", where she combines the quantitative methodology of Variational Pragmatics with qualitative approaches to communicative norms and practices. She is also the co-editor of *English World-Wide* (Benjamins).

## Pawel Sickinger

Pawel Sickinger originally studied translation at Bonn University, then completed a PhD supervised by Klaus P. Schneider in cognitive translation studies and contrastive semantics. Together with Klaus P. Schneider, he conducted research on pragmatic variation, pragmatic competence and learner pragmatics in English. This line of work is continued and expanded in the context of the DFG funded project "A Pragmatic Profile of Namibian English" based at Bielefeld University, where Pawel Sickinger currently has a full researcher position.