Standard reference work for all Bachelor and Master students of English, English Language and Linguistics

Covers all branches of linguistics (including English-German contrasts, varieties of English)

Coloured (two-tone) layout - with numerous checklists, reader-friendly figures and tables, exercises and solutions, links to useful websites for further study and reading
The book

This is the completely revised, updated and enlarged 2nd edition of a classic textbook used in many English and linguistics departments in Germany for more than 20 years. It serves both as an introduction for beginners and as a companion for more advanced undergraduate and graduate students, familiarizing its readers with the major and distinctive properties of English (Standard English as well major national, regional and social varieties), including an in-depth structural comparison with German. Written in an accessible style and with many reader-friendly features (including checklists with key terms and concepts, basic and advanced exercises with solutions), the book offers a state-of-the-art-survey of the core terminology and issues of the central branches of linguistics, including an account of the major current research traditions and methodologies.

The author

Bernd Kortmann is Professor of English Language and Linguistics at the University of Freiburg, Germany, and, since 2013, Executive Director of FRIAS (Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies). He has been a long-time editor of the two international book series Topics in English Linguistics and Dialects of English as well as journal editor of English Language and Linguistics.
What leading linguists think about the book:

Alexander Bergs (U Osnabrück, Germany):
At last, here it is, the textbook we've been looking for: the second edition of Bernd Kortmann's English Linguistics: Essentials - revised, updated, and enlarged. Easy to read and understand, with clear and helpful figures and diagrams, this book not only offers a great introduction to all essential areas of English linguistics, it is invaluable as a study resource and go-to reference work for students at all levels. The highlighted keywords in the margins are particularly helpful and reader-friendly, especially when it comes to practicing for exams. And all this comes at the fraction of the cost of most American textbooks. Go, buy, enjoy!

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This is a text of impressive depth and breadth, covering all of the central areas of English linguistics. The core chapters are bookended by sophisticated and up-to-date chapters showing where English linguistics came from and where it is going. The text is highly readable, well-paced, and clearly organized, with many useful graphics. Each chapter ends with a set of exercises, which are both engaging and challenging. No matter what your level – from beginning student to advanced scholar – you will learn a great deal from this richly rewarding book.

David Britain (U Bern, Switzerland):
This highly impressive volume presents so much more than simply a user-friendly account of the nuts and bolts of the linguistic structure of English. Packed with clear definitions, highly useful exercises and a wide-range of additional resources, it introduces English linguistics in all of its social and regional variability, both contextualising the building blocks of the language within its contemporary accents and dialects, and embedding them within an accessible introduction to the ongoing theoretical debates in the discipline.

Kate Burridge (Monash U, Melbourne, Australia):
English Linguistics: Essentials is an outstanding guide to an impressively wide range of areas in English language and linguistics. And who better to write this guide than Bernd Kortmann — with his decades of teaching experience, coupled with incisive research and authorship. Now updated and enlarged, this bigger and better edition has been further enriched by a new final chapter, which takes the reader on an exhilarating journey though recent developments and trends in English linguistics. This is a superbly written, beautifully exemplified and impeccably structured textbook that will delight students and instructors alike — indeed anyone with a love of language and a fascination for how it works.

Karen Corrigan (U Newcastle, UK):
Students will find this new edition of an already winning formula to be a treasure trove on so many fronts. It combines a scholarly overview of the building blocks of English linguistics with an approach that encourages readers to reflect on the new data, insights, models and paradigms that are shaping the direction of our discipline in the twenty-first century. An abiding strength of the work is its agnostic approach to theory and its pluralist perspective. This orientation navigates students through the core branches of linguistics but does so without purporting to "hold the key to the truth." Any linguist who has worked in this field for even a short time will already have discovered this goal to be elusive anyway. Such is the nature of a replicable science that has truly come of age.

Hubert Cuyckens (KU Leuven, Belgium):
This second edition of Kortmann's textbook English Linguistics: Essentials makes a lasting impression. Not only does it provide state-of-the-art coverage of the various domains of English linguistics, it is also very clearly written, thus serving as the perfect introduction for beginners as well as an outstanding reference work for more advanced students. With its attractive and inviting layout, the book keeps the reader focused. Finally, I'd like to point out the many new features (key terms, new exercises + answer key) as well as a brand-new final chapter, which will guarantee the book at least another 15 years.

Stephanie Hackert (LMU Munich, Germany):
This book has been accompanying me ever since it was first published, and it has been superb company. Written by an outstanding researcher and highly experienced teacher, it takes readers all the way from basic definition to advanced theoretical and methodological issues, in eminently accessible style and with highly effective visuals. The new chapters on recent trends in the field and online resources make for great additions that will bring English linguistics even closer to readers' own experience. Essentials has been and will be one of the best textbooks on the market!

John Hawkins (U Cambridge, UK, and U Davis, USA):
This is a superb introduction both to general linguistics, for students specializing in English, and to English linguistics. It covers all the key areas, from sounds through morphology and syntax and different kinds of meanings, to sociolinguistics, historical linguistics and language typology. There are several features that I find particularly impressive and distinctive: it gives students a clear sense of the history of the discipline and of modern research methods; it presents English as a world language with its many varieties; and it links features of English and World English to language typology, i.e. to patterns of variation in languages across the globe, and to contrasting properties in one of its closest historical relatives, German. All the chapters are well written, the many tables and key words are particularly clarifying, and the references to further studies, follow-up materials and accessible databases are second to none. This is the best textbook I know of for any student anywhere in the world who wishes to study linguistics with a particular focus on English.
Daniel Schreier (U Zurich, Switzerland):
This is a well-written and truly exciting introduction to English linguistics, providing a thorough and detailed survey, including an inspiring account of sociolinguistics, regional and social varieties. The roadmap for turns and trends in the 21st century is thought-provoking for BA and MA students alike. Readers are taken by hand and guided step-by-step through the essential fields, with exercises that are ideally suited for practical work. Highly recommended!

Graeme Trousdale (U Edinburgh, UK):
Kortmann’s text provides a terrific guide for students of English linguistics. It is comprehensive in its coverage, clear in its use of terminology, and really engaging in its written style and use of exercises. In addition to providing a lucid account of key topics in the structure of modern English, Kortmann also provides a very helpful survey of varieties of English, and makes a number of illuminating connections with wider issues in linguistic theory.

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