***Philipps-Universität Marburg April 21st, 2011***

***Summer Term 2011***

*Course: Presenting Content*

*Lecturer: A. Sperl*

*Thursday, 10 – 12 h*

**TAG QUESTIONS**

**General information:**

A tag question is a special construction in English. It is a ***statement followed by a mini-question***. The whole sentence is a "*tag question*", and the mini-question at the end is called a *"question tag"*. We use tag questions at the end of statements ***to ask for confirmation***. They mean something like *"Am I right?"* or *"Do you agree?"* They are very common in the colloquial spoken usage of English.

The English tag question is ***made up of an auxiliary verb and a pronoun***. English tag questions may contain a negation, but need not. A ***positive sentence usually has a negative tag and vice versa***. In normal conversation there may be also "*unbalanced tag questions*". Here a positive sentence has a positive tag and a negative sentence a negative tag. They may be used for ironic or confrontational effects.

**The basic structure:**

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|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **+ Positive statement** | **- Negative tag** |
| *Snow is white,* | *isn't it?* |
| **- Negative statement** | **+ Positive tag** |
| *You don't like me,* | *do you?* |

**Examples:**

* *C:\Programme\Microsoft Office\MEDIA\CAGCAT10\j0157763.wmfShe* ***doesn't*** *really want those apples,* ***does she?***
* *He****'s*** *reading this book,* ***isn't he?***
* *She****'s not*** *French,* ***is******she****?*
* *Oh, I'****m*** *lazy,* ***am******I****?*

***Exercises***:

1. ***Which question tag is correct?***
2. *There is a fly in your soup, …*

…isn’t there?

…isn’t it?

1. *Let’s go swimming, …*

…aren’t we?

…shall we?

1. ***Complete the tag questions correctly!***
2. The sun won’t shine tomorrow, ?
3. The slide show was fantastic, ?
4. Open the window, ?