



Fawlty Towers. the Portrayal of Foreign Characters in the Series

Selina Schuster

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Seminar paper from the year 2012 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,3, University of Paderborn (Institut für Anglistik/Amerikanistik), course: Hauptseminar 'Humour', language: English, comment: Die komödiantische Darstellung ausländischer Charaktere in der britischen Fernsehserie 'Fawlty Towers' vor dem Hintergrund bestehender nationaler Klischés und Stereotypen, sowie deren Umsetzung in der Serie. , abstract: Fawlty Towers, a British television series from the 1970's, written by John Cleese and Connie Booth is famous for its eccentric characters, farcical humour and unintentionally funny moments. The life of Basil Fawlty, the choleric and perpetually overworked owner of a slightly run-down sea front hotel, his constantly nagging wife Sybil and their good-hearted but maltreated employees, the maid Polly and the Spanish waiter Manuel, is depicted throughout the series. All of them try to keep the hotel running and the guests satisfied despite several incidents and self-made catastrophes. Due to the fact that the series focuses on a hotel, plenty of different guests visit the hotel Fawlty Towers during the 12 episode run of the series. Almost every visit leads to copious amounts of awkward situations and there's always something Basil Fawlty dislikes about his clientele - may it be their outer appearance, personal taste, social class or their cultural background. Bearing that in mind this homework will take a closer look at the portrayal of foreign characters throughout the series and their interactions with the British hotel staff. After a short introduction to the series and its main protagonists I'm going to point out how foreigners and people of different cultural backgrounds are portrayed in the series and which aspects of their behaviour or cultural peculiarities are made fun of. Furthermore, I will take a closer look at the English characters of the series as well. How do they interact with the fo

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