

British and American English; their Linguistic Features and Czech Users' Preferences

Zuzana Jurigová

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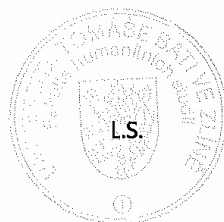
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doc. Ing. Anežka Lengalová, Ph.D.
děkanka




doc. Ing. Anežka Lengalová, Ph.D.
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ABSTRAKT

Bakalářská práce se zabývá britskou a americkou angličtinou týkající se jejich znaků a preferencí nerodilých mluvčích angličtiny. Konkrétně se práce zabývá českými mluvčími angličtiny. Cílem teoretické části je poukázat na vývoj a původ britské a americké angličtiny a obeznámit čitatele se základními gramatickými, fonetickými a lexikálními rozdíly mezi britskou a americkou angličtinou. Cílem praktické části je vyzkoumat, zda čeští studenti preferují jednu z těchto dvou variant angličtiny, britskou či americkou, a z jakého důvodu tomu tak je.

Klíčová slova: britská angličtina, americká angličtina, spisovná angličtina, jazyk, výslovnost, gramatické rozdíly, fonetické rozdíly, lexikální rozdíly, pravopisné rozdíly, preference nerodilých mluvčích

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis deals with British and American English, regarding their features and non-native speaker's preferences. The work specifically deals with Czech non-native speakers. The aim of the theoretical part is to outline the development and origin of British and American English and to acquaint the reader with the basic grammatical, phonetic and lexical differences between British and American English.

The aim of the practical part is to investigate whether Czech students prefer one of these two variants of English - British or American English and what are the factors of their preferences.

Keywords: British English, American English, Standard English, language, pronunciation, grammatical differences, phonetic differences, lexical differences, spelling differences, non-native speakers' preferences

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INTRODUCTION

"England and America are two countries separated by a common language."

(Davies 2007, viii)

G.B. Shaw

G.B. Shaw sees Britain and America as two countries divided by a common language. The division of the English speaking Britain and the English speaking America brought about the changes that are apparent in today's English language. The common English language of these countries has undergone changes in the use of vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling and is no longer perceived as common.

In this thesis we deal with the British and American English and their features: Since the distinction between these two varieties of English matter not only to the teachers of the English language, but predominantly to the learners of the English language. The phonetic, lexical, grammatical and spelling differences in both variants serve as a guide to English teachers teaching English. The teachers should adhere merely to one of the varieties in order to not confuse the learners of English as a foreign language. At the beginning of the learning process, the learners of the English language incline to one variety of English, either British or American. However one variety of English may develop into a mosaic of two varieties and it may cause misunderstanding in the spoken and written language. As a result, learners should be wary of the peculiarities of British and American English. It is stipulated by the curriculum of primary and secondary schools in the Czech Republic that British English is to be regarded as the most typical for the purposes of teaching, however due to the expansion of media and entertainment there is a tendency to use also American English as a standard form.

The theoretical part of this work deals mainly with the two variants of English that are both considered standard due to the fact that "standard English is taken to be the variety most widely accepted and understood within an English-speaking country or throughout the English-speaking world." (Burchfield 1994, 17) Therefore British and American Englishes are the major Standard English models for non-native speakers of English. With no indented disrespect or neglect the other varieties, this work only briefly mentions the other

varieties of English, namely Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, African English and Euro-English.

The theoretical part serves to acquaint the reader with the fundamental differences between British and American English from a historical and linguistic point of view. From a historical perspective, this work illustrates why Standard English is shaped as an educational target. The theoretic scope includes the division of the United Kingdom and the USA politically and the subsequent changes in the English languages. From the linguistic perspective, the work pinpoints the essential and fundamental distinctions between British and American English with respect to grammar, the phonetic system, lexicology and spelling.

The practical part deals with the preferences of Czech students, for British or American English; the effect of the media world; native speakers and education influence on the learners of English as their foreign language. The aim is to find out whether Czech students deflect from the set standard British learning path and follow American English in certain aspects. The preferences for either British or American English by learners depend on these circumstances: "whether the country was formerly a British or a US colony; its proximity to Britain or the United States; which of the two had most influenced its economic, cultural, or scientific development; and current commercial or political relations." (Crystal and Quirk 2004, 7) Based on these factors, the Czech Republic is geographically and educationally linked to Great Britain. However the cultural trends along with the trade and political relations are also influenced by the recent expansion of American culture and American language that has spread into the Czech awareness. As the Czech Republic is indirectly interrelated with both Great Britain and the USA, it seems natural that these two countries influence the teaching and learning standards of English in the Czech Republic.

As stated above the recent expansion of the English language has caused the mutual usage of two standard models of English, British and American, and it has influenced the preferences of people learning English as their foreign language.

The practical part is supplemented by a survey conducted by a questionnaire method. The aim will be to prove whether the students prefer British or American English or whether there is a mutual penetration of both. The results are to prove the theory that American English is becoming more powerful, e.g. because of the media it has become a predominant language power, among Czech learners of English, as a foreign language.

I. THEORY

1 STANDARD ENGLISH

It is essential to define the term Standard English as it is the dominant characteristic of the standard British and American language.

Since the 1980s, the public notion of the English language was increasing at two levels. At a national level, in the United States of America and in the British Isles, according to Crystal, the concern was based on developing and finding a suitable "national curriculum for English in primary and secondary education." (Crystal 2003a, 110) The codification of English was aimed at the establishment of the standard national form of English language in English speaking countries. Concerning an international level, the question was which standard path in teaching English should be followed in terms of non-native speakers of English. (Crystal 2003a, 110) Both at the national and international level, the establishment of a norm for Standard English was required.

The following chapter describes the term Standard English and deals with the question of why Standard English crept into the minds of people as the educational form of English. The two national standard variations of English are described along with other variations of the English language.

1.1 Standard English Definition

Sociolinguists have never formulated a commonly agreed definition for the term Standard English. However, most sociolinguists try to find common and apparent features of Standard English.

As provided in the McArthur's definition of Standard English, "standard English is taken to be the variety most widely accepted and understood within an English-speaking country or throughout the English-speaking world." (Burchfield 1994, 17)

Crystal describes Standard English including the words "widely understood, carries most prestige, a variety of English, a dialect excluding pronunciation used by minority of speakers." (Crystal 2003a, 110) He claims that Standard English is a dialect which includes grammar, vocabulary and orthography, but excludes pronunciation.

Stevens likewise argues that the Standard English dialect has "no local base" and it is not restricted to any accent. (Stevens 1985, 2)

Quirk's definition describes Standard English as the one which is taught in the schools, used as the language of the press and codified in dictionaries and grammar books. (Crystal and Quirk 2004, 18)

Based on these definitions, the common agreed features stated by sociolinguists are observed. Standard English is thus defined as a dialect based on prestige which is widely used and understood by educated native and non-native speakers.

1.2 Standard English as an educational target

Standard English is considered an educational target for the native and the non-native English speakers due to its historical development. (Crystal 2003a, 110)

In the 14th century London became the political and cultural centre of the country. London was the base for the administrative offices and the spelling used in London's administration was slowly being standardised. The area known as "triangle" bounded by London, Oxford and Cambridge was the main educational centre. (Crystal 2003a, 55) The emergence of the new administrative buildings, universities, court language and printing contributed to the notion of the educated English. In the USA, the notion of the standardized language began with the codification of the new language after the USA separated, politically and linguistically from British Isles.

Nowadays, the standard teaching norms of English are used by teachers who use the same standardized core vocabulary and grammar. (Stevens 1985, 6) The non-native speakers of English are taught a uniform English language with the slight distinctions in grammar, vocabulary and primarily in pronunciation- depending on who is taught and by whom.

1.3 Main standard variations of English

In countries where English is a non-native language, the major standard models for writing, speaking and learning have been generally British English and American English. Other variations including Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Canadian Australian, New Zealand, African Englishes or Euro-English have based their linguistic rules on these two models.

1.4 Other varieties of English besides British and American English

With no intention to disrespect or neglect the other varieties of English, it is essential to provide the other varieties of English besides British and American English. These varieties include Scottish, Irish and Welsh English as other typical varieties of British English or Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, African Englishes and Euro-English. These varieties are different from Standard British English and Standard American English however they share common features with both of these standards.

British and American English serve as the official language models for prescribing the linguistic rules to the other variants. It is obvious, that no region is able to preserve the same form of British and American English in their speech due to language development and changes. As a result, speakers of English regularly modify their speech by loanwords appropriated from other languages. The preservation of a static form of British or American English is thought to be impossible. Therefore each English-speaking country has developed its own variety in accent, grammar and spelling. Based on their origin and influence of either the British or American model, these countries have adopted either of the languages as their model standard form.

1.4.1 Scottish English

Scottish English belongs to the variety that is influenced by British English.

Scotland is a part of the British Isles and the origins of its language are considered British. However, Scottish English is very divergent from Standard British English. The extent of the divergence is based on the two principal factors: the uniqueness of the historical and literary background of Scotland and independence of the nation in the Middle Ages. (Crystal 2003a, 328)

Typical Scottish linguistic features are visible in lexical usage: *ay-* always, *dominie-* teacher, *kirk-*church. Other typically Scottish features are included in grammar: irregular plural nouns such as *shuin-shoes* or distinctive verb forms for instance *gae-go*, *gaed-went*, *gane-gone*. (Crystal 2003a, 329)

The distinction of Scottish English from Standard British English is unique and clearly observed. Scottish English has developed its own path that set the principal rules on the roots of British English.

1.4.2 Irish English

Irish English is divided into Ulster English with three subcategories and the English of the rest of Ireland. The three subcategories of Ulster English are referred to as Ulster Scots, South Ulster Scots English and Mid- Ulster English which is the combination of the previous two varieties. (Burchfield 1994, 174)

Due to the regional distinctions in the varieties of Irish English, this work will briefly mention the characteristics typical for Irish English. Irish English possesses a combination of features from the historical development and recent English usage. The result of

historical development is seen in the words *sleep* and *keep* where Irish English uses /e:/ rather than /i:/. Other retained the features of Irish historical development include the preservation of historical /r/ or /hw/-/w/ in all positions. (Burchfield 1994, 175)

1.4.3 Welsh English

The distinctiveness of Welsh English from British English is most noticeable in the north-west of the country. Like Scotland, Wales has become the part of the British Isles. However its Celtic origins have been preserved and as a result strong Celtic features are clearly visible such as the tag question *isn't it* and tag *yes* or omitting of /z/ in Welsh resulting in the same sound (*pence/pens*). (Crystal 2003a, 335)

In recent years, as the English language has been spreading worldwide, Crystal observes that in Welsh English there has been "a pressure towards anglicanisation." (Crystal 2003a, 334) As a result, statisticians have observed the fluctuation of the number of Welsh speakers in the 20th century. (Crystal 2003a, 335)

1.4.4 Canadian English

Canadian English is related to the features of both British and American English. However, it displays its own unique features. (Crystal 2003a, 340) Canadian's desire to be independent resulted in identifying neither with the American nor with the British language group. Crystal states several unique characteristics of Canadian speakers:

- a) The use of *eh* with rising intonation instead of tag question
- b) The words restricted to Canadian area include *kayak*, *parka*, *caribou*, *mukluk* (Inuit boot) and other words connected with trading, wood or mining. The pronunciation form of /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ so that *out* sounds more like *oat* and *isle* more like *oil*. (Crystal 2003a, 342)

Canadians have been resisting the influence of American or British language as a matter of searching for its own Canadian identity. (Crystal and Quirk 2004, 21)

However, Canadian English borrowed certain features from British or American English as well. According to Laurel J. Brinton and Margarey Fee the spelling variety of Canadian English is the mixture of both British and American English. (Algeo 2001, 433) The American influence may be observed in rhotic pronunciation and is also visible in the preservation of secondary stress in the words ending with *-ory*, *-ary* and *-ery* typical for American English. (Algeo 2001, 430)

The distinctively British features include the pronunciation of words *again* /ə'geɪn/, *either* /aɪ.ðər/ or *lever* /li:vər/. (Algeo 2001, 431)

The prior examples illustrate that Canadian English is a hybrid of British and American English with its own unique Canadian features.

1.4.5 Australian English

Australian English is regarded as the combination of British and American English. However, due to the political and historical connection with Britain, most features of Australian English are more comparable with British English.

The main distinctiveness of Australian English concerns the accent. The Australian phonetic system is comparable with a RP accent with regional differences within Australia. As stated by George W. Turner, in the pronunciation of words *dance* or *sample* the RP vowel /ɑː/ is identical with RP in Adelaide but /æ/ is pronounced in these words in Sydney. Very exceptional is the usage of the unstressed or weakly stressed syllables. G. Turner states the example word *trinity*. The RP phonetic transcription of this word includes three vowel phonemes /ɪ/. The word is transcribed as /trɪnɪtɪ/ in an RP accent. The Australian pronunciation of the word *trinity* consists of three different vowel phonemes /ɪ/, /ə/ and /iː/. The word is transcribed as /trɪnətiː/ in Australian English. (Burchfield 1994, 293) G. Turner mentions the morphological and syntactic distinctions only sporadically supported with few examples. A very noticeable syntactic feature is the use of *but* in sentence such as "Funny old bag. I quite like her but." (Burchfield 1994, 303) The structure of this sentence is hardly understandable in southern England.

Most of the features of Australian English are comparable with British English with a few Australian peculiarities preserved.

1.4.6 New Zealand English

Phonologically, New Zealand English is "a variant of a south-east England system." (Burchfield 1994, 388) "It has /ʌ/ rather than /ʊ/ in words like *cup*; it has /ɑ/ rather than /æ/ in words like *fast*." (Burchfield 1994, 391)

Concerning the morphology and syntax of New Zealand English, it is "undistinguishable" (Burchfield 1994, 399) from the morphological and syntactical structure of British English.

Concerning the vocabulary of New Zealand English, it is general to all English varieties however it has certain specific expressions of Maori origin connected with fauna

and flora. The examples include such words as "*kowhai, manuka, rimu* or *kahikatea*." (Burchfield 1994, 401- 403)

Although New Zealanders incline to a British form of English, there exist a lot of American expressions in New Zealand. (Burchfield 1994, 409) It comprises principally of American lexis and pronunciation. Examples of American lexis used by New Zealanders are *movie-* film, *kerosene-* paraffin, *truck-* lorry or *principal-* school and the American pronunciation is found in the words *vitamin* /vaɪ.təˈmɪn/ or *either* /'iːðər/. (Burchfield 1994, 409, 417)

1.4.7 South African English

Despite the fact that in South Africa, English as a mother tongue is represented by only 10% of the population, the English language has a high status among young speakers in South Africa in the areas of school, media and public use. (Crystal 2003a, 356)

The pronunciation of South African varies from region to region and as a result various accents are produced. However, the accent of older and conservative speakers is approaching to British Received Pronunciation. The pronunciation of the vowel /a/ as in the word *pat* is closer to /e/ in the word *pet* and /e/ in *pet* is closer to /ɪ/ in the word *pit*. Some words from South Africa have entered the English language such as *apartheid, commando* or *kraal*. (Crystal 2003a, 357) The grammatical variations are not different from Standard English, phrases and words differ mostly in colloquial African speech. Examples demonstrating the colloquial grammar usage in English include *must* meaning *shall* as in *Must I do it?*, "*I will be by the house*" meaning *I will be at home* or the unusual usage of prepositions such as *on the moment*. (Crystal 2003a, 357)

1.4.8 Euro- English

Euro- English is a term describing English spoken throughout Europe. It is regarded as the combination of British and American characteristics with its own unique features.

According to Modiano, English language in Europe "is dependant on the British rendition of the English language because the vast majority of educational materials used in mainland Europe are imported from England." (Modiano 2006, 223) He supports this view by saying that British Council and publishers such as Cambridge University Press, Longman or Oxford University Press provide the learning materials for the whole of Europe. (Modiano 2006, 224)

Despite the British effect on the learning English in Europe, the American English influence is increasing. As Modiano puts it, "through various forms of media, the American variety of English is impacting the lives of millions of Europeans." (Modiano 2006, 225) As a result, the awareness of American English in the school systems is increasing and it is challenging the British educational standard. (Modiano 2006, 225)

Thus "Euro- English", according to Cenoz and Jessner, is a variety that "shares characteristics of British and American English but presents some differences when compared to native speakers." (Cenoz and Jessner 2000, viii) (The differences being those of other European language such as German, French etc.)

2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

The prior section clarified the term Standard English being a significant term for defining British and American English.

The historical and political consequences had caused that these two standard English languages were separated and each of them has been taking its own direction in the world. As a result of the historical and political consequences, English in Britain began to shape earlier and gave the seeds to American English.

This chapter further clarifies the course of British and American English and outlines the proposed forms of English codification in both countries. These two factors are significant for understanding the differences between the two Standard English language forms.

2.1 British English

2.1.1 The origin of Standard British English on the British Isles

The beginnings of English language in the British Isles were the combination of foreign influences that were left by the non- natives. The foreign influence on the forming of words are visible in the English lexicon. The Celtic and Latin borrowings in the Old English and French, Scandinavian and Latin loanwords in the Middle English had an overall impact on Standard British English. (Crystal 2003a, 8- 53)

In the 12th century, English entered into usage amongst the upper classes and superseded French as the language of power. After the political conflict between King John of England and King Philip of France, which resulted in the Hundred Years War, the English language "was used for the first time at the opening of Parliament" in 1362. (Crystal 2003a, 31)

In the 14th century the notion of Standard British English emerged in the south- east of England since London became the political centre of the country. The standard language was inevitably moving with the political and cultural institutions. Besides London two seats of education, Cambridge and Oxford were also of a great importance. These two cities, regarded as the homes of learning, contributed to the development of the standard language in this area. (Crystal 2003a, 55)

Crystal described the 18th century as a "century of manners, class system and politeness" (Crystal n.d., 3) not only in behaviour. There was a new trend to find the proper

language ruling the polite and socially acceptable language. This trend was growing in parallel with the distinctions between classes. In this time period, the rich part of the society desired to be different from the rest and the language was set as their means of difference. (Crystal n.d., 3) The proper words, grammatically correct sentences and clear pronunciation meant an educated grounding for a vast majority of prosperous society. The situation of the Standard English in the British Isles in the earlier centuries clarifies why Standard British English is recently associated with the educated and higher- social circles.

2.1.2 Samuel Johnson's Dictionary as the codification of British English

In order to set up a widely accepted English language system, the society needed a key for the uniform usage of words and spelling. Samuel Johnson proposed an essential dictionary that unified all the rules and deviations in language into one single book.

Samuel Johnson's Dictionary is regarded as the most authoritative piece of work shaping English spelling in the British Isles. As indicated on the British Library Board Website Samuel Johnson accomplished and published *A Dictionary of the English Language* in 1755. It was considered the first proper English dictionary. Crystal quotes Johnson's Preface to the dictionary where Johnson explained that the intention of the dictionary was "not form, but register the language." (Crystal 2003a, 74) Its uniqueness resided in the fact that it was "more diligently collected, more accurately spelled, more faithfully explained and more authentically ascertained" than other such documentation. (Johnson 1812, 16) The irregularities that were in the language should vanish by using of the English words mentioned in this lexicon His aim was to change "our speech copious without order and energetick without rules" into proper and grammatically correct. (Johnson 1812, 3)

Johnson's contribution to literature had an enormous impact on the following creation of dictionaries. As a result, Johnson's dictionary had been considered a proposed norm of the British English usage for many years.

2.2 American English

2.2.1 The origin of American English in the USA

The history of American English may be divided into two significant periods: Colonial period and National period. The events in these periods contributed to the diversification of

British and American English. The exploring of these two periods is a step towards a better understanding of the recent distinctions between British and American Englishes.

Colonial Period

The first significant period of American English was the Colonial period. The Colonial period began with the settlers at the colony subsequently named Jamestown in Virginia in 1607. (Algeo 2001, 4) The motive for settlement was the political and religious oppression that forced Europeans and British inhabitants to seek the better life in America. Immigrants created a new nation and the new created nation in America needed a mutual means of communication. (Peprník 1994, 6)

There are two basic aspects of the need for a new language. The first aspect was based on communication and understanding. English speakers were exposed to everyday communication with the native inhabitants in America. The need for a national and unique language was required for mutual understanding. (Peprník 1994, 6) The second aspect for the diversification from the mother tongue was the evident distance. British colonial settlers in America had no verbal contact with the British people at the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. (Davies 2007, 2) They were cut off from verbal communication with the British nation. Being that there was no verbal contact with the British people, the need for the preservation of their native language was slowly vanishing and the need for the new common language was increasingly growing. (Algeo 2001, 7)

National Period

The second significant period for the history and beginnings of the American language was the National period. The National period contributed to the development of a new American nation along with a new American English language.

The American Declaration of Independence in 1776 brought a desire for a language culturally independent from British. The British government started to tax colonists on everyday commodities. The conflict erupted when the British taxing of tea resulted in the War of Independence. The American nation wanted to be independent from the British government and their separation from the British system was in its infancy. The war ended with the Declaration of Independence that redefined the American nation. (Algeo 2001, 21)

The new political system in America required new language institutions as well as the new linguistic rules. (Algeo 2001, 21) The division of Britain and America brought new linguistic changes in both countries.

2.2.2 Noah Webster's Dictionary as the codification of American English

As Samuel Johnson issued a dictionary of the British language in 1755, the same happened in America with Noah Webster's Dictionary in 1806.

Noah Webster, a lexicographer, contributed to the American English language in the National period by proposing a new American standard speech and spelling. Moreover, besides new American linguistic rules, Webster's work gave Americans new sense of identity. (Crystal 2003a, 81)

According to Webster, British English definitely build the foundation stone for American English. In Webster's work *Dissertations on the English language* (1789), he confessed that American English is "an inheritance which the Americans have received from their British parents." (College of Education n.d.) Further in his influential *Essay on Necessity* he urges the establishment of the new system arising from English. Webster issued the substantiation for the new standard in his essay, saying that "Great Britain, whose children we are, and whose language we speak, should no longer be our standard; for the taste of her writers is already corrupted, and her language on the decline." (College of Education n.d.) It seemed obvious that the national American language would share English roots but by no means British orthography and grammar. Except for the above-cited, Webster proposed a new educational standard since "as an independent nation, our honour requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government." (College of Education n.d.)

Apart from essays and dissertations, Webster issued an *American Spelling Book* where he suggested spelling reforms that distinguished American English from British English. The spelling reforms included the spelling of American *-or* rather than British *-our* (*color/colour*) and the spelling of American *-er* rather than British *-re* (*center/centre*). (Algeo 2001, 62)

To round off the reform of American English, he compiled a first volume of a dictionary called *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* in 1806. (Crystal 2003a, 80) Webster admitted that half of the words used in the second edition of the dictionary from 1828 did not occur in Johnson's British Dictionary. The American

language was starting to develop in a different direction to its British ancestor. (Crystal 2003a, 80)

Despite the criticism Webster has received for his work, his successful reform has changed the spelling of the words such as *center*, *honor* or *defense* still being used in American English. (Crystal 2002, 249)

2.3 The future of British and American English

The success of today's English has been a combination of the influence of the British colonial power and recently the power of the USA. (Graddol 2000, 9) As mentioned previously, the future of English is not predictable, however many linguists and theoreticians have agreed that British English is recently under a cloud of darkness due to the expansion of the USA.

The status British English was holding years ago, is slowly on the retreat due to the economic, technological and cultural position of the USA in the world. In the 20th century, "the role of the US has been more important than that of Britain," (Graddol 2000, 14) states Graddol in his *Future of English*. Not surprisingly claimed he that the fundamental change of the position of the US will influence "the attractiveness of English language" among non-native speakers. (Graddol 2000, 9) The US movies, technological inventions, economical growth or business achievements of the USA have led to the expansion of the American language. Assuming these facts true, the leading position of the USA might be directly proportional to the attraction of the English language in the world. As David Graddol remarks, Britain set up "the pre-conditions for English as a global language." (Graddol 2000, 8) However, it is not Britain ruling the world of global English nowadays. A similar view on the retreat of British English is presented by Crystal. Crystal in his study on global English language states that the number of "70 percent of all English mother-tongue speakers in the world (excluding creole varieties)" are living in the USA. (Crystal 2003b, 60) "Such dominance," says Crystal, "currently gives America a controlling interest in the way the language is likely to develop." (Crystal 2003b, 60)

The mass media is another component that has helped the American language to enter the scene of globalization. Not only do native speakers of English have access to the world news or films in the English language, but many of the other cultures share the English media as well.

The above-cited material shows that the usage of American English is anticipated to grow in the future.

3 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

The awareness of the peculiarities and differences between British and American language is essential for both the teachers and the learners of English.

In terms of the learners of English, unawareness of the distinctions of British and American English may result in misunderstanding when visiting a foreign country. The mosaic compiled from British and American English may seem problematic for students while completing homework, reading an authentic text or in any kind of language interaction. As a result, students should be aware of the peculiarities of both varieties. Provided that a learner of English understands both varieties and these varieties do not create a communication barrier for her/him, it is not necessary for the learner to deal elaborately with the differences among these two variants. In terms of teaching English, the differences between British and American English may serve as a general manual to teachers of these two language variants. Teachers should focus purely on one variety in order not to confuse their students, yet at the same time, students should be aware of the existence and characteristics of other varieties.

This chapter investigates the two forms of standard pronunciation in the British and American phonetic system, lexicon, spelling and grammatical differences among British and American English.

3.1 Standard pronunciation variants

When analysing the differences between the two principal English teaching models, it is crucial to start with the most apparent difference. The phonetic variations of British and American English have predominantly served to distinguish one accent from another. By no means do we suggest that there are only two varieties of British and American pronunciation forms. There are variations of different accents spoken in the British Isles and in the USA. The emphasis here is put solely on the forms of English pronunciation that are considered standard, educated and predominantly used in the British Isles and in the USA.

3.1.1 Accent

Since this part of the work deals with pronunciation, it is crucial to define the term accent. Stevens classifies an accent as a pronunciation including intonation, rhythm and stress of the language. (Stevens 1985, 1)

As indicated by the Queen's English Society Website, an accent is described as a "characteristic mode of pronunciation typical of people of a particular group, such as people in a region, race or social group." Based on these definitions, accent is considered to be a typical way of pronouncing words and sentences with its prosodic features typical for certain region and social class.

Having mentioned the standard forms of the English language, two standard pronunciation variants of English, Received Pronunciation on the British Isles and General American in the USA, are analysed in the thesis.

3.1.2 Received Pronunciation "RP"

Received Pronunciation, further referred to as RP, has been proposed as a pronunciation model for teaching and learning the English language. To understand the reason why RP emerged as an educational standard and is taught at schools, this section will provide the historical and contemporary status of RP.

History of RP

The orientation on one's prosodic and speech qualities started to attract people 400 years ago. Crystal quotes the statement of George Puttenham who in 1589 wrote that English language "of northern men ...is not so courtly or so current as our Southern English is." (Crystal 2003a, 365) No wonder that people would move to London to acquire the phonetic properties of Southern English. The seed was sown and the society might have expected the further growth of social awareness for distinct speech.

The obvious factor for the development of RP was the need for distinguishing from others. The upper class would not like to be associated with the same accent as the working- class. RP signalled the high status in the society and was the means for divergence. Moreover RP accent meant prestigious employment as it was invariably connected with the court, parliament and highly accepted positions. (Crystal 2003a, 365) For these reasons, RP had become widely known and popular in the 19th century.

The term RP was coined by A J Ellis in 1869. However Ellis did not bring the fame to RP. Daniel Jones was the one to promote its reputation. He issued *An English Pronouncing Dictionary* where he defined the RP accent as "that most usually heard in everyday speech in the families of Southern English persons whose men-folk have been educated at the great public boarding- schools." (Upton 2004, 217) Consequently after Jones named it Public School Pronunciation, the accent was associated with the prestigious schools, such as Eton and Harrow and with people who had graduated from the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford. (Crystal 2003a, 365) The linkage of the accent with education was so influential that the RP soon played the role of the most superior accent of all. By 1926, the name of Public School Pronunciation had changed to the most recent form Received Pronunciation. (Upton 2004, 217)

The power of mass media influenced the status of RP. What was popular in the mass media might gain the popularity among people. As indicated on the British Library Board Website, in 1922 Lord Reith, the first general manager of the BBC, had adopted RP accent in his broadcasting. He believed in the correctness of Standard English enriched by the RP accent. Moreover, its regional neutrality contributed to the distribution of this accent in the media world.

RP accent was ultimately the accent associated with education, prestigious occupation, high society and also regional neutrality.

The future of RP

The future of RP is not exclusively black or white, however due to the expansion of the USA, the position of RP in Europe is likely to weaken. The paradox is that the features, that had helped RP to reach its popularity, have caused the decline of RP in recent years.

The first factor that contributed to the decline of RP is the power of the media. As the mass media contributed to the development of RP, in recent years it has also contributed to its decline. After the influence of the media world, the pure RP started to be unpopular among young people. (Crystal 2003a, 365) The medias attitude toward the pure RP accent has changed. Crystal supports this viewpoint by stating that Edinburgh Scots and Yorkshire accents are more searched voices on the "telephone- mediated" connections than the voices of RP speakers. He adds, that such things would have been impossible a few years ago. (Crystal 2002, 67)

Secondly, the decline of the usage of RP is caused by the popular penetration of regional features into the prestigious RP accent. The amalgamation of RP with regional features had caused modifications creating of new variants of accents. The British press in 1993 assigned the top popularity among accents to Estuary English. Even the young generation of the Royal Family modifies their RP accent and "glottalization" has already been noticed. (Crystal 2003a, 365) The RP accent has been replaced by modern modifications of the accent and therefore it lost its regional neutrality. (Milroy, n.d., 17)

The other factor diminishing the popularity of RP is its decreasing educational value. Milroy in his essay on Received Pronunciation disproves the present position of RP as standard. He argues that the standard RP is "no longer so vitally important for those who wish to be regarded as "educated"." (Milroy, n.d., 16) Milroy shows that the reason for the unpopularity of the RP accent lies in its unfashionable usage. He states the example of a student quoted by Honey saying "Eton accents are decidedly uncool." (Milroy, n.d., 16) Few years ago, Eton College was considered the centre of education naturally connected with the prestigious accent. The modern trends in speech have been driving out the prestigious RP accent and social position connected with it.

Although the popularity of RP in the British Isles is nationally on the retreat, the highly- regarded accent preserves its popularity among non native. For foreigners the pure RP has remained the educated form of learning the language. (Crystal 2003a, 365) Moreover, RP has continued to be the standard variant of British dictionaries.

3.1.3 General American "GA"

General American, further referred to as GA, has been used as the standard pronunciation variant of American English. Even though it is generally assumed that GA is the typical pronunciation variant of American English, some opinions on the existence of GA testify against its existence.

John Algeo's opinion on the term General American is rather negative. He claims that there is "no General American pronunciation, parallel with British Received Pronunciation." (Algeo 2001, xxiv) Unlike the British Isles, America has no regionally pure pronunciation perceived as an American standard.

A similar view of the non- existence of GA is shared by Kretzschmar. Even though Kretzschmar defines the term General American as "a presumed most common or default form of American English, especially to be distinguished from marked regional speech of

New England or the South," (Kretzschmar 2004, 262) he adds that no historical justifications exist to support the origin of General American. In the section dedicated to *Standard American English pronunciation*, Kretzschmar's viewpoint on the term of General American is similar to Algeo's statement. "There is in fact no single American norm of pronunciation that corresponds to RP in England, being a non- regional class dialect,"(Schneider et al. 2004, 252) says Kretzschmar. As a result of not believing in existence of General American, Kretzschmar avoids the usage of General American. He prefers the term Standard American English pronunciation. His explanation of the term Standard American English pronunciation is "an accent deliberately held free of features associated with particular regions."(Schneider et al. 2004, 252) According to Kretzschmar, "the most educated speakers in formal settings tend to suppress any linguistic features that they recognize as marked, i.e., regionally or socially identifiable" (Kretzschmar 2004, 261) in order to be perceived as educated.

Even though, sociolinguists claim that there is no such term as General American, many of them ascribe it the qualities characteristic for standard pronunciation. Certain features of the ambiguous term General American have been commonly agreed by a majority of sociolinguists.

As with Received Pronunciation, General American is considered the other standard form of pronunciation in the English language. Its regional neutrality along with its connection to educated speakers and media resembles the qualities described in Received Pronunciation.

History of GA

As mentioned earlier in the work, the history of GA is rather ambiguous. In the prior section, Kretzschmar was quoted as commenting that there are no historical justifications for the term GA. However dating back to the historical invention of the term General American, a few supportive statements can be found made by linguists and writers.

Even before the American Declaration of Independence, in 1758 the *American Magazine* argued that the nation of Americans is comprised of a vast majority of people speaking a variety of languages resulting in the loss of "true pronunciation and writing" (Algeo 2001, 79) of the American language. The most beneficial assertion was made by Marckwardt in saying that "the British regional dialects are reflected in the dialects of the Atlantic seaboard, but level out almost completely west of the Appalachians." (Algeo 2001,

79) Based on this statement the term General American was linked with the west part of America and as Van Riper affirmed, the origin of the term General American was embedded here. As a result, General American has emerged as the accent linked with the Mid- West. (Algeo 2001, 79)

The future of GA

It is difficult to anticipate the further development of the GA accent. However, due to the recent expansion of the USA, it is possible to be more optimistic about the future of GA than about the future of RP.

3.2 Phonetic differences between RP and GA

It is essential to provide typical phonetic features occurring in RP and GA. The phonetic features have made the two accents divergent and unique. This chapter will cover the crucial differences of Received Pronunciation and General American as the standard pronunciation variants of English.

Pronunciation is the most prominent feature of the diversity of British and American English. Certain vowels and consonants in RP and GA have been used by the same formula however there are consonants and vowels that make the accents distinctive. To show the divergence in RP and GA accents, the following description covers solely the different articulation of vowels and consonants in British and American pronouncing models.

By comparing RP and GA, the most noticeable differences can be observed. GA lacks the vowel /ɒ/ that occurs solely in RP. General American pronounces /r/ in all positions whereas /r/ in RP is pronounced solely before a vowel. (Swan 2005, 43)

More phonetic differences are included in the following list.

<u>RP</u>	<u>GA</u>	<u>Examples</u>
a) ɒ	→ aː	as in God /gɒd/ → /gɑːd/ or collage /'kɒlɑːʒ/ → /'kɑːlɑːʒ/ The vowel /ɒ/ found solely in RP was substituted by long vowel /aː/ in GA. Though in the transcription system, GA lacks one vowel /ɒ/.
b) əʊ	→ oʊ	as in snow /snəʊ/ → /snou/ or clothes /kləʊðz/ → /kloʊðz/ GA substitutes schwa sound /ə/ for a short vowel /o/ that in RP phonetic chart does not occur as a single vowel.

<u>RP</u>	<u>GA</u>	<u>Examples</u>
c) ʃ	→ s	as in issue /'ɪʃuː/ → /'ɪsjuː/ or tissue /'tɪʃuː/ → /'tɪsjuː/
d) aː	→ eɪ	as in tomato /tə'mɑː.təʊ/ → /tə 'meɪtəʊ/
e) aɪ	→ ɪ	as in privacy /'prɪvəsi/ → /'praɪvəsi /
f) ə	→ æ	as in address /ə'dres/ → /'ædres/
g) f	→ v	as in nephew /'nefjuː/ → /'nevj uː/
h) əʊ	→ aː	as in process /'prəʊses/ → /'praː ses /
i) ɪ	→ aɪ	as in vitamin /'vɪtəɪn/ → /'vaɪtəɪn /
j) aː	→ aːr	as in star /stɑː/ → /stɑːr/ or far /fɑː/ → /fɑːr/

The consonant /r/ occupying the final position of the word is not pronounced in RP, however in GA, the rhotic /r/ is preserved in pronunciation at the end.

k) ɔː	→ ɔːr	as in record /rɪ'kɔːd/ → /rɪ 'kɔːrd/
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In the word *record* speakers of GA articulate /r/ even before the consonant /d/; this doesn't happen in non-rhotic RP accent.

l) ʃ	→ sk	as in schedule /'ʃedjuːl/ → /'skedjuːl/
m) aɪ	→ iː	as in either /'aɪðər / → /'iː ðər / or neither /'naɪðər/ → /'niː ðər/
n) aː	→ æ	as in banana /bə'nɑːnə/ → / bə 'nænə/ or bath /bɑːθ/ → /bæθ/
o) juː	→ uː	as in tube /tjuːb/ → /tuːb/ or tune /tjuːn/ → /tuːn/

Clusters of consonants such as /tj/, /dj/, /sj/ and /nj/ are unique in RP and are not observed in GA. (Swan 2005, 43)

These chief differences between British and American standard pronunciation make the two variants strikingly recognizable. For non-native speakers the choice between RP and GA is individual and may result in a blending of the two different variants into one.

3.3 Lexical differences

British and American English also differ in vocabulary. The discrepancy between British and American words may cause misunderstanding between their native speakers but predominantly in non- native speakers who may use a certain mixture of the two varieties. The bilingualism in this sense may cause misunderstanding while talking to native speakers of either variant, or other high- level non-native speakers solely proficient in either form.

To compile a list of all the diverse vocabulary of British and American English would be impossible and ambiguous for various reasons. Firstly, many words of the British vocabulary have recently entered the American vocabulary and vice versa. Secondly, vocabulary in the British Isles and in the USA is constantly changing. Basically, it would be impossible to focus on all different vocabulary in British and American English. As a result, the classification of different words was generalised into various categories.

Gunnel Tottie summarizes the chief characteristics of lexical difference into four main "form- based classifications." (Tottie 2002, 100)

1. "Words with the same basic meaning in British and American English but with differences in style, connotation, or frequency" (Tottie 2002, 100)

This category includes the words such as *post/ mail* or *perhaps/maybe*. The former mentioned are British words and the later mentioned are American words. Both varieties have the same basic meanings and according to the Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, these words are considered synonyms. (Oxford Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms, s.v. "Post, Maybe") As Tottie states the difference in this category is based on preference and frequency. British people prefer *post* to *mail* with the same meaning. The same happens with the pair of words *maybe* and *perhaps*. Tottie's survey from 2001 showed the more frequent occurrence of the word *perhaps* in British English speech than in American English. 83% of the British questioned people used the word *perhaps* rather than the word *maybe*. (Tottie 2002, 99)

2. "Words that share a basic meaning but which have developed additional meanings in one or both varieties" (Tottie 2002, 100)

The developed additional meaning may be loaded. Not surprisingly many word meanings in Britain may cause discrepancy among American speakers. Tottie's examples in this category are the words such as *tube*, *bathroom* and *presently*. American English has developed the additional meaning to *bathroom* known as *toilet*. (Tottie 2002, 99) Another example in this category is the word *tube* meaning "underground railway" in both varieties. (Tottie 2002, 99) However, American English modified this meaning by adding the meaning "television." (Tottie 2002, 99) The word

presently means "soon, in a minute" in British English, however American English regards *presently* as "just now, at the moment". (Tottie 2002, 99)

3. "Words that used to have a common meaning but which now have different meanings in the two varieties" (Tottie 2002, 101)

By the distance of time and space, many words have taken on the different meanings from the previously used. Tottie states as an example the word *clerk* that in the past meant "clergyman or scholar". Currently *clerk* is used for "office worker" in British lexicon and "salesperson or hotel receptionist" in American lexicon. (Tottie 2002, 101)

4. "Words, collocations and idioms that are used only or predominantly in one variety" (Tottie 2002, 102)

According to Tottie, the peculiarities of this category are restricted in the two basic subcategories. The first subcategory includes "English words that have disappeared from one variety, such as *lorry*, which is typically British word," and the second subcategory is typical for "coinages and compounds based on English materials, or foreign words which have been anglicized, but which are used only or mostly in one variety." (Tottie 2002, 102) The latter mentioned subcategory includes the words *mobile phone* in British English and *cell phone* in American English. (Tottie 2002, 102)

3.4 Grammatical and spelling differences

A substantial part of the differences between British and American English are concentrated around spelling and grammatical structures of these two standard variants of English. American English has a tendency to shorten and simplify both grammar and spelling. As a result, grammar and spelling of British English are considered more complicated.

3.4.1 Grammatical differences

American English has developed grammatical changes independent from the British grammatical norms. The peculiarities of American grammar are compared with British grammar here.

1. Singular vs. Plural forms

- a) BrE: Plural/Single verb combined with collective nouns (Crystal 2003a, 311)

Example: The government *are/is* powerful.

- b) AmE: Singular verb combined with collective nouns

Example: The government *is* powerful.

2. Have got vs. Have

- a) BrE: Have got /Have you got

British English prefers the verb structure *have got* with corresponding question form *have you got*.

Example: He *has got* a black car.

Has he got a red car? Yes, he *has got*/ No, he *hasn't got*

- b) AmE: Have / Do you have

American English uses for possession the verb *have* with the appropriate question formed with do-support (Algeo 2001, 336)

Example: He *has* a black car.

Does he have a black car? Yes, he *does*/No, he *doesn't*.

3. Got vs. Gotten

- a) BrE: Got

In the British English, the word *got* is used more widely in the sense of possession.

Example: He *got* a new present

- b) AmE: Gotten

Gotten is the form used by Americans. The usage of *gotten* does not mean *have got*. The usage of *gotten* is used to make distinctions in sentences such as "they've got to leave= they must leave vs they've gotten to leave=they've managed to leave."

Crystal identifies meanings of *gotten* as "obtain" or "become".

Example: I've *gotten* off the sofa. (= moved) (Crystal 2003a, 311)

4. Preposition differences

a) BrE

Example: different *to/from*

It's twenty *to* four.

haven't seen her *for* ages

live *in the* Great street

see you *at* the weekend

b) AmE

Example: different *than/ from*

It's twenty *of* four.

haven't seen her *in* ages

live *on* the Great street

see you *over* the weekend

5. Present perfect tense vs. Simple past tense

a) BrE: Present perfect tense

Example: She *has* just *finished* her housework.

b) AmE: Simple past tense

American grammar prefers simple past tense in the places where British grammar would use the present perfect tense.

Example: She just *finished* her housework. (Crystal and Quirk 2004, 19)

6. This category includes other remarkable grammatical changes between the two varieties. (Crystal 2002, 267)

a) BrE:

I will eat in *a moment*.

I *burnt* the paper.

Wednesday to Friday *inclusive*

really good

b) AmE:

I will eat *momentarily*.

I *burned* the paper.

Wednesday *through* Friday

real good

The grammatical distinctions among the above mentioned, widely spoken and accepted models of the English language are relatively small, but they are still essential for the complete picture of distinctions in British and American English.

3.4.2 Spelling differences

There are several distinctions between British and American spelling. Due to a recent penetration of American spelling into British English and British spelling into American English, the overall comparison of British and American spelling is scarcely realizable. (Crystal 2002, 265) However, fixed spelling distinctions exist that promptly distinguish the

British English from American. The changes in British and American spelling are listed in the following part.

British English	American English
-ou- colour, labour	-o- color, labor
-ae/oe- encyclopaedia/ manoeuvre	-e- encyclopedia/maneuver
-re metre, centre	-er meter, center
-ce defence	-se defense
-ll- signalled	-l- signaled
-l- fulfil	-ll- fulfill
-ise realise, apologise	-ize realize, apologize
-mm programme	-m program
en- enquire	in- inquire
-s- organise	-z- organize

II. ANALYSIS

4 CIRCUMSTANCES INFLUENCING PREFERENCES

The preferences for a certain variant of English are made by individual speakers. The usage of either of the English language variants are tightly connected with the speaker's background and his/her personal choices. According to Quirk the preferences depend on various circumstances namely "whether the country was formerly a British or a US colony; its proximity to Britain or the United States; which of the two had most influenced its economic, cultural, or scientific development; and current commercial or political relations." (Crystal and Quirk 2004, 7) After applying the previously mentioned factors on the Czech Republic, the Czech preferences of English can be stated as follows:

4.1 Geographical position

In terms of the geographical location, the Czech Republic is situated in the centre of Europe and is a member of the European Union. Geographically, the Czech Republic is closer to Great Britain than to the USA. As indicated on the Distance Calculator Website the distance from Prague to Edinburgh (UK) is 1 345,12 kilometres and the distance from Prague to Boston (the USA) is 6 279,33 kilometres.

4.2 History

Historically the Czech Republic had developed good relations with the USA. Great Britain was also helpful in forming an independent Czechoslovak state.

In 1918 president of the United States Woodrow Wilson helped to establish the Czechoslovak state and his 14 points were the foundation stone for the Czechoslovak union.

During the World War I Tomas G. Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia established a good relationship with U.S. officials. According to the U.S. Department of State: Diplomacy in Action Website, Masaryk "used the U.S. Constitution as a model for the first Czechoslovak constitution."

As indicated by the U.S. Department of State: Diplomacy in Action Website one year after the "Velvet Revolution" in 1990 the president of the USA, George W. Bush, in Prague's square promised to support the government and people in creating a democratic Czechoslovak state. Having supported the creation of a completely democratic and united Czechoslovakia, the U.S. Government did not agree with the subsequent division of Czechoslovakia into two separate states. Despite this fact, as mentioned on the U.S.

Department of State: Diplomacy in Action Website, the USA "recognized both the Czech Republic and Slovakia on January 1, 1933." Both historically and currently the U.S. - Czech relations are considered to be good.

However Great Britain participated in the liberty and independence of Czechoslovakia as well. In 1918 a declaration was issued where "Great Britain regards Czecho-Slovaks as an Allied nation." (Nosek 2010, 107) This step was very important for Czecho-Slovaks since Great Britain helped to acknowledge Czechoslovakia's independence.

Another factor of influence was World War II. It contributed to the expansion of American English in Europe. Hoffmann claims that in this period "American occupying forces had a much greater impact on people in Germany and Austria than did the British." (Hoffmann 2000, 7) World War II strengthened the position of American English in economic, political and commercial affairs.

4.3 The European Union

The European Union helps to spread the English language throughout Europe. English spoken in the European institutions serves as the language of communication. Modiano states that in the European Union two "vehicular languages" (Modiano 2006, 231), English and French, are crucial. However English asserts itself more than French language.

The English language spoken in the European Union is referred to as "Euro-English" (Cenoz and Jessner 2000, viii) and it is a mosaic compiled from British and American English.

Even though Great Britain is a part of the European Union, it is not merely British English that is dominant in European countries. As Cenoz and Jessner state, the position of British English in the states of the European Union is not stable: "in the European context the combined influence of American English and the increasing use of the language among non-native speakers is beginning to challenge the pre-eminence of British English as the only model." (Cenoz and Jessner 2000, viii) A similar view on the expansion of American English is shared by Modiano and Hoffmann. Modiano says that "Standard British English has been seriously challenged by American English for the past 20-30 years." (Modiano 2006, 225) Even though Great Britain provides the learners of English in Europe with British textbooks, dictionaries and learning materials, the power of American English is also increasing. (Modiano 2006, 224) Charlotte Hoffmann admits that "in most European countries English was traditionally associated with the variety of the language spoken in

England, and even today many teaching materials and teachers use British English. Yet the kind of English which is most influential, because of its widespread presence, is American English." (Hoffmann 2000, 7)

4.4 Media

Culturally, European countries succumb to the influence of the English language. Hoffmann claims that in Benelux countries and Scandinavia, the English language has conquered the world of media. As a result, small children prefer English programmes with English subtitles rather than dubbed English programmes even though they are not able to read their own mother language. (Hoffmann 2000, 8)

Similarly as in the previous factors it is American English that is seizing the world of media more than British English. This fact is proved by Modiano's statement which says that "through various forms of media, the American variety of English is impacting on the lives of millions of Europeans." (Modiano 2006, 225)

The British Broadcasting Corporation gained its worldwide status also covering the areas of Europe until the 1990's. However the American media corporations have decided to intervene in the world of media introducing prominent corporations such as News Corp or Disney. (Graddol 2000, 40)

4.5 Personal aspects

When learning the English language, each learner acquires different and unique language manners that depend on various factors. According to Oxford the determinants that influence the second language acquisition include:

"1) language being learned; 2) level of language learning, proficiency, or course; 3) degree of metacognitive awareness; 4) sex; 5) affective variables such as attitudes, motivation, and language learning goals; 6) specific personality traits; 7) overall personality type; 8) learning style; 9) career orientation or field of specialization; 10) national origin; 11) aptitude; 12) language teaching methods; 13) task requirements; and, if relevant, 14) type of strategy training." (Oxford and Nyikos 2002, 291)

All the above-mentioned factors influence the learners' choice of English learning and his/her acquisition of language skills.

If a student wants to acquire language skills efficiently, he/she should be motivated enough to reach his/her language goal. He/ she can be motivated by a career opportunity either in the United Kingdom or the USA or by travelling abroad.

The learner's personality is another significant factor while learning. If a learner prefers an American accent because personally to him/ her it is more attractive, he/ she will try to adopt American accent rather than British. Put simply they will be using the variety of English that is more useful, practical, easier and more attractive to them.

A learner of language can not influence their inborn and natural determinants such as sex, national origin, talent or personality type, thus these qualities can not be learned and therefore can not be influenced by external factors.

Based on the previously mentioned factors, geographically the Czech Republic is closer to Great Britain and historically the Czech Republic had developed good relations with both Great Britain and the USA. Concerning the European Union a certain mixture of British and American English is evident. Great Britain supplies the European Union with British learning materials however American English is reaching the general awareness of people. In terms of media influence, it is the American English that wins the favour of European citizens. Thus Czech preferences of English are stated rather with vagueness due to the mixture of both varieties.

5 THE DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY

The choice of the usage of English depends on each individual however there are factors that may influence the usage. This bachelor thesis observes the students of grammar schools in Zlín. 60 students of three close age categories were selected as a sample for the survey.

Figure 1 shows the age category represented by the respondent sample.

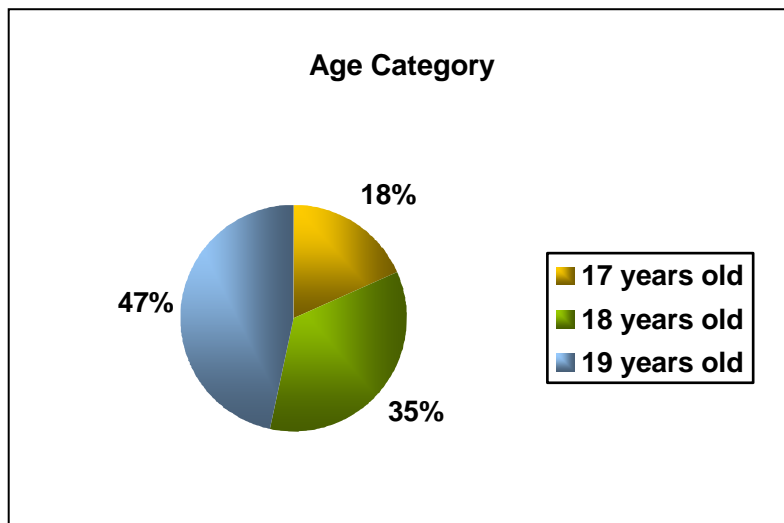


Figure 1. Age Category of the Respondent Sample.

The questionnaire survey consisted of three fundamental sections aimed at finding the preferences and factors influencing the overall choice by the learner's of English.

The first section of the research served predominantly to discover the factors that influence the usage of either British or American English or the usage of a combination of variants. The questions were aimed at the names of the textbooks used at school, at the English media the student prefers to watch and at the lessons with a native speaker. All the previously mentioned factors bias the speaker's language preferences to a considerable extent.

The second section of the questionnaire served to reveal the real British or American preferences with respect to pronunciation, lexicology and spelling. The respondents were asked either to choose one of the two forms they preferred or to circle both forms if used equally. The given pronunciation transcription and given words had been chosen according to the level of the language skills of a target group.

The respondents were asked to identify a British and American accent of the speaker from the recording. From this part, I was able to identify whether the learners can place the accent and recognize it. If they watch British and American media and are in contact with British and American native speakers, they should place these two accents correctly.

The objective of the third section of the survey was an interview with the teachers of English who taught the sample of respondents. A teacher certainly influences the student's choice of English since he/she is an authoritative person who provides the students with new information and English language models. Since the teacher guides the learner through a learning process, it is essential to include the teacher as an influential factor.

The influences of any of these above- stated factors were further observed in the individuals' preferences.

6 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PREFERENCES

A non-native speaker of the English language cannot measure the language skills of a native speaker of English. As a result, a non-native speaker has to acquire them by learning.

When learning the English language, various external factors contribute to the deflection from the standard learning path. The typical learning form of English is ordinarily set by the curriculum of the primary and secondary schools. However the student learning English as a foreign language may incline towards other given variants of English due to various factors.

6.1 The teacher factor

6.1.1 Description of the teacher's preferences

The description of the preferences of the three asked teachers is essential since it is one of the factors that influence student's choices of lexis, spelling and accent. For our purposes, the teachers were named English teacher 1, English teacher 2 and English teacher 3. Each teacher was asked to answer the questions aimed at their language experience and preferences.

English teacher 1 teaches English at the T.G.M grammar school in Zlín. She admits that she strives to use the standard British form, however she succumbs to the American influence with certain American expressions, intonation and accent. Her English usage was influenced neither by a longer stay abroad nor by a study sojourn. However her English usage is influenced by frequent contact with native speakers, mainly by lecturers from Canada, London and America. The teacher adheres to the British variant of English because she prepares the students for the British FCE tests. She teaches the British form of English however she has already met with students who were resisted this standard British English because of a one year stay in the USA. Although the usage of British English is preferred, she is not against the usage of the American form of English by the students. (Interview with a secondary school teacher, February 14, 2011; All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.)

English teacher 2 from the grammar school Lesní čtvrť in Zlín comments on her sole usage of British English. Her strict preference for British English arises from a long-term stay in the United Kingdom. Although she admits that there are some American features

that may influence her British English, she did not list specific examples. She studied at the university in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania for two semesters. Moreover her brother-in-law comes from the USA and they are in frequent contact. She has already met with the students who preferred solely the American form of English. She believes that the American influence is evidently the result of American film production. In the comparison with the first teacher, the second teacher claims that it is important to adhere to one form of English. The emerging mixture of both English variants is not suitable for testing purposes of students learning English. Her viewpoint on the mixture of Englishes was rather pessimistic. She laments that there are very few teachers who really respect and use only one variety of English. (Interview with a secondary school teacher, February 16, 2011; All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.)

English teacher 3 speaks British English since her English was influenced by a stay abroad. She has not studied abroad, however she regularly attends educational seminars and conferences where she comes into frequent contact with British native speakers. All her study was oriented towards the British form of English and obviously her orientation on the British English has been mirrored in her teaching. Since American English is a variety that historically evolved from British English, she considers British English as the correct form for teaching non-native speakers. (Interview with a secondary school teacher, February 16, 2011; All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.)

The preferences of British or American English of the interviewed teachers have arisen because of their English education, contact with native speakers and from the sojourn in either Great Britain or the USA. These factors have revealed that the teachers prefer British English as the correct form for teaching English, however there are some American features that can be also mirrored in their teaching.

6.1.2 Influence of the teacher factor on the respondents

The following table 1, table 2 and table 3 provide the concrete influence of the teacher on the given sample of respondents with respect to British English, American English and the mixture of British and American English.

Table 1. Respondents using British English- factor teacher

BRITISH ENGLISH			
Teacher	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (25)	14	23	14
British/American (35)	15	30	24

Table 2. Respondents using American English- factor teacher

AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Teacher	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (25)	6	1	7
British/ American (35)	9	2	8

Table 3. Respondents using British/ American English- factor teacher

BRITISH/AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Teacher	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (25)	5	1	4
British/ American (35)	11	3	3

In terms of teachers' influence, it is evident that British English prevails in both the British teacher and British/ American teacher factors. Teachers using British English have influenced the respondents to a great extent. American English is used mainly in pronunciation and spelling and it is more used in the British/ American teacher factor. The mixture of British and American teacher's factor caused that the respondents preferred equally British and American pronunciation.

6.2 A literature factor

The previously mentioned three teachers and their students have been using three British Oxford textbooks namely *Maturita Solutions*, *New English Files* and *New Matrix Intermediate*. The solely British textbooks contribute to the preferences of the British form of English. As the students have been learning the vocabulary and the pronunciation for examinations for which these textbooks prepare the students, this factor also affects their choice of English.

6.3 Mass media factor

6.3.1 Description of media preferences

Since the invention of print and television, mass media has been playing a significant role in the world of communication. The English language has expanded its position as a global language and as a result the majority of news, films and TV shows are produced by English film producers or are translated into English language. The broadcasting of English programmes has caused the English language to spread worldwide into various corners of the globe: So that now it serves as the language of commerce, economics and the media. For that reason the power of mass media is an essential factor for determining the learner's preferences with the English language.

The sample of questioned students were asked whether they watched series, sit-coms or films in English and the outcome is seen in figure 2. Merely 5% of the respondents admitted that they do not watch any of the previously mentioned. 25% of the respondents marked all options namely series, sit-coms and films in English. The other numbers such as 20% watching series in English, 14% watching sit-coms in English and 36% watching films in English have proved the hypothesis about the mass media's impact on the learners of the English language. Since 95% of an overall number of respondents claim that they follow English media, their vocabulary and accent will evidently succumb to the variant of English they will hear in the English media.

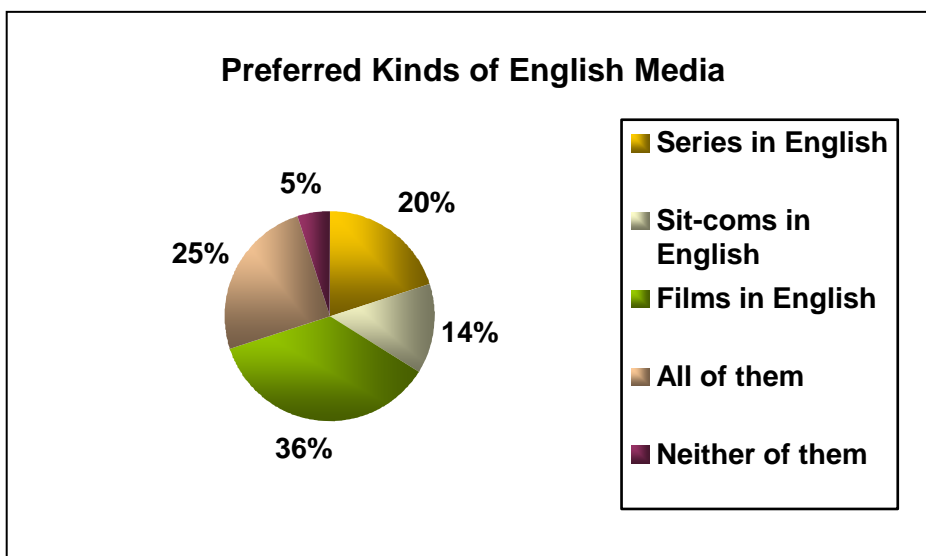


Figure 2. Preferred Kinds of English media.

In addition to watching English media, the respondents were asked to name their favourite kinds of English media. Figure 3 shows the percentage result of American and British media according to respondents' preferences.

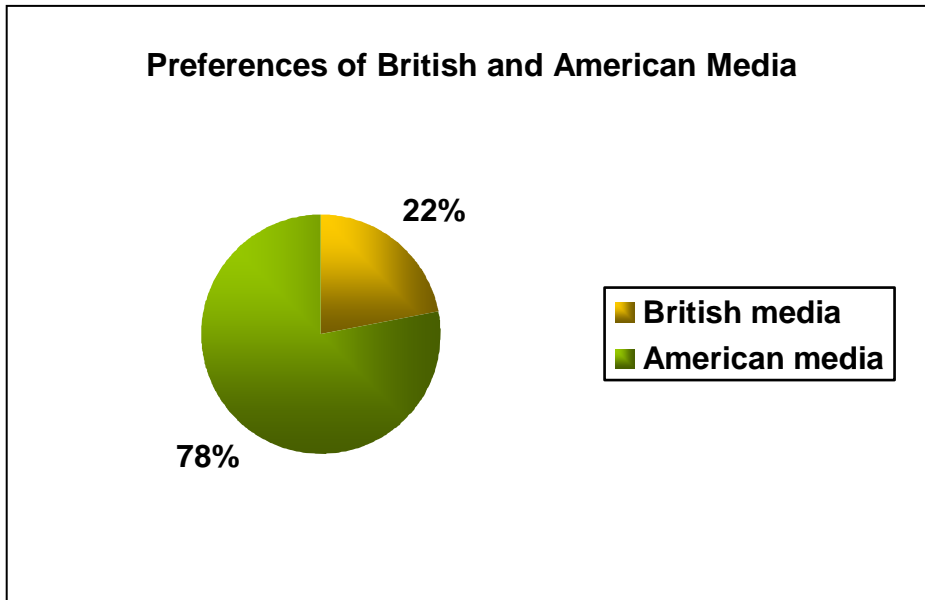


Figure 3. Preferences of British and American Media.

After the detailed survey of the given names of English series, sit-coms and films, the conclusion was apparent. 78% of the media belonged to American production while 22% were of a British origin. A student who watches an American film certainly falls under the influence of American intonation or accent. Apart from the pronunciation, lexis is unconsciously perceived in the American media as well. A student who repeatedly watches American films is likely to acquire American expressions. American films are popularized not only for their content and quality but also for higher level of comprehensibility of the English language for the learner.

More detailed media influence on each respondent is described in table 10.

6.3.2 Influence of a media factor on the respondents

The following table 4, table 5 and table 6 provide the media influence on respondents' British and American English.

Table 4. Respondents using British English- factor media

BRITISH ENGLISH			
Media	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (4)	2	4	2
American (41)	16	37	24
British+ American (7)	6	5	4
No (4)	2	4	4

Table 5. Respondents using American English- factor media

AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Media	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (4)	1	0	0
American (41)	12	3	13
British+ American (7)	0	0	1
No (4)	0	0	0

Table 6. Respondents using British/American English- factor media

BRITISH/ AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Media	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (4)	1	0	2
American (41)	13	2	4
British+ American (7)	1	2	1
No (4)	1	0	0

Surprisingly, respondents watching American media used British English in all three areas more than American English. American media has not as extensive an influence on American English pronunciation, lexis and spelling as one might expect. However it starts to intervene in the respondents English preferences. Lexis evidently does not succumb to the influence of American media, it remains mostly British. It is predominantly pronunciation that is affected. Those respondents watching British media have scarcely been influenced by the American English. Despite having mentioned that 78% of the respondents in the questionnaire preferred watching American media, it is remarkable that

only 12 respondents are affected by American pronunciation, 3 respondents by American lexis and 13 respondents by American spelling.

6.4 A Native speaker factor

6.4.1 Description of native speaker preferences

A native speaker definitely affects the students' accent, intonation and choice of words. Frequent contact with a native speaker improves communication and fluency of the learner's language. For learners, a native speaker is a source of authentic British or American language. The majority of schools offer the possibility of being taught by a native speaker. When learning with a native speaker, students are restricted in the usage of Czech terms and sentences and their reliance on their English language skills improves their communication abilities in the foreign language.

As a native speaker biases learners' preferences, it is given as an influencing factor. In the survey, the sample of questioned respondents were asked whether they have had lessons with a native speaker or not. Moreover they were asked to identify native speaker's nationality.

In figure 4, 59% of the students stated that they have lessons with a native speaker.

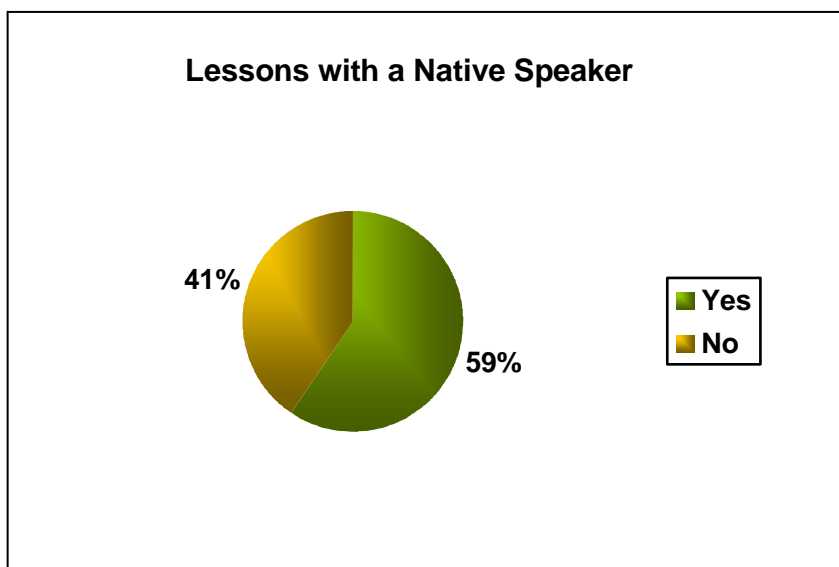


Figure 4. Lessons with a Native Speaker.

88% of the native speakers were of British origin. Therefore the direct contact with British native speaker is more intensive than with American or Australian native speakers.

Apart from noting the native speakers' presence in the students' learning process, the questionnaire was accompanied by an identification test, using the accents of both a British and American native speaker in recorded form.

Figure 5 shows the proportion of how many people were able to identify the dialect of the British native speaker.

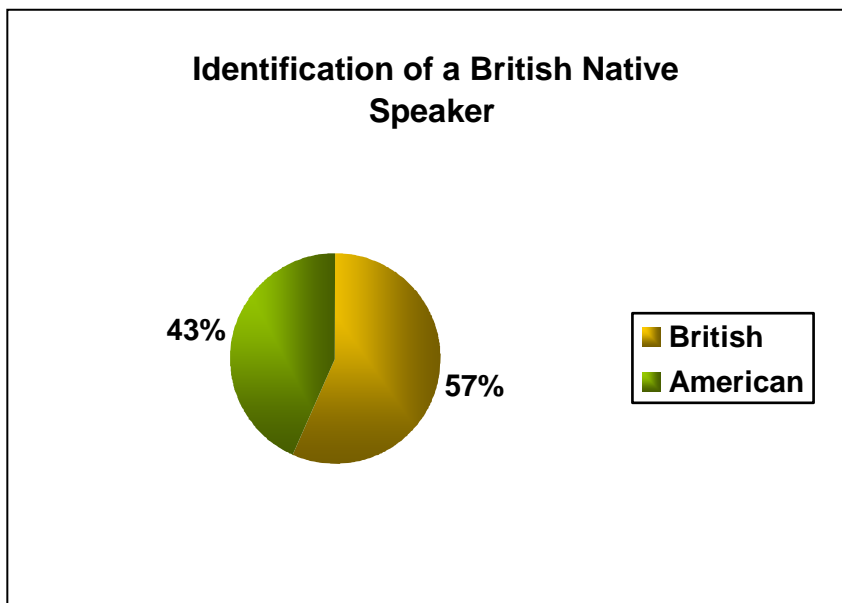


Figure 5. Identification of a British Native Speaker.

The British native speaker was recognized by 57% of all respondents. The other 43% of respondents believed a British native speaker was of American origin. The result of the identification of the accent and phonetic properties of a native speaker was not so apparent despite having lessons with a British native speaker.

Figure 6 states the number of students who, from the recording, correctly marked the American accent.

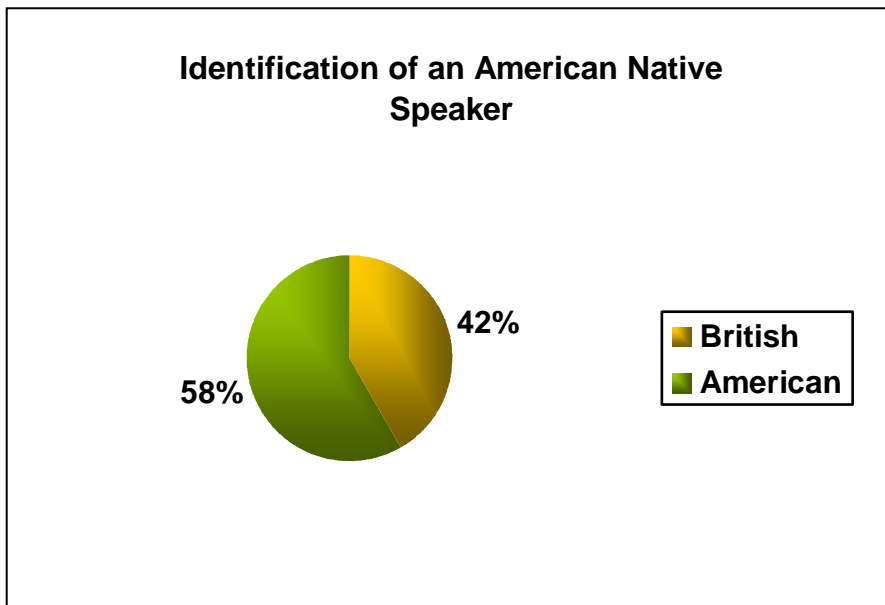


Figure 6. Identification of an American Native Speaker.

The accent of an American native speaker was recognized by 58% of the students, whereas 42% of the students thought the American accent belonged to a British native speaker. Despite watching more American media with American native speakers, the respondents could scarcely place an American accent correctly.

6.4.2 Influence of a native speaker factor on the respondents

The following tables namely table 7, table 8 and table 9 clarify whether a native speaker and his/her nationality can influence the speakers' choice of English or not.

Table 7. Respondents using British English- factor native speaker

BRITISH ENGLISH			
Native Speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (32)	17	28	21
American (2)	0	2	1
British+ American (2)	1	2	1
No (24)	11	21	15

Table 8. Respondents using American English- factor native speaker

AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Native Speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (32)	8	2	7
American (2)	0	0	1
British+ American (2)	0	0	1
No (24)	7	1	6

Table 9. Respondents using British/ American English- factor native speaker

BRITISH/ AMERICAN ENGLISH			
Native Speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling
British (32)	7	2	4
American (2)	2	0	0
British+ American (2)	1	0	0
No (24)	5	2	3

British native speaker had influenced the British English of the respondents in terms of pronunciation, lexis and spelling. The respondents who had an American native speaker are still more under the influence of British English. American and Australian native speakers do not influence the learners' choice of English to a great extent.

24 respondents marked that they do not have lessons with any native speaker. In this group of no native speakers, American English pronunciation, lexis and spelling have appeared however British English still prevails.

All the above-mentioned factors namely teachers and textbooks, mass media and native speakers, are presented in table 10 as the factors that shape the learners' preferences in using British or American English.

7 INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCES OF BRITISH OR AMERICAN ENGLISH

The prior section served to acquaint the reader with the possible influences that contribute to the preferences for either the British or American form of English.

Table 10 provides the concrete preferences of the individual students regarding pronunciation, spelling and lexis. The concrete preferences were compared to the factors influencing the usage of English. The outcome shows to what extent the usage of respondents is influenced by education, media and a native speaker. The final result will prove which variety is preferred and whether the participants' usage of words succumbs to the influences of education, media and a native speaker or not. The table also reveals the principal factors that contribute to the preferences of the majority. The preferences according to table 10 are divided into two groups.

7.1 No influence of the factors on the preferences

As seen in the above- stated section, school education, the power of mass media and a native speaker are the three factors that have evidently influenced the learner's choice of English. However, as it is described in the outcome in table 10, the influence of the American media on English usage does not reflect all cases. 19 respondents preferred British English in terms of pronunciation, spelling and lexis even if they admit to watch American media. The impact of American media was not so persuasive or intensive that it would considerably penetrate into the usage of these students. Similarly three respondents incline solely towards American English despite their British education. Their choice was influenced by American media rather than by the British education or native speaker.

7.2 Evident influence of the factors on the preferences

Contrary to the previously mentioned, and according to table 10, in most cases an evident influence of the factors on the preferences is observed. The impact of the American media on the preferences is apparent in the pronunciation of 7 respondents. Although the preferences of lexis and spelling of these 7 respondents were British, in terms of phonetic features American pronunciation predominates. The preferences are partly influenced by American media and partly by the teacher's American intonation and accent.

The equal percentage of British and American pronunciation was noticed in 16 answers of the respondents. It was an outcome of American media in combination with the

British native speaker and British teachers. This clash in pronunciation demonstrates that the previously mentioned factors have been combined and created a mixture of accents that the respondents have used.

Similarly 7 respondents marked equally the usage of British and American variants of spelling. The British- American mosaic of the spelling variants is observed. However the spelling equality is ascribed to American media and mostly to the simplicity of some American spelling.

Equality of British and American usage of lexis was noticed in 4 answers of the respondents due to the American and British media combined with the British textbooks and memorization of the British lexis.

Other respondents have deflected from the standard British English learning path and followed American pronunciation, American lexis or American spelling.

Figure 7 illustrates the three types of the preferences according to the survey namely the preferences of solely one kind of English, the mixture of British and American English and the equal usage of British and American English either in terms of pronunciation, lexis or spelling.

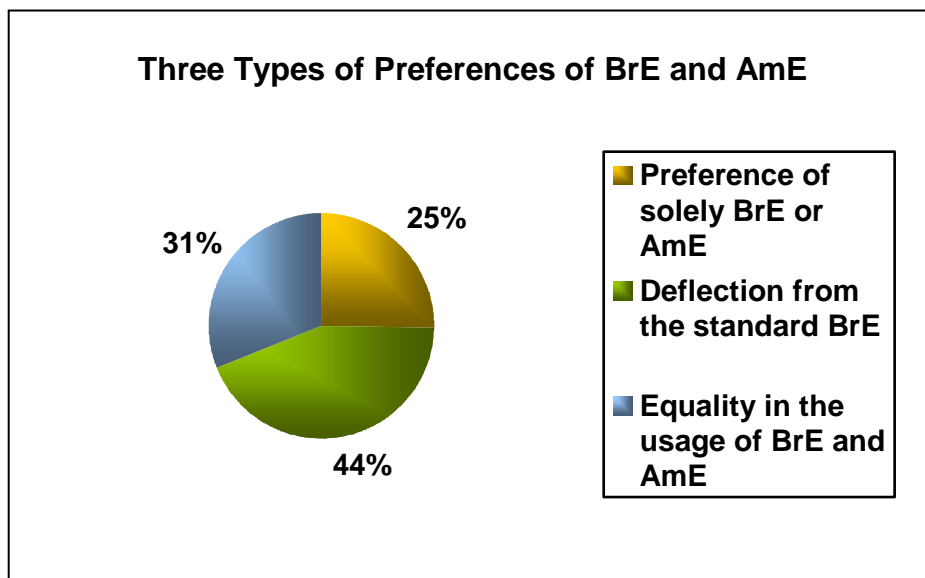


Figure 7. Three types of preferences of British English and American English.

The further investigation of the three factors namely education, media and native speaker on the learners' preferences is particularised in table 10 with a concrete description and outcomes for each individual respondent.

Parti- cipants	I. Influence			II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome	
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling		Listening
	Teacher	Textbook							
1.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE, AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	AmE spelling and BrE/ AmE pronunciation → Am. media influence, British education system
2.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE, AmE	*	BrE/ AmE spelling, otherwise BrE used → American media, British native speaker, education
3.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation, otherwise BrE used → Am media, British native speaker, education
4.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE, AmE	BrE	AmE	*	BrE/ AmE pronunciation → influenced by both British teacher and American media
5.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no influence of American media
6.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE, AmE	*	BrE/AmE spelling → no Am.
7.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	AmE usage prevails → influence of Am. media, BrE lexis influenced by textbooks

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence				II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling	Listening	
	Teacher	Textbook							
8.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	BrE	BrE, AmE	✓	BrE, AmE used → lexis BrE influenced by education factor, Am. media
9.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation used → influenced by media
10.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no influence of Am. media on usage
11.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no influence of Am. media on usage
12.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no influence of Am. media on usage
13.	3 rd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	Not stated	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no influence of AmE
14.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	Australian	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE → not observed influence of AmE on usage
15.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	Australian	BrE, AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	BrE, AmE used → influence of American media and Australian native speaker
16.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE → no influence of Am. media on usage
17.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	AmE prevails → Am. media influence, BrE lexis influenced by textbook teacher

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence				II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling	Listening	
	Teacher	Textbook							
18.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	AmE	AmE	✓	Solely AmE → no influence of British education, however great influence of Am. media
19.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE → not influenced by American media
20.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE, AmE	BrE, AmE	✓	AmE spelling noticed at the same level as BrE spelling otherwise BrE prevails
21.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE usage → not influenced by American media
22.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influenced by American media, otherwise BrE prevails
23.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influenced by American media
24.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	No	BrE	BrE, AmE	BrE	✓	AmE lexis → influenced by American media
25.	2 nd teacher BrE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	British	BrE	BrE	AmE	✓	AmE spelling → American media influence
26.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	Prevails BrE however AmE pronunciation noticed → American media

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence			II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome	
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling		Listening
	Teacher	Textbook							
27.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influenced by Am. media, teacher
28.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation → influence of Am. media and teacher
29.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE	British	Br, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation → influence despite watching British media, American accent of a teacher
30.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	Not stated	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE, British native speaker, British education, no influence of teacher
31.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	British	BrE	BrE, AmE	BrE	*	AmE lexis used at the same level as BrE lexis, media influence, teacher
32.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE, despite watching American media → no influence
33.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE, despite watching American media →no influence

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence			II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome	
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling		Listening
	Teacher	Textbook							
34.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE, AmE	*	Noticed American influence in pronunciation and spelling → American media and teacher influence
35.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE, AmE	✓	AmE seen solely in spelling → media influence, teacher
36.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	Not stated	British	AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation → influence of teacher using American accent, intonation
37.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation influenced by media
38.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation influenced by American media, otherwise BrE prevails
39.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	AmE	AmE	*	Solely AmE → influence of media, teacher
40.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	No media	No	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE → no media, no native speaker
41.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	No	BrE, AmE	BrE, AmE	AmE	*	AmE prevails → considerably influenced by Am. media and teacher
42.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE used → British native speaker, education

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence				II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling	Listening	
	Teacher	Textbook							
43.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	AmE	*	AmE seen in spelling → American media, teacher
44.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	*	Solely BrE used → no influence of AmE
45.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	American	BrE, AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	American spelling, pronunciation → American native speaker, media
46.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE pronunciation at the same level as BrE pronunciation → influence of American media, teacher+ British textbook and British native speaker
47.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	AmE	✓	AmE spelling → media influence, teacher
48.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	No media	No	AmE	BrE	BrE	*	American pronunciation observed → No influence of American media, no native speaker
49.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influence of Am. media and teacher using Am. accent

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence			II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome	
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling		Listening
	Teacher	Textbook							
50.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE → not influenced by the American media or a teacher using BrE/AmE
51.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	BrE, AmE	AmE	✓	AmE prevails → observed influence of American media, teacher
52.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	Not stated	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	BrE usage → influenced by British native speaker, education
53.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE, AmE	*	BrE prevails → noticed usage of both AmE spelling and BrE spelling
54.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	American	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	*	AmE and BrE pronunciation equal → influence of American media
55.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE	British	AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influenced by teacher's mixture of accents
56.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Solely BrE → no influence of media or teacher
57.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	AmE	British	AmE	AmE	AmE	✓	Solely AmE → no influence of native speaker or education factor

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

Parti- cipants	I. Influence			II. Reality-questionnaire				III. Outcome	
	Education		Media	Native speaker	Pronunciation	Lexis	Spelling		Listening
	Teacher	Textbook							
58.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	BrE, AmE	British	BrE, AmE	BrE	AmE	✓	Usage of both BrE and AmE in pronunciation → influenced by AmE/BrE media and teacher
59.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	No media	British	BrE	BrE	BrE	✓	Pure BrE, not influenced by teacher's American accent and intonation
60.	1 st teacher BrE/AmE	BrE (Oxford)	No media	No	BrE, AmE	BrE	BrE	✓	AmE pronunciation → influenced by teacher, no media influence

Table 10. Preferences and Influences of British and American English by respondents

8 OVERALL PREFERENCES

The survey served to explore the relationship between the factors that shape the preferences of the individual respondents and the real usage of two standard varieties of English by the respondents. The previous section served to analyse the concrete preferences and influencing factors of an each individual separately.

This section deals with the concrete preferred forms of pronunciation, spelling and lexis. It demonstrates the overall result of the preferences of British and American English from the given sample of 60 respondents coming from grammar schools in Zlín. Moreover it will investigate whether the model for pronunciation, RP, is diminishing among young Czech learners of English and is being substituted by American pronunciation, GA or otherwise.

8.1 Overall pronunciation preferences

Figure 8 exemplifies the preferences of British and American pronunciation by Czech respondents from the grammar schools in Zlín.

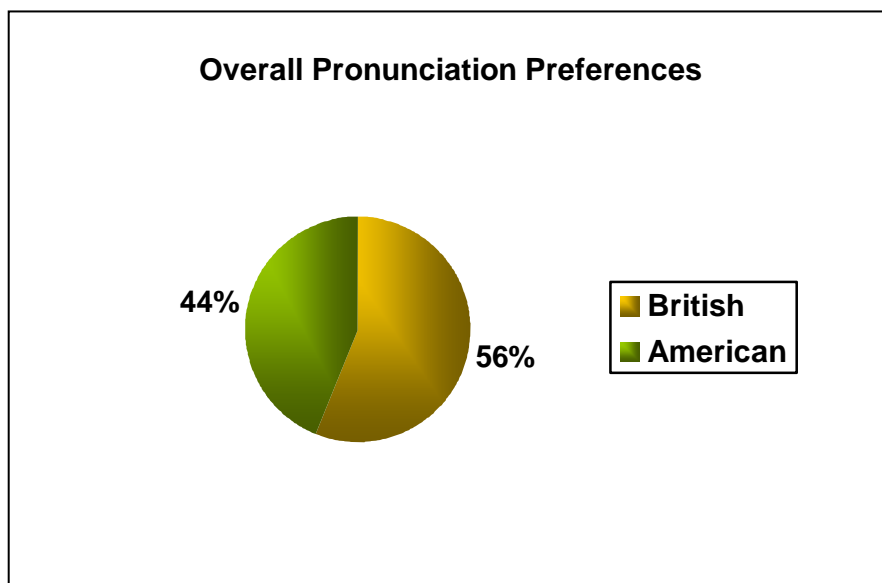


Figure 8. Overall pronunciation preferences.

It is apparent that British and American pronunciations are two pronunciation models that compete for the acquisition of prevalence. 56% of the respondents marked British form of pronunciation as the most used in their speech however the number of respondents using American pronunciation was approaching the British pronunciation with 44% of the total.

In terms of pronunciation, the influencing factors were American media vs British education along with the British native speaker.

In the following columns, the ratio of the preferred pronunciation variant is given. The most preferred word in each pair is in bold.

<u>Word</u>	<u>British English</u>	<u>American English</u>
car	/kɑː/ (20%)	/kɑːr/ (80%)
tissue	/'tɪʃuː/ (38%)	/'tɪsjuː/ (62%)
schedule	/' ʃ edjuːl/ (57%)	/'skedjuːl/(43%)
vase	/vɑːz/ (33%)	/veɪs/ (67%)
sure	/ʃɔː/ (40%)	/ʃʊr/ (60%)
slow	/sləʊ/ (20%)	/slou/ (80%)
herb	/hɜːb/ (90%)	/ɜːb/ (10%)
new	/njuː/ (75%)	/nuː/ (25%)
vitamin	/'vɪtəmin/ (93%)	/'vaɪt əmɪn / (7%)
duty	/'djuːti/ (95%)	/'duːti/ (5%)

Concerning the percentage results the traditional British RP prevails over American GA and its educational value has not considerably decreased. However American GA has not only a tendency to approach to RP but GA might overcome the popularity and usage of RP in the future.

8.2 Overall preferences of lexis

Having mentioned that all the three teachers have been using British form of English and British textbooks, it is evidently British lexis that is taught at both schools. However, the lexis has already been marked with a certain amount of American influence.

The survey has proved that in terms of lexis, students have been influenced by the British education standards. Figure 9 outlines the overall preferences of respondents' vocabulary usage. It should be emphasized that six respondents circled both variants as a sign they do not prefer a British word more than an American word and vice versa. They marked both variants in a couple of words *pavement-sidewalk*, *cinema- movies* and *chips-french fries*.

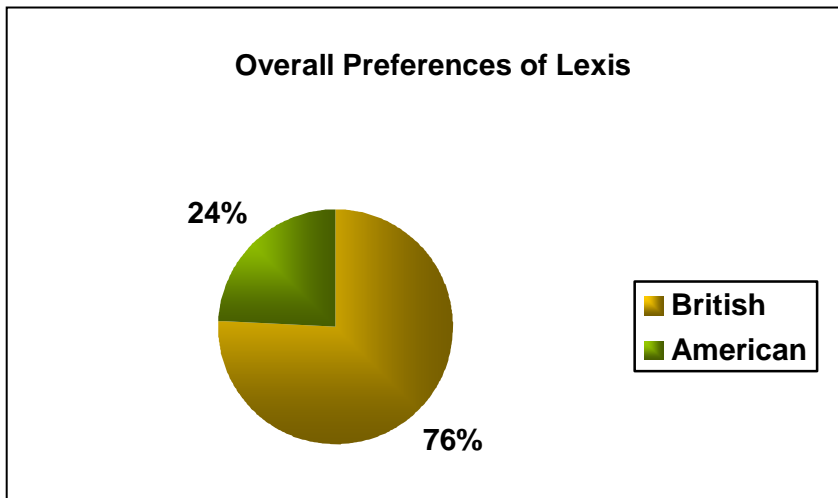


Figure 9. Overall preferences of lexis.

From the total number of respondents, 76% of them have been using the British forms of lexis as a result of using British textbooks.

In the following columns, the preferences of each word are described. The most preferred word in each pair is in bold.

<u>British lexis</u>	<u>American lexis</u>
lift (58%)	elevator (42%)
autumn (88%)	fall (12%)
biscuit (44%)	cookie (56%)
cinema (100%)	movie (0%)
sweets (80%)	candy (20%)
holiday (94%)	vacation (6%)
film (60%)	movie (40%)
shop (98%)	store (2%)
mobile (92%)	cellphone (8%)
toilet (89%)	bathroom/restroom (11%)
chips (50%)	french fries (50%)
pavement (63%)	sidewalk (37%)
petrol (62%)	gas (38%)
taxi (84%)	cab (16%)

The exception was the British word *chips* that was used by 30 students as well as American word *french fries* was used by 30 students. No student uses the American word *movies* since British textbooks prefer the word *cinema* being originally a French word that British have acquired.

The prevailing British lexis of the respondents is the result of the usage of British textbooks from which they have to memorize and learn vocabulary. These words are standardly taught at schools. The only American word preferred was *cookie* which is already found on the covers of Czech food magazines and is used in American films. Moreover the word *cookie* has already assimilated into the Czech language and as a result it is no longer perceived as a fully foreign word.

8.3 Overall spelling preferences

In the survey, respondents were asked to choose which spelling variant of English they preferred.

Figure 10 outlines the overall preferences of the spelling variants by given sample of respondents.

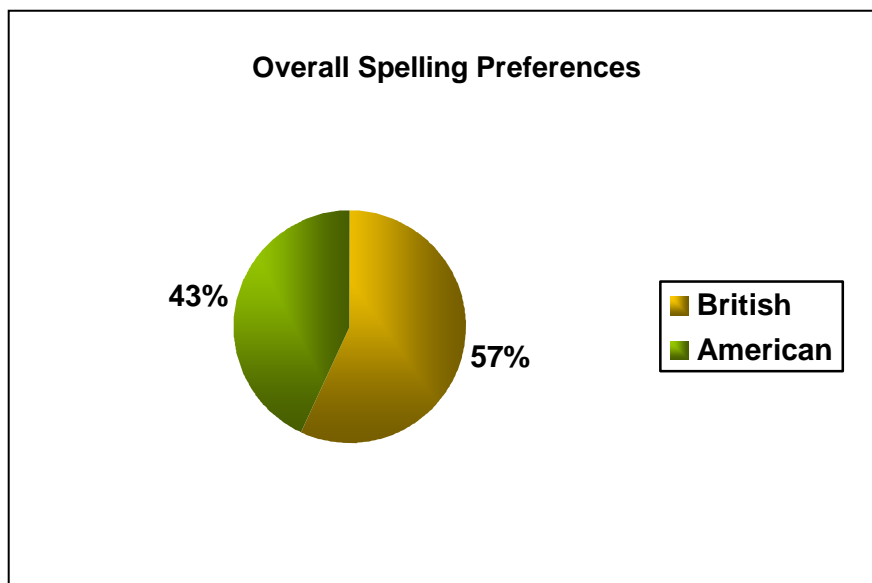


Figure10. Overall spelling preferences.

As seen in figure10, British spelling is used by 57% of the respondents and American spelling is used by 43% of the respondents. It is inevitable to mention the fact that one respondent circled both variants of spelling namely the couple of words *aeroplane-*

airplane, *metre- meter* and *cheque- check* indicating that he/she does not prefer either variant of English.

In the following columns, the ratio of British and American spelling preferences are demonstrated. The words are grouped into categories according to the vowel or consonant change in the word. The most preferred word in each pair is in bold.

	<u>British spelling</u>	<u>American spelling</u>
- ou /-o	colour (80%)	color (20%)
	labour (88%)	labor (7%)
	neighbour (98%)	neighbor (2%)
- re/-er	centre (63%)	center (37%)
	metre (39%)	meter (61%)
	theatre (70%)	theater (30%)
-mme/-m	programme (63%)	program (37%)
-ae/- ai	aeroplane (28%)	airplane (72%)
	encyclopaedia (2%)	encyclopedia (98%)
- s/- z	analyse (v) (55%)	analyze (v) (45%)
- ue/--	dialogue (58%)	dialog (42%)
	catalogue (60%)	catalog (40%)
-q/-ck	cheque (80%)	check (20%)
-l/ -ll	fulfil (12%)	fulfill (88%)

The predominance of American spelling has been noticed in four cases. The two American words *airplane* and *encyclopedia* prevail over the British forms of these words. These two words are from the identical category of changing vowels –ae/-ai. The American word *meter* is preferred by respondents however the American words *center* and *theater* from the same category –re/-er do not prevail over the British forms. This may be ascribed to the resemblance of the word *meter* to its Czech equivalent.

The preferences of British spelling varieties may be an outcome of the usage of British textbooks. American forms of spelling are largely predominated in cases where the use of the British form is complicated such as in the words *encyclopaedia* or *airplane*.

As it was demonstrated in the above- mentioned evidence arising from the responses of the Czech students of grammar schools in Zlín, British English generally prevails over

American. However in terms of pronunciation and spelling American English has been expanding and it has been approaching the numbers of British English usage.

CONCLUSION

The bachelor thesis in hand dealt with the features of British and American English and the preferences of Czech learners regarding British and American English.

The theoretical part of this work clarified the historical and linguistic perspective of the British and American English language. It served to acquaint the reader with the reasons why these two common languages are shaped differently by the flow of time along with the significant codifications. It also focused on the linguistic features and differences between British and American English in terms of pronunciation, lexis and spelling that were further explored in the practical part.

The practical part was aimed at the identification of concrete preferences of British and American English by Czech students in the grammar schools in Zlín and the factors that influence the choice of English while learning. Three factors namely education, media and a native speaker were crucial in determining the preferences. Based on the individual results and preferences of an each individual, the respondents of the questionnaire survey can be divided into three principal groups.

In the questionnaire method of the survey, 25% of the respondents admit they succumb solely to British or solely to American English. Despite watching American media, solely British respondents were not influenced by any of the American factors and the reason for a predominant use of British English resided in the British education. Similarly, the solely American usage was observed despite having learnt British English at schools along with a British native speaker. No influence of previously mentioned factors was detected in this group.

The second group of respondents deflected from the British standard variety to more American usage. 44% of the respondents preferred American English at least in one of three linguistic characteristics namely pronunciation, lexis and spelling. Their selection of American English either in pronunciation, spelling or lexis was influenced predominantly by watching American media. By comparing it to the first group, this group evidently yields to an impulse of certain American English characteristics. The penetration of American English into standard British English taught at schools was confirmed by the presence of solely American spelling, or solely American pronunciation in the learners' preferences.

The lexis was broadly marked by the usage of British textbooks therefore the lexis was not excessively affected by American usage.

In the third group, the respondents used both British and American English on the same level either in terms of pronunciation, lexis or spelling. In the questionnaire, the same level of usage was detected in 31%. Few of the respondents supported this view by circling both variants of pronunciation or spelling as an indication of equality. This expansion of British and American usage on the same level into learners' preferences proves that the learners of English absorb both British and American English models however they do not distinguish between them in real usage.

Generally, British English emerged as the English mostly used by the students however not inevitably in all three given linguistic features. In terms of pronunciation, American pronunciation may reach the status of British English since the difference in percentage was only 12%. Similarly the preferences of American spelling can be anticipated to progress since the difference in percentage was 14%. Thus the only sheltered position of British English is in the usage of lexis. In terms of lexis, British English acquired the stable position and is preferred by learners of English more than the American lexis.

Having explored the individual factors namely education, media and a native speaker and their influences on the British and American English, the survey proved that the respondents mostly succumbed to British English despite American factors that might have influenced them. The media factor appeared as the most influential one in terms of American English preferences. However despite watching American media, it was British English that prevailed in their usage. American pronunciation, lexis and spelling were noticed only in small numbers. American media has not as extensive influence on American English preferences as one might expect. However it starts to intervene in the respondents' English preferences. In terms of a native speaker, a British native speaker had an influence on the British English of the recipients. Due to little presence of American and Australian native speakers, it is obvious that a British native speaker was more influential. The third factor, education, was apparent in the students' lexis and in their overall preferences of British English.

The survey has proved that the penetration and the increasing popularity of American English have been noticed predominantly in pronunciation and spelling. The factors such as American media, an American native speaker and the American accent of the teacher have not influenced the American English of respondents as extensively as British education. As a result the Czech learners constantly succumb more to British English than

served up through the teaching model in schools. Nevertheless American English has already created preconditions for its extensive usage and popularity by Czech learners of English in the future.

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APPENDICES

P I A questionnaire

P II Questionnaire recording of British and American native speakers on attached CD

P III List of series, sit-coms and films reported by respondents

APPENDIX P I: A QUESTIONNAIRE

1

Questionnaire BACHELOR THESIS SURVEY / English for Business Administration, TBU in Zlín

Jmenuji se Zuzana Jurigová a píši bakalářskou práci na téma Preference britské či americké angličtiny nerodilými, v tomto případě českými mluvčími. Cílem mé práce je vyzkoumat, zda studenti preferují některou z těchto dvou variant. Prosím Vás proto o vyplnění následujícího dotazníku, kterým přispějete k výzkumné části mé práce.

Děkuji.

1) Age:

2) Sex (circle please): Female / Male

3) The name of the English textbook you use at school:

4) Do you watch:

- a) Series in English
- b) Sit-coms in English
- c) Films in English
- d) All of them
- e) Neither of them
- f) Other:

5) If so, give names of your favourite English shows, programmes or movies:

6) Do you have lessons with a native speaker? Yes No

7) If you have lessons with a native speaker is he/she:

- a) British
- b) American
- c) Canadian
- d) Australian
- e) South- African
- f) I don't know

8) In the future, would you like to visit:

- a) The United Kingdom
- b) The United States
- c) Other English speaking countries
- d) All of them
- e) Neither of them

9) Give reasons for 8:

Part I. Listen to the recording and circle the correct variant.

"I was excited at the thought of exploring this mysterious boat, but Jim said, "No!" He was certain that a man would be on the boat to protect the supplies it carried. "What's there to protect? Most of the boat is under water. Who would remain on a boat in that condition in a storm like this? At any moment, the boat might break and disappear." Jim couldn't answer that argument and didn't try. I continued, "We might find some good supplies that we could use. Boat captains are rich and always travel with the best supplies. Jim wasn't happy, but he finally agreed to go with me on the boat." Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Speaker 1 is : British / American

Speaker 2 is: British / American

Part II. Circle the form of pronunciation that you use:

Word	Form A	Form B
car/ auto	/kɑː /	/kɑːr/
tissue/ kapesník	/'tɪʃuː/	/'tɪsjuː/
schedule/ rozvrh	/'ʃedjuːl/	/'skedjuːl/
vase/váza	/vaːz/	/veɪs/
sure/ jiste	/ʃʊː/	/ʃʊr/
slow/pomalý	/sləʊ/	/slou/
herb/ rostlina	/hɜːb/	/ɜːb/
new/ nový	/njuː/	/nuː/
vitamin/vitámín	/'vɪtəˌmɪn/	/'vɑːt əˌmɪn /
duty/povinnost	/'djuːti/	/'duːʃi/

Part III. Circle the word you use for:

	Form A	Form B
výtah	lift	elevator
podzim	autumn	fall
sušenka	biscuit	cookie
kino	cinema	movies
bonbóny	sweets	candy
prázdniny	holiday	vacation
film	film	movie
obchod	shop	store
mobilní telefon	mobile	cellphone
toaleta	toilet	bathroom/restroom
hranolky	chips	french fries
chodník	pavement	sidewalk
benzín	petrol	gas
taxík	taxi	cab

Part IV. Circle the spelling you use of:

	Form A	Form B
barva	colour	color
centrum	centre	center
program	programme	program
letadlo	aeroplane	airplane
soused	neighbour	neighbor
práce	labour	labor
analyzovat	analyse	analyze
dialog	dialogue	dialog
metr	metre	meter
katalog	catalogue	catalog
šek	cheque	check
divadlo	theatre	theater
encyklopedie	encyclopaedia	encyclopedia
naplnit	fulfil	fulfill

Thank you for your time.

The questions for English teachers teaching English to the sample of respondents:

1. Do you speak British or American English?
2. Did a sojourn abroad influence the usage of your British or American English?
3. Did you study abroad? If yes, please state the place of your studies.
4. Have you been in contact with the English native speakers? If yes, please state their nationality.
5. Which of these two variants do you follow while teaching English?
6. Have you already met with the students who preferred strictly British or American English?
7. What is your opinion on the teaching of strictly a British or American form? Why?

**APPENDIX P II: QUESTIONNAIRE RECORDING OF BRITISH AND
AMERICAN NATIVE SPEAKERS ON ATTACHED CD**

**APPENDIX P III: LIST OF SERIES, SIT-COMS AND FILMS
REPORTED BY RESPONDENTS**

Title	Number of students	Type of the media	British media	American media
Black swan	1	Film		✓
Big Bang Theory	18	Sit-com		✓
Friends	6	Sit-com		✓
Misfits	1x	Series	✓	
My name is Earl	1x	Series	✓	
Little Britain	1x	Series	✓	
Desperate Housewives	4x	Series		✓
The Vampire Diaries	3x	Series		✓
Greek	1x	series		✓
How I met your mother	19x	Sit-com		✓
Harry Potter	3x	Film	✓	
Remember me	1x	Film		✓
Mamma Mia	3x	Film	✓	
Boardwalk Empire	1x	Series		✓
Star Wars	1x	Film		✓
Snatch	1x	Film	✓	
Dexter	2x	Series		✓
Angels and Demons	1x	Film		✓
House M.D.	6x	Series		✓
Californication	3x	Series		✓
King Arthur	1x	Film		✓
The Simpsons	1x	Series		✓
Rain Man	1x	Film		✓
Wall Street Warriors	1x	Series		✓
A beautiful mind	1x	Film		✓
MTV	2x	TV		✓
The Office	1x	Series		✓
American Beauty	1x	Film		✓
Galaxy Quest	1x	Film		✓
Love Actually	1x	Film	✓	
Shall we dance	1x	Film		✓
Pirates of the Caribbean	1x	Film		✓
Hustle	1x	Series	✓	
Heroes	2x	Series		✓
Inception	1x	Film		✓
Requiem for a dream	1x	Film		✓
Shutter Island	1x	Film		✓

Title	Number of students	Type of the media	British media	American media
Lost	1x	Series		✓
I.T. Crowd	3x	Sit-Com	✓	
Bridget Jones's Diary	2x	Film	✓	
Monthy Python	2x	Series	✓	
Gossip Girl	6x	Series		✓
Gran Torino	1x	Film		✓
Pulp Fiction	1x	Film		✓
Million Dollar Baby	1x	Film		✓
P.S. I love you	1x	Film		✓
Dear John	1x	Film		✓
Red Dwarf	5x	Sit-Com	✓	
Futurama	1x	Sit-com		✓
The Dark Knight	1x	Film		✓
Chicago	1x	Film		✓
Prison Break	1x	Series		✓
Burn Notice	1x	Series		✓
Top Gear	3x	Series	✓	
Sky News	1x	TV	✓	
Fringe	1x	Series	✓	
Nip/ Tuck	2x	Series		✓
Gilmore Girls	1x	Series		✓
Black Books	3x	Sit-com	✓	
Star Wars	1x	Film		✓
The Secret Diary of Call Girl	1x	Series	✓	
Sex and the city	1x	Series/Film		✓
Fight club	1x	Film		✓
The Godfather	1x	Film		✓
Aqualibrium	1x	Film		✓
The King's Speech	1x	Film	✓	
The Duchess	1x	Film	✓	
Forest Gump	1x	Film		✓
Smallville	1x	Series		✓
The Lord of the Rings	1x	Film		✓
Superman returns	1x	Film		✓
Hours	1x	Film		✓
Family Guy	2x	Series		✓
TOTAL NUMBER	151	Films, Series, Sit-coms, TV	35	116