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Emma Tomoriová

Colour Adjectives in British and American English

Adjektiva popisující barvy v Britské a Americké angličtině

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vedoucí práce: Mgr. Kateřina Vašků, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

The present thesis studies the gradability, i.e. essentially the ability of colour adjectives to take inflection and classify them in sense of syntax and semantics. This contrastive study aims to determine whether it is possible to describe the differences between British and American English in the possibility of gradation of these adjectives, the type of inflection of the particular six colour adjectives and analyze the frequency of inflected adjectives in comparison with semantic and syntactic features. The analysis is based on data from the British National Corpus and Corpus of Contemporary American English. The colour adjectives are examined in comparative synthetic and analytic constructions, as well as with premodifiers *very* and *really*. Next, the inflected adjectives are analyzed quantitatively concerning British and American varieties and subsequently from the syntactic as well as semantic points of view such as the meaning of the inflected colour adjectives, or the position of such adjectives in relation to a noun phrase. The thesis consists of two parts: the theoretical part which introduces form, function, position, syntax and semantics of adjectives, and the empirical part consisting of the quantitative part that selects six colours and analyzes their use in a comparative and the qualitative part which examines two hundred examples taken from the corpora. The findings acquired in the analysis are summarized in the conclusion. One of the most substantial results concluded in the comparative research confirm the hypothesis and show that there is a bigger tendency towards synthetic inflection in both British and American English, however, it is unmistakable that American English prefers analytic inflection more than British English.

Key words: colour adjectives, British English, American English, inflection, attributive and predicative position, literal and figurative meaning

ABSTRAKT

Táto práca študuje gradabilitu, tj. schopnosť farebných adjektív prijímať skloňovanie a klasifikovať ich v zmysle syntaxe a sémantiky. Cieľom tejto kontrastívnej štúdie je zistiť, či je možné popísať rozdiely medzi britskou a americkou angličtinou v možnosti gradácie týchto adjektív, typu skloňovania konkrétnych šiestich farebných adjektív a analyzovať frekvenciu skloňovania adjektív v porovnaní k niekoľkým sémantickým a syntaktickým rysom. Analýza je založená na dátach z British National Corpus a Corpus of Contemporary American English. Farebné adjektíva sa skúmajú v porovnávacích syntetických a analytických konštrukciách, ako aj s premodifikátormi *veľmi* a *skutočne*. Ďalej sa skloňované adjektíva kvantitatívne analyzujú v súvislosti s britskou a americkou angličtinou a následne zo syntaktických, ako aj sémantických hľadísk, ako je napríklad význam skloňovaných farebných prídavných mien alebo poloha týchto prídavných mien vo vzťahu k podstatnému menu. Bakalárska práca sa skladá z dvoch častí: teoretickej, ktorá predstavuje formu, funkciu, polohu, syntax a sémantiku adjektív, a empirickú časť tvoriacu kvantitatívnu časť, ktorá vyberá šesť farieb a analyzuje ich použitie v stupňovaní prídavných mien a kvalitatívna časť, ktorá skúma dvesto príkladov odobratých z korpusov. Zistenie získané v analýze sú zhrnuté v závere. Jeden z najpodstatnejších výsledkov uzavretých v komparatívnom výskume potvrdzuje hypotézu a ukazuje, že v britskej aj v americkej angličtine existuje väčšia tendencia k syntetickému skloňovaniu, avšak je nepochybné, že americká angličtina uprednostňuje analytické skloňovanie viac ako britská angličtina.

Kľúčové slová: adjektíva popisujúce farby, britská angličtina, americká angličtina, skloňovanie, atributívne a predikatívne pozície, doslovný a obrazný význam

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List of Abbreviations

* = *incorrect form*

BNC = *The British National Corpus*

COCA = *The Corpus of Contemporary American English*

ipm = *instances per million*

P = *predicative*

AT = *attributive*

L = *literal*

F = *figurative*

S = *synthetic*

AN = *analytic*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The present thesis focuses on six colour adjectives and their comparative forms in British and American varieties. The form of the colour adjectives under analysis is the set of synthetically and analytically inflected adjectives, and modifiers functioning as intensifiers and emphasizees to colour adjectives. The paper concentrates on such constructions with relation to their frequency in the British and American varieties. It also analyses its occurrences in relation to selected semantic and syntactic features.

The theoretical background of the thesis characterizes adjectives and examines specifically inflection of colour adjectives *black, white, red, green, blue, brown* from various perspectives. It defines adjectives, their form, function, position, syntax and semantics and usage. The final section of the theoretical background chiefly interprets questions regarding colour adjective inflection, factors in comparative alternation, gradability, interpretation of absolute and relative colour adjectives, or attributive and predicative colour adjectives.

In the empirical part of the thesis, relative frequencies of all comparative forms and forms with intensifiers are analyzed, and frequencies of occurrences of colour adjectives with premodifiers *very* and *really* are inspected in the British National Corpus and Corpus of Contemporary American English. Subsequently, the two hundred occurrences of comparative forms of colour adjectives provided by the BNC and COCA are examined. The empirical part comprises four sections regarding comparative constructions: presence and interpretation of the intensifier *very* and the emphasizee *really* as modifiers to colour adjectives, the study of synthetic and analytic adjective inflection in British and American varieties, the attributive and predicative position of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives in relation to the synthetic and analytic adjective inflection, and literal and figurative meaning of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives in relation to the synthetic and analytic adjective inflection.

Based on findings and comparison between British and American varieties, we will find answers to our research questions - when, how and to what degree are used the comparative forms of colour adjectives in the two varieties, and which comparative is preferred - synthetic as opposed to analytic. This particular topic is examined because it is interesting to observe and examine the topic where nor grammars nor dictionaries cannot consent to one definite standard usage of colour

adjective comparison. It is interesting to observe the possibility of diverse gradability in the English language and its varieties, the different ways how we perceive the concept of colour and consequently different ways of expressing these notions.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Form, Position and Meaning of Adjectives

“At the general level, adjectives may be defined as a syntactically distinct class of words whose most characteristic function is to modify nouns. They typically denote properties – most centrally in the domains of size, shape, colour, worth, and age. If a language has adjectives, it will always have some [...] colour adjectives meaning ‘black’, ‘white’, ‘red’, ‘green’” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 527). According to Dušková et al. (2009: 6.1), an adjective expresses a property, quality, or relationship (to the object from whose name it is derived). Quirk et al. (1995: 402) add that many common adjectives have no identifying form, nor can we identify a word as an adjective merely from its potentialities for inflection. “Unlike in many other languages, adjectives in English do not change (agree) with the noun that they modify” (*Cambridge international dictionary of English*, 1995). The commonly considered form and features of adjectives will be discussed in the next section. The adjective form, that being the three-degree comparison or inflection, will be discussed in 2.1.2.

Quirk et al. (1995: 417) analyze three positions of adjectives:

- Predicative
- Attributive
- Postpositive

Predicative adjectives come after the head of a noun phrase. An attributive adjective comes before the head of a noun phrase. Adjectives are postpositive, when they immediately follow the noun or pronoun they modify, and they will be approached as the subtype of attributive adjectives. We will discuss predicative and attributive functions more in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.3.

When referring to the meaning, Biber et al. distinguish two broad semantic groups of adjectives: *descriptors* and *classifiers*. *Descriptors* are prototypical adjectives denoting such features as colour, size and weight, chronology and age, or emotion. In contrast, the primary function of *classifiers* is to restrict a noun’s referent, by placing it in a category in relation to other referents (Biber et al., 1999: 508 - 509). Quirk et al. (1995: 434) semantically subclassify adjectives as follows:

- Stative/ dynamic
- Gradable/ non gradable

- Inherent/ noninherent

We will be concerning with the semantics of adjectives to a broader depth in 2.2.

2.1.1 Criterial Properties

According to Quirk et al. (1995: 402), “four features are commonly considered to be characteristic of adjectives.”

- Firstly, they can occur in an attributive function, that is, they can premodify the head of a noun phrase: a *red* house.
- Secondly, they can also occur in a predicative function, that is, they function as a subject complement: the house is *red*, or as object complement: he painted the house *red*. There is a copular relationship between the subject and subject complement, as there is also one between the direct object and object complement (Quirk et al. 1995: 417, Biber et al., 1999: 505).
- The third feature is that they can be premodified by the intensifier *very*.
- The fourth characteristic is that they can take comparative and superlative forms. The comparison may be synthetic (-*er* and -*est*): *happier*, *happiest*, or analytic (the addition of the premodifiers *more* and *most*): *more intelligent*, *most intelligent*.

As Quirk et al. (1995: 403 - 404) remark, not all adjectives possess all of these four features – premodification by *very*, and the ability to take comparison have no value in distinguishing adjectives from adverbs, thus only the first and the second criterion (the ability to function attributively and predicatively) have a diagnostic value. Quirk et al. (1995: 404), and Biber et al. (1999: 506) call adjectives that can function both attributively and predicatively *central* adjectives, and adjectives that satisfy one of these two criteria to be *peripheral*. Colour adjectives are *central* adjectives on the grounds that they both function attributively and predicatively. The problem of colour adjectives we will discuss in the Analysis is the question of their ability to be premodified by intensifiers *very* and *really*, and their inflection.

2.1.2 Adjective Inflection

One of the main properties of adjectives is adjective inflection, that is, the possibility to take comparative and superlative forms (Quirk et al., 1995: 403). This category also often goes under the name of ‘comparison’ (Quirk et al., 1995: 435). As Quirk et al. or Bauer, Lieber, & Plag point out, three types of comparison are possible along a scale of values: “The positive form denotes an unmarked given value (e.g. *wide*), the comparative expresses a higher degree (*wider*), the superlative the highest degree on the respective scale (*widest*)” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 103). The three-degree comparison is referred to as absolute, comparative, and superlative by Quirk et al. (1995: 458), or as positive, comparative, and superlative by Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 103). As observed by many grammars (e.g. Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 103 - 104), Dušková, L et al. (2009: 6.8), Quirk, R. et al. (1995: 458), Biber, D. et al. (1999: 521)), the comparison is done by two different structural realizations. “One option is suffixation by *-er* (comparative) or *-est* (superlative), the other a syntactic construction with *more* (comparative) or *most* (superlative) preceding the adjective or adverb” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 103). These two realizations have been labelled many terms over time – for clarity purposes, we will address some of the principal terms next. We can find suffixed realizations (*-er*, *-est*) to be referred to as affixal, synthetic, morphological (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 103), or inflectional, (Dušková, 2009: 6.81, Quirk et al., 1995: 458) whereas the constructions involving the degree markers (*more*, *most*) are usually being referred to as periphrastic, analytic, syntactic, or phrasal (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag 2015: 103, Quirk et al. 1995: 458, Dušková 2009: 6.8, Algeo 2006: 129). We will discuss factors in the choice between these two comparative forms in the next section. It should be noted that the factors examined do not categorize, but rather increase, the chances of the occurrence of one variant: “the realization of an inflectional category is probabilistic, instead of being grammatically or lexically strictly determined” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 119). As observed and accurately noted by Dixon, it is needed to be aware of the fact that comparative forms of colour terms carry quite different meanings of the comparative forms as opposed to other adjectives; by that Dixon means that they involve no converse relation. Eventually, he suggests that the term comparative, although morphologically apposite, is perhaps semantically inappropriate. He explains the notion with:

X is redder than Y need not necessarily imply Y is bluer/yellower/greener/etc. than X;
rather X is redder than Y is typically used in cases where X and Y are equally 'red', in

terms of the crucial parameter of hue, but differ along the parameter of chroma or brightness (Dixon, 2010: 19).

2.1.2.1 Factors in the Comparative Alternation

There has been a lot of discourse regarding the preference in the usage of the two (analytic and synthetic) competing forms of adjective comparison. The first and main distinction that is being mostly mentioned in grammar books is phonological – that is, the decisive factor is the number of syllables: “The choice between inflectional and periphrastic comparison is largely determined by the length of the adjective” (Quirk et al., 1995: 461), i.e. “monosyllabic adjectives typically take the affixal forms” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 111), or, as clarified in more explicit commentary by Mondorf, “there is general consent in the literature that trisyllabic words take the historically more recent analytic comparative, while monosyllables take synthetic variants, with disyllabic words being subject to variation” (Mondorf, 2009: 1). Dušková, et al. remark that analytical gradation using *more*, *most* is used for trisyllabic and multisyllabic adjectives as well as numerous double-syllable adjectives, especially ending in *-ct*, *-nt*, *-ous*, *-ful*, *-al*, *-less*, adjectives starting with *a-* and adjectives with participle form and unusual phonological or morphological structure, for example, those of foreign origin (Dušková, 2009: 6.82). Yet as Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 111), and Algeo (2006: 129) reflect, while the length of an adjective is generally a good predictor for the choice of the variant, it has to be stated that monosyllables can still show variable behaviour – they may occasionally form periphrastic comparison. Except for the variable behaviour in some syllables, other factors are relevant. As observed by Mondorf (2009) and again interpreted by Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 110), besides the phonological aspect, the other factors are in the force of the choice of comparatives: morphological, lexical, semantic, syntactic, and dialectal.

Biber et al. also conclude that in some cases, “monosyllabic adjectives can alternatively take phrasal marking as well as inflectional” and a possible reason for the choice of the phrasal, or, the analytic alternative is that “it makes the comparison more prominent; in speech, the comparison can additionally be stressed for emphasis” (Biber et al., 1999: 522). As Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 113) comment, “there is a well-established general effect of morphological complexity at work [...], such that morphologically complex adjectives prefer the periphrastic

degree variants.” In the sphere of lexicalization, Bauer, Lieber, & Plag (2015: 118) affirm that frequency also plays a role in the choice of the degree variants – adjectives with higher frequency tend to contain more synthetic variants. Among the semantic factors, it is worth noting that abstract readings of monosyllabic adjectives (as for *clean* in *a clean break*), the chances of the periphrastic comparative formation increase dramatically and adjectives that appear to be less easily construed as gradable appear to be more prone to choose periphrastic comparatives (*more right* as opposed to *righter*) (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 118). When discussing syntactic factors, it is essential to mention that certain syntactic environments favour particular degree variants. “Thus, the presence of *to*-infinitival complements, prepositional complements, premodification of the adjective, and predicative (as against attributive) position all increase the chances of a periphrastic comparative” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 118). Dialectal factors are particularly significant in this work. Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, (2015: 119), Kytö and Romaine (2000: 181), and Mondorf (2009: 179) concur that American English takes analytic comparison to a greater extent than British English. Kytö and Romaine (2000: 190) imply that it might be as a consequence of British English being slightly ahead of American English at each historical period in terms of implementing the change towards the synthetic type of adjective comparison. Jespersen (1949: 356) also reflects that there is a noticeable tendency towards the use of synthetic form in what he refers to as vulgar speech. Mondorf (2009: 97) notes that there is also a difference between the literal and figurative meanings, in that “periphrasis seems commoner than comparison with *-er*, *-est* especially in a figurative sense.” Further, Mondorf observes that stress also has a role in comparative alternation. He notices that the analytic variant is preferred in contexts when the suffix functions as a shield, or a buffer, between the two stressed syllables in the phrase (Mondorf, 2009: 275). Hilpert reviews that “a right-side collocate with initial stress is expected to bias speakers toward the morphological comparative, while no such tendency should be observed with right-side collocates that have other stress patterns” (Hilpert, 2007: 400). When looking at attributive and predicative usage, Leech and Culpeper claim that adjectives alternate fairly evenly between the analytic and synthetic comparative. Yet, they add that attributive usage is related to the synthetic comparative and vice versa, predicative usage is shown to correlate with analytic comparative (Leech and Culpeper, 1997: 366). Kytö and Romaine demonstrate their findings regarding the registers of the inflected adjective forms where they found that “inflectional forms prevailed in matter-of-fact text types such as handbooks and language written to reflect spoken or colloquial registers. More rhetorical

texts (philosophical and religious treatises and correspondence) make greater use of periphrastic forms” (Kytö and Romaine, 2000: 185).

2.1.3 Function of Adjectives

As mentioned above in 2.1.1, attributive adjectives premodify the head of a noun phrase, and predicative adjectives function as a subject complement or an object complement with copular relationship, and “we consider the ability of functioning both attributively and predicatively to be a central feature of adjectives” (Quirk et al., 1995: 404). Mondorf (2009: 89) notes that attributives generally favour the synthetic comparative form, while predicatives favour the analytic comparative. Biber et al. (1999: 511) comment on the very high usage of attributive adjectives functioning as descriptors (an expression used to describe something) in the fiction register. Bolinger inspected temporary adjectives in predicative position and remarks that “if an adjective names a quality that is too fleeting to characterize anything, it is restricted (with that meaning) to predicative, or to post-adjunct, position” (Bolinger D., 1967: 10). He depicts the concept with some examples: “one may say *The house was red in the sunset*, but it would take a poet to arrest this temporary image and say *the red house*,” and the same goes for adjectives referring to temporary states of mind or health: “*I’ve never seen a man so sick - he was positively green* does not sanction **a green man*” (Bolinger D., 1967: 10). Connor Ferris states that attributive uses are instances where a property denoted by an adjective qualifies the entity denoted by the noun (Ferris, 1993: 50). This means that an attributive adjective is being used when the speaker feels the property to be relevant to the identification of an entity, and thus the noun alone is not sufficient (Ferris, 1993:21). Contrastively, predicative adjectives merely add information to an already identified subject (Ferris, 1993: 26).

2.1.4 Derived Adjectives

Bauer, Lieber, & Plag consider the full range of affixes that derive adjectives in contemporary English, being listed as follows: “-able, -al, -an, -ant, -ary, -esque, -ful, -ic, -ical, -ine, -ing, -ish, -ive, -ly, -oid, -ory, -ous, -some, -y, and the past participle” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 288). However, for the sake of transparency, we will mention only affixes that are associated

with colour adjectives. Bauer, Lieber, & Plag also comment on some of the affixes correlating with colour adjectives, on pairs of *-ish* and *-like* words, which usually tend to have little or no difference in semantic content (they both stand for *like, resembling...*), but there is a difference in “cases like *amberish* versus *amber-like*, where the *-ish* adjective refers to the color, and the *-like* adjective to the substance. [...] Similarly, it would seem that in a pair like *blondish* versus *blonde-like*, the former would refer to a color, and the latter to a type of person” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 312).

Huddleston & Pullum comment on the *-ly* suffix relating to colour adjectives. “The *-ly* suffix does not (in general) attach to adjectives [...] denoting colours. There are, however, a few colour terms that are occasionally found: *blackly, whitely, greenly, redly*” (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 566).

Algeo comments on adjectival use of other parts of speech, and particularly on some examples that are indicative of Britishness such as adjectives and nouns + *-ish* e.g. *greyish*, or *yellowish* (Algeo, 2006: 119, 120, 125). Dixon notes that “*-ish* can occur with the basic colour adjectives but scarcely with their hyponyms - *reddish* and *pinkish* are much more acceptable than *scarletish*,” (Dixon, 2010: 20) and later, he mentions adjective-forming suffix that can only be added to colour terms (out of the seven semantic types of adjectives he is discussing), and that is *-y*: *greeny, pinky, yellowy* and so on. *-Y* can occur with any of the basic (not hyponyms) colour terms except *black* and *white* (Dixon, 2010: 21). Finally, he observes that *black*, and some of the other colour terms in English, can also form intransitive and transitive verbal forms, such as *-blacken* (Dixon, 2010: 14). Later, Dixon (2010: 23, 24) looks at the problem regarding the study by Berlin and Kay (1969) who have suggested, from a study of about a hundred languages, that there is a universal hierarchy of colour terms: in languages with just two colour terms these are *black* and *white*, a third term is *red*; the fourth and fifth will be *yellow* and *green* (in either order, depending upon the language); then *blue*; then *brown*; then (without order) *purple, pink, orange*, and *grey* (Dixon, 2010: 24). Based on this order, Dixon found out that it has a relevance to language, especially to the gradual acquisition of colour terms: “Of the colour terms in English only four have inchoative/causative forms. There are the regular *-en* derivatives *blacken, whiten* and *redde*n (where the final segment is one of the set that takes *-en*); and in the case of *yellow* (which does not end in a member of this set) the adjective form simply functions as a verb” (Dixon, 2010: 24). He brings our attention to the fact that these are the first four colour terms in the Berlin

and Kay (1969) hierarchy. Based on this hierarchy, the first six adjectives will be chosen for analysis in the empirical part of the thesis, nevertheless, *yellow* will be replaced by *brown*, because of its higher frequency in both corpora.

2.2 Semantics of Adjectives

As mentioned in 2.1, Quirk et al. (1995: 434) semantically classify adjectives as follows: stative/ dynamic, inherent/ noninherent, and gradable/non-gradable. We will be concerned with the gradable and non-gradable features in section 2.2.2. Again, it is important to mention, that “we are dealing with scales rather than with a feature that is present or absent. That is to say, not all the realizations of a feature are available in each case” (Quirk et al., 1995: 434). Quirk et al. differentiate dynamic adjectives syntactically from static in their possibility to be used with the progressive aspect or with the imperative (while stative adjectives cannot be used in such a way). Semantically, dynamic adjectives “denote qualities that are thought to be subject to control by the possessor and hence can be restricted temporally,” and they are also inclined to subjective measurement (Quirk et al., 1995: 434). When understanding that stative adjectives denote a state or condition, which may generally be considered permanent, we can conclude that colour adjectives are essentially stative.

To the distinction between inherent and noninherent adjectives, Quirk et al. assert that “most adjectives are inherent, that is to say, they characterize the referent of the noun directly” (Quirk et al., 1995: 435). Altogether, inherent adjectives denote an attribute of the noun. For instance, we can see that colour adjectives are inherent in the phrase *a red car* because they can be reformulated and said to denote *a car that is red*. But of course, there is a shift in meaning in some colour adjectives that no longer denote the attribute of the noun. According to the Cambridge dictionary, *blue* can also mean “feeling or showing sadness” (*Cambridge international dictionary of English*, 1995), and *black* can mean “without hope” or “bad or evil” (*Cambridge international dictionary of English*, 1995). In these contexts, these colours are noninherent. For example, the adjective *blue* in “He's been a bit *blue* since she left him” (*Cambridge international dictionary of English*, 1995), does not indicate that his skin or appearance is of blue colour. Similarly, in “*a black-hearted villain*” (*Cambridge international dictionary of English*, 1995), the villain's heart is not of black colour. It can be said that colour adjectives act as noninherent when the adjective is

of figurative meaning. De facto, we can observe that “modification of a noun by means of a noninherent adjective can be seen as an extension of the basic sense of the noun” (Quirk et al., 1995: 435). Quirk et al. also add to associate the relationship between these semantic features in the comment: “dynamic adjectives are generally inherent,” and “gradable adjectives are either inherent, as in *a black coat*, or noninherent, as in *a new friend*” (Quirk et al., 1995: 436).

2.2.1 Absolute and Relative Adjectives

In this section, we will analyze the problem of absolute and relative adjectives, and also their relation to colour adjectives respectively. To define the distinction between absolute and relative adjectives, Kristen Syrett (2007: 31) said that relative adjectives relate to a standard or norm, present amounts along a scale, and have been said to contrast with absolute adjectives, which denote properties where the adjective cannot be compared and represents an intersection of the two properties.

On absolute adjectives and their supposed incapability of being compared, many linguists comment that the reality is often not so clear-cut. Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 532) recognise that absolute adjectives conflict with established usage: “There has been a prescriptive tradition of saying that such adjectives are non-gradable, and hence should not be used in comparative constructions or with degree modifiers.” But, they note that gradability itself is not an all-or-nothing matter, rather it is a matter of semantic compatibility, not of grammaticality (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002: 532). Similarly, Bauer, Lieber, & Plag point out, that “prescriptivists often advise against comparative and superlative uses of absolute adjectives (*more unique, the most unique*), but contemporary English speakers generally find no difficulty in construing such adjectives as gradable” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 105). Bartsch and Vennemann (1972) noted too that absolute adjectives can have a secondary relative interpretation, which becomes accessible when the positive form is modified by an intensifier such as *very*. Similarly, Helena Aparicio, Ming Xiang, and Christopher Kennedy (2016: 428) note that “the interpretations of both relative and absolute adjectives are more context-dependent.”

When regarding colour adjectives, many linguists hold various positions of whether colour adjectives are absolute, relative, or whether it changes based on context. Wheeler (2020: 331), Rips & Turnbull (1980: 32), Clapp (2012: 71–100), Nelson & Benedict (1974), McNally (2011:

151–168), and Hilpert (2007: 402) all propose that colour adjectives are absolute – they either do or do not possess the property (admitting that they have a standard that lies somewhere near the midpoint of the relevant scale). On the other hand, Sapir, Edward (1944: 93, 94), Huttenlocher, J., & Higgins, E. (1971: 78), and Hansen, Nathaniel (2011: 209) claim colour adjectives have relative standards: they can be measured along the scale. Finally, some do not consent to a single correct answer. Aparicio, Helena, Ming Xiang, and Christopher Kennedy (2016: 425) divide adjectives into three groups to avoid the problem of classification of colour adjectives – relative adjectives, absolute adjectives and colour adjectives. Nat Hansen and Emmanuel Chemla (2017: 247 - 262) found out in their questionnaire experiment that colour adjectives are significantly different than relative adjectives, and that responses to the quantitative reading of colour adjectives are significantly different than either the pattern observed for minimum standard, absolute or relative adjectives, so overall, they consent that judgements of colour quality vary across individuals.

2.2.2 Gradability

Bauer, Lieber, & Plag comment on the distinction between absolute and relative adjectives which they claim is closely connected to their gradability. “It is uncontroversial and follows from the meanings conveyed by degree marking, that only those adjectives and adverbs that are gradable or at least allow a gradable reading, can have comparative and superlative forms” (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 104). For an adjective to be gradable, it must be denoting a quality that is not absolute, but present in greater or lesser amounts along a scale (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2015: 104). But there is a problem, because, as mentioned above in 2.2.1, absolute adjectives can have a comparative and superlative form. Syrett Kristen (2007: 31) takes into consideration the ambiguity of colour adjectives in a fashion whether they are relative or absolute, and in opposition shows that the gradable/ non-gradable distinction does not align neatly with the relative/ absolute distinction: “For example, color terms such as *red*, which are often labeled as absolute adjectives, are clearly gradable” (Syrett Kristen, 2007: 31). Again, there occurs a similar problem as it did in the absolute/ relative distinction of colour adjectives.

The Collins COBUILD dictionary (Collins COBUILD English Dictionary, 1995) describes these colours as gradable adjectives: *black*, *white*, *red*, *green*, and *brown*. This dictionary does not describe the colour *blue* as a gradable adjective. The Longman Dictionary (Longman

Dictionary of Contemporary English, 2003) describes only *black* and *red* as gradable. *White*, *green*, *blue* and *brown* are not described as gradable. The American Heritage Dictionary (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2004) gives comparative forms for *black*, *white*, *red*, *green*, *blue*, and *brown*.

Edward Sapir (1944: 93, 94) said that colours are definitely gradable, however, he was referring to psychological, not linguistic grading. Similarly, Kristen Syrett (2007: 32) concurred that even though there have been many various viewpoints on this subject, colour adjectives must be gradable. Christopher Kennedy and Louise McNally (2010: 89 - 92) presented two possible (quantitative and qualitative) readings of colour adjectives considering the presence of context-sensitivity and the variation of truth value. Their argument consists of the theory that colours can be either gradable or non-gradable, and all it matters on the distinction is the property meaning in which we use these terms. They “provide empirical arguments that color adjectives are in fact ambiguous between gradable and nongradable interpretations” (Christopher Kennedy and Louise McNally, 2010: 79). In gradable interpretation, they involved two distinct readings, which they refer to as colour quantity and colour quality. Colour quality includes a degree of hue, colour saturation, and brightness. The quantity reading expresses a measure of how much of the object is the relevant colour; being expressed with proportional modifiers like *completely*, *entirely*, or *half* (Christopher Kennedy and Louise McNally, 2010: 90). In non-gradable interpretation, they figured out that “the relation between the color property and the correlated property in these cases is not a matter of degree: either the correlation exists or it does not” (Christopher Kennedy and Louise McNally, 2010: 89).

2.3 Usage of Colour Adjectives

In this section, all that we have come to understand about the ambiguous behaviour of usage of colour adjectives regarding their inflection and gradation will be summarized. According to grammars, graded colour adjectives can be divided into three main approaches when discussing the problem of inflection. When a comparison is being made, there has to be a scale we compare it on. And here comes the problem and a question of whether colour adjectives are possible to be compared on a scale – that is, whether they are absolute or relative. Some claim that colour terms cannot have the inflectional form, they propose that colour adjectives are absolute, that they either

do or do not possess the property. On the other hand, others claim the opposite, that colour adjectives have relative standards, that they can be measured along the scale. But even some of those who claim that colour adjectives can be inflected noticed some issues, for example, the fact that comparative forms of colour adjectives have different meanings of the comparative forms as opposed to other adjectives. In the third group, some acknowledge that the distinction is too complex to just put the colour adjectives into one group. For example, some divide adjectives into three groups to avoid the problem of classification of colour adjectives, they differentiate them as relative adjectives, absolute adjectives and colour adjectives. Others found out that colour adjectives are significantly different than both relative adjectives or absolute adjectives, and they consent that judgements of colour quality vary across individuals.

Similarly, there are also many various approaches when dealing with a gradation of colour adjectives. Only those adjectives that are gradable can have comparative and superlative forms, they must be denoting a quality that is not absolute, but present on a scale. Some believe that colour adjectives are non-gradable, others believe they are gradable, and there is the third group of linguists that presents various possible readings of colour adjectives. For example, some claim that sometimes they are gradable and sometimes non-gradable with relation to context and truth value.

Also, when taking into account those who claim that colour adjectives are, in fact, gradable, there is ambiguity in the method of gradation - synthetic versus analytic. Based on research, there is a tendency for colour adjectives in British English to use synthetic inflection to a greater extent, whereas in American English, an analytic variant is preferred. The analytic variant is used more in formal and written speech, whereas synthetic form tends to be used for spoken register or colloquial speech to a greater extent. The analytic variant, however, also has a stylistic advantage, it is used in speech when we want to make the comparison more emphasized, more stressed.

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

As has been already described in Chapter 2, some linguists (e.g. S. C. Wheeler, L. Rips, & W. Turnbull, L. Clapp, K. Nelson, & H. Benedict, and M. Hilpert) don't consider colour adjectives as gradable or see them as absolute, while some of them do and perceive them as gradable or relative (e.g. K. Syrett, E. Sapir, J. Huttenlocher, & E. Higgins, and N. Hansen), and some of them consider adjectives as ambiguous in that sense (e.g. Ch. Kennedy, L. McNally, H. Aparicio, M. Xiang, N. Hansen, and E. Chemla). This disagreement may help differentiate the discord in colour adjectives between the British and American variety. We will look at this problem by comparing BNC and COCA with respect to the frequency of usage of graded colour adjectives in the varieties.

The thesis aims to take into account the ambiguity that revolves around the gradability of colour adjectives and classify them in sense of syntax and semantics. There is the possibility that the equivocacy of colour terms has been a problem not only of semantics but also of geographical scope. Thus, the research is going to be based on analyzing the corpora of both British and American English, finding the disparity between these two English varieties. The thesis is examining the use of differently inflected colour adjectives in British and American varieties. This study aims to determine whether the differences between British and American English can be described by different ways of how we grade these adjectives and in the method of gradation. We presume that in American English, people will use graded (inflected) colour adjectives more than in British English. We also expect to find a tendency for colour adjectives in British English to use synthetic inflection to a greater extent, whereas in American English, an analytic variant will presumably be preferred.

3.1 Material

We will compare the synthetic and analytic realization of comparison of colour adjectives in British and American English. The thesis will address all these issues and summarize the collected data based on semantic and syntactic dimensions. The analysis will be based on randomly collected data from both the British National Corpus and Corpus of Contemporary American English. Since we are using BNC and COCA in the comparative study, we need to take into

account that COCA contains around ten times more words than BNC. The Corpus of Contemporary American English is a more than one billion-word corpus of American English. It was created by Mark Davies, Professor of Corpus Linguistics at Brigham Young University in 2008. It contains eight genres: spoken (127,396,916 words), fiction (119,505,292 words), popular magazines (127,352,014 words), newspapers (122,959,393 words), academic texts (120,988,348 words), TV and Movies subtitles (128,013,334 words), blogs (125,496,215 words), and other web pages (129,899,426 words) (Davies 2008-). The British National Corpus is a one hundred million-word corpus of British English. It was created by Oxford University press as the lead collaborator in 1991. It contains seven genres: spoken (9,963,663 words), fiction (15,909,312 words), popular magazines (7,261,990 words), newspaper (10,466,422 words), academic (15,331,668 words), non-academic (16,495,185 words), and miscellaneous (20,835,159 words). There is no need to compare the relative frequency of graded colour adjectives between registers in English varieties because we want the results to be as close to authentic usage in all registers as possible, and the usage of all registers - of the corpus as a whole - will be helpful in that way.

3.2 Method

To deal with unequal corpora sizes, we are going to use relative frequency. The relative frequency allows comparisons between corpora or texts of unequal size. We will select 6 basic colours and analyze their use in their comparative form quantitatively and qualitatively. The six basic colours will be included in this research, that is, colours with the biggest frequency in both British and American corpora, and at the same time colours suggested by Berlin and Kay (1969) in their study regarding the hierarchy of evolution of colour terms – *black*, *white*, *red*, *green*, *blue*, and *brown*. The two structural realizations of the comparison of adjectives (either by the addition of an adverb of degree, such as *very* (i.e. analytic) or by forming comparative form by adding *-er* (i.e. synthetic) will be used in the study. Subsequently, we will compile a random sample of 100 examples of the investigated phenomenon of each variety (British and American), and based on their comparison, we will attempt to find an answer to the research question of whether gradation of colour adjectives is used in British and American English and if yes, what type (synthetic or analytic) the two varieties prefer. The hypothesis presupposes that there is a bigger tendency

towards synthetic inflection in British English and that American English will prefer analytic inflection. Therefore, we will compare the relative frequency of graded colour adjectives in British and American English, and then we will compare synthetic and analytic inflection in both varieties. We will analyze random samples from each variety and verify the hypothesis, we will analyse the material from the synchronic perspective, and we will not be comparing each of the registers separately.

In the quantitative section, we will look up all six inflected (either synthetically or analytically) colour adjectives in both British and American corpora, and after that, we will compare each of the two frequencies. We will be examining the lemmas of each colour term, but we need to trace only the comparatives out of all lemmas. To locate synthetic variant, we will find word-form with added suffix *-er* to each colour term. To locate the analytic variant, we will be looking for particular left collocates of colour words. We will be looking at the most frequent intensifiers: *more*, *very*, and *really*. Because of the different semantic role of premodifiers *very* and *really*, they cannot be positioned next to each other, as if belonging to one group, or positioned next to *more*, which will be positioned as opposed to suffixation with *-er*, and they need to be looked at as functioning and belonging to opposite groups, because semantically,

we first distinguish two sets of intensifiers: amplifiers and downtoners. AMPLIFIERS scale upwards from an assumed norm, eg '*a very funny film*', as compared with '*a funny film*',' while "as in the treatment of adjectives, it may be possible to distinguish another class of adjective modifiers called EMPHASIZERS, which add to the force (as distinct from the degree) of the adjective: *She has a really /beautiful/ face*. Unlike intensifiers, emphasizees cooccur with nongradable adjectives, but the effect is often similar to that of intensifiers (Quirk et al. 1995: 445, 447)

Next will be presented all instances of emphasizee *really* which are behaving as intensifiers that move the colour adjectives on a scale and because of that colour adjectives seem as gradable in these contexts, in the random one hundred examples taken from the corpora:

[1] However, as we shall learn in the next chapter, black holes are not **really black** after all: they glow like a hot body... (BNC 17)

- [2] ...for want of a better colour, it's **really red**, it's a sort of purply colour, they're very dark and th the the actual head doesn't really stand out very much... (BNC 72)
- [3] I thought I had hot fryer. But they are floating onto the top and are still **really white**. (COCA 9)
- [4] We like Cover Girl Continuous Color Lipstick in **Really Red**, \$5. (COCA 42)
- [5] ...there are bright spots where the lights are hitting the black fabric so that it's not **really black**... (COCA 73)
- [6] Dinner's ready, Mrs. Gilmore. - No, it's not. - I just checked it and it's... - I was in there ten minutes ago - and it still had another forty minutes to go. - But it's **really brown** and... (COCA 97)
- [7] Her little teeth were **really black** from, I guess, dehydration. (COCA 98)

Below are listed all instances of emphasize *really* that adds to the force of adjective, and thus take colour adjectives as nongradable, in the random one hundred examples taken from the corpora:

- [8] There are better things for people who deem themselves **really black** to do than to yell at white people... (COCA 60)
- [9] The white lady. She wasn't **really white**. She was black. (COCA 61)
- [10] "The first time he made an advance I was feeling **really blue**, I was crying," Cathy says. (COCA 92)

In qualitative research, we will create a sample of one hundred words from each variety. We will create the sample by comprising all six comparatives (in both synthetic and analytic form), and through the function randomize creating an authentic sample of both language varieties. We will be looking at the structures in which these adjectives appear, and whether these structures differ between synthetic and analytic forms in British and American English. In the sample, we will be looking for two aspects. When focusing on semantics, we will look at the meaning or connotation of the colour term, and thus differentiate between literal and figurative meaning. In syntax, we will look at the position of the colour term in the sentence, and therefore differentiate between predicative and attributive position.

It should be also noted that every frequency comparison or equation was measured and analyzed in the corpus calculator (<https://www.korpus.cz/calc/>). This calculator provides corpus users with assistance in calculating the basic statistical tasks that can be commonly encountered in

research. A module that corresponds to this particular research situation is the use of the 2 words in 2 corpora. Statistical test Chi2 was applied. It identifies units that are significantly more frequent in one corpus than in another, taking into account the size of the corpora used. Thus, it was used as a comparison of unit frequencies across corpora. In every research result, the difference is statistically significant at the selected significance level of 0.05.

3.2.1 Issues regarding election and extraction of the two hundred examples of colour adjectives from the corpora

For the election and extraction of the random sample of 100 colour adjective examples in both varieties, we have composed a query in the Corpus Query Language that we used in <https://www.korpus.cz/>:

```
[word="blacker" | word="whiter" | word="redder" | word="greener" | word="bluer" |  
word="brownier"] | [word="more"] [word="black" | word="white" | word="red" |  
word="green" | word="blue" | word="brown"] | [word="very"] [word="black" | word="white"  
| word="red" | word="green" | word="blue" | word="brown"] | [word="really"] [word="black"  
| word="white" | word="red" | word="green" | word="blue" | word="brown"]
```

Essentially, these were all the word forms that we wanted to locate and include:

Synthetic inflection: *blacker, whiter, redder, greener, bluer, brownier*

Analytic inflection, premodifiers, intensifiers: *more, very, really (more black, very black, really black, more white, very white, really white, more red, very red, really red, more green, very green, really green, more blue, very blue, really blue, more brown, very brown, really brown)*

Unfortunately, the classic syntax that works in European corpora, for example in corpus *kontext* from <https://www.korpus.cz/> that contains BNC, doesn't work in COCA - it was impossible to create a query with the phrase "or," so it was necessary to follow the longer and more extensive method, where it was unavoidable to search for every single word form gradually and then to merge all the data together in one table in Excel, randomize them and afterwards select the first one hundred examples.

Naturally, there have been several other obstructions, whereas not all examples were ideal for the research and analysis. It was necessary to manually extract and replace a few examples with new examples suited better for qualitative research. Notwithstanding, the unacceptable sentences were replaced so that the same colour adjective would be retained, in the same form, and with as close semantic meaning as possible. Next will be presented the problematic semantic and syntactic hindrances that were observed.

First, there was ambiguity around the syntactic role of the adverbial *really*, that could not be prevented in the query search. We could be concerned with the fact that an adverbial *really* can function as a disjunct that modifies a whole clause and expresses a writer's or speaker's attitude to the content, not a subjunct intensifying an adjective, not affecting the whole clause, can alter the results, but whereas in the qualitative research, *really* as a disjunct occurred only once in:

[11] Is the Night Sky **Really Green**? Astrophotographers are faced with a bewildering array of film choices: colour or black-and-white, slide or print, Kodak or Fuji... (23, 2000, MAG, Astronomy)

and that was replaced with a more relevant sample, we can say that the occurrence of an adverb *really* as a disjunct in corpora is not too high to alter our results greatly. However, we must point out that the range of error may be higher in the frequency of *really* + *colour adjective*.

In a similar fashion, it was needed to remove and replace few sentences containing the adverb *more*, in which it did not play the role of the adjective intensifier, but it merely modified a noun, functioning as a quantifier, as in:

[12] The success of Exhale should open the door for **more Black** films that don't center on the tried-and-true story "from the hood" (1995, MAG, Essence).

In *more Black films*, *more* intensifies *films*, not *Black*. Likewise as in the disjunct *really* type, by the virtue of the low occurrence of these structures in the samples, we considered it too low for altering the quantitative results, however, there is still the possibility of the standard deviation being somewhat higher.

4. ANALYSIS

4.1 Quantitative research

4.1.1 Presence of the intensifier *very* and the emphazier *really* as modifiers to colour adjectives in BNC and COCA

The first area to be studied in the empirical part is the contrast between intensifier *very* and emphazier *really* which premodify colour adjectives in BNC and COCA. They are compared respectively to discover whether colour adjectives can be considered as gradable further in the thesis, and thus can be inflected. These two adjective modifiers have been chosen because of their highest relative frequency among other modifiers in the corpora. Still, *very* (BNC: 1 184.90 ipm, COCA: 1 045.17 ipm) has considerably bigger relative frequency than *really* (BNC: 458.10 ipm COCA: 902.34 ipm) alone, so it is presupposed that *very* will be prevailing in this comparison. It is to be observed and compared to what extent colour adjectives cooccur with intensifiers which normally accompany gradable adjectives: “the modifying adverb is a scaling device called an intensifier, which cooccurs with a gradable adjective” (Quirk et al. 1995:445), and to what extent they occur with emphaziers (which normally accompany both gradable and nongradable adjectives). It would not be always possible to use an intensifier with nongradable adjectives, for example, as in **very nuclear*, which also can indicate that colour adjectives are indeed gradable in many contexts. However, when emphasizing gradable adjectives, “the adverbial takes on the force of an intensifier.” (Quirk et al. 1995: 583)

Next will be presented some instances of emphaziers which are behaving as intensifiers that move the colour adjectives on a scale and make colour adjectives gradable in the context, in the random sample of 100 examples:

- [13] ...for want of a better colour, it's **really red**, it's a sort of purply colour, they're very dark and th the the actual head doesn't really stand out very much... (BNC 72)
- [14] Her little teeth were **really black** from, I guess, dehydration. (COCA 98)

Below are listed instances of intensifiers that add to the force of adjective, and thus take colour adjectives as nongradable, in the random sample of 100 examples :

[15] "There are better things for people who deem themselves **really black** to do than to yell at white people because they harped too long on things Marion Barry shouldn't have been doing in the first place." (COCA 60)

[16] "The first time he made an advance I was feeling **really blue**, I was crying," Cathy says. (COCA 92)

The qualitative study shows that there is a relationship between the function really and the meaning of the adjective (4.2.3).

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate the results of the corpora data analysis and Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the proportional relation between adjective modifiers *very* and *really* in respective corpora. It is relevant to note that every frequency comparison in all Tables was statistically significant. The absolute frequency in Tables 1 and 2 (and in upcoming tables later in the thesis) is just shown for perspective illustration.

Table 1. Adjective modifier *very* as the intensifier of selected colour adjectives in BNC and COCA

Intensifier <i>very</i>	BNC Absolute Frequency	COCA Absolute Frequency	BNC Relative Frequency (ipm)	COCA Relative Frequency (ipm)
very black	36	189	0.37	0.19
very white	62	349	0.64	0.35
very red	57	183	0.59	0.18
very green	19	138	0.2	0.14
very blue	21	156	0.22	0.16
very brown	7	31	0.07	0.03
Total	202	1046	2.09	1.05

Table 2. Adjective modifier really as the emphaser (/intensifier) of selected colour adjectives in BNC and COCA

Emphasizer <i>really</i>	BNC Absolute Frequency	COCA Absolute Frequency	BNC Relative Frequency (ipm)	COCA Relative Frequency (ipm)
really black	8	65	0.08	0.06
really white	3	71	0.03	0.07
really red	4	58	0.04	0.06
really green	2	31	0.02	0.03
really blue	2	28	0.02	0.03
really brown	2	12	0.02	0.01
Total	21	265	0.21	0.26

Figure 1. BNC, the relative frequency of adjective modifiers very and really with colour adjectives - proportion in %

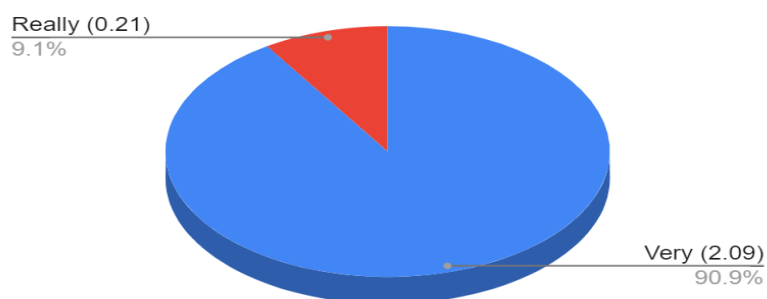
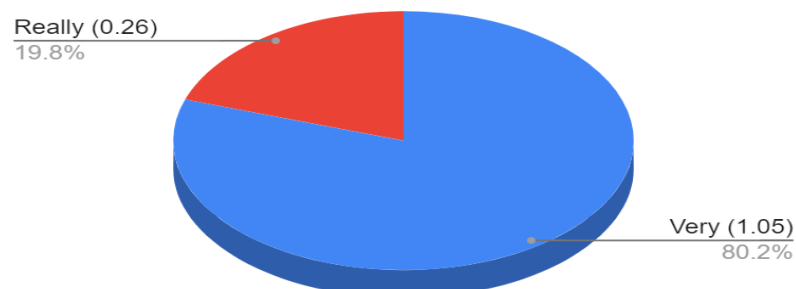


Figure 2. COCA, the relative frequency of adjective modifiers very and really with colour adjectives - proportion in %



As observed from Figures 1 and 2, it is, therefore, possible to make a tentative assumption that since *very* occurs with colour adjectives more often in British English, colours may be more commonly gradable in British English than in American English.

It is worth noticing that *very white* and *very red* have a considerably higher frequency in BNC, even higher than *very black*, and that when opposed to adjectives modified by *really*, adjectives modified by *very* are quite uneven in the frequencies in both corpora. After a brief visual examination of *very red* and *very white* in BNC search, we could see a frequent figurative meaning, mostly regarding parts of the body while concerning the mental state of a person. Adjectives with the intensifier *very* are almost twice the size of the frequency in BNC than in COCA, whereas with emphasizer *really*, the frequencies are comparable.

It is shown in Figures 1 and 2 that the adjective modifier *very* intensifies colour adjectives to a much bigger extent than emphasizer *really*, even with regard to the uneven quantity of the adjective modifiers, and from examples [13], and [14] (also see 4.2.2.1 for all the examples), it can be observed that emphasizer *really* often takes the role of intensifier. In that respect, it can be claimed that because intensifier *very*, which typically accompanies gradable adjectives, occurs with colour adjectives notably more, colour adjectives alone can be considered gradable, and thus take inflection. Inflected colour adjectives will be analyzed in the next section.

4.1.2 The synthetic and analytic adjective inflection in BNC and COCA

The next area to study in the empirical section is the comparison of those instances of the synthetically inflected colour adjectives with analytically inflected colour adjectives in BNC and COCA. As stated in 2.1.2.1, Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, (2015: 119), Kytö and Romaine (2000: 181), and Mondorf (2009: 179) concur that American English takes analytic comparison to a greater extent than British English. The results are described in Tables 3 and 4 and Figures 3 and 4. By means of this comparison, it is possible to determine whether synthetic or analytic inflection is more common in the two English varieties, and to what extent.

Table 3. Synthetically inflected selected colour adjectives in BNC and COCA

	BNC Absolute Frequency	COCA Absolute Frequency	BNC Relative Frequency (ipm)	COCA Relative Frequency (ipm)
Synthetic Form				
blackier	83	457	0.86	0.46
whiter	86	796	0.89	0.79
redder	57	517	0.59	0.52
greener	147	1697	1.53	1.69
bluer	15	335	0.16	0.33
browner	32	169	0.33	0.17
Total	420	3971	4.36	3.96

Table 4. Analytically inflected selected colour adjectives in BNC and COCA

	BNC Absolute Frequency	COCA Absolute Frequency	BNC Relative Frequency (ipm)	COCA Relative Frequency (ipm)
Analytic Form				
more black	46	719	0.48	0.72
more white	20	500	0.21	0.5
more red	27	361	0.28	0.36
more green	8	256	0.08	0.26
more blue	7	183	0.07	0.18
more brown	4	94	0.04	0.09
Total	112	2113	1.16	2.11

Figure 3. BNC, the relative frequency of inflected colour adjectives - proportion in %

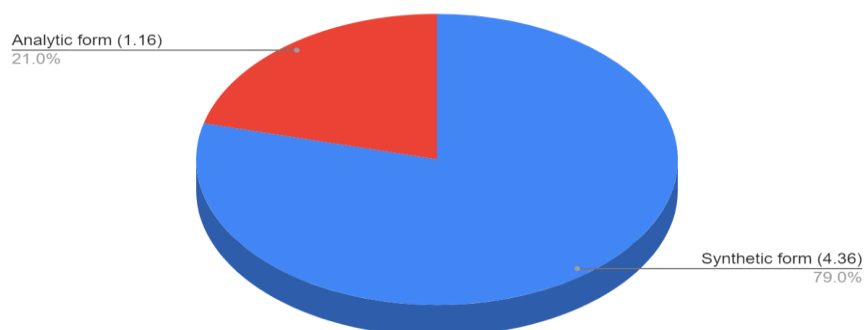
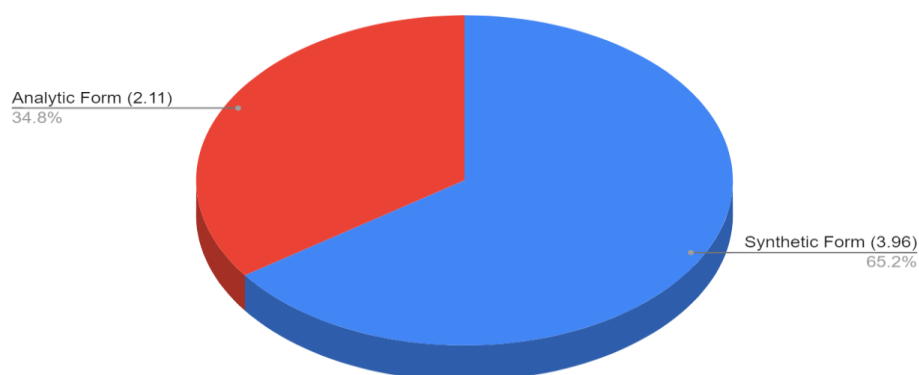


Figure 4. COCA, the relative frequency of inflected colour adjectives - proportion in %



As apparent from Figures 1 and 2, there is a bigger tendency towards synthetic inflection in both British and American English. However, it is obvious that American English still prefers analytic inflection more than British English. Hence, the hypothesis based on Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, (2015: 119), Kytö and Romaine (2000: 181), and Mondorf (2009: 179) who claim that American English takes analytic comparison to a greater extent than British English, is proven.

Now, frequencies of some of the specific colours will be closely observed and we will start with the largest fluctuations in frequencies. When looking at the biggest dissimilarities, the inflections of the colour *green* call for attention. *Greener* has a disproportionately higher frequency in both corpora compared to the other colours, maintaining the highest frequencies of all inflected colours (BNC - 1.53 ipm, COCA - 1.69 ipm). *More green*, however, has one of the lowest values in BNC (0.08 ipm) and an average one in COCA (0.26 ipm). The occurrence is also manifested in Table 5, with the biggest and unparalleled quotient (19). It is clear from these observations that *greener* is used much more often, which is a typical phenomenon for a synthetic adjective. We assume that the reason behind the high frequency of *greener* is its use in the figurative sense, which is also confirmed in the qualitative analysis (see 4.2.3)

As anticipated, *blacker* (BNC - 0.86 ipm, COCA - 0.46 ipm), *whiter* (BNC - 0.89 ipm, COCA - 0.79 ipm), *more black* (BNC - 0.48 ipm, COCA 0.72 ipm), and *more white* (BNC - 0.21 ipm, COCA - 0.50 ipm) have overall the highest frequencies when compared to other colour inflections in respective sections. They are the most basic and most prevalent colours, also the first colours to be formed in a language according to Berlin and Kay (1969) study. Again, the fact that

they are frequently used in other sense than the literal (figurative sense related to race colour), increases the usage of these colour inflections. It is intriguing to notice that in American English, analytic inflection of black (*more black*) is preferred to that of synthetic inflection (*blacker*). This is the only instance in which analytic word form heavily prevails over that of synthetic.

It is also worth mentioning that in BNC, except *greener* and *more green*, the *browner* is in percentage in the biggest proportional relation to *more brown* which has the smallest frequency in both corpora. We can observe the phenomenon in Table 5. The overall numbers from Tables 3 and 4 indicate the relevance of the proportions in Table 5.

Table 5. Proportional relations between synthetic and analytic inflections of colour adjectives.

Quotient	BNC	COCA
blacker : more black	1.79	0.64
whiter : more white	4.23	1.58
redder : more red	2.1	1.44
greener : more green	19	6.51
bluer : more blue	2.29	1.83
browner : more brown	8.26	1.89

Some of the analytical colour adjectives such as *more green* (0.08 ipm), and *more brown* (0.4 ipm) in BNC, or *more brown* (0.09 ipm) in COCA have such small relative frequency that it is rational to assume that with these colours, synthetic inflection is vastly preferred and analytic inflection is barely used.

As apparent from Table 5, the biggest inequalities between the inflected colour adjective frequencies are in colours *green* (BNC and COCA), and *brown* (BNC). All other colours have a relatively similar ratio in the number of items they occur in a category.

4.2 Qualitative research

This section of the thesis discusses the examples that were randomly chosen from BNC and COCA corpora. The one hundred examples of colour adjectives from each corpus will be now analyzed in relation to syntax and semantics, namely, the position of colour adjectives in relation to the noun and the meaning of the colour adjectives. The two hundred examples of colour adjectives from the corpora were specified in terms of the syntax (attributive and predicative position), semantics (literal and figurative meaning), and as expected, the word form (synthetic and analytic) in relation to the first two aspects. Every classification of all examples is stated and classified in Appendix.

4.2.1 Attributive and predicative position of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives

As already stated in 2.1.3, Mondorf claims that attributives generally favour the synthetic comparative form, while predicatives favour the analytic comparative (Mondorf, 2009: 89). Subsequently, Leech and Culpeper support this argument by claiming that attributive usage is indeed related to the synthetic comparative and vice versa, predicative usage is shown to correlate with analytic comparative. But they call attention to the fact that both predicative and attributive adjectives alternate fairly evenly between the analytic and synthetic comparative (Leech and Culpeper, 1997: 366). In Table 6, this premise will be inspected.

Table 6. Synthetic and analytic colour adjectives with attributive and predicative positions.

	BNC predicative position (71)	BNC attributive position (29)	COCA Predicative position (70)	COCA Attributive position (30)
Modification by <i>very</i> and <i>really</i>	19	9	18	8
Synthetic inflection	41	16	30	15
Analytic inflection	11	4	22	7

As apparent from Table 6, modifiers *very* and *really* are counted separately to have data comparable between the quantitative and qualitative part (i.e. we added another row to Table 6

with *very/really* modification), and therefore we excluded these examples from the numbers with synthetic and analytic modification.

As shown by Table 6, the difference between the synthetic and analytic frequency that was apparent in the whole corpora analysis, that is, the fact that synthetic adjectives take up for the majority of inflected colour adjectives, is apparent in the study of the two hundred examples, whereas there are one hundred two synthetically inflected adjectives and forty-four analytic colour adjectives. The findings from Table 6 are demonstrated in Figures 5 and 6, and exhibit that there are seventy-one synthetic adjectives in the predicative position, and thirty-three analytic adjectives in the predicative position. Following, there are thirty-one synthetic adjectives in the attributive position, and eleven analytic adjectives in the attributive position. From these findings, it can be stated that regarding the two hundred examples, predicatives (104) are more widespread compared to attributes (42), and synthetic and analytic comparative forms both favour the predicative position in the two English varieties. However, it is not analyzed in this work whether the higher number of the predicative position is not simply due to a generally higher number of this position with colour adjectives, or generally with all adjectives. Thus, Mondorf's and Leech and Culpeper's argument that states that attributives generally favour the synthetic comparative form, while predicatives favour the analytic comparative is partly validated on this particular two hundred example, as shown in Figures 5 and 6. Both predicatives and attributives favour synthetic inflection, however, predicatives indeed use analytic inflection to a higher degree than attributives. Leech and Culpeper's claim that suggests that adjectives alternate evenly between the analytic and synthetic comparative is challenged due to prevalence of synthetic preference.

Figure 5. Predicatives in synthetic and analytic comparative form - proportion in %

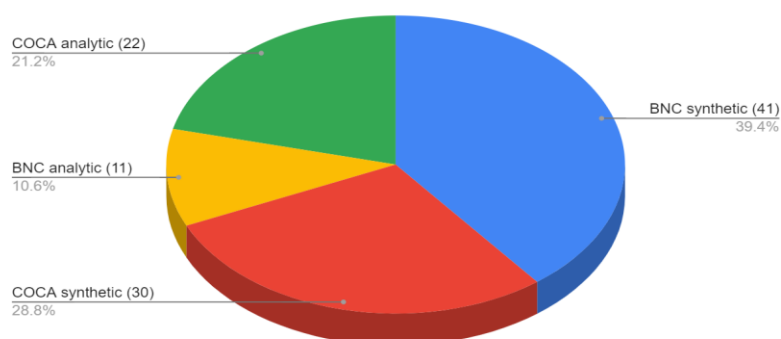
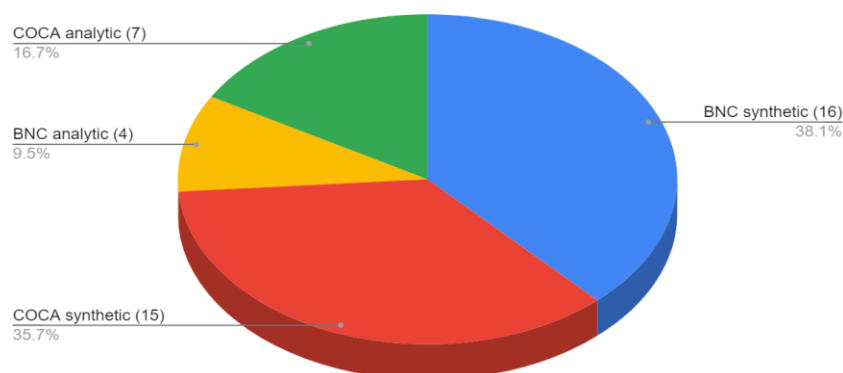


Figure 6. Attributives in synthetic and analytic comparative form - proportion in %



Next, all the instances discussed above will be listed, inspected and interpreted with a specific example from the one hundred examples of colour adjectives from each corpus.

Predicatives with the synthetic comparative form can be found functioning as a subject complement, i.e. adjectives standing after the noun, generally modifying the subject of the sentence with the linking verb *be* as or object complement which is not present in the examples below (Quirk et al. 1995: 417). The colour adjective is synthetically inflected, i.e. formed by affix *-er*:

[17] The gardens of Ireland have a special dreamlike quality, like gardens known as a child -- where everything was bigger and **greener**, and chattering rabbits abounded. (BNC 4)

[18] The Democrats and Republicans are a tale of two parties The GOP are older, **whiter**, male, more Christian, and part of the Silent generation along with some older Boomers. They vote against gay marriage, abortion, immigration, and favor smaller government. (COCA 1)

Attributives with the synthetic comparative form are found as premodifiers of the head of the noun phrase, standing in the first position, before the noun (Quirk et al. 1995: 417) with the form of the adjective being synthetic, that is, formed by prefix *-er*:

[19] The Fat Controller blew a plume of cigar smoke at it from out of the corner of his mouth; the blue strands interleaved with her **browner** ones. (BNC 9)

[20] The fast-growing bamboo, a type of grass, is a **greener** alternative to pine and other woods typically used in construction. (COCA 5)

Predicatives with the analytic comparative form can be detected as in the form of a subject complement, which in the example [21] is not linked with linking verb *be*, but *have*, with the analytic inflection in the form of the addition of the premodifier *more*.

[21] Red Pied is also a dual-purpose type but has a great deal **more red** in the coat than the White-and-Red. (BNC 20)

[22] Arguing about who is **more black** than that guy is insane. Makes no sense. (COCA 3)

Attributives with the analytic comparative form are identified by premodifying the noun, analytically inflected into form with a premodifier *more*. The noun (presumably *clothes*) in example [23] is not expressed.

[23] The front doors swung open like a piper at the gates of dawn and two of the biggest guys I'd ever seen swaggered in wearing **more black** than a Valentine Dyll fan club dinner. (BNC 5)

[24] If you'd like to read **more green** business and environmental health coverage, you can follow me on. (COCA 26)

In this section, it is also required to exhibit two examples with a postpositive position of the colour adjectives. Postpositive adjectives occur immediately after a noun they modify, and in the said examples we can see that postposition provides emphasis or poetic exaggeration. There were only two such examples, so the sample was too small in quantity to make any other examination or inquiry on such a subject, hence these two instances were added under the attributive position of adjectives in the analysis. Nonetheless, next are listed said examples of postpositive adjectives:

[25] Europe has voted for something new and something **greener** and closer to the community. (BNC 7)

[26] Something warm, something much **more red**. (BNC 35)

4.2.2 Interpretation of adjective modifiers *very* and *really*, and their meaning in the two hundred inflected colour adjectives

In Tables 1 and 2 (see 4.1.1), we could see the proportion and frequency of adjective modifiers *very* and *really* in BNC and COCA. We already know that, unlike intensifiers, emphasizees add to the force of the adjective, not degree and that they co-occur with nongradable adjectives (see 3.2). Next, we will determine how many instances of the modifier *really* act as an emphasiser and which act as an intensifier.

4.2.2.1 Semantics of *very* and *really*

Next are presented all instances of emphasizee *really* which is behaving as an intensifier that moves the colour adjectives on a scale (thus taking colour adjectives as gradable), in the random sample of two hundred examples:

- [27] However, as we shall learn in the next chapter, black holes are not **really black** after all: they glow like a hot body... (BNC 17)
- [28] ...for want of a better colour, it's **really red**, it's a sort of purply colour, they're very dark and th the the actual head doesn't really stand out very much... (BNC 72)
- [29] I thought I had hot fryer. But they are floating onto the top and are still **really white**. (COCA 9)
- [30] We like Cover Girl Continuous Color Lipstick in **Really Red**, \$5. (COCA 42)
- [31] ...there are bright spots where the lights are hitting the black fabric so that it's not **really black**... (COCA 73)
- [32] Dinner's ready, Mrs. Gilmore. - No, it's not. - I just checked it and it's... - I was in there ten minutes ago - and it still had another forty minutes to go. - But it's **really brown** and... (COCA 97)
- [33] Her little teeth were **really black** from, I guess, dehydration. (COCA 98)

Below are listed all examples of emphasizee *really* that adds to the force of adjective, and thus takes colour adjectives as nongradable, in the random sample of two hundred examples :

- [34] There are better things for people who deem themselves **really black** to do than to yell at white people... (COCA 60)

[35] The white lady. She wasn't **really white**. She was black. (COCA 61)

[36] "The first time he made an advance I was feeling **really blue**, I was crying," Cathy says.
(COCA 92)

It can be said that the emphasizer *really* behaves as an intensifier, (i.e. adds to the degree of the adjectives/ moves the adjectives higher on a scale) with adjectives that were established as having a literal meaning, and that emphasizer *really* behaves as an emphasizer (i.e. adds to the force of the adjectives) with adjectives that were established as having figurative meaning. When considering 200 corpora examples that were analyzed by means of semantic meaning, there are around twice as many *really* examples that carry figurative meaning, and thus we can presume that one-third of emphasizer *really* followed by colour adjective acts as an emphasizer and that the majority behaves as an intensifier.

4.2.3 Literal and figurative meaning of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives

This section of the empirical part of the paper concentrates and evaluates differences related to literal and figurative meanings connected with synthetic and analytic comparative colour adjective forms. As mentioned in 2.1.2.1, Mondorf (2009: 97) claims that there is a difference between the literal and figurative meanings, in that “periphrasis seems commoner than comparison with *-er*, *-est* especially in a figurative sense.”

In the random selection of the two hundred examples from the corpora, there have also been problems of semantic nature. Besides the literal and figurative meaning of the colour adjectives, we discovered difficulty with polysemous words of colour, especially those relating to the race: *black*, *white* and sporadically *brown*. The problem came into being after the dilemma of whether to identify colour adjectives regarding ethnic groups as literal or figurative, due to a lack of unanimous consensus on this theme. According to Cambridge dictionary, literal meaning is defined as “having exactly the same meaning as the basic or original meaning of a word or expression,” while figurative as “used not with their basic meaning but to suggest part of that meaning” (Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). *Cambridge dictionary*. Retrieved July 29, 2021). Essentially, figurative language refers to expressions that mean something different from their literal definition. We can build on that and even add that one needs to recognize the shared knowledge in society and cultural context to understand the figurative meaning behind an

expression. However, it is quite clear that the colour in *the white race* if not indicates then directly expresses the tone of the skin colour, which is not perfectly white, but is white when opposed to *the black race*, and no cultural context needs to be attained to understand the expression. This argument is the reason behind assigning literal meaning to expressions such as:

[37] As they lifted him on to a stretcher and then on to the jeep the blanket slipped away from his shoulders revealing his red hair and a **very white** arm covered in freckles. (BNC 2)

[38] Frankie had often spoken to one of the **very black** men who lived at Nanny's house in Lansdowne Place. (BNC 3)

[39] Image is everything to judges (directly or subconsciously), and image is shaped by Race. Two ASP finals last week, the better, and **browner**, surfers both got robbed ... (COCA 76)

For convenience sake, expressions regarding race are marked as *L (race)* in the Appendix.

However, some of the expressions do not indicate the literal skin colour, but rather the cultural characteristic that may not be understood by everyone. Furthermore, these expressions often do not refer to people but are inanimate or abstract:

[40] Is there anything... any music in particular... that you guys wan na do? Can we maybe try something a little **more black**? (COCA 37)

[41] But while it was difficult for me psychologically as a mixed Asian American girl in the **very white** suburbs of St Louis, it was not usually cause for public humiliation. (COCA 33)

[42] I can't begin to imagine what that means. # Obama represents what old white people fear-that " their " country is moving on without them, that it's getting " **browner** " and less English, more tolerant of Otherness, and global. (COCA 74)

These examples will be thus classified as of figurative meaning, and the meaning will be described and specified in the Table 10.

Next, we assume that the reason behind the high frequency of *greener* (see 4.1.2) can be explained thanks to qualitative analysis. Given the sample of two hundred specific examples, it can be concluded that *greener* is predominantly used in a figurative sense (in 19 examples), especially in relation to ecology and the environment, which has a great influence on such a high frequency:

- [43] Europe has voted for something new and something **greener** and closer to the community. (BNC 7)
- [44] The allotment holders have gone public inviting visitors to see how to use **greener** gardening techniques. Whop those weeds with a piece of old carpet and plant bedfellows that get on. (BNC 13)
- [45] Issues considered include conducting supplier audits and launching **greener** products. (BNC 34)
- [46] Wind turbines are appearing by the hundreds in corn and soybean fields across the Midwest, bringing with them **greener** energy, **greener** income, and possibly **greener** crops. (COCA 2)
- [47] The fast-growing bamboo, a type of grass, is a **greener** alternative to pine and other woods typically used in construction. (COCA 5)
- [48] This demand for **greener** cars is not lost on the engineers testing and refining the Volvo ECC. (COCA 8)

The list of all examples with the inflected adjective green in figurative meaning relating to the protection of the environment can be found in Table 10.

Table 7. Synthetic and analytic colour adjectives carrying literal and figurative meanings

	BNC literal meaning (73)	BNC figurative meaning (27)	COCA literal meaning (61)	COCA figurative meaning (39)
Modification by <i>very</i> and <i>really</i>	21	7	20	6
Synthetic inflection	39	17	21	25
Analytic inflection	13	3	20	8

Figure 7. Synthetic and analytic colour adjectives carrying literal and figurative meanings

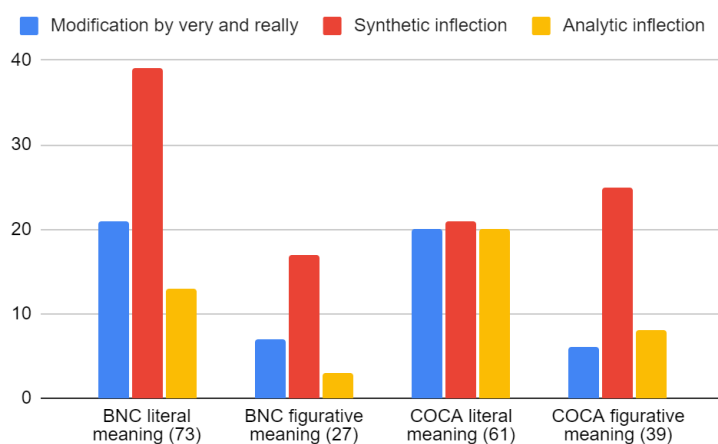


Figure 8. Synthetic and analytic comparatives carrying literal meaning - proportion in %

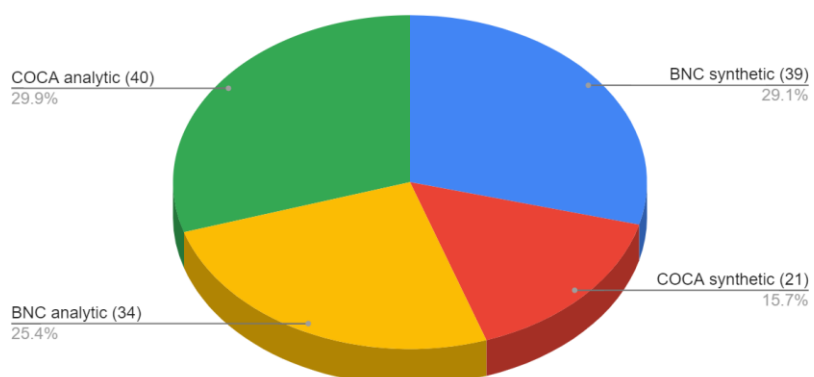
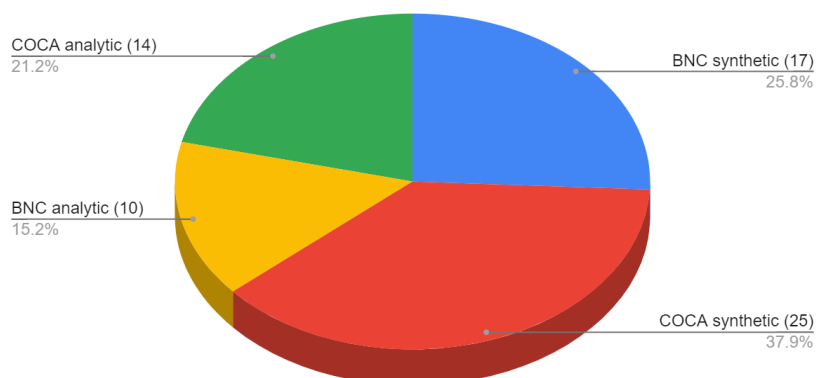


Figure 9. Synthetic and analytic comparatives carrying figurative meaning - proportion in %



From the data presented in Table 7 and graphically illustrated by Figure 7 for enhanced estimation, synthetic inflection prevails over analytic in every variety and in every semantics, aside from literal meaning in American English, where the proportion is equal. As apparent from Figures 8 and 9, it is obvious that analytic comparative surprisingly predominates in the literal usage of inflected colour adjectives. Thereupon, synthetic comparative chiefly prevails in figurative usage, and thus Mondorf's claim that analytic inflection seems commoner than comparison with *-er*, *-est* in a figurative sense is not proven.

Furthermore, all the instances depicted in Table 7 will be examined and interpreted with a specific example from the one hundred examples of colour adjectives from each corpus. Colour adjectives with synthetic comparative form, i.e. formed by prefix *-er* and carrying literal meaning, i.e. having original, basic meaning are presented in examples [49] and [50]. Here, *redder* and *blacker* literally mean having a darker or more intensified shade of colour.

[49] I looked at the rosy-cheeked little fellow (all of four years) in front of me. He appeared a picture of health. Then I realised she was concerned about his cheeks; one was definitely **redder** than the other. (BNC 12)

[50] My hair was wilder than ever that day, curlier from the moisture of the beach, tangled and dense from the salt air. It surrounded me, thicker and **blacker** than the hair of any woman that has come before me, any that might come after. (COCA 10)

Synthetically inflected adjectives carrying figurative meaning are presented by examples [51] and [52]. The figurative meaning of *greener* in [51] means that gardening techniques do not have a greener colour, but that they relate to the protection of the environment. Similarly, in example [52], bluer and redder do not imply darker shades of colours blue and red, but political preferences. A list of all the figurative meanings in the two hundred examples is recorded in Table 10.

[51] The allotment holders have gone public inviting visitors to see how to use **greener** gardening techniques. (BNC 15)

[52] There are some notable exceptions to the rule, of course: Lind's map shows that the 'tidewater states' of Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and North Carolina are becoming' **bluer**' rather than' **redder**'. (COCA 29)

Adjectives having analytic form, that is, are premodified by *more*, and bearing literal meaning, that is, are expressed in their basic sense are demonstrated by examples [53] and [54]. *More pink* and *more black* actually means having a more intense or darker shade of said colour.

[53] There the skies are bigger than here, and in the evening the sun sets more red, **more pink**, then ever ours can. (BNC 33)

[54] And the building inside is getting more and **more black**. (COCA 16)

Analytically inflected adjectives formed with a premodifier *more* with figurative meaning are presented by examples [55] and [56]. Figure in example [55], similarly as in [51] means that one should be more environmentally friendly, not having or wearing more intense colour green. Example [56] illustrated through a figure of speech the state of being very embarrassed.

[55] suppose you may say: 'Why should I be **more green** and what I say to that is: ' I don't know what the reason is for you but I do know that for me it's about showing compassion for the planet we live on and trying to hand on as much beauty and good-will as we possibly can to future generations; (BNC 94)

[56] Nancy didn't know what to answer to such compliments and her cheeks grew **very red**. (COCA 38)

The examples above show that inflected adjectives having literal meaning correspond to darker or more intense shade of colour, whereas colour adjectives carrying figurative meaning cannot be understood alone and need to be implied from a context in which they appear and shared knowledge of a society must be inferred.

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of the thesis was primarily to discuss the gradability of colour adjectives in British and American English, the way these adjectives form inflection and classify them in sense of syntax and semantics. The form of graded colour adjectives that were examined was the synthetic and analytic comparative form, i.e. the suffixation by *-er* or addition of premodifier *more*, or intensifiers *very* and *really*.

The quantitative part of the analysis was based on the whole BNC and COCA, the qualitative part was based on the two hundred random examples of graded colour adjectives (*black*, *white*, *red*, *green*, *blue*, and *brown*) taken from BNC and COCA. In the quantitative research, the first perspective was the analysis of the intensifier *very* and the emphasize *really* as modifiers to colour adjectives in BNC and COCA, to determine to what degree colour adjectives act as gradable. The second perspective was the analysis of synthetically and analytically inflected colour adjectives in the two corpora, to determine whether selected adjectives prefer synthetic or analytic inflection. In the qualitative research, the first perspective was the analysis of the attributive and predicative position of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives in relation to their synthetic and analytic comparative form. Next, the interpretation and semantics of adjective modifiers *very* and *really* were analyzed. Lastly, the literal and figurative meaning of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives in relation to their synthetic and analytic comparative form was analyzed.

Before the comparative study of the inflected colour adjectives, it was essential to resolve the issues regarding the selection and extraction of the two hundred examples of colour adjectives from the corpora, namely the fact that not all examples were ideal for the qualitative analysis. These obstacles were dealt with by manual replacement of the examples unfit for the study.

The analysis of the modifiers *very* and *really* as intensifiers and emphasize to colour adjectives in BNC and COCA was necessary to start within the quantitative study, for the reason that later in the respective section (see 4.1.1), it was observed that colour adjectives alone can be considered gradable, and thus take inflection. This ambiguity (see 2.2.2) was essential to determine before proceeding on to the next parts of the study.

Next, in the analysis of synthetic and analytic inflection of colour adjectives in the whole corpora, it was discovered that there is a bigger tendency towards synthetic inflection in both

British and American English. However, it is obvious that American English still prefers analytic inflection more than British English. Thus, the hypothesis which claimed that there is a bigger tendency towards synthetic inflection in British English and that American English will prefer analytic inflection was confirmed. In 4.1.2 were discovered several intriguing irregularities in relative frequencies concerning concrete colour inflections. *Greener* has a disproportionately higher frequency in both corpora compared to the other colours, maintaining the highest frequencies of all inflected colours while *more green* has quite low values, and the reason behind the high frequency of *greener* is presumably its use in the figurative sense. *Blacker*, *whiter*, *more black*, and *more white* have the highest frequencies, apparently because they are the most used colours, and figurative sense related to race colour increases the usage of these colour inflections. *More green* or *more brown* have the smallest relative frequencies of all the colours that were analyzed, and there are also the biggest inequalities in frequency with their synthetic counterparts (*greener*, *browner*), so we must assume that synthetic comparatives are vastly preferred and analytic inflection is barely used.

In the qualitative research concerning the attributive and predicative position of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives, the hypothesis that attributives generally favour the synthetic comparative form, while predicatives favour the analytic comparative was again only partly validated because while both predicatives and attributives favour synthetic inflection, predicatives indeed use analytic inflection to a higher degree than attributives.

Next, in 4.2.2, the semantics of adjective modifiers *very* and *really* of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives were analyzed, and it was found that of ten examples with premodifier *really*, in seven of them, intensifier *really* behaves as an intensifier with (gradable) colour adjectives that carry literal meaning, and only in three, *really* behaves as an intensifier with (nongradable) colour adjectives that carry figurative meaning, and we concluded that in the majority of colour adjectives, premodifier *really* acts as an intensifier.

Lastly, the literal and figurative meaning of the two hundred inflected colour adjectives in relation to their synthetic and analytic comparative form was analyzed, and the results prove that synthetic inflection prevails over analytic in every variety and in every sense, except for literal meaning in American English, where the proportion is somewhat equal.

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Resumé

Hlavným cieľom tejto bakalárskej práce bolo popísať rozdielne stupňovanie prídavných mien popisujúcich farby vo vzťahu ku rôznym faktorom, ako sú variácie anglického jazyka, alebo vybrané syntaktické a sémantické charakteristiky. Zamerali sme sa na črty ako ich pozícia vo vete, význam konkrétnych adjektív a význam intenzifikátorov modifikujúcich tieto adjektíva a merali sme tieto vlastnosti vo vzťahu ku rozdielnemu stupňovaniu farebných adjektív. Analyzovali sme náhodne vybrané dáta šiestich rôzne stupňovaných adjektív farby z korpusov britskej (BNC) a americkej (COCA) angličtiny. Výsledky ukazujú, že medzi oboma jazykmi sú patričné rozdiely v spôsobe stupňovania, ako aj v používaní týchto adjektív druhého stupňa v syntaktických polohách a sémantických významoch.

Práca sa skladá z teoretickej časti, v ktorej sú predstavené základné koncepty a niektoré relevantné výsledky z predchádzajúcich výskumov, a z praktickej časti, v ktorej je predstavený samotný výskum. V teoretickej časti začíname vysvetlením všeobecného termínu prídavných mien. Adjektíva sú slovné druhy, ktoré sa vyznačujú určitými charakteristikami, ako sú ich schopnosť modifikovať podstatné mená a pridávať týmto slovným druhom určité vlastnosti. Prvými dvoma vlastnosťami je ich pozícia vo vete. Atributívna pozícia znamená, že prídavné meno sa vyskytuje pred podstatným menom, zatiaľ čo predikatívne prídavné meno sa vyskytuje za podstatným menom. Ďalšou vlastnosťou je, že pred nimi môže stáť premodifikátor ktorý má funkciu intenzifikátora daného adjektíva, ako napríklad modifikátor *veľmi*. Štvrtou charakteristikou, ktorou sme sa ďalej v práci zaoberali do najväčšej hĺbky je, že niektoré adjektíva môžu formovať komparatívne a superlatívne formy, t.j. sú stupňovateľné. Stupňovanie môže byť syntetické, čo znamená že sa formuje pridaním prípony ku koreňu slova, alebo analytické, čo znamená pridanie modifikátora *viac* pred stupňované prídavné meno. Treba poznamenať, že nie všetky prídavné mená majú všetky tieto štyri vlastnosti, napríklad premodifikácia a schopnosť stupňovania nemá žiadnu hodnotu pri rozlišovaní prídavných mien od prísloviek. Ďalšie charakteristiky adjektív sú sémantického rázu. Statívne adjektíva sa od dynamických rozlišujú tým, že popisujú stav alebo podmienku, ktoré možno vo všeobecnosti považovať za trvalé, a naopak, dynamické adjektíva sú časovo obmedzené. Inherentné adjektíva majú základnú vlastnosť

substantíva, ktorá je jeho súčasťou a neinherentné adjektíva majú na druhú stranu relevantný význam iba vtedy, ak sa používajú atributívne s odkazom na konkrétnu osobu. Ďalej sme sa zaberali termínmi ako absolútne adjektíva s významom, ktorý sa vo všeobecnosti nedá zosilniť ani porovnať, zatiaľ čo relatívne adjektíva sa dajú porovnávať a “posúvať” na určitej škále. V tejto bakalárskej práci boli skúmané adjektíva popisujúce farbu, preto je im v teoretickej časti venovaná bližšia pozornosť. Adjektíva popisujúce farby teda môžu byť v predikatívnej aj atributívnej forme, môžu byť modifikované intenzifikátorom, sú statívne, môžu byť inherentné (*čierny dom*) aj neinherentné (*zločinec s čiernym srdcom*). Aj keď trvajú spory ohľadne toho, či sú farby absolútne alebo relatívne a či sú stupňovateľné synteticky aj analyticky, v tejto práci ich budeme považovať za relatívne a stupňovateľné (kvôli analýze v praktickej časti, ktorá z korpusových dát dokázala, že tieto adektíva sa často pohybujú na určitej škále).

Pre účely tejto práce sme si vybrali a skúmali šesť najzákladnejších farieb, t.j. farieb s najvyššou relatívnou frekvenciou v skúmaných korpusoch (BNC a COCA): *čierna*, *biela*, *červená*, *zelená*, *modrá*, a *hnedá*. Frekvencia v korpusovej lingvistike označuje počet výskytov javu v korpuse. Uvádza sa buď v absolútnych alebo relatívnych hodnotách. Kým absolútna frekvencia (t.j. počet výskytov slov v korpuse) vyžaduje na ich zhodnotenie ďalšie spresnenia, relatívna frekvencia (t.j. absolútna frekvencia spriemerovaná celkovou dĺžkou korpusu) umožňuje porovnanie aj medzi korpusmi nerovnakej veľkosti, ako napríklad medzi korpusmi BNC a COCA. V súvislosti so skúmaním týchto farieb budeme v praktickej časti rozlišovať medzi viacerými termínmi, ako je gradabilita (sémantická vlastnosť prídavného mena, ktorá identifikuje rôzne úrovne alebo stupne kvality), predikatívna a atributívna poloha, doslovný význam (výraz znamená presne to, čo hovorí) a obrazný význam (ktorý sa týka slov alebo výrazov, ktoré znamenajú niečo iné ako ich doslovný význam).

Konkrétne sa bakalárska práca zameriava na to, či sa najbežnejších šesť farieb stupňuje synteticky (*červenší*), alebo analyticky (*viac červený*), tým sa rozumie členenie farieb na tieto dva opaky. Výskum uskutočnený v rámci tejto práce skúmal prítomnosť a interpretáciu intenzifikátora *veľmi* a zdôrazňovača *skutočne* ako modifikátorov farebných prídavných mien, štúdium stupňovania syntetických a analytických prídavných mien v britskej a americkej angličtine,

atributívne a predikatívne postavenie dvesto stupňovaných farebných prídavných mien vo vzťahu k syntetickému a analytickému stupňovaniu a doslovný a obrazný význam dvesto stupňovaných farebných adjektív vo vzťahu k syntetickému a analytickému stupňovaniu.

Aby sa predišlo rozporom ohľadne toho, či sú farby absolútne alebo relatívne a tým pádom, či sú stupňovateľné (synteticky a analyticky), bolo potrebné pozorovať a porovnať, do akej miery sa farebné prídavné mená spájajú s intenzifikátormi ako *veľmi*, ktoré bežne sprevádzajú stupňovateľné adjektíva, a do akej miery sa vyskytujú so zdôrazňovačmi ako *skutočne*, ktoré bežne sprevádzajú stupňovateľné adjektíva, ale aj adjektíva, ktoré sa nedajú stupňovať. Nebolo by vždy možné použiť intenzifikátor s adjektívami, ktoré sa nedajú stupňovať, čo tiež naznačovalo, že farebné prídavné mená sú skutočne stupňovateľné, ale napriek tomu sme to skúmali na dvesto príkladoch z korpusov. Pri zdôrazňovaní stupňovateľných prídavných mien sa adjektívum správa ako intenzifikátor, a preto sme v dvesto príkladoch našli všetky príklady so zdôrazňovačom *skutočne*, a zistili sme, že v drvivej väčšine sa tento premodifikátor správal ako intenzifikátor, teda sa spája so stupňovateľnými adjektívami.

To znamená, že sme mohli ďalej pokračovať v skúmaní syntetického a analytického stupňovania (pozri 4.1.2). Hypotéza založená na viacerých gramatikách a prácach, ktoré tvrdia že americká angličtina používa analytické stupňovanie vo väčšej miere ako britská angličtina, bola dokázaná. Tiež bolo objavených niekoľko zaujímavých nepravidelností v relatívnych frekvenciách týkajúcich sa konkrétnych stupňovaní farebných adjektív. *Zelenší* má v oboch korpusoch v porovnaní s ostatnými farbami nepomerne vyššiu frekvenciu, a má najvyššiu frekvenciu v porovnaní s ostatnými stupňovanými farbami, zatiaľ čo *viac zelený* má pomerne nízke hodnoty. Dôvodom vysokej frekvencie *zelenší* je pravdepodobne jej použitie v prenesenom význame (ako *ekologický*). *Čiernejší*, *belší*, *viac čierny* a *viac biely* majú (okrem adjektíva *zelenší*) najvyššie frekvencie, zrejme preto, že sú to najpoužívanejšie farby, a obrazný zmysel pre farbu spájanú s rasou zvyšuje využitie týchto stupňovaných farebných ajektív. *Viac zelená* a *viac hnedá* majú najmenšiu relatívnu frekvenciu zo všetkých analyzovaných farieb a taktiež existuje najväčšia nerovnosť vo frekvencii s ich syntetickými náprotivkami (*zelenší*, *hnedší*), takže musíme

predpokladať, že syntetické stupňovanie je veľmi preferované a analytické stupňovanie sa takmer nepoužíva.

Pri atributívnom a predikatívnom postavení dvesto farebných adjektív vo vzťahu k syntetickému a analytickému stupňovaniu sme na základe literatúry predpokladali, že atributívne adjektíva vo všeobecnosti budú uprednostňovať syntetickú komparatívnu formu, zatiaľ čo predikatívne adjektíva budú uprednostňovať analytickú komparatívnu formu. Táto hypotéza je čiastočne potvrdená na dvesto príkladoch vybraných z korpusov. Predikatívne aj atributívne adjektíva síce uprednostňujú syntetické stupňovanie, ale predikatívne adjektíva skutočne používajú analytické stupňovanie vo vyššej miere ako atributívne adjektíva. Britská a americká angličtina používajú predikatívne a atributívne adjektíva v rovnakom pomere.

Pri analyzovaní doslovného a obrazného významu dvesto farebných adjektív vo vzťahu k syntetickému a analytickému stupňovaniu sme predpokladali, že analytické adjektíva budú preferované v obrazných významoch. Avšak, na základe výskumu dvesto príkladov sme túto hypotézu nepotvrdili. Zistili sme, že syntetické stupňovanie prevažuje nad analytickým v britskej aj v americkej angličtine v doslovnom aj prenesenom význame, okrem doslovného významu v americkej angličtine, kde je podiel syntetických a analytických adjektív rovnaký.

Appendix

The Appendix consists of the two hundred example sentences that the analysis of the thesis is based on. The examples are categorized in Appendix Tables 1 and 2 based on the texts in which they occurred and the occurrence of the colour adjective comparative forms in each example is marked in bold, and each example has determined its predicative/attributive position, its literal/figurative meaning and its synthetic/ analytic inflection. The figurative meanings of each colour discussed in the analysis are categorized in Appendix Table 3, and the definitions of figurative meanings are taken from Cambridge dictionary online (Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). *Cambridge dictionary*. Retrieved July 26, 2021).

Table 8. The one hundred examples of the colour adjective comparative from the BNC taken from <https://www.korpus.cz/kontext/query?corpname=bnc>

No.					P/A	L/F	S/A
BNC 1	bncdoc #453	Egyptians have the greater moral claim because Arabs are slightly	blacker	than they are .	P	L (race)	S
BNC 2	bncdoc #190	As they lifted him on to a stretcher and then on to the jeep the blanket slipped away from his shoulders revealing his red hair and a	very white	arm covered in freckles .	A	L (race)	A
BNC 3	bncdoc #384	Frankie had often spoken to one of the	very black	men who lived at Nanny 's house in Lansdowne Place .	A	L (race)	A
BNC 4	bncdoc #226	The gardens of Ireland have a special dreamlike quality , like gardens known as a child -- where everything was bigger and	greener	, and chattering rabbits abounded .	P	L	S
BNC 5	bncdoc #921	the biggest guys I 'd ever seen swaggered in wearing	more black	than a Valentine Dyall fan club dinner .	A	L	A
BNC 6	bncdoc #2709	` They keep the calves in the dark so that the flesh is	whiter	. '	P	L	S

BNC 7	bncdoc #950	Europe has voted for something new and something	greener	and closer to the community .	A (post positive)	F	S
BNC 8	bncdoc #2333	Red-heads dive constantly like grebes , but have conspicuously whiter cheeks , and are also much	whiter	than other small diving ducks .	P	L	S
BNC 9	bncdoc #1979	The Fat Controller blew a plume of cigar smoke at it from out of the corner of his mouth ; the blue strands interleaved with her	browner	ones .	A	L	S
BNC 10	bncdoc #3866	Twenty three . He 's married . Well , so ? He got married si what three months ago . Maybe he doesn't want any children yet . He we he went redder than that.	Redder	than that ?	P	F	S
BNC 11	bncdoc #1947	She smiled at me , but her face went	very white	, and her hands started to shake .	P	F	A
BNC 12	bncdoc #883	He appeared a picture of health. Then I realised she was concerned about his cheeks ; one was definitely	redder	than the other .	P	L	S
BNC 13	bncdoc #3573	The allotment holders have gone public inviting visitors to see how to use	greener	gardening techniques.	A	F	S
BNC 14	bncdoc #1698	Can he turn	greener	than his shirt !	P	F	S
BNC 15	bncdoc #1732	Persil washed	whiter	, in one form or another , for at least 60 years , taking on new angles of development as a campaign ...	P	L	S
BNC 16	bncdoc #1290	The straps had been painted in Renaissance fold mixed with cadmium red light to give it a warmer ,	redder	appearance .	A	L	S
BNC 17	bncdoc #2534	However , as we shall learn in the next chapter , black holes are not	really black	after all : they glow like a hot body , and the smaller they are , the more they glow .	P	L	A

BNC 18	bncdoc #19	The woman had short	very black	hair , stylishly cut away from the curve of her jaw ; her head was upright , and her firm chin rested on one hand .	A	L	A
BNC 19	bncdoc #1999	I want a red Elphberg -- and the King , our friend Johann says , is	very red	.	P	L	A
BNC 20	bncdoc #688	Red Pied is also a dual-purpose type but has a great deal	more red	in the coat than the White-and-Red . It originated between	P	L	A
BNC 21	bncdoc #2333	Immature	browner	with pale chestnut underparts , but cf Booted Eagle .	A	L	S
BNC 22	bncdoc #3540	` It is	greener	and cooler and a thousand times more beautiful and you will see it all for yourself one day '	P	L	S
BNC 23	bncdoc #765	Favourite Shade (Rap) She 's getting No	more black	, her . You 've got bugger all bar black	P	L (race)	A
BNC 24	bncdoc #2159	Her skin was	very white	.	P	L (race)	A
BNC 25	bncdoc #1891	His hair was made to look even	browner	by the liberal application of hair-oil .	P	L	S
BNC 26	bncdoc #1798	...many of his colleagues have left the country for	greener	pastures in the West or have taken up another occupation .	A	F	S
BNC 27	bncdoc #1481	...it can rise to the fourth magnitude it can be a binocular object , and is	very red	, though at minimum it falls to magnitude 11 .	P	L	A
BNC 28	bncdoc #2196	` She 's very	very black	, pretty , you know , with a tinge of blue ? '	P	L (race)	A
BNC 29	bncdoc #921	than a Valentine Dyall fan club dinner .	more black	-- at least , not until they invent black frets and and black strings .	P	L (race)	A

BNC 30	bncdoc #4052	get it	whiter	than white	P	L	S
BNC 31	bncdoc #2225	I never saw a man	more white	. Like death he looked , with a handkerchief held up against his face ...	P	L (race)	A
BNC 32	bncdoc #136	Brought together , the whole view becomes	very black	.	P	F	A
BNC 33	bncdoc #1951	There the skies are bigger than here , and in the evening the sun sets	more red	, more pink , then ever ours can .	P	L	A
BNC 34	bncdoc #1111	Issues considered include conducting supplier audits and launching	greener	products .	A	F	S
BNC 35	bncdoc #2825	Something warm , something much	more red	.	A	L	A
BNC 36	bncdoc #2220	Sir Emmanuel had a florid complexion which , apparently , became	redder	and redder as his temper grew worse , and his language was appalling .	P	F	S
BNC 37	bncdoc #1125	and Dmitry 's bedroom , ` but mine is much	more black	and white , and much smaller .	P	L	A
BNC 38	bncdoc #1153	-- on to a stage which could n't possibly be any	more black	-- clutching a minor forest of fuming joss sticks .	P	L	A
BNC 39	bncdoc #37	Both the water-based gloss and satin paints come in pure brilliant white and not only start whiter but stay	whiter	than other traditional solvent-based paints.	P	L	S
BNC 40	bncdoc #212	It is a female eider , duller and	browner	now that the mating season -- for which she did not, in any case, dress up -- is over.	P	L	S
BNC 41	bncdoc #190	In the dim light of the oil lamp hanging from a chain attached to a	very black	beam above the fireplace , and the glow from the log fire .	A	L	A

BNC 42	bncdoc #2160	Each section will have left an image on the film ; the more radioactivity present , the	blackier	the image will be .	P	L	S
BNC 43	bncdoc #346	In the 1920s Edwin Hubble observed that distant galaxies look	redder	than nearby ones .	P	L	S
BNC 44	bncdoc #2778	The light is much stronger and	whiter	than normal tungsten, but, like normal bulbs, they can be used with a dimmer switch.	P	L	S
BNC 45	bncdoc #1091	Grass	greener	for Ransomes Engineering firm back in the black SIGNS that the economy might be on the upturn come...	P	F	S
BNC 46	bncdoc #2345	` Why me coffee coloured ' , he say , ` How come Wallace dark , and Kennedy black and Kevin a bit	browner	?	P	L (race)	S
BNC 47	bncdoc #2614	Deveraugh grinned , his teeth showing	very white	, very even .	P	L	A
BNC 48	bncdoc #3682	Typically McGeechan will do more work with the whole squad before the forwards go off to perfect their	blackier	arts .	A	F	S
BNC 49	bncdoc #3573	Later on we 've	greener	greens and beauty queens .	A	L	S
BNC 50	bncdoc #3809	Nanking is a	very green	city with beautiful plane-trees lining the main streets ...	A	L	A
BNC 51	bncdoc #2333	Most Commons have much	whiter	breast and underparts than most Arctics , contrasting strongly with their mantles .	A	L	S
BNC 52	bncdoc #1796	Nail-scissored lawns ; hand-waxed cars and twitching net curtains in brilliant white . Pinner is	very white	.	P	F	A

BNC 53	bncdoc #3540	` In Seville you said Majorca was	greener	and lush and cooler but you did n't tell me how spectacular and beautiful it was , ' Ruth breathed .	P	L	S
BNC 54	bncdoc #1042	The director turned a	whiter	shade of pale .	A	F	S
BNC 55	bncdoc #45	Already replaced once in June after being splattered with paint , it was replaced again last week with a new painting featuring a	bluer	sky .	A	L	S
BNC 56	bncdoc #3551	He proceeded to throw her thinking totally out of gear when , his face	whiter	than ever , ` You wanted that interview so badly you were even ready to commit adultery to get -- '	P	F	S
BNC 57	bncdoc #190	He had	very red	hair and a pale complexion with masses of freckles all over his face...	A	L	A
BNC 58	bncdoc #1654	The various colours of light which they manifest correspond to different frequencies of vibration of the electromagnetic field , the redder colours being of lower frequency than the	bluer	ones .	A	L	S
BNC 59	bncdoc #1156	effect on its feathers . from a distance it looks	more black	than brown and it has a most interesting tail which , when closed , looks like one of the flippers scuba divers wear .	P	L	A
BNC 60	bncdoc #226	No other packaging material can be	greener	than cork .	P	F	S
BNC 61	bncdoc #1659	A green lane , on this day made even	greener	by the sunlight filtering through the leaves, led to a farm drive and the road to the village.	P	L	S
BNC 62	bncdoc #2180	Tasted a bit like oxtail only much	redder	.	P	L	S
BNC 63	bncdoc #728	It was common opinion that maniacs often had	very blue	eyes .	A	L	A

BNC 64	bncdoc #2175	The surfeit of codes and jargons in which she is immersed brings about a loss of faith in the power of the word , but her attitude toward the ` instant world ' that is `	whiter	than white ' because it has no memory and no values makes her uneasy .	P	F	S
BNC 65	bncdoc #3831	The man said , how is it your grass is	greener	than next door ?	P	L	S
BNC 66	bncdoc #2556	She looked	very white	, and somehow surprised , as if her precious youth had never met such a threat before .	P	F	A
BNC 67	bncdoc #2222	We were told by our parents that it was bad for our health to drink a lot of water in such heat , so we all became very thin , as well as	very brown	, in the sun .	P	L	A
BNC 68	bncdoc #344	Borlotti beans are similar to pintos , but a little larger and somewhat	redder	in colour .	P	L	S
BNC 69	bncdoc #2390	She looked afraid , and her face was	very white	.	P	F	A
BNC 70	bncdoc #2333	Duck very like duck Garganey , but has	bluer	forewing , blackish bill and yellow legs .	A	L	S
BNC 71	bncdoc #1757	George pulled her towards a large hole that was	blackier	than the night around it .	P	L	S
BNC 72	bncdoc #2904	...and here because the green and the erm er , this , th for want of a better colour , it 's	really red	, it's a sort of purply colour, they're very dark and th the the actual head doesn't really stand out very much...	P	L	A
BNC 73	bncdoc #219	One touch of a button and the family wash comes out	whiter	than white .	P	L	S
BNC 74	bncdoc #372	Far across the valley the dark tree line cut sharp across a white snow ridge , the sky above it	bluer	than the summer sea .	P	L	S

BNC 75	bncdoc #354	The property of being	whiter	is an obvious example , for one thing is compared with another when we say it is whiter than the other .	P	L	S
BNC 76	bncdoc #212	For the moment I am concentrating mostly on the fact that I am riding under the Arctic sky , a	very black	sky , heavily overcast , being pulled across the ice by a team of dogs .	A	L	A
BNC 77	bncdoc #2608	On the desk in Rosemary Kepepwe 's office stood a photograph of her husband David ,	very black	, smiling genially with a large fish on a scale by his side .	A	L (race)	A
BNC 78	bncdoc #1544	I , however , went to Rovaniemi in April when the days are long and sunny , and my face got	very brown	.	P	L	A
BNC 79	bncdoc #428	It is not enough that hedges are misted in fresh green spray ; are	greener	today than they were yesterday, and greener yesterday than they were the day before.	P	L	S
BNC 80	bncdoc #3107	Now things are	very black	.	P	F	A
BNC 81	bncdoc #240	The dishes he filled seemed indistinguishable to my eye from run-of-the-mill cottage pie except they were rather	blackier	round the edges than is normal , and they were accompanied by the garnish of a quarter of a raw tomato...	P	L	S
BNC 82	bncdoc #384	Her hair looked	very red	in the bright light from the kitchen , and her ear-rings twinkled each time she moved her head .	P	L	A
BNC 83	bncdoc #2157	And darkness ,	blackier	Than an oil-slick , Covered everything forever	P	F	S
BNC 84	bncdoc #1951	stormy sky , the bars of the cages seeming even	more black	against it than they were and the leafless trees more bleak.	P	F	A
BNC 85	bncdoc #2175	In order to get a job at the end of the war , she and Siegfried need to obtain what she calls a ` Persil-Schein certificate denazifying us	whiter	than white ' (79/473) .	P	F	S

BNC 86	bncdoc #533	The beaches are a mixture of sand and shingle , and the sea is	very blue	.	P	L	A
BNC 87	bncdoc #2333	Plover with longish legs , greyish-buff underwings and axillaries and	more black	but less white on face and underparts .	A	L	A
BNC 88	bncdoc #2607	I feel	very white	and small .	P	F	A
BNC 89	bncdoc #352	The	redder	the light , the farther and faster the galaxy .	P	L	S
BNC 90	bncdoc #2331	In some populations in Britain , however , there are also ladybirds with	more black	on their wing covers (the black spots are enlarged and more numerous) this type is called quadrimaculata .	A	L	A
BNC 91	bncdoc #401	Iranians had more respect for people with graying locks ; North , already tipped off by Ghorbanifar , had put	more white	in his ;	P	L	A
BNC 92	bncdoc #1987	She was a red woman ,	redder	, even , than Finn and Francie . Her eyebrows were red...	A	L	S
BNC 93	bncdoc #328	IT SEEMS the last Christmas of the decade will be	more green	than white .	P	F	A
BNC 94	bncdoc #3611	` Why should I be	more green	and what I say to that is...	P	F	A
BNC 95	bncdoc #392	He noticed that the ink was	blackier	, showing how each word had been pressed hard on to the paper .	P	L	S
BNC 96	bncdoc #1798	But whereas the administration likes to talk about a	greener	and more internationally competitive car industry...	A	F	S

BNC 97	bncdoc #37	Both the water-based gloss and satin paints come in pure brilliant white and not only start	whiter	, but stay whiter than other traditional solvent-based paints .	P	L	S
BNC 98	bncdoc #543	Endill could feel the heat from the Headmaster 's face as it grew	redder	and redder and he was sure it was about to explode .	P	F	S
BNC 99	bncdoc #2769	The sky is grey and abysmal ; it has grown	blacker	since morning .	P	L	S
BNC 100	bncdoc #212	Iceland is actually	very green	.	P	L	A

Table 9. The one hundred examples of the colour adjective comparative from the BNC taken from <https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/>

No.			P/A	L/F	S/A
COCA 1	2012 BLOG ...tzstake.blogspot.com	The Democrats and Republicans are a tale of two parties The GOP are older, whiter , male, more Christian, and part of the Silent generation along with some older Boomers.	P	L (race)	S
COCA 2	2011 MAG OrganicGarden	Wind turbines are appearing by the hundreds in corn and soybean fields across the Midwest, bringing with them greener energy, greener income, and possibly greener crops.	A	F	S
COCA 3	2012 BLOG mediaite.com	Arguing about who is more black than that guy is insane. Makes no sense.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 4	2012 BLOG mediaite.com	But if you do think that way, I'm way more black than Obama so you probably want to vote for me.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 5	2009 NEWS WashPost	The fast-growing bamboo, a type of grass, is a greener alternative to pine and other woods typically used in construction.	A	F	S

COCA 6	2012 WEB postmasculine.com	# Well,' the grass is always greener... '; especially when you keep on going back and forth to the home-country of yours that allows you to do so, as many times as you wish and just about anywhere you wish.	P	F	S
COCA 7	2018 ACAD Studies in the Novel	Her face grew white, whiter than her dress; she struggled faintly, and then with the feeling of submission strong within her, crossed her arms upon her breast as a little child about to say her prayers ...	P	F	S
COCA 8	1995 ACAD MechanicalEng	This demand for greener cars is not lost on the engineers testing and refining the Volvo ECC.	A	F	S
COCA 9	2014 TV Masterchef	They just look like sad spring rolls I want a delicious spring rolls, right? Let's go. I thought I had hot fryer. But they are floating onto the top and are still really white .	P	L	A
COCA 10	1996 FIC MassachRev	My hair was wilder than ever that day, curlier from the moisture of the beach, tangled and dense from the salt air. It surrounded me, thicker and blacker than the hair of any woman that has come before me, any that might come after.	P	L	S
COCA 11	1998 FIC ParisRev	Some days, through the haze, a dirt roller would birth out of the horizon. It looked like a thunderstorm, but blacker , angrier.	P	F	S
COCA 12	2012 BLOG hmyfamilyandothercricketers.blogspot.com	Cuba is a beautiful place, very green and picturesque.	P	L	A
COCA 13	2010 SPOK NBC_MeetPress	I do not think it's going to be a Republican landslide, but I do think we're going to get a lot more red .	P	F	A
COCA 14	2017 NEWS Minneapolis Star Tribune	Retired Cargill CEO Greg Page is a leader of the Risky Business initiative on the economic and environmental returns of moving to a greener economy.	A	F	S
COCA 15	2012 BLOG ...umerenergyreport.com	The truth is that you seem to see the future in much more black and white terms than I do.	P	L	A

COCA 16	2012 BLOG powerlineblog.com	And the building inside is getting more and more black .	P	L	A
COCA 17	2012 BLOG korystamper.wordpress.com	" Lapis lazuli blue: " a moderate blue that is redder and duller than average copen and redder and deeper than azurite blue, dresden blue, or pompadour. "	P	L	S
COCA 18	2013 FIC GettysburgRev	In the city the daughter was more white than she was in places like Minnesota. She was so white in the city, a black store clerk would not risk her fingers touching her open palm as she dropped the daughter's change on the counter.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 19	2012 WEB jukeintheback.org	changing his last name to Otis in order to sound more black .	P	F	A
COCA 20	2012 WEB mubi.com	The 1996 poster appears much redder in color than the original posters above, but in Bass and Kirkham's book the original designs appear much more red than orange so perhaps the originals have faded over time.	P	L	A
COCA 21	2011 FIC Antipodes	The camellias are redder than red, the lavender more purple than purple, and the lemons, surreal luminous lamps, set deep into satins of green.	P	L	S
COCA 22	2012 BLOG tcj.com	Yes, some conversations are more black and white and the point should be gotten to.	P	F	A
COCA 23	2012 BLOG blogs.babycenter.com	For your list, I think the boys all seem more black to me.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 24	1996 FIC LiteraryRev	Taking more new books down, taking others away as the crazy castle changed colors by turn, now redder, now more blue .	P	L	A
COCA 25	1999 FIC LitCavalcade	His face was very white and there were dark areas under his eyes.	P	L	A
COCA 26	2012 WEB forbes.com	The front doors swung open like a piper at the gates of dawn and two of the biggest guys I'd ever seen swaggered in wearing more black than a Valentine Dyall fan club dinner	A	F	A

COCA 27	2016 ACAD Journal of Narrative Theory : JNT	...at the foot of the stairs on the night of the ball, shaking hands with everybody, a cloud of dark hair against the very white skin, and her costume suited her so.	A	L	A
COCA 28	2010 FIC Analog	If only he knew that he was really building boilers to confine matter more black than soot that has no real existence as we know it.	P	L	A
COCA 29	2012 BLOG existentialmusingsofmatt.blogspot.com	There are some notable exceptions to the rule, of course: Lind's map shows that the 'tidewater states' of Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and North Carolina are becoming' bluer ' rather than' redder '.	P	F	S
COCA 30	2017 NEWS USA TODAY	...it's going to be brighter and whiter than anything you've ever seen, much worse than any kind of chemical explosion, and it's just this hot, radiating ball that is going to be expanding outward.	P	L	S
COCA 31	2002 SPOK CBS_Morning	He intensified everything. The sky was darker, or the rocks in the foreground were bolder, or whiter . You know, he just didn't see in color, he saw in black and white.	P	L	S
COCA 32	2007 SPOK PBS_Newshour	As part of the transaction, the private equity firms buying the company -- led by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Texas Pacific -- committed TXU to become a greener company, by adopting more environment-friendly policies.	A	F	S
COCA 33	2008 MAG America	But while it was difficult for me psychologically as a mixed AsianAmerican girl in the very white suburbs of St Louis, it was not usually cause for public humiliation.	A	F	A
COCA 34	2012 BLOG ed.msnbc.com	There are several hotels going solar and more green and I hope more follow.	P	F	A
COCA 35	2014 FIC SouthernRev	She took out a little mirror and refreshed her lipstick, making it redder than before.	P	L	S
COCA 36	2012 BLOG ...- justme.blogspot.com	Gracie is getting more black on her face all the time.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 37	2009 TV Glee	Is there anything... any music in particular... that you guys want to do? Can we maybe try something a little more black ?	A	F	A

COCA 38	2006 MAG ChildLife	Nancy didn't know what to answer to such compliments and her cheeks grew very red .	P	F	A
COCA 39	2012 BLOG feministe.us	Because in a case like that, it's more black and white: a civil lawsuit is not expected so that the victim can recover	P	F	A
COCA 40	2005 SPOK CBS_SixtyII	UNIDENTIFIED-FEMAL: Does that really work? ! BENING: Have you ever seen whiter whites? Dialogue is cheap in Hollywood, Ben. (END-VIDEO-CLIP)	A	L	S
COCA 41	2000 MAG Astronomy	The subjects were asked to judge whether they saw more green or more blue, and their brain activity was monitored while they did so.	A	L	A
COCA 42	2005 MAG Cosmopolitan	We like Cover Girl Continuous Color Lipstick in Really Red , \$5.	P	L	A
COCA 43	1993 MAG TodaysParent	If the skin turns very red , white or black, and becomes stiff, the child has probably suffered a third - degree burn.	P	L	A
COCA 44	2011 MAG MotherEarth	Water-based interior paints have a reputation as a healthier, greener alternative to the oil-based paints of yesteryear, but a new scientific study has found that children exposed to fumes from some water-based paints have a heightened risk of developing asthma and allergies.	A	F	S
COCA 45	2012 MAG Horticulture	It has a brighter appearance than Tee Dance', with more white in the foliage. Its foliage is also finer and makes a denser clump.	P	L	A
COCA 46	2010 SPOK NPR_TellMore	I think that you mentioned that to me, you know, was that the gentleman in the commercial, you know, had braids which, you know, obviously elicited a very blue collar background, you know, I wonder, you know, would it have had the same effect if the guy had, you know, shown up to the date in a suit and stuff.	A	F	A
COCA 47	2012 BLOG styleblazer.com	And I'm not sure why they feel like they need to make Beyonce more black , that just seems racist or something, i'm not sure how exactly.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 48	2003 MAG Cosmopolitan	The general rule that applies to all skin tones: Olive, warm complexions should stick with reds that have a yellow or orange undertone. Fair, cool complexions look best in bluer reds, says Gita Bass, a makeup artist at Price Inc., in NYC.	A	L	S

COCA 49	2010 MAG Redbook	Also, a darker complexion -- whether by birth or by bronzer -- makes teeth look whiter .	P	L	S
COCA 50	1997 FIC FantasySciFi	Her eyes were getting very blue and moist.	P	L	A
COCA 51	2012 WEB pjmedia.com	Instead, they are meeting for earnest discussions about how to make their lives more green .	P	F	A
COCA 52	2009 SPOK NPR_Science	So in the case of blue cheese, you make it and you have a very blue wheel and nothing else.	A	L	A
COCA 53	2012 FIC Bk:MurderMost Austen	The man's full lips drew back into a condescending smile; his teeth were very large and very white .	P	L	A
COCA 54	2012 BLOG emsexploration.com	It's the phrase I hear most often from people who work here and leave for greener pastures.	A	F	S
COCA 55	2008 MAG NaturalHist	The sky used to be clear blue on a nice day but now it seems reddish. It's just a guess, but I think it's redder for the same reason the snow is yellower : there is a smoky or dirty substance in the air.	P	L	S
COCA 56	1991 FIC BkSF:AllWeyrs Pern	The saddles were new but bore no leatherman's stamp; the runners were not ear-notched or branded and betrayed the nervousness of very green animals.	A	L	A
COCA 57	2009 ACAD Bioscience	Higher market values for fish grown in an environmentally sensitive manner, or inability to export fish grown with damaging practices, will provide strong incentives for greener aquaculture practices.	A	F	S
COCA 58	2012 WEB palagems.com	Such skylight is actually more blue early and late in the day.	A	L	A
COCA 59	2012 BLOG gaypatriot.net	father was more Arab than African, and so by definition, Obama is more white than anything else, then Arab, then African	P	L (race)	A

COCA 60	1990 NEWS USAToday	"There are better things for people who deem themselves really black to do than to yell at white people because they harped too long on things Marion Barry shouldn't have been doing in the first place."	P	F	A
COCA 61	2005 TV Cold Case	The white lady. She wasn't really white . She was black.	P	L (race)	A
COCA 62	2012 BLOG houzz.com	Definitely worth checking out, although more white paint over old woodwork than what I like.	A	L	A
COCA 63	2012 BLOG rockpapershotgun.com	# There will definitely be a " Grass is greener " yearning when players look out to the distance/next block over. #	P	F	S
COCA 64	2012 BLOG theonlinephotographer.typepad.com	The brick of the hut is redder .	P	L	S
COCA 65	2012 BLOG blogs.denverpost.com	As the pictures demonstrate, this was another time when things were more black and white.	P	F	A
COCA 66	2012 BLOG blogs.hbr.org	"These ideas will focus on how to become greener individuals, greener managers, help lead greener organizations, and find new profit and business opportunities through a focus on sustainability.	A	F	S
COCA 67	2015 MAG USCatholic	When people are introduced to environmental thinking, they are often presented with a very long laundry list of all the things they can do to live a more green life.	A	F	A
COCA 68	2016 FIC Bk:BlueBetween SkyWater	So did the skin on Mariam's arms, from brown to very brown in the summer.	P	L	A
COCA 69	2012 MAG TownCountry	Though his hair is now whiter , his suits darker, and his line of work considerably less cosseted, Cooper still manages to cut a dashing figure.	P	L	S

COCA 70	1990 SPOK CNN_King	Consumer Editor: voice-over If you believe this 30-minute commercial, everyone wants whiter , brighter teeth.	A	L	S
COCA 71	1993 SPOK NPR_Morning	Penny Pagles sp, a fisheries specialist with Greenpeace, doubts that any kind of ownership system, including CDQs, will make fishing in this region any greener .	P	F	S
COCA 72	2012 BLOG wmpoweruser.com	# it was released but sold out..... more black 920? s arriving November 30, other colors December. #	A	L	A
COCA 73	2012 BLOG digital-photography-school.com	I'm using nylon fabrics for backgrounds and white worked perfect, but when i used any other color like black, and i light the sides of the box (instead of the top) there are bright spots where the lights are hitting the black fabric so that its not really black ..	P	L	A
COCA 74	2012 WEB crooksandliars.com	# Obama represents what old white people fear--that " their " country is moving on without them, that it's getting " browner " and less English, more tolerant of Otherness, and global.	P	F	S
COCA 75	2015 FIC NewEnglandRev	On the other side of the hedge a forested section of the park looked far blackier than the sky. The rain had stopped, but Dale was damp and cold.	P	L	S
COCA 76	2012 BLOG theinertia.com	Image is everything to judges (directly or subconsciously), and image is shaped by Race. Two ASP finals last week, the better, and browner , surfers both got robbed ...	A	L (race)	S
COCA 77	2012 WEB personal.psu.edu	My next adventure took me to Arkansas. It was greener than Texas and Oklahoma, the people were a little bit friendlier, and their accent was a little bit similar to mine, but I was still a fish out of water!	P	L	S
COCA 78	2018 NEWS Omaha World-Herald	Easterns are called the chocolate toms, because their feathers are more brown at the end.	P	L	A
COCA 79	2018 NEWS OCRegister	# A development sign shows greener pastures near Kanan road in Calabasas.	A	F	S

COCA 80	2012 WEB classicsshorts.com	I laughed at that, and turned again to the dark trees before me. It was very black , and Weena clung to me convulsively, but there was still, as my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, sufficient light for me to avoid the stems.	P	L	A
COCA 81	2000 MAG Essence	But if it seems the grass is greener on somebody else's career path, well, maybe it is.	P	F	S
COCA 82	1999 MAG Skiing	" We're all tired of snow. " here's our first impression of Big White: White, very white . Nothing but white. Six inches of snow fell on the mountain overnight...	A	L	A
COCA 83	2012 WEB huffingtonpost.com	...organic particles (that form fungus) and brighteners (that make the paper look very white) that may also leave chemical compounds behind.	P	L	A
COCA 84	2019 FIC SciFI & Fantasy	The longer they went on this way, the more Eric started and stopped, the redder his face became till it matched his hair.	P	F	S
COCA 85	1999 SPOK ABC_GMA	ADAM SANDLER: This is -- turns out the big move I made with these pants is, they were redder , and then my girlfriend put some of that bleach stuff on them, made them pinker.	P	L	S
COCA 86	2012 WEB scarymommy.com	There is a ripple effect that I don't think the cheater thinks about. He thinks the grass is greener , but what he doesn't realize is how many people are affected and how much they are affected.	P	F	S
COCA 87	2012 BLOG patheos.com	Most of my peers saw the writing on the wall and wisely left for greener pastures.	A	F	S
COCA 88	2008 FIC Analog	She started getting redder , until she was the color of one of the better class of tomatoes.	P	F	S
COCA 89	2001 FIC Bk:TicketToMin to	Father Coslo, the principal, an indigenous product with a full head of very black hair and a cold, thin smile developed somewhat on the lines of sermons.	A	L	A
COCA 90	2019 MAG Salon	...and the average seat would become whiter and more Republican.	P	F	S

COCA 91	2009 SPOK CNN_StateUnion	So, you know, I want to work in a bipartisan way. I'm from a very blue state in Illinois, served in the legislature because I was elected to Congress.	A	F	A
COCA 92	1992 MAG Ms	" The first time he made an advance I was feeling really blue , I was crying, " Cathy says.	P	F	A
COCA 93	2007 TV The Simple Life	I feel like you look blackier than me. Oh, my! It's a whole new look for you.	P	L (race)	S
COCA 94	2012 WEB bougainvillea.hubbpages.com	so i smiled back and he shot up and like pretended to do something and got redder .	P	F	S
COCA 95	2017 FIC Bk:FreeDakota	By the time he reached the Taconic, the trees were still barren and the grass was more brown than green.	P	L	A
COCA 96	2013 FIC AntiochRev	Her hair had been colored redder than usual that morning.	P	L	S
COCA 97	2003 TV Gilmore Girls	Dinner's ready, Mrs. Gilmore. - No, it's not. - I just checked it and it's... - I was in there ten minutes ago - and it still had another forty minutes to go. - But it's really brown and...	P	L	A
COCA 98	2010 SPOK ABC_20/20	Her little teeth were really black from, I guess, dehydration.	P	L	A
COCA 99	2002 SPOK NBC_Today	And it even got to the point for me that I began to, like, do the Crest White Strip thing because I wanted my teeth to be whiter .	P	L	S
COCA 100	2012 BLOG racebending.com	Consider that Asians today routinely have surgery on their eyelids to look more white , whiten their skin, wear colored contact lenses and bleach their hair.	P	L (race)	A

Table 10. The figurative meanings/ idioms in the two hundred examples of the colour adjective comparative from the BNC and COCA

Green	
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	relating to the protection of the environment
BNC 7	Europe has voted for something new and something greener and closer to the community.
BNC 13	The allotment holders have gone public inviting visitors to see how to use greener gardening techniques. Whop those weeds with a piece of old carpet and plant bedfellows that get on.
BNC 34	Issues considered include conducting supplier audits and launching greener products.
BNC 60	No other packaging material can be greener than cork.
BNC 94	suppose you may say: ` Why should I be more green and what I say to that is: ` I don't know what the reason is for you but I do know that for me it's about showing compassion for the planet we live on and trying to hand on as much beauty and good-will as we possibly can to future generations;
BNC 96	But whereas the administration likes to talk about a greener and more internationally competitive car industry, Detroit wants to spend any available support on overcoming bread-and-butter engineering obstacles in complying with environmental legislation.
COCA 2	Wind turbines are appearing by the hundreds in corn and soybean fields across the Midwest, bringing with them greener energy, greener income, and possibly greener crops.
COCA 5	The fast-growing bamboo, a type of grass, is a greener alternative to pine and other woods typically used in construction.
COCA 8	This demand for greener cars is not lost on the engineers testing and refining the Volvo ECC.
COCA 14	Retired Cargill CEO Greg Page is a leader of the Risky Business initiative on the economic and environmental returns of moving to a greener economy.
COCA 26	If you'd like to read more green business and environmental health coverage, you can follow me on...
COCA 32	As part of the transaction, the private equity firms buying the company -- led by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Texas Pacific -- committed TXU to become a greener company, by adopting more environment-friendly policies.
COCA 34	There are several hotels going solar and more green and I hope more follow.
COCA 44	Water-based interior paints have a reputation as a healthier, greener alternative to the oil-based paints of yesteryear, but a new scientific study has found that children exposed to fumes from some water-based paints have a heightened risk of developing asthma and allergies.
COCA 51	Instead, they are meeting for earnest discussions about how to make their lives more green.
COCA 57	Higher market values for fish grown in an environmentally sensitive manner, or inability to export fish grown with damaging practices, will provide strong incentives for greener aquaculture practices (Clay 1997, Boyd et al. 2005).
COCA 66	Our mission here is to provide ideas that will help fuel your " green thinking. " These ideas will focus on how to become greener individuals, greener managers, help lead greener organizations, and find new profit and business opportunities through a focus on sustainability.
COCA 67	When people are introduced to environmental thinking, they are often presented with a very long laundry list of all the things they can do to live a more green life.
COCA 71	Penny Pagles sp, a fisheries specialist with Greenpeace, doubts that any kind of ownership system, including CDQs, will make fishing in this region any greener.
	go/turn green: to look pale and ill as if you are going to vomit
BNC 14	Can he turn greener than his shirt!

	greener pastures: a new place or activity that offers new opportunities:
BNC 26	Alex Goldfarb, executive director of the ISF and formerly a biochemist at the Engelhardt Institute in Moscow, sees the gap between the number of applicants and the number of eligible scientists as a sign that many of his colleagues have left the country for greener pastures in the West or have taken up another occupation.
COCA 54	It's the phrase I hear most often from people who work here and leave for greener pastures.
COCA 87	Most of my peers saw the writing on the wall and wisely left for greener pastures.
COCA 79	# A development sign shows greener pastures near Kanan road in Calabasas.
	the grass is (always) greener (on the other side): something that you say that means that other people always seem to be in a better situation than you, although they may not be
BNC 45	Grass greener for Ransomes Engineering firm back in the black SIGNS that the economy might be on the upturn come with another major East Anglian employer back in profit.
COCA 6	# Well,' the grass is always greener...'; especially when you keep on going back and forth to the home-country of yours that allows you to do so, as many times as you wish and just about anywhere you wish.
COCA 63	# There will definitely be a " Grass is greener " yearning when players look out to the distance/next block over. #
COCA 81	But if it seems the grass is greener on somebody else's career path, well, maybe it is.
COCA 86	Oh yeah... this was about cheating. There is a ripple effect that I don't think the cheater thinks about. He thinks the grass is greener, but what he doesn't realize is how many people are affected and how much they are affected.
	Green Christmas: A Christmas with no snow on the ground, the opposite of a White Christmas.
BNC 93	IT SEEMS the last Christmas of the decade will be more green than white.
Red	
	go/turn red: If you go/turn red, your face becomes red because you are angry or embarrassed
BNC 10	Twenty three. He's married . Well, so? He got married si what three months ago. Maybe he doesn't want any children yet. He we he went redder than that. Redder than that?
BNC 36	Sir Emmanuel had a florid complexion which, apparently, became redder and redder as his temper grew worse, and his language was appalling.
BNC 98	Endill could feel the heat from the Headmaster's face as it grew redder and redder and he was sure it was about to explode.
COCA 38	Nancy didn't know what to answer to such compliments and her cheeks grew very red.
COCA 84	The longer they went on this way, the more Eric started and stopped, the redder his face became till it matched his hair.
COCA 88	She started getting redder, until she was the color of one of the better class of tomatoes.
COCA 94	so i smiled back and he shot up and like pretended to do something and got redder. I always caught him starring at me or lookng at me in band, spanish, waiting for the bell to ring, any time he s with me!
	red state: a US state where most people usually vote Republican
COCA 13	I do not think it's going to be a Republican landslide, but I do think we're going to get a lot more red.
Blue	

	blue state: a US state where most people usually vote Democrat
COCA 29	There are some notable exceptions to the rule, of course: Lind's map shows that the 'tidewater states' of Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and North Carolina are becoming 'bluer' rather than 'redder'.
COCA 91	So, you know, I want to work in a bipartisan way. I'm from a very blue state in Illinois, served in the legislature because I was elected to Congress.
	blue collar: Blue-collar workers do work needing strength or physical skill rather than office work
COCA 46	I think that you mentioned that to me, you know, was that the gentleman in the commercial, you know, had braids which, you know, obviously elicited a very blue collar background, you know, I wonder, you know, would it have had the same effect if the guy had, you know, shown up to the date in a suit and stuff.
	feeling or showing sadness
COCA 92	" The first time he made an advance I was feeling really blue, I was crying, " Cathy says.
White	
	having a pale face because you are not well, or you are feeling shocked
BNC 11	She smiled at me, but her face went very white, and her hands started to shake.
BNC 54	When director Elliot Silverstein was told that the role of Kid Shelleen in his up-and-coming comedy western Cat Ballou was to be offered to Kirk Douglas, the director turned a whiter shade of pale.
BNC 56	And, while she was chewing on that, suddenly some fierce Czech expletive rent the air, then, ' Hell, did you have me fooled ! ' he raged, and when she had been certain that his fury was wholly on account of her pretending to be a journalist when she was not, he proceeded to throw her thinking totally out of gear when his face whiter than ever, ' You wanted that interview so badly you were even ready to commit adultery to get -- '
BNC 66	She looked very white, and somehow surprised, as if her precious youth had never met such a threat before.
BNC 69	She looked afraid, and her face was very white.
COCA 7	Her face grew white, whiter than her dress; she struggled faintly, and then with the feeling of submission strong within her, crossed her arms upon her breast as a little child about to say her prayers
	belonging to the group of people with skin that is pale in colour, who come from or whose family originally came from Europe
BNC 52	Nail-scissored lawns; hand-waxed cars and twitching net curtains in brilliant white. Pinner is very white.
BNC 64	The surfeit of codes and jargons in which she is immersed brings about a loss of faith in the power of the word, but her attitude toward the ' instant world ' that is ' whiter than white ' because it has no memory and no values makes her uneasy.
BNC 85	In order to get a job at the end of the war, she and Siegfried need to obtain what she calls a ' Persil-Schein certificate denazifying us whiter than white ' (79/473).
BNC 88	I feel very white and small.
COCA 33	But while it was difficult for me psychologically as a mixed Asian American girl in the very white suburbs of St Louis, it was not usually cause for public humiliation.
COCA 90	Such cities could lose dozens of legislative seats around the country -- and the average seat would become whiter and more Republican. # As Tribe makes clear, this is an outcome that Trump seems to openly want.
Black	

	without hope
BNC 32	Brought together, the whole view becomes very black.
BNC 80	Now things are very black.
	bad or evil
BNC 48	Typically McGeechan will do more work with the whole squad before the forwards go off to perfect their blacker arts.
BNC 83	And darkness, blacker Than an oil-slick, Covered everything forever And the last ear left on earth Lay on the beach, Deaf as a shell And the land froze And the seas froze ' Who's a pretty boy then?
BNC 84	stormy sky, the bars of the cages seeming even more black against it than they were and the leafless trees more bleak.
COCA 11	Some days, through the haze, a dirt roller would birth out of the horizon. It looked like a thunderstorm, but blacker, angrier.
	black-and-white: A black-and-white subject or situation is one in which it is easy to understand what is right and wrong
BNC 87	The English speaker may initially have the perception that some other nationalities come to more black and white decisions than themselves, on the same evidence, and are therefore more competent or more rash, according to the context.
COCA 22	changing his last name to Otis in order to sound more black.
COCA 39	Because in a case like that, it's more black and white: a civil lawsuit is not expected so that the victim can recover
COCA 65	As the pictures demonstrate, this was another time when things were more black and white.
	relating or belonging to people with black or dark brown skin, especially people who live in Africa or whose family originally came from Africa
COCA 37	Is there anything... any music in particular... that you guys wan na do? Can we maybe try something a little more black?
COCA 19	changing his last name to Otis in order to sound more black.
Brown	
	brownskin: a brown-skinned person
COCA 74	I can't begin to imagine what that means. # Obama represents what old white people fear--that " their " country is moving on without them, that it's getting " browner " and less English, more tolerant of Otherness, and global.