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Department of
English Language
and Literature

**AMERICAN AND BRITISH
DIALECTAL SYNONYMS
IN SELECTED LEXICAL
FIELDS**

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I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis, written under the supervision of PhDr. Klára Matuchová, is a product of my own work. All quotation sources are listed in the Works cited section.

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Abstract

The bachelor thesis deals with lexical differences between contemporary American and British English. The thesis presents an outline of historical and sociolinguistic factors which affected the development of American English. It includes a thematic mini-dictionary of 224 commonly used British and American dialectal synonyms. With regard to the words' etymological origin, the thesis attempts to characterize the structure of selected lexical fields. The practical part presents an experiment which reflects on how Czech students of the English language incorporate individual dialectal synonyms into their active vocabulary.

Anotace v češtině

Bakalářská práce se zabývá lexikálními rozdíly mezi současnou americkou a britskou angličtinou. Pozornost je věnována nástinu historických a sociolingvistických faktorů, které ovlivnily vývoj americké angličtiny. Práce obsahuje tematicky rozdělený slovníček 224 běžně užívaných amerických a britských dialektových synonym. S přihlédnutím k etymologickému původu jednotlivých slov se snaží charakterizovat strukturu vybraných lexikálních polí. Obsahem praktické části je experiment reflektující jak čeští studenti angličtiny začleňují jednotlivá synonyma do aktivní slovní zásoby.

1 Introduction

English as a language has several national variants. Undoubtedly the most prominent are British and American English, as they are spoken by the majority of native speakers and studied by most foreigners. At the very beginning it is important to decide what in the context of this thesis will be understood as American and British English. It is needless to say that a country the size of the United States or the United Kingdom is very unlikely to be linguistically homogenous. There are bound to be words and expressions limited to smaller regions, social or ethnical groups, which, however, are not comprehensible to the majority of speakers.

In the United States as well as in the United Kingdom there are several groups or regions that use quite peculiar and distinctive vocabulary, nevertheless, for the sake of simplicity and because of the limited scope of this thesis, the term American English will be used to refer to the dialect that is shared and understood by the majority of US citizens (General American English). Similarly, as British English we will understand the variant of English comprehensible to all denizens of the United Kingdom (Standard British English) (Crystal 290).

It is often said that the inhabitants of the British Isles and North America are not only divided geographically by the Atlantic Ocean but also linguistically. Even though they seemingly share the same language, there are significant differences. It is a widely known fact that American English differs in its

easily recognizable rhotic accent as well as its grammatical structures, spelling (and other formal rules, such as punctuation), pronunciation, intonation and vocabulary in general. Lexical differences between the two dialects are perhaps one of the most perplexing characteristic as the same words can be used to refer to different concepts. Even though nowadays the popular media allow speakers to become familiarized with different expressions, there are indeed situations when using different dialectal synonyms may create misunderstanding, confusion or undesirable embarrassment.

Nonetheless, American and British English have never drifted apart enough to become unintelligible. In fact, a great number of the phonological and grammatical differences have zero impact on mutual intelligibility; therefore American English has never gained the status of a separate language and the two continue to coexist as two distinct national variants.

This bachelor thesis attempts to analyze the differences between the American and British lexicons in selected semantic domains from the American English point of view. It comments on the vocabulary variation between the two dialects, with a particular focus on etymology, i.e. word formation and the historical period when its use was first recorded.

Such information should allow to determine whether it is possible to discover recurrent distributional patterns in the lexical fields' structure. The basis of this work is a thematic mini-dictionary of 224 frequently used synonymous nominal expressions which were compiled

from a selected range of American and British dictionaries. The full list of dictionaries used in the process of compilation can be found in the last section (page 41).

Furthermore, a simple experiment focusing on the perception and the active use of American and British vocabulary was carried out. One hundred Czech ESL students were tested in an attempt to establish whether there is a correlation between the amount of study experience, achieved knowledge level and active vocabulary preference.

During the study of English in a typical Czech school, students use British ESL textbooks, listen to audio materials recorded by native British speakers and are also asked to learn the vocabulary found in these. This can be contrasted with the amount of vocabulary acquired through the exposure to popular media. The results of the testing will also help to demonstrate the role of unguided vocabulary acquisition in comparison with vocabulary teaching.

2 Historical and sociolinguistic background

Every existing language is a dynamic and constantly evolving system. Word meanings are shifting, new words are borrowed, strung together or otherwise adopted to satisfy the speakers' communicative needs. The same way other lexical units are pushed from the center to the periphery of the word stock only to become obsolete and fall out of use.

Today's British and American English are no different. The two dialects have originated from the same historical variant of the English language which was once used in Britain. However, they have gone through four centuries of individual cultural and social development, which turned them into what they are in the present day. Americans have enriched the English lexicon by thousands of words, many of which are used all over the world (as a part of the English language or as English loan words in other languages), yet a large part of the vocabulary still remains perceived as distinctively American. A look into the history of the United States will help to reveal the conditions which allowed American English to form as an autonomous variant of the English language.

2.1 Colonial and pre-industrial period

The history of development of American English began in 1607 when a group of about a hundred English-speaking pilgrims led by Captain John Smith first disembarked in the Promised Land. The Puritan escapees soon established the very first American colony in Jamestown, Virginia. They sought political, economical

and religious freedom and gave up their old lives to venture on a difficult journey into the unknown. Large groups of Englishmen soon followed and founded a colony in New England in Plymouth, Massachusetts (1620) and another one in the Massachusetts Bay.

Some scholars consider this the linguistically most important period, since this was the time when the settlement of the original thirteen colonies along the Atlantic seaboard took place, and thus the first speakers of what would later become American English appeared on the North American continent (Kövecses 19). A new society began developing.

However, the beginning was marked by many hardships. The colonists found themselves in a brand new landscape with different natural conditions. They discovered many plants and animals which they had never seen before and for which they had no names. In such a situation, the easiest solution was to adopt words from a language that already had all the required vocabulary, thus many new loan words, such as *raccoon*, *squash*, *moose*, *sequoia* or *hickory* were conveniently absorbed from Native American languages.

Cultivation of the vast plots of land was also a problem. The colonists encountered the native American Indian tribes, which they had to deal with. Although the early history of American nation records sporadic acts of friendship between the colonists and the Indians, more records of animosity and hostility can be found in the annals (Janicki 15). The Indians' will to protect their land confronted by the colonists' desire to survive in a

new land resulted in a great number of conflicts. The new American social and economic conditions, as well as great geographical distance, were one of the factors that triggered the development of American English and caused the language to evolve differently from the original British variant.

The British were not the only nation to establish colonies on the American continent. They were soon followed by other European nations with their own languages, such as the Dutch (who contributed words such as *cookie*, *coleslaw*, *boss*), the French (e.g. *prairie*, *pumpkin*, *depot*) or the Spanish (e.g. *barbecue*, *marijuana*, *cockroach*). Words from the other colonists' languages quickly found their way into the American English lexicon, giving the newly developing language multi-cultural and multi-ethnic qualities.

It did not take long before America became the metaphorical melting pot. Although, it is safe to say that the English language has always been very prone to borrowing and absorbing words from other languages; the English lexicon had already contained a wide range of originally non-English words even prior the colonization of North America.

2.1.1 African American Vernacular English

Another important social group which influenced the development of American English were the African slaves. Though the first Africans had come to the North American colonies in 1619, there is very little evidence of the languages they used or the English they came to speak

(Finegan a Rickford 10). By 1750s, slavery was legal in all of the thirteen American colonies and the share of African American population kept increasing.

Although it took more than another hundred years before slavery was abolished by the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865, African American English (often simply referred to as Black English) has developed as a strong and distinctive American ethnolect which has also contributed many words, such as *banjo*, *bogus* or *cool* (as a slang expression), to the standard American English lexicon (Green 38).

2.2 19th century and Industrial revolution

In 1789, Noah Webster, the well-known American lexicographer, predicted that American English would eventually be as different from British English as Dutch, Danish and Swedish are from German, or from one another (Davies 2). Webster and other American patriots shared the belief that language is a reflection of national identity and hence the language of the republic (United States) would naturally be different from the language of the monarchy (United Kingdom).

Interestingly, it was also Noah Webster who initiated a great number of changes in American spelling and punctuation. The fact that all the changes were so easily accepted in the United States may have had to do with the great concern about linguistic correctness among the early immigrants (Tottie 9).

Furthermore, the term 'colonial lag' has been used in relation to American English, describing the variation

as both conservative and innovative in comparison to British English (Rohdenburg & Schlüter 13-14), with innovative features most obviously found in the lexicon.

Webster's predictions obviously had no real effect on the language itself. Nevertheless, American and British English had indeed diverged. It would be a misconception to think that American English was the only one that went through a process of changes and innovations. British English at the beginning of the nineteenth century was very different from the English spoken in Britain at the beginning of the seventeenth.

In some respects, present-day British English is closer to the common ancestral form of the present-day varieties than is American English or other varieties; but in other respects the reverse is true, and American English, for instance, preserves older uses that became obsolete in British use (Algeo 15). For example the word *fall* (meaning *autumn*) was commonly used in Elizabethan England but in Britain it soon became obsolete and is not used anymore.

In American English, however, the word *fall* is still commonly used and in most situations preferred over the word *autumn*. Also it should be stressed that the notion of a unified 'standard' language was not firmly established until around the mid-eighteenth century (Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 104), which means that American English did not evolve from some sort of a single unified British dialect but more likely from a multitude of diverse British dialects which different immigrants kept bringing from the British Isles.

It did not take long before the Industrial revolution reached the shores of North America in the nineteenth century. The rise of capitalism together with the advancement in technology, transportation and production helped increase the growth of the United States and also triggered many changes in the American society and economy. Once again, the American population faced the already once encountered problem: the lack of words for naming newly invented objects and other new social phenomena. Therefore a wide range of new vocabulary was produced in this period.

This concerns especially the lexical fields of transportation terminology, automobiles, travel and road infrastructure as well as household items, occupation names or sport related vocabulary. It is these lexical fields that show the largest number of discrepancies between the vocabulary of British and American English. However, until 1900s many books in America were still imported from England, which to a certain degree kept American English from straying too far (Davies 2).

Even though the original colonies had been dispersed, immigrants did not stop pouring into the United States and in addition to the previously mentioned loan words from French, Dutch or Spanish, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century the American word stock was enriched by a great number of words brought by the new immigrants. In contemporary American English we can identify words borrowed from German (e.g. *gesundheit*, *hamburger*, *sauerkraut*, which were later also incorporated into the British lexicon but not directly from German) or

Yiddish (e.g. *bagel*, *klutz* or *glitch*) as well as Italian (e.g. *pizza*, *zucchini*, *pasta*). Although especially Yiddish vocabulary may not be as widespread as other loan words (with the exception of areas with large Jewish communities, such as New York City), countless Yiddish words can be found in American dictionaries.

After the World War I the American government attempted to reduce the number of immigrants and thus in the next decades the United States became very much monolingual, limiting the source of new words to more inventive methods such as shortening, blending or the frequent use of proprietary eponyms (generic trademark names).

There is one characteristic that can be observed in the productivity of American English: the American, on his linguistic side, likes to make his language as he goes along. The characteristic American habit of reducing complex concepts to the starkest abbreviations was already noticeable in the colonial times, and such highly typical Americanisms as *OK*, have been traced back even to the first days of the republic (Mencken 44).

The reason and cause of inventiveness in American English is given by the fact that Americans had to adapt their language to the new circumstances and thus innovation simply became a necessity (Kövecses 287). Contrarily to that, there is also an interesting fact about English in the United States. Despite the long existing feeling of national pride rooted in the American nation, with English as the only politically and socially

dominant language, it has never been legally declared as the country's official language.

2.3 Post World War II

Two hundred years after Noah Webster's prediction it can be safely declared that American and British English have never drifted so much apart to become two distinct languages. In fact, British and American English probably reached their greatest divergence just before World War II and since that time have been getting closer, or at least better understood by the other country.

However, an estimated four thousand words in everyday use in Britain have a different meaning or are used differently in the United States (Davies 42-3). What keeps the two national varieties (and the same can be assumed about the other existing English dialects, i.e. Canadian or Australian English) is the ongoing trend of globalization, sustained by the fact that information can reach the other side of the Atlantic Ocean in a fraction of a second. Moreover, popular media are practically saturated by American productions. This raises the potential amount of exposure for all native English speakers and ESL learners equally.

The status of English in the United States always remains an open question. As Tottie comments, it is possible that a foreign languages with a large number of speakers such as Spanish may dominate in large parts of metropolitan areas (245), but as we have seen in the past foreign languages have had little impact on the English

language in America and there is no doubt that the number of American English speakers will keep increasing with the growth of American population as well as the number of non-native speakers, given by the status of American English which derives the country's economic and cultural dominance.

Despite the fact that all the national varieties of the English language have remained very much intelligible, there is a common practice of altering books and other materials prior to their publishing on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. Many publishing houses choose to do so in order to make the content more accessible to domestic consumers. British books are often stripped of vocabulary unknown to the American reader (e.g. the American edition of the *Harry Potter* series) and American television shows (for example the *MythBusters* series on the UK *Discovery Channel*) may receive a new voice-over commentary in Received Pronunciation which is perhaps more favorable to the British ear.

3 Analysis of selected lexical fields and processes

3.1 Clothing

One of the lexical fields which display considerable amount of variation between American and British English is the vocabulary group that identifies various clothing items or accessories.

There is a set of synonyms which are used in both dialects but designate different concepts, and therefore are very likely to create confusion or misunderstanding between speakers not familiar with this fact. Such words are for example *pants* and *vest*, which in British English both refer to undergarments. Another such example is the word *purse*, which in American English was shifted from its original meaning (a small pouch for carrying coins; in this sense it is still used in British English) and is used as a synonym to a woman's handbag.

British English in this category also contains several expressions which may be completely unknown to an American speaker, e.g. *Macintosh* (also spelled *Mackintosh*) or *Wellington boots*, both named after their respective inventors. Synonymous expressions found in American English (*raincoat* and *rubber boots*) are formed as easily deducible, transparent compounds.

An interesting synonymous pair which demonstrates different concepts of thinking is *suspenders* (AmE) and *braces* (BrE). Both derived from a verb, they suggest completely opposite notions. The word *suspender* is also used in British English, meaning a *garter belt*.

Many words in this particular lexical field of American English have been in continuous use since the first half of the twentieth century and the dialect also makes frequent use of genericized trademarks (such as *laundromat* or *Speedo*) or otherwise fabricated words, for example *nylons* (synonymous to *stockings*), which is a word formed on a pattern similar to the word *cotton*.

The majority of words connected with clothing are of French or Germanic origin, however, in British English a few peculiarities can be discovered: *dungarees* (named after a part of the city of Bombay) and *polo neck*, which has its origin in the Balti language spoken in Pakistan and India. Both words were absorbed by British English during the colonial period.

3.2 Food and eating

The lexical field of food names also represents a wide range of synonymous nominal pairs used in American and British English.

Particularly confusing can be the word *chips*, which again can be found in both dialects. The popular British take-away food *fish and chips* would have to be named *fish and French fries* in America, as *chips* in American English are what the British call *crisps*.

The expression *to French fry* is also used as a verb and is synonymous to *deep fry* in American English. We can also find the word *French toast*, which in British English

is known as *eggy bread*. Interestingly, despite the name, the meal did not originate in France.

Words which may not be understood across the Atlantic Ocean are *zucchini* (of Italian origin; British English prefers the French word *courgette*) or *eggplant* (of Latin origin; British English again favors the French word *aubergine*).

As for word origin, the majority of vocabulary in this lexical field is ultimately derived from French, however, many exceptions can be found. Particularly in American English there are words of Dutch, German or Italian origin introduced by the immigrants from Europe. Many of these expressions (for example *hamburger*) are also used internationally as secondary loanwords from American English.

3.3 Household and living

Many words in the lexical field of household items represent concepts, inventions and electric appliances that first appeared in the nineteenth century.

Since at this time American and British English were linguistically separated and there was also no quick way of exchanging information, both dialects had to find their own way when struggling with the need to name new phenomena.

Nevertheless, there are again words which can be found in both dialects but differ in meaning, mainly as a result of a semantic shift. Such word is for example

a *torch*, which in British English denotes a *flashlight* but when used in American English it is understood as a *burning torch*.

Another such word is *toilet*, which in Britain is used in the sense of a *bathroom* or *restroom*. However, when used in America the word commonly refers to a *toilet bowl* and the word *bathroom* is preferred as more appropriate when one needs to excuse himself or herself.

Also, the word *serviette* is generally preferred in British English, as the in American English synonymous word *napkin* is sometimes used to denote a *diaper (nappy)* or a *handkerchief*.

There is at least one word that certainly would not be understood by an American speaker. *Perambulator* (often shortened to *pram*) is derived from a Latin word which means *to walk around* and is used to denote what in American English is known as a *baby carriage*. Similarly, instead of a *push chair*, American English favors the word *stroller*.

In this category, genericized trademarks can be found in both American and British lexicons. The word *Kleenex* is commonly used as a proprietary eponym, however, outside the United States the word *paper tissue* is generally preferred. Also, *hoover*, originally a trademark of an American company has practically become synonymous to a *vacuum cleaner*, which is a term commonly preferred in the United States.

3.4 People and work

The lexical field of job names and other expressions used to describe people has developed similarly as the previously mentioned category of household related items. Many new occupations appeared in the nineteenth century and again because of the separation and the individual social and cultural development of the two countries, different names were put into use.

Many job names on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean were formed as simple compounds following the pattern of *occupation name + man*. This tendency was however often criticized by the feminist movement in the twentieth century and hence gender neutral job names (e.g. *firefighter* instead of *fireman*) have been often preferred as politically correct.

There are several idiomatic compounds that are country specific and their meaning is impossible to guess for a foreign speaker. For example the British English expression a *lollipop man* (a *crossing guard* in American English), which refers to the lollipop resembling stop sign that the officers carry.

Another interesting expression is the *Essex girl*, which is an idea based on stereotypical behavior. Similar concept of the *Valley girl* (the name refers to San Fernando Valley in California) can also be found in American English, where it denotes a self-centered materialistic woman with a distinct accent and slow style of speech.

The frequently used semi-informal American word *guys* can be replaced by the word *people* in British English. The word, however, loses the semi-informal connotation and is applicable for a wider use.

Furthermore, the American term *buddy* is replaced by the less informal *mate* in British English. These words can be used as a friendly form of address between men or boys, yet the usage of both remains rather limited.

3.5 Shopping and services

The majority of differences in this particular lexical field are generated from the fact that American English prefers the noun *store* (French origin, in continuous use since 1720s) over the much older word *shop* (English origin).

American English forms the most of its names for shops by following the simple pattern noun + *store* (e.g. *grocery store*, *liquor store*), which can be understood even by speakers previously not familiar with the compound noun. Contrastingly, in British English we can find several names of establishments that do not follow this simple pattern, such as the French word *abattoir* (meaning a *slaughterhouse*) or the Germanic expression *ironmonger* (also known as a *DIY centre* in the UK; in American English it is simply referred to as a *hardware store*).

Chemist, a word of French origin ultimately derived from *alchemist*, which is commonly used to refer to a

pharmacy is in American English replaced by the word *drug store*. The US concept is similar to a pharmacy, although a typical American *drug store* sells a wider range of products including cosmetics and magazines. The word *drug* also has a wider meaning, denoting any kind of medicine or pharmaceutical preparation.

British English also uses the word *off-license* to refer to a *liquor store* (*liquor* is synonymous to *distilled alcohol*). The expression *off-license* does not use the name of the product which is sold there but rather suggests that the purchased goods must be consumed off the store premises.

3.6 Traffic

The lexical field of traffic and automobile related expressions is probably the one where the largest lexical differences between American and British English can be observed, as the two variants of expressions again developed separately without the possibility of much mutual influence. The majority of words in the category are compounds formed in the nineteenth or early twentieth century from originally English or French words (with a few exceptions, such as the word *gas*, which has a Dutch origin).

Unlike in other lexical fields, there is a very small amount of synonymous pairs which can be used in both discussed variants of the English language, therefore there is a limited possibility of misunderstanding. However, a number of examples still

exists, e.g. the word *subway*, when used in American English denotes an underground electric railroad (in British English simply known as the *underground*, which is shortened from the phrase *underground railway*); although in British English the same word designates a tunnel for use by pedestrians built under a road.

As transparent as most of the compound nouns are, there are several idiomatic phrases or French expressions that would not be understood by an average American speaker. For example the British English concept of *cul-de-sac* (literally meaning *bottom of a sack*) is not known in the United States and thus the expression *dead end* is preferred.

Similarly, the colloquial idiomatic expression *sleeping policeman* refers to what in American English is known as a *speed bump*, a ridge set in a road surface to control the speed of vehicles.

For the full list of forty different synonyms from the lexical field of traffic related vocabulary refer to the respective mini-dictionary section (page 55-56).

3.7 Proprietary eponyms

A particularly interesting phenomenon that can be observed in American English is the frequent use of proprietary eponyms, which are undoubtedly related to the consumerism oriented culture found in most countries of the modern world. These expressions, more commonly referred to as genericized trademarks, represent the names of trademarked brand products and services that have been adopted into daily use language. Genericized trademarks are used synonymously to standard general use nouns and can be found in most modern languages. Trademarks are purposely invented names which may have no direct and obvious connection to the product or service they represent. The process of lexicalization of proprietary eponyms is not dissimilar from the adoption of loan words.

When a new brand name is introduced, it is legally protected and used specifically to label a certain product. The name may or may not slowly begin to be used as a proprietary eponym. In case of particularly popular products its meaning becomes much broader to include other similar items or products.

Furthermore, minor changes such as the loss of capitalization may occur (brand names, unless stylized, are typically capitalized). As the genericized trademark shifts to the center of the word stock it is increasingly seldom recognized and treated as a brand name. After a certain period of time, the original brand name is used as a part of standard vocabulary and only an etymologic dictionary can reveal the truth about the word's origin.

Thus, based on their properties, we can divide proprietary eponyms into three groups:

- Former trademarks which have lost their trademark status. These proprietary eponyms are fully integrated into the vocabulary and are commonly used as normal words.
e.g. *escalator, kerosene, zipper*
- Existing trademarks used generically are registered brand names which are often used as synonyms to refer to a range of similar products, regardless of their manufacturer.
e.g. *Kleenex, Xerox, Post-it notes*
- Legally protected genericized trademarks used only in the United States are names of products marketed only in the US. These names are used generically but they may not be understood by a non-American speaker as the product name is not known outside the US.
e.g. *Q-tip, Jell-O, Band-Aid*

There is also one word formation process which is commonly used in connection with proprietary eponyms. Generic trademark names in English are easily converted into verbs and this practice is most often used with computer and technology related terms, such as *to google* (meaning to use a search engine to obtain information from the Internet), which was officially added to the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* in July 2006 (Ahrens). Further commonly used verbs derived from proprietary eponyms are for example *to photoshop* (often *to be photoshopped*; meaning to digitally alter a photograph) or *to xerox* (to make a photocopy).

4 Vocabulary preference poll

4.1 Premises and questionnaire design

One hundred Czech students of the English language ranging from beginners to advanced were asked to fill out the following questionnaire which was aimed to determine how ESL students of different levels perceive and treat American and British English dialectal synonyms. Higher level ESL students should naturally be able to passively understand most of the synonymous vocabulary. All of the respondents were chosen from students that have been educated in Czech schools using textbooks and other materials that are almost exclusively based on English dialects used in the United Kingdom.

Thus, the results should also show the percentage of vocabulary which is actually learned at school and to what extent is active vocabulary acquired from other sources, such as the Internet, films or literature. Given by the fact that the level of exposure to British English vocabulary in Czech schools is generally higher, it was expected that mainly lower level students would display a general tendency of selecting British English vocabulary. Similarly, advanced ESL students should be more likely to demonstrate a vocabulary preference with higher level of consistency based either on the British or American English word stock.

The vocabulary preference poll was designed from twenty pairs of selected American and British dialectal synonyms, chosen from different lexical fields with respect to their frequency of usage. To avoid possible

ambiguities (especially in case of words that are used in both American and British English but differ in their meaning) a dictionary definition was provided for each pair.

The native Czech ESL students were given a definition of a word and were asked to choose only one word from each pair which they would be more likely to use actively in writing or conversation. The level of respondents ranged from beginner to advanced, including a number of English language students from the KAJL department of the Faculty of Education.

All ESL students were also asked to mark the length of their study in years and to estimate the level of their language competence. For practical reasons, it was decided to use the following traditional typology rather than the more contemporary CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages):

- beginner
- pre-intermediate
- intermediate
- upper-intermediate
- advanced

While the latter is a defined standard which describes each level thoroughly, the majority of students are not acquainted with the guideline. Hence the former classification, which is commonly used by textbooks and requires no further explanation, seemed more suitable for the purposes of this survey.

The two categories, level and length of study, were chosen deliberately since they represent two rather different qualities, as vocabulary learning and vocabulary acquisition are two different processes. Naturally, every student has a different amount of aptitude for vocabulary acquisition. Length of study and achieved level of competence typically correlate, but it is to be expected that some learners are able to achieve a higher level of proficiency in a relatively short time. Nevertheless, the range of acquired vocabulary should be directly proportional to the length of study, regardless of the student's level.

To prevent the respondents from deliberately choosing a particular set of answers, no further explanation of the poll's aim was given prior to the testing. For the same reason the vocabulary list was also shuffled. Yet, the majority of ESL students were able to determine the objective of the experiment quite easily, which suggests there is at least some basic awareness of different dialectal synonyms.

The original form of the questionnaire can be found in the appendix section (see page 42).

4.2 Poll results table

The amassed data was converted into the spreadsheet found on the following two pages. For the reasons of practicality, the following abbreviations were used: Beg (beginner), Pre-Int (pre-intermediate), Int (intermediate), Up-Int (upper-intermediate) and Adv (advanced).

Table 1: Vocabulary preference poll results - part 1

respondent number	years of study	level	sneakers - trainers	pants - trousers	raincoat - mackintosh	candy - sweets	fries - chips	napkin - serviette	bathroom - toilet	cell phone - mobile phone	elevator - lift	battery - accumulator	flashlight - torch	truck - lorry	parking lot - car park	sidewalk - pavement	commercial - advertisement	principal - headmaster	eraser - rubber	grade - mark	mailman - postman	paramedic - ambulance man	vocabulary consistency
1	13	Adv	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	7
2	12	Up-Int	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	7
3	4	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	14
4	14	Adv	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	8
5	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
6	13	Adv	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	8
7	20	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	5
8	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	7
9	13	Adv	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	11
10	8	Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	6
11	8	Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	6
12	13	Adv	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	8
13	10	Up-Int	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	14
14	20	Adv	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
15	7	Int	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	13
16	7	Int	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	13
17	5	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	14
18	12	Adv	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	18
19	8	Up-Int	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	18
20	18	Adv	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	8
21	8	Int	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	9
22	8	Int	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	15
23	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	8
24	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	4
25	13	Adv	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	13
26	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	11
27	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	6
28	10	Up-Int	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	15
29	10	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	10
30	20	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
31	13	Adv	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	11
32	10	Up-Int	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
33	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	5
34	12	Adv	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	17
35	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	5
36	6	Pre-Int	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	14
37	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	5
38	5	Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	3
39	4	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	9
40	10	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	7
41	5	Pre-Int	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	9
42	8	Int	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	16
43	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	10
44	3	Beg	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	7
45	10	Up-Int	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	11

Table 2: Vocabulary preference poll results - part 2

46	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	8
47	4	Pre-Int	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	13
48	4	Pre-Int	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	13
49	10	Adv	US	20																			
50	8	Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	14										
51	3	Beg	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	9
52	13	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	7						
53	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	9
54	6	Pre-Int	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	13	
55	7	Int	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	6
56	11	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	6						
57	10	Up-Int	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	12
58	13	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	7
59	8	Int	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	12
60	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	6						
61	16	Adv	US	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	17											
62	7	Int	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	7
63	10	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	10
64	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	4								
65	6	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	10
66	11	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	7							
67	3	Beg	US	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	10
68	14	Adv	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	10
69	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
70	9	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	10
71	6	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	8
72	12	Up-Int	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	8								
73	12	Up-Int	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	8								
74	8	Int	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	7
75	10	Up-Int	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	12
76	11	Adv	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	3								
77	5	Pre-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	7
78	7	Int	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	9	
79	6	Pre-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	7						
80	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	10
81	12	Up-Int	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	7							
82	10	Up-Int	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	14						
83	12	Up-Int	US	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	9						
84	11	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	9
85	5	Pre-Int	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	16									
86	10	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	9								
87	18	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	4						
88	12	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	6								
89	6	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	11
90	6	Pre-Int	GB	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	11
91	12	Up-Int	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	10
92	12	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	10
93	9	Up-Int	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	US	7
94	15	Adv	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	6
95	8	Int	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	7
96	10	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	8
97	16	Adv	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	GB	7
98	10	Up-Int	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	US	GB	US	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	GB	GB	8
99	10	Up-Int	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	US	GB	US	US	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	9
100	6	Pre-Int	US	GB	US	GB	US	GB	GB	GB	GB	GB	US	US	US	US	US	US	GB	GB	US	GB	9

4.3 Assessment of the amassed data

Each row in the table represents the answers of one respondent as well as their level and length of study. For better orientation in the voluminous table, the answers are marked in different colors. Furthermore, a special category labeled vocabulary consistency was established. The index ranges from 0 to 20, scoring one point for each American English synonym marked as a part of the respondent's active vocabulary.

In other words, 20 points represent consistent American English vocabulary preference and conversely, a British English vocabulary user would score 0 points. Based on this rating, the ESL students were divided into three groups: (1) consistent US vocabulary user (scored seventeen points or more), (2) consistent GB vocabulary user (scored three points or less) and (3) mixed vocabulary user (between four and sixteen points).

A quick glance at the results reveals that the majority of Czech students of the English language fall into the mixed vocabulary group. Out of one hundred respondents only five showed a consistent American English vocabulary selection. As for British English vocabulary preference, as few as two students displayed a consistent result. The average score is 9.42 points which equals to 47.1% of US vocabulary, resulting in a nearly 50:50 word ratio.

Only a single person managed to produce a perfect result scoring the maximum of twenty points, meaning they selected American English vocabulary only. No one

achieved a zero point result; two students scored the lowest number of three points, demonstrating a fairly consistent British English vocabulary preference.

The least chosen words typically associated with the American word stock were mailman (12%), principal (21%), commercial (31%), eraser (31%), grade (33%) and bathroom (33%).

Because of the expected problem with insufficient vocabulary range, only a limited number of ESL learners who identified themselves as beginners were chosen to take part in the testing. None of the beginner students scored more than ten points in the vocabulary consistency rating, which confirms the fact that these students generally rely on British English vocabulary that can be found in textbooks. However, as the skill level and length of study increase, the vocabulary consistency of Czech ESL learners becomes very much less predictable.

It was expected that especially advanced students would demonstrate a rather consistent vocabulary preference of either dialect. As stated previously, only a small fraction of the respondents managed to achieve a rating of more than sixteen or less than four points. From the respondents who chose to label themselves as advanced, only five managed to achieve such number; the highest and lowest scores are highlighted in the vocabulary consistency column.

Regardless of proficiency level, no respondent scored zero points in the test. The lowest score of three points was achieved by two students: advanced (ten years

of study) and intermediate, with a relatively short five year study experience.

Only one student, who declared himself or herself as advanced with ten years of study experience, scored the maximum of twenty, thus showing a clear American English vocabulary preference. The second highest score of eighteen points was achieved by two respondents, who chose to identify themselves as advanced (12 years of study) and upper-intermediate (8 years of study), respectively; followed by two advanced students (12 and 16 years of study)

4.4 Experiment results and conclusions

Despite having demonstrated the competence of understanding different regional synonyms, as for active usage, 93% of the examined ESL students showed rather inconsistent vocabulary preference with words mixed from both British and American English dialects. Only a very small number of respondents displayed a more or less clearly defined active vocabulary preference. It has been demonstrated that students learn their vocabulary not only from textbooks provided in schools but also from other secondary sources, e.g. the very much Americanized popular media, which allow them to acquire a range of different vocabulary from both different regional dialects.

Vocabulary acquisition, which is a process different from guided studying, is clearly an undeniable source of students' knowledge and even though ESL learners may generally choose active vocabulary from

different regional dialects, they retain the ability to understand synonymous expressions. That is perhaps the essence of ESL or Global English which constitutes itself as a global dialect which cannot be associated with a particular region or social class and is clearly constructed from various contemporary regional dialects of the English language.

5 Thematic dictionary of dialectal synonyms

The set of tables included in the Appendix section represents a mini-dictionary of 224 commonly used American and British dialectal synonyms (page 46). These vocabulary lists were also used as a basis for the designing of the Vocabulary Preference Poll (page 28).

The vocabulary is divided into seven different categories: (1) clothing, (2) food and items connected with eating, (3) household items, (4) names of jobs and other vocabulary used to label people, (5) names of shops and vocabulary related to services, (6) wide range of vocabulary related to automobiles and traffic in general and (7) miscellaneous.

The lists are ordered alphabetically; and the tables further contain etymological information about the origin of each word as well as the approximate time period or decade when its usage was first recorded. There are also notes which comment on the words' meaning and formation. Specific attention was paid to the pairs of words which are used in both dialects but have a different meaning.

Even though the lists are by no means complete, the included vocabulary range of more than one hundred and twenty pairs of synonyms is wide and the mini-dictionary is suitable for use as a supplementary material for vocabulary teaching. Especially upper-intermediate and advanced students may find it useful for further improvement of the range of their vocabulary knowledge.

6 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to examine how American and British English have developed lexically since the beginning of the colonization of the American continent. American English has taken a path that was significantly affected by a set of unique social and cultural phenomena, which allowed the dialect to become in many respects different from the one spoken on the British Isles. Shaped by multi-cultural and multi-ethnic influences, American English went through a period of separate social and cultural development, which clearly demonstrates how different national identities can be reflected in the language itself.

Special attention was given to lexical differences between American and British English in a number of selected lexical fields. By comparing word formation processes and etymological data relating to the regional synonyms it can be concluded that American English displays the following unique tendencies in vocabulary formation: reducing of complex concepts (exhibited mainly by the use of easily deducible, transparent compounds), inventiveness and innovation (see page 15) and the frequent use of proprietary eponyms.

Nonetheless, regardless of the ample linguistic differences between American and British English, it can be safely assumed that the gap between the two has in fact become smaller, mainly due to the possibility of fast information exchange between the two continents.

The practical part attempted to examine how different Czech students of the English language perceive the synonymous regional expressions and more importantly to what extent the American words, which were previously analyzed in the theoretical part, can be found in their active vocabulary.

It was originally assumed that respondents with higher level of knowledge (and correspondingly wider vocabulary range) would consistently choose vocabulary from one of the two national variants of English. However, only a small fraction of the respondents demonstrated a consistent vocabulary preference from either of the dialects.

Even though the students' vocabulary preference has proven practically unpredictable, the final average 50:50 ratio showed that a significant part of the learner's active vocabulary is acquired passively. This is further supported by the fact that British English is generally the only English variant taught in Czech schools.

Additionally, the thematic mini-dictionary of dialectal synonyms included in the Appendix section was used as a basis for both parts of this thesis and was subsequently systematized for eventual practical use as a means of vocabulary teaching.

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9 Appendix

9.1 Vocabulary preference questionnaire

1) Please mark the length of your ESL (English as a second language) study in years.

2) How would you describe the level of your English knowledge? The last textbook you have used may help you easily identify the level of your skills. Choose one of the following:

- beginner
- pre-intermediate
- intermediate
- upper-intermediate
- advanced

3) Read the following twenty word definitions and choose which of the provided synonyms you would be more likely to use actively, i.e. in written or spoken form. Choose only one word from each pair.

1. Soft shoes with a rubber sole worn for sports or casual occasions.

- a) sneakers
- b) trainers

2. An outer garment covering the body from the waist to the ankles, with a separate part for each leg.

- a) trousers
- b) pants

3. A long coat made from waterproofed or water-resistant fabric.

a) raincoat

b) mackintosh

4. Sweet food made with sugar or syrup combined with fruit, chocolate, or nuts.

a) candy

b) sweets

5. Potatoes cut into strips and deep-fried.

a) fries

b) chips

6. A square piece of cloth or paper used at a meal to wipe the fingers or lips and to protect garments, or to serve food on.

a) serviette

b) napkin

7. A room containing a toilet bowl.

a) bathroom

b) toilet

8. A telephone that can be used over a wide area, without a physical connection to a network.

a) mobile phone

b) cell phone

9. A platform or compartment housed in a shaft for raising and lowering people or things to different floors or levels.

a) elevator

b) lift

10. A container consisting of one or more cells, in which chemical energy is converted into electricity and used as a source of power.
 - a) battery
 - b) accumulator
11. A battery-operated portable light.
 - a) torch
 - b) flashlight
12. A large, heavy motor vehicle, used for transporting goods, materials, or troops.
 - a) truck
 - b) lorry
13. An area where cars or other vehicles may be left temporarily.
 - a) car park
 - b) parking lot
14. A paved path for pedestrians at the side of a road.
 - a) pavement
 - b) sidewalk
15. A notice or announcement in a public medium promoting a product, service, or event.
 - a) advertisement
 - b) commercial
16. The head of a school, college, or other educational institution.
 - a) principal

b) headmaster

17. An object used to rub out something written.

a) rubber

b) eraser

18. An assessment indicating the quality of a student's work

a) grade

b) mark

19. A person who is employed to deliver and collect letters and parcels.

a) postman

b) mailman

20. A person who is trained to do medical work, esp. emergency first aid, but is not usually a fully qualified physician.

a) paramedic

b) ambulance man

9.2 Thematic mini-dictionary

Table 3: Clothing related vocabulary - part 1

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
bathrobe	French	end of 19 th cent.	dressing gown	French	1770s
<i>compound word, pattern is similar to "raincoat, worn before or after bath</i>			<i>compound word, the meaning is not restricted to before/after bath</i>		
bobby pin	English	1930s	hair grip	Germanic	1920s
<i>sprung hairpin; originated from "bob", bobby pins were originally used with bobbed hair</i>			<i>compound word, denoting a clip used to fix hair in a desired shape</i>		
diaper	French	late 16 th cent.	nappy	French	early 20 th cent.
<i>underpants for babies made of absorbent material, continuously used since 1837</i>			<i>abbreviation of "napkin"</i>		
jumper (dress)	uncertain origin	1930-40s	pinafore dress	Germanic	late 18 th cent.
<i>sleeveless dress worn over a blouse, in BrE the word has a different meaning</i>			<i>derived from "pin" as it was originally attached by pins in the front</i>		
Laundromat	genericized trademark	1940s	launderette	French	1940s
<i>self-service laundry facility; the word was created by G.E. Pendray for Westinghouse Electric, a US company</i>			<i>alternatively spelled as "laundrette"</i>		
nylons	invented word	1930s	stockings	Germanic	late 16 th cent.
<i>stockings or hose made of nylon; the word itself was invented on the pattern of cotton and rayon</i>			<i>women's garment, made of nylon or silk, that covers one leg from the foot to the thigh</i>		
overalls	Germanic	1790s	dungarees	Hindi	1860s
<i>one-piece garment used as protective clothing; compound word meaning it is worn over the whole body</i>			<i>overalls, originally meaning "trousers made of dungaree", named after a part of the city of Bombay</i>		
pants	French	mid 19 th cent.	trousers	uncertain origin	early 17 th cent.
<i>shortening of "pantaloons"; semantic shift - the word has a different meaning in BrE</i>			<i>formed probably from Irish and Scottish Gaelic, on the pattern of drawers</i>		
purse	Latin	early 17 th cent.	handbag	English	1860s
<i>originally a small bag made for carrying coins, from 1955 in AmE used as woman's handbag</i>			<i>a woman's purse, compound of "hand" and "bag", a bag that is carried in one's hand</i>		
raincoat	Old and Middle English	1830s	Macintosh	English	early 19 th cent.
<i>compound word, the pattern is similar to "rubber boots", garment used as a means of protection from rain</i>			<i>also spelled "mackintosh", named after Charles Macintosh, a Scottish inventor</i>		
rubber boots	English	early 19 th cent.	Wellington boots	English	early 19 th cent.
<i>compound word meaning waterproof boots, the BrE term is commonly not used</i>			<i>named after the 1st Duke of Wellington</i>		
shoestring	Germanic	1610s	shoelace	French	1640s
<i>compound of "shoe" and "string", a string that is used to tie shoes</i>			<i>compound word, similar to its AmE counterpart; "string" retains the meaning of "cord for tying"</i>		

Table 4: Clothing related vocabulary - part 2

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
sneakers	English	end of 19 th cent.	trainers	English	20 th cent.
<i>rubber-soled shoe which was basically noiseless, hence the name</i>			<i>derived from "training shoes", originated as a genericized trademark of the UK based company Gola</i>		
Speedos	genericized trademark	1920-30s	swim briefs	French	1930s
<i>bathing suit; used both in sg and pl; genericized trademark of the Australian Speedo company</i>			<i>compound word denoting close-fitting underpants designed for swimming, derived from "brief"</i>		
spike heels	Germanic	1920s	stilettos	Italian	1950s
<i>compound word; a very high tapering heel which resembles a spike</i>			<i>originally a dagger with a tapering blade, later used figuratively for woman's high heel shoes</i>		
suspenders	French	mid 19 th cent.	braces	Middle English	mid 19 th cent.
<i>suffixation of "suspend", straps word over the shoulders to hold up pants; in BrE the word means "garter belt"</i>			<i>the word suggests an opposite concept than the AmE term, bracing instead of suspending</i>		
sweater	Old English	mid 19 th cent.	jumper	uncertain origin	1850s
<i>suffixation of "sweat", the item was originally worn when doing exercise to make a person sweat</i>			<i>a sweater, apparently formed from the 17th century word meaning "short coat"</i>		
turtleneck	French	1890s	polo neck	Balti	1940s
<i>high close-fitting collar, typically on a sweater; compound word</i>			<i>compound alternatively spelled with a hyphen; originally worn by polo players</i>		
underpants	French	mid 19 th cent.	pants	French	mid 19 th cent.
<i>prefixation of "pants", restricts the meaning of the original word to undergarments only</i>			<i>in BrE used solely to refer to undergarments</i>		
undershirt	Germanic	mid 17 th cent.	vest	French	early 17 th cent.
<i>similar pattern as "underpants", used to refer to undergarments without sleeves</i>			<i>in BrE used solely to refer to undergarments</i>		
vest	French	early 17 th cent.	waistcoat	French	1510s
<i>used in AmE to refer to a piece of clothing with buttons, worn as part of a suit; different meaning in BrE</i>			<i>compound of "waist" and "coat", originally a historical garment, the meaning was later shifted</i>		

Table 5: Food related vocabulary - part 1

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
appetizer	French	1860s	starter	Germanic	early 18 th cent.
<i>small food or drink taken before the main course; derived from "to appetize", meaning "make hungry"</i>			<i>in BrE the first course of a meal</i>		
bun	obscure origin	14 th cent.	bap	unknown origin	1570s
<i>a sweet or plain small bread or a bread roll, typically sweetened</i>			<i>BrE term denoting a small bun or roll</i>		
candy	French	15 th cent.	sweets	Germanic	14 th cent.
<i>sweet food made with sugar or syrup combined with fruit or chocolate; originally meaning "crystallized sugar"</i>			<i>confectionery, soft and hard candy; deadjectival noun used in plural</i>		
chips	English	1850s	crisps	Latin	1920s
<i>fried, baked or dried potato slices, typically eaten as a snack</i>			<i>BrE term for chips, however the sense is much wider, used not only for potato chips but also corn chips etc.</i>		
cookie	Dutch	early 18 th cent.	biscuit	French	early 19 th cent.
<i>a small sweet cake, typically round, flat, and crisp; meaning "little cake"</i>			<i>a cookie or cracker; literally meaning "twice cooked"</i>		
cotton candy	French	1920s	candy floss	French	1900s
<i>a mass of fluffy spun sugar, typically wrapped around a stick; compound noun, suggests the fabric-like quality</i>			<i>derived from the original name of the product "Fairy Floss"</i>		
cupcake	Germanic	1820s	fairy cake	Germanic	early 19 th cent.
<i>a small cake baked in a cup-shaped container and typically iced; compound word</i>			<i>the name perhaps refers to its small size, i.e. a cake for tiny fairies</i>		
dessert	French	mid 16 th cent.	afters	Germanic	1900s
<i>sweet course eaten at the end of a meal</i>			<i>deadverbial plural noun; refers to what is eaten after the main course</i>		
eggplant	Latin	1760s	aubergine	French	1790s
<i>dark purple egg-shaped fruit, eaten as a vegetable; compound word referring to its shape</i>			<i>BrE term for eggplant</i>		
French fries	French	early 20 th cent.	chips	English	1870s
<i>deep-fried potato strips, often referred to only as "fries"; "French fried" is synonymous to "deep fried" in the US</i>			<i>BrE term for French fries; typically fish-and-chips, popular take-away food in the UK</i>		
French toast	French	1660s	eggy bread	English	1870s
<i>bread coated in egg and milk and fried; despite the name the meal did not originate in France</i>			<i>instead of the supposed country of origin, the term refers rather to the ingredients used</i>		
hard candy	French	1870s	boiled sweet	Germanic	19 th cent.
<i>a type of candy made to dissolve slowly in the mouth; compound word</i>			<i>BrE term for hard candy, describes the process of making such candy (i.e. boiling without crystallizing)</i>		

Table 6: Food related vocabulary - part 2

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
liquor	French	14 th cent.	alcohol	French	1670s
<i>a distilled drink (e.g. brandy or whiskey), usually distinguished from a fermented one</i>			<i>fermented or distilled liquors, the noun refers to the intoxicating agent (also a chemical substance)</i>		
popsicle	genericized trademark	1920s	ice lolly	English	1920s
<i>flavored ice on a stick; originally a trademark name; presumably a blend of "lollypop" and "icicle"</i>			<i>compound word, meaning is very similar to the AmE term, "lolly" is a shortened form of "lollipop"</i>		
powdered sugar	French	unknown	icing sugar	French	unknown
<i>very fine sugar; the term refers to the texture of the product</i>			<i>compound noun; the BrE term refers to the intended use for icing, frosting or cake decorations</i>		
zucchini	Italian	1920s	courgette	French	1930s
<i>a fleshy, typically large fruit with a hard skin; literally "small gourd"</i>			<i>diminutive of "courage" gourd</i>		

Table 7: Household related vocabulary - part 1

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
antenna	Latin	1900s	aerial	Latin	1900s
<i>a device used to transmit or receive radio or television signals; originally meaning "feeler or horn of an insect"</i>			<i>synonymous term; short for "aerial antenna"; the noun suggests that waves are received from the air</i>		
apartment	French	1870s	flat	Germanic	1800s
<i>a suite of rooms forming one residence, typically in a building</i>			<i>synonymous term used in the UK, derived from a word meaning "floor or story of a house"</i>		
baby carriage	French	1860s	perambulator	Latin	1850s
<i>compound noun; a four-wheeled carriage for a baby, pushed by a person on foot</i>			<i>derived from a Latin word meaning "to walk around"; it is often shortened to "pram"</i>		
backyard	English	1650s	garden	French	14 th cent.
<i>compound noun; a piece of ground behind a house or other building</i>			<i>a piece of ground, often near a house, used for growing flowers, fruit, or vegetables</i>		
bathroom	Germanic	1780s	toilet	French	19 th cent.
<i>compound noun; often used to refer to a room containing a toilet</i>			<i>a room containing a bowl for urinating or defecating into; when used in AmE the noun suggest the bowl itself</i>		
battery	French	1750s	accumulator	Latin	1750s
<i>a container in which chemical energy is converted into electricity and used as a source of power</i>			<i>synonymous term; derived from the verb "to accumulate", i.e. a device for gathering energy</i>		
closet	French	1610s	wardrobe	French	14 th cent.
<i>a small room used for storing items, especially one's clothing</i>			<i>a piece of furniture used for storing clothes, also a person's stock of clothes</i>		
drapes	French	1890s	curtains	French	14 th cent.
<i>piece of cloth hung on the inside of a window used to block sunlight; derived from the verb "to drape"</i>			<i>synonymous term, but also has a broader meaning (e.g. stage curtain)</i>		
elevator	Latin	1780s	lift	Germanic	1850s
<i>a cage or platform housed used for transporting people or things to different levels; derived from "to raise"</i>			<i>synonymous term; derived from a verb of similar meaning but different origin</i>		
faucet	French	1850s	tap	Germanic	12 th cent.
<i>a device by which a flow of liquid or gas from a pipe or container can be controlled</i>			<i>synonymous to "faucet"; in AmE used mainly to refer to a beer tap</i>		
flashlight	English	1910s	torch	French	early 20 th cent.
<i>compound noun; a battery-operated portable light</i>			<i>synonymous term; when used in AmE the noun refers to a burning torch</i>		
Kleenex	genericized trademark	1930s	paper tissue	French	1920s
<i>trademark of Kimberly-Clark Corp., used as a synonym for range of paper-based products, esp. tissues</i>			<i>compound noun; a disposable piece of absorbent paper, used esp. as a handkerchief or for cleaning the skin</i>		

Table 8: Household related vocabulary - part 2

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
napkin	French	14 th cent.	serviette	French	1810s
<i>a square piece of cloth or paper used at a meal to wipe the fingers or lips</i>			<i>a table napkin; the AmE word "napkin" is sometimes used to refer to a diaper or handkerchief in the UK</i>		
sofa	French	1710s	couch	French	1350s
<i>a long upholstered seat with a back and arms, for two or more people; ultimately derived from Arabic</i>			<i>synonymous term, also a reclining seat with a headrest at one end</i>		
stove	Germanic	1610s	cooker	English	1880s
<i>a kitchen apparatus for cooking or heating; originally meaning "heated room"</i>			<i>noun derived from the verb "to cook" by suffixation; an appliance used for cooking</i>		
stroller	German	1920s	push chair	French	1920s
<i>a folding chair on wheels in which a child can be pushed along; formed as an agent noun from "stroll"</i>			<i>synonymous compound noun; suggests the notion of a forward movement</i>		
vacuum cleaner	English	1900s	Hoover	genericized trademark	early 20 th cent.
<i>an electrical apparatus that uses suction to collect dust; compound noun</i>			<i>the name of the American Hoover company became synonymous with the vacuum cleaner</i>		
wrench	English	1790s	spanner	German	1790s
<i>a tool with jaws used for gripping and turning nuts, bolts, pipes, etc.</i>			<i>synonymous term used in the UK, derived from a word meaning "draw tight"</i>		

Table 9: Vocabulary used for naming people - part 1

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
attorney	French	14 th cent.	solicitor	French	1570s
<i>a lawyer; the sense is "one appointed to represent another's interests"</i>			<i>specific class of legal practitioners in the UK</i>		
buddy	English	1840s	mate	Germanic	late 14 th cent.
<i>a close friend; the term is an Americanism, perhaps an alteration of "brother"</i>			<i>a friend or companion, also used as a friendly form of address between men or boys</i>		
conductor	French	1830s	guard	French	19 th cent.
<i>a person in charge of a train, streetcar, or other public conveyance, who collects fares and sells tickets</i>			<i>an official who rides on and is in general charge of a train</i>		
cop	English	1850s	policeman	English	1790s
<i>abbreviation of "copper" which has the same meaning, i.e. "police officer"</i>			<i>compound noun that follows the "job+man" pattern</i>		
crossing guard	French	1920s	lollipop man	English	20 th cent.
<i>a person who assists pedestrians, esp. schoolchildren, to cross intersections safely</i>			<i>"-man" compound; "lollipop" is perhaps a reference to the large stop signs which the officers carry</i>		
flight attendant	French	1950s	air hostess	French	1950s
<i>an airline employee who attends to passenger's comfort during commercial flights; gender neutral</i>			<i>"air host" or "steward" is also frequently used to avoid gender related issues</i>		
garbage man	Anglo-French	1880s	dustman	English	1700s
<i>"-man" compound; "garbage" has a wider meaning of wasted or spoiled food or any items considered worthless</i>			<i>"-man" compound; "dust" suggests dirt or ashes</i>		
guys (pl)	English	1800s	people	Anglo-French	late 13 th cent.
<i>in plural frequently used to address (a group of) people of either sex; presumably after Guy Fawkes</i>			<i>unlike the AmE synonym, the word doesn't have a similar informal connotation</i>		
janitor	Latin	17 th cent.	caretaker	English	19 th cent.
<i>a person employed as a caretaker of a building; derived from a word originally meaning "door"</i>			<i>the BrE term refers more specifically to what such person does; compound noun</i>		
mailman	English	1880s	postman	French	1520s
<i>"-man" compound; a postal worker</i>			<i>"-man" compound; the word "post" is of French origin</i>		
paramedic	French	1970s	ambulance man	French	1830s
<i>a person trained to do medical work, usually not a fully qualified physician; back-formation of "paramedical"</i>			<i>"-man" compound; emergency services employee, the meaning is restricted to pre-hospital care</i>		
principal	French	late 14 th cent.	headmaster	English	1570s
<i>the head of a school, college, or other educational institution</i>			<i>compound of "head" and "master"; also used in AmE but more commonly associated with private schools</i>		

Table 10: Vocabulary used for naming people - part 2

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
salesperson	French	1920s	shop assistant	French	1890s
<i>compound noun suggesting the notion of selling rather than assisting; used as gender neutral</i>			<i>compound noun; a person in charge of assisting customers in a retail store</i>		
substitute teacher	English	unknown	supply teacher	English	unknown
<i>a person who teaches in school in case the regular teacher is unavailable</i>			<i>synonymous term, it suggests a person acting as a temporary substitute for another</i>		
teller	Germanic	late 15 th cent.	cashier	French	1570s
<i>a person employed to deal with customers' transactions in a bank; from "tell" meaning "to count"</i>			<i>the meaning is not restricted only to a person working in a bank but also in other businesses</i>		
Valley girl	English	1980s	Essex girl	English	1980s
<i>self-centered, materialistic woman with a distinct style of speech; named after San Fernando Valley in California</i>			<i>similar concept based on stereotypes, although it rather connotes ditziness and promiscuity</i>		

Table 11: Shopping related vocabulary

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
check	French	late 19 th cent.	bill	Anglo-Latin	1400s
<i>the bill in a restaurant or a slip indicating the amount due</i>			<i>printed statement of charges for goods or services</i>		
coffeehouse	Germanic	19 th cent.	café	French	1800s
<i>compound noun; "café" is used to refer to an informal restaurant which offers a range of meals</i>			<i>an establishment which serves coffee and other beverages</i>		
commercial	French	1930s	advertisement	French	18 th cent.
<i>a television or radio advertisement; deadjectival noun originally meaning "done for the sake of profit"</i>			<i>originally meaning "a written statement calling attention to" or later "public notice"</i>		
doctor's office	French	unknown	surgery	French	unknown
<i>compound noun; a room where a physician treats patients</i>			<i>synonymous to doctor's office; however, in AmE "surgery" is used only to refer to a treatment of injury</i>		
drug store	French	1810s	chemist	French	1740s
<i>a pharmacy that typically also sells cosmetics, candy or magazines; compound noun</i>			<i>an establishment that sells medicines; ultimately derived from "alchemist"</i>		
hardware store	French	unknown	ironmonger	Germanic	14 th cent.
<i>another + "store" compound; a retailer that sells household tools, utensils and other house wares</i>			<i>a person or store selling hardware such as tools and household implement; also known as DIY centre</i>		
liquor store	French	unknown	off-license	French	unknown
<i>a retailer that sells bottled alcoholic drinks, especially distilled spirits; "liquor" is synonymous to "alcohol"</i>			<i>the name refers to the fact that the purchased alcohol must be consumed off the store premises</i>		
newsstand	English	1860s	newsagent	Latin	1850s
<i>a stand or stall for the sale of newspapers; the compound noun suggests an outdoor stall or booth</i>			<i>usually a shop selling newspapers and other periodicals, the compound suggests a person rather than a kiosk</i>		
slaughterhouse	Germanic	14 th cent.	abattoir	French	early 19 th cent.
<i>compound noun; an establishment where animals are butchered</i>			<i>a slaughterhouse for cows, derived from the French word "abattre" meaning "to beat down"</i>		
store	French	1720s	shop	English	14 th cent.
<i>a place where goods are kept for sale, a retail store</i>			<i>a building or part of a building where goods or services are sold</i>		
take-out	English	1910s	take-away	British	1960s
<i>food that is sold by a restaurant but packaged to be eaten elsewhere; deverbal noun, often spelled as one word</i>			<i>deverbal noun, unlike its AmE counterpart it may suggest eating away from the restaurant, not out in the public</i>		

Table 12: Traffic related vocabulary - part 1

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
backup light	English	20 th cent.	reversing lamp	French	20 th cent.
<i>compound; a light at the rear of a vehicle that comes on when the vehicle is in reverse gear</i>			<i>synonymous compound noun, uses a different head with similar meaning</i>		
crosswalk	English	1670s	pedestrian crossing	English	1790s
<i>compound noun; a marked part of a road where pedestrians have right of way to cross</i>			<i>synonymous term; a crossing designed for pedestrians</i>		
dead end	English	1880s	cul-de-sac	French	1800s
<i>compound word; an end of a road from which no exit is possible</i>			<i>a street or passage closed at one end; literally "bottom of a sack"</i>		
detour	French	1730s	diversion	Latin	17 th cent.
<i>an alternative route for use by traffic when the usual road is temporarily closed</i>			<i>synonymous term; it suggests the notion of diverting traffic from its original course</i>		
freeway	English	1930s	motorway	English	1900s
<i>compound noun; a toll-free express highway</i>			<i>compound noun; a highway designed for fast traffic, with controlled entrance and exit</i>		
gas	Dutch	1900s	petrol	French	1890s
<i>short for gasoline, a flammable liquid used for powering engines</i>			<i>synonymous term; ultimately derived from "petroleum"</i>		
gearshift	English	1920s	gear lever	French	1860s
<i>compound noun; a device used to engage or disengage gears in a transmission or similar mechanism</i>			<i>synonymous compound; derived from the construction of the device (the AmE term rather suggests its function)</i>		
hood	English	19 th cent.	bonnet	French	19 th cent.
<i>a metal part covering the engine of an automobile; resembling a hood in shape or use</i>			<i>synonymous term; originally a kind of hat; similar notion of covering something</i>		
overpass	French	1920s	fly-over	English	1900s
<i>a bridge by which a road or railroad passes over another</i>			<i>synonymous term, the compound is formed differently but the suggested notion is very similar</i>		
parking lot	English	1920s	car park	French	1920s
<i>compound noun; an area where cars may be left temporarily, the notion also incorporates other vehicles</i>			<i>a parking lot for cars, it can also refer to a parking garage</i>		
sidewalk	English	1730s	pavement	French	14 th cent.
<i>compound noun; a paved path alongside the road designed for pedestrians</i>			<i>synonymous term; when used in AmE it suggests any kind of paved area or surface</i>		
speed bump	Scandinavian	1970s	sleeping policeman	English	1970s
<i>a ridge set in a road surface to control the speed of vehicles</i>			<i>synonymous term; the bump works as a substitution of a police officer</i>		

Table 13: Traffic related vocabulary - part 2

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
subway	English (Latin prefix)	1890s	underground	English (Germanic prefix)	1880s
<i>an underground electric railroad; in BrE it refers to a tunnel under a road for use by pedestrians</i>			<i>shortened from phrase "underground railway"</i>		
tailpipe	English	1920s	exhaust pipe	English	20 th cent.
<i>compound noun; the rear section of the exhaust system of a motor vehicle</i>			<i>synonymous compound, uses the same head; suggests the notion of expelling gas</i>		
traffic circle	French	1940s	roundabout	English	1920s
<i>compound; a road junction at which traffic moves in one direction around a central island</i>			<i>similar to a traffic circle but usually smaller and with different rules of operation</i>		
traffic jam	unknown origin, probably symbolic	1910s	tailback	English	1930s
<i>road traffic at or near a standstill caused by an accident, heavy congestion or roadworks</i>			<i>compound noun used synonymously; in AmE it is used as a term for player position in American football</i>		
trailer	French	1890s	caravan	French	19 th cent.
<i>an unpowered vehicle equipped for living in, typically used during vacations; the noun also has a wider meaning</i>			<i>synonymous; often a rough equivalent to "mobile home"; ultimately derived from Persian</i>		
truck	English	1930s	lorry	English	1910s
<i>originally meaning "small wheel" but later extended to a motor vehicle for carrying heavy loads</i>			<i>synonymous term; derived probably from the verb "lurry" (to pull, tug)</i>		
trunk	French	1930s	boot	Old Norse	18 th cent.
<i>the space at the back of a car for carrying luggage and other goods</i>			<i>synonymous term; originally a built-in compartment on a horse-drawn carriage</i>		
windshield	English	1900s	windscreen	Germanic	1900s
<i>compound noun; a window at the front of a motor vehicle; suggests a notion of protecting from wind</i>			<i>similarly formed compound; "screen" is synonymous to "shield"; same notion of sheltering</i>		

Table 14: Miscellaneous vocabulary

American	origin	year	British	origin	year
cell phone	French	1980s	mobile phone	French	1980s
<i>short for cellular telephone; one cell is an area covered by a single radio tower</i>			<i>synonymous term; emphasizes the portability of such device</i>		
eraser	Latin	1790s	rubber	Germanic	late 18 th cent.
<i>a piece of soft rubber or plastic used to rub out something written; deverbal noun</i>			<i>eraser of pencil or ink marks; refers to the material such thing is made of; originally a deverbal noun "rub+er"</i>		
elementary school	Germanic	unknown	primary school	Germanic	unknown
<i>a school that provides the first stage of compulsory education, teaching the elementary skills</i>			<i>synonymous term, the word "primary" suggests that it is the first education phase</i>		
fall	Germanic	1660s	autumn	Latin	14 th cent.
<i>one of the four seasons, transition between summer and winter; probably short for "fall of the leaf"</i>			<i>the word "fall" was commonly used in 17th cent. England but it became obsolete and it is practically not used in contemporary BrE</i>		
grade	Latin	1880s	mark	Germanic	1820s
<i>a mark indicating the quality of a student's work, originally used as a unit of measurement</i>			<i>synonymous term meaning a teacher's estimate of a student's work</i>		
high school	Germanic	unknown	comprehensive school	Germanic	unknown
<i>an institution that provides the whole secondary education up to the twelfth grade</i>			<i>secondary school for children between the age 11 to at least 19; the AmE and BrE terms roughly correspond</i>		
private school	Germanic	unknown	public school	Germanic	unknown
<i>educational institution not funded by the government, often operated by religious institutions</i>			<i>also called "independent schools" in the UK, non-governmental institutions funded mainly by tuition fees</i>		
public school	Germanic	unknown	state school	Germanic	unknown
<i>tax funded educational institution administered by the government; schools open to the public</i>			<i>synonymous term, refers to schools that provide education free of charge</i>		
vacation	French	1870s	holiday	English	16 th cent.
<i>an extended period of recreation, originally meaning "being free from duty"</i>			<i>originally formed as a compound meaning both "religious festival" and "day of recreation"</i>		
Xerox	genericized trademark	1960s	photocopier	French	1940s
<i>brand name of the American Xerox company, became synonymous with photocopier, also used as a verb</i>			<i>compound noun; a machine used for making photocopies; meaning "a photographic reproduction device"</i>		