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**Selected Differences between British and American English for  
Learners**

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**Anotace:**

Tato práce se zabývá problematikou rozdílů mezi britskou a americkou angličtinou ve výuce anglického jazyka. Krátký výzkum znalosti a četnosti užití amerických výrazů u studentů angličtiny ukázal, jak často používají americké výrazy, aniž by si toho sami byli vědomi, naopak však bez systematické výuky mnohdy nejsou schopni význam některých amerických slov odvodit ani z kontextu. Tato neznalost může způsobit nedorozumění či komplikace v budoucím praktickém užití jazyka (například cestování, porozumění anglicky psané literatuře a podobně) nejen u začínajících, ale i pokročilejších studentů. Proto vznikla tato studie, která stručně shrnuje problematiku rozdílů mezi britskou a americkou angličtinou v jednotlivých jazykových oblastech, jako jsou výslovnost, pravopis, gramatika, slovní zásoba a jazykové fráze. Dále nabízí metodické pokyny pro jejich výuku a cvičení sloužící k ucelení znalostí studentů zábavnou formou. Hlavním záměrem studie je tedy inspirovat lektory k práci s americkou angličtinou a motivovat žáky ke studiu jazyka jako celku, tedy světového jazyka, avšak zároveň také zajistit jeho správné užití pro danou oblast.

**Klíčová slova:** vocabulary, regional dialect, synonyms, vocabulary teaching, authentic text

**Abstract:**

The thesis focuses on the differences between British and American English in teaching. A brief research among students of English was carried out, examining their actual knowledge and frequency of the use of American vocabulary. The research project has proved that students frequently use American expressions while using British English. On the other hand, they are often not able to even deduce the meaning of some common American words from context. This lack of knowledge can cause misunderstanding or complication in future use of English (for example by travelling, reading English books, articles etc.) not only at the beginner but intermediate or advanced level, too. This is the reason why this study has originated. It briefly covers the differences between British and American English in individual language areas such as pronunciation, spelling, grammar, vocabulary and word phrases. Further the thesis offers methodical instructions for their teaching and exercises establishing students' knowledge in an amusing way. The main aim of the study is to suggest teachers to work with American English and motivate students to study English as a whole, world language. However, it is important to use the appropriate variant for each locality where spoken.

**Key words:** vocabulary, regional dialect, synonyms, vocabulary teaching, authentic text

## **Statutory declaration**

Hereby I assure that I wrote independently this present bachelor thesis and did not use any different than the indicated sources and aids.

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## **Introduction**

### Two Faces of the English language

George Bernard Shaw said that the United States and the United Kingdom were “two countries divided by a common language” (Stade 309). Likewise, Oscar Wilde in his *Canterville Ghost* wrote with the hint of irony: “We have really everything in common with America nowadays, except, of course, the language” (Wilde 4). Henry Sweet, English philologist, phonetician and grammarian even predicted in 1877, luckily falsely, that within a century, American English, Australian English and British English would be mutually unintelligible.

The written and spoken form of American English is still having a greater influence on standard British English. The progress of American English is quite logical. American economical, political and cultural influences enable the language to expand all around the world. Simultaneously American English displays a tendency to simplify grammar (for example the use of past instead of perfect tense) and spelling (neighbour X neighbor). As we can see, the initial position of American English is much more promising. However, the British English still has its standard taught at school and it is used in language books, business correspondence, at meetings and in all branches of science where English language is used as means of communication. This is the reason why British English seems to still be considered the more prestigious one.

The idea of consistent teaching of the basic differences between British and American English will be introduced in this thesis. This paper is based on two short research projects which show the need to inform students about the American expressions and the basic differences in grammar, pronunciation and spelling. It should help them to avoid making mistakes and misunderstanding in later use of English. The influence of American English is growing especially due to globalization and development of modern technologies, so it is necessary to adjust language teaching, too. Our students have the opportunity to practice their English knowledge in a practical and amusing way while reading online articles, listening to music and watching films in English. However, all of these are mostly of American origin. It is much better when the teacher awakes interest in their students rather than prejudices against

American English. It is useless to warn against the use of American expressions, considering them incorrect and better to be forgotten. It is not possible to avoid American English nowadays, so we (and our students) should be able to use it correctly, differentiate it from British English and what more, enjoy it as one of the language peculiarities.

This issue is not sufficiently covered in many textbooks. The differences are only marginally mentioned or even not mentioned at all (for example in the series of English Project<sup>1</sup> or New Headway<sup>2</sup> which are still frequently used at schools). This is the reason why this issue will be introduced in this thesis in a well arranged and enjoyable way. This will be done both for the students' and teachers' benefits. The main advantages for students can be seen in the enrichment of vocabulary, comprehension of the language development and enhancement in their cultural education. Further, the passive use of American expressions and their understanding is connected with the ability to avoid mistakes in the use of British English.

The list of differences between two English variants is much longer than that we are going to introduce. However, this can be seen as another advantage, since the topic can become an inspiration for students' own research and projects. They can look for the differences in lyrics of the songs, internet articles and films. To sum it up, the main purpose of this thesis' practical part is to support students' motivation and interest in the language. The main benefit for teachers is offering a tool to enrich their teaching materials and methods by the summary of the basic rules, examples of the issue, new materials, ideas and inspiration for teaching. Those are applicable not only to practice one problem but can be adjusted and used in other English topics, too.

The thesis is structured into six chapters whose contents can be outlined as follows. The first chapter includes two theoretical parts. In the subchapter 1.1 (p.6) readers will be introduced to the development of American English and it will be explained how those differences arose. The reflection of historical development and the following trend in English in general will be provided. The second subchapter (p.7) will account for the reason of teaching American and British Differences already at the beginning or intermediate level. In chapter 2 (p.8) the main differences between British and American English in the areas of spelling, pronunciation, grammar, syntax and vocabulary will be listed and explained.

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<sup>1</sup> Hutchinson, Tom. *English Project*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Soars, Liz and John. *New Headway*, Oxford: : Oxford University Press, 2009.

Subsequently the methodology of teaching British and American differences will be introduced in chapter 3 (p.17). Its subchapter 3.1 (p.17) will deal with the different approaches towards British and American differences in the textbooks. Subchapter 3.2 (p.17) deals with class management. This theoretical part is followed by actual examples of the differences in British and American English literature in chapter 4 (p.19). A suggestion of its use in class is provided, too. In chapter 5 (p.22) the importance of the issue will be demonstrated by two research projects. Two questionnaires were used for research among students of English. Their main aim was to compare their actual knowledge of our topic before and after having been taught. In addition, author-created supporting teaching materials and exercises are to be found in the appendix in chapter 6 (p.31).

# 1 The Influence of American English on Learners

## 1.1

### **To the Development of American English**

In this subchapter a brief survey of American English development will be introduced and the origin of British and American English differences presented.

The main detachment of American English from British English started in the first half of the 18th century in the new established colonies in the United States of America. It is closely connected with the effort to achieve the economical and political independence and also to strengthen the cultural and language identity of the new nation. In the 1789 Noah Webster was the first to mention that “American English is so different from the English of the British Islands that it is justified to name it American language” (Viereck 151). In 1828 the first large American dictionary, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, was written by him. Webster was a strong proponent of spelling reform and there are many words which were given a new different spelling form in his dictionary. American English has become widespread spoken and that is why English in general is now the main international language for communication, political dealing and science. In spite of the long effort to create a new, simple and easily accessible artificial language (for example Esperanto), English has adopted this function in a quite natural way. In simple terms, English has replaced in modern society the function of Medieval Latin. Although, this is the main merit of American English, British English is the one which is learnt in state schools, used in translations of literature, business correspondence etc.

There are many different kinds and varieties of English language. It is mostly connected with the cultural and historical development of the different parts of the British Islands and colonies. Examples are Canadian, Irish, Australian, New Zealand and African English. In the United States scholars have mapped at least four major regional variations of spoken English - Northern, Southern, Midland, and Western. Dialects and accents vary among the countries in the United Kingdom - England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and even within these individual countries. However, in this thesis only the most significant and frequent differences between American and British English will be described since they can confuse our students easily.

### **Why Teach the British and American Synonym Words?**

Students mostly like a system and tables because these are easier for them to understand and memorise. This is the reason why our topic should be included in a unit with less tabular grammar. Students can switch their attention between mechanical, in an amusing way learnt vocabulary and more difficult grammar.

Especially the beginners may find learning ordinary synonyms useless. They need only one word to express their ideas and to understand all synonyms the native speaker could use is quite impossible at their level. However, in the British and American differences students can see similarity of the dialects in their country. The fact that people speaking the same language may still not understand each other is one of the most interesting features of every language. In a word, the possibility of misunderstanding makes our topic attractive and worth learning.

The standard British English is taught and used as an international language for communication. However, students can often meet American words in media like the internet and television, films and lyrics of songs. American words and spelling appear very often in crosswords (e.g. the problem with spelling of the word *colour*). That is the reason why our students who know the basic vocabulary should know simultaneously the basic American synonyms. It is important at least because of the strong pressure of American English towards the British. Not only less complicated American grammar but some American vocabulary penetrates through the borders of pure British English, too.

## 2 The Main Differences between British and American English

In the third chapter the main differences in each language area will be introduced and explained. New methods will be offered for its effective and stimulating teaching and learning as well.

### 2.1

#### Pronunciation

By listening to a song or a short piece of conversation among native speakers students sometimes notice that the American pronunciation differs from the British. The teacher can introduce some examples of those differences. The easiest way to get students engaged in the issue is to give practical examples. The teacher can choose some of the examples below and pronounce each word twice – according to the British and American pronunciation. Each time students are asked to guess whether it was an American or a Briton who spoke. The list of the main pronunciation differences and example words:

- British [a:] changes to [æ:] – e.g. *class, pass, half, chance, fast, can't...*
- [o] changes to [ɑ] in the words as : *hot, not, coffee, doctor, dog...*
- [ɑ] to closed [e] in: *courage, hurry...*
- [ei] to [e] in: *hate, gate*
- [eu] to [ou] in: *home*
- [ju:] in some words becomes [u:]: *student, new, due, tune, duty...*
- Some vowels are pronounced longer in American English than in British, for example in: *not, office...*

Quite typical is the American R which is pronounced even in postvocalic position, so it becomes well recognisable, e.g. in: *far, hard, bird, more, sure, butter*

In contrast to British English the [h] sound can be heard in the words like: *wheat, where, white* and unvoiced consonants become voiced in: *water, written, proper*

In conclusion we should point out that some words are pronounced in a different way, for example: *schedule* with [ch] and [k], *either* with [ai] or [i:], *advertisement* [ed've:tisement] and [eadve'taizment] in both British and American English.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Examples used from: Hais 343 – 344

Before introducing the pronunciation of the words given in the appendix 6.1.1 (or as a revision activity after being introduced), we can ask students to try to pronounce the words by themselves. They can see whether they are able to pronounce the word correct without the teacher's help. Otherwise, we can offer two possible pronunciations and let them guess which is the American and which is the British according to the given rules. For this activity students can use the flags to mark the British or American pronunciation. The flags can be found in the appendix 6.1.2. For another exercise for practicing differences in pronunciation see the appendix 6.1.3.

## 2.2

### Spelling

For learners it is easier to learn single words with different spelling in British and American English than to memorise the rules for changes as listed below. However, it can help to attract students' attention if the teacher presents some concrete examples and then he or she lets students find out the rules by themselves. The occasions these differences appear on are as follows:

- British –our becomes American –or : *colour, honour, labour, favourite*
- British –re becomes –er : *centre, theatre, litre*
- British –ence becomes –ense : *defence, offence, licence*
- British –en becomes –in : *enquire, enclose*
- Some double consonants are simplified to only one in American English, e.g. in the words as: *traveller, marvellous, kidnapped, waggon, faggot* and so on.
- British –s becomes –z : *realise, cosy...*
- In some cases the unpronounced letters are left out in American English, for example: *catalogue (catalog), programme (program), prologue (prolog) cheque (check), jewellery (jewelry)*.<sup>4</sup>

As we can see, the American spelling tries to approach the pronunciation or at least to minimize the difference between spelling and pronunciation which is created mostly by the historical development of the language. American spelling is then easier and more convenient for learning.

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<sup>4</sup> Examples used from: Hais 344

To enable students to participate in an active way we can hand out cards from the appendix 6.2.1. and divide the board into two columns, for British and American spelling (to mark the columns we can use the flags from the pronunciation exercise – appendix 6.1.2). Afterwards the students will be asked to write their words in the right column according to the introduced spelling rules.

As an additional exercise there is also a crossword where students are supposed to correctly fill in British English spelling of American words to find a secret. This is to be found in the appendix 6.1.3

## 2.3

### **Grammar and Syntax**

Our students should be aware of some difficulties they could face, because of the differences between British and American grammar. The following is a list of the most problematic areas for the learners.

- In some textbooks for example *Essential Grammar in Use*<sup>5</sup>, *Elementary Language Practice*<sup>6</sup> or other sources of irregular verbs there are sometimes to be found two past or participle forms of a single infinitive. Our students should be informed that in American English there is a tendency towards changing the irregular verbs to regular, for example : *thrive (throve, thriven X thrived)*, *wet (wet, wet X wetted)*, *awake (awoke, awoken X awaked)*, *dream (dreamt, dreamt X dreamed)*, *learn (learnt, learnt X learned)*, *spell (spelt, spelt X spelled)*. However, there is one typical American irregular form different from the British one: *get (got, got X got, gotten)*. However, the British English seems to lean towards convenient usage and has already adopted some regular forms instead of irregular ones (for example the verbs *learn* and *show* are used as regular now).
- In some American texts the use of personal pronouns can take the students by surprise. The pronoun in nominal – *I* appears where they would use *–me*. For example: *between you and I*, or *Peter and I*.
- British English has also adopted the use of the auxiliary verb *to do* with the verb *to have* (in the sense of possession) instead of the earlier form *to have got*. That is why

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<sup>5</sup> Murphy, Reymond.: *Essential Grammar in Use*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Vince, Michael: *Elementary Language Practice*, Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1999.

students can sometimes find two different forms: *Have you got a brother? X Do you have a brother? Has he got a brother? X Does he have a brother? No, he hasn't. X No, he doesn't.*

- In the cases where the British native speaker uses present perfect, the American often applies past simple, e.g.: *We have just seen the film. X We just saw the film.* However, our students should avoid this exception.
- British and American English also sometimes differs in the usage of the definite article: e.g. : in Am.E. *to the hospital*, Br.E. *to hospital*. In other case, Br.E. requires *tell the time*, while Am.E. omits the article - *tell time* and in Am.E. *actress Elizabeth Taylor*, Br.E. *the actress Elizabeth Taylor*. However, these cases are quite rare.
- Another difference lies in the use of prepositions. While in the USA speakers tend to say: “this case is different *from* the previous one,” in the UK they would say: “this case is different *to*”. An American plays *on a team* while a Briton *in a team*, they *talk with* Peter and *to* Peter and they call him *at* his phone number and *on* his phone number in the USA and Great Britain.
- If in English a group becomes a singular noun, for example *the team*, an American uses singular verbs, while a Briton singular or plural – “*the team is*” and “*the team are*”. The same happens in the case of *company, family, government, Spanish (as a nation)* and other.
- Verbal auxiliary *Shall* is more commonly used by the British, while the American would use *will* instead in the first person singular and plural.<sup>7</sup>

Other differences, for example the transitivity of verbs or conditionals, are not so important for English learners. The same occurs in cases where both forms of the word or grammar use are possible, just their frequencies differ. This area is practiced together with the lexical and spelling differences in the text comparison and text editing – the appendix 6.4.

## 2.4

### **Lexical Differences:**

This area is without any doubts the most important and useful for our students to know. To introduce this issue we can mention a real misunderstanding which happened during the time Winston Churchill was the Prime Minister. As he wrote (Churchill, ch.32), the opposite

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<sup>7</sup> The examples were taken over from Wikipedia – American English, Hais 345)

meaning of the verb *to table*, derived from the common noun, created a great problem during a meeting of the Allied forces. In British English this means to *open something up* for discussion, while in American English the same means to *remove something from* discussion. Another common word with quite different meaning in the USA and the UK is *bill* – meaning *invoice* or *receipt*, however, in American English it means besides *paper money*, and in British English a *proposal of a law*.

### **British and American synonyms**

For a topically divided list of the most frequent words which have a different form in British and in American English see the appendix 6.3.1<sup>8</sup>

The presented methods are divided into two groups due to their suitability for the students' ages. Naturally, some games could welcome animations of the lesson for a group of the adults, too. On the other hand, some timid children could prefer individual work and writing based exercises. We might teach individuals as well, which needs a modification of a group activity or some pair-work. All presented activities and exercises are created by the author of this thesis, except of the well-known games which were only altered (e.g. pexeso). These techniques are based on the author's personal experience. Inspiration originated and the ideas were modified while teaching small groups of students of various ages and levels. The activities proved themselves to be applicable in praxis, suitable especially for children and young learners.

*“pexeso”*

The basis lies in the game well-known as pexeso. However, there are not only the pairs of the same pictures, there is also the vocabulary. In one picture there is a British word, in the other an American synonym. These prepared cards (see the appendix 6.3.2) can be used for many different purposes.

a) The first one is obviously the well-known game of pexeso. The contribution of this game is that students see repeatedly the picture together with the English word and they memorise new vocabulary. For that purpose students should be asked to read aloud the word they have just turned. This will attach the hearing memory and the teacher will make sure that the students know the correct pronunciation. That is why it is best to play this game first. If the

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<sup>8</sup> The Examples taken over from Lipus 213, Hais 345-346, Borrow)

students know the vocabulary, we have already played the game more times and the matter has been learnt, we can ask each student not only to read aloud the word under the picture, but to add its British or American synonym, too. Doing this we change the passive knowledge of the vocabulary to the active.

b) Further we can use prepared pair cards for the game similar to Czech “quartet”. By this game students subconsciously revise the words hearing them from their colleagues. To be able to play, they should already know all words actively, so it is better to practice it as revision.

#### *“Waking up” game*

In this game we point out to the students that although they are learning the words as synonyms, they have to know which of them is American and which is British. While teaching how to differentiate between them we can include this escapist game at the end of the lesson or when we see that students need a break. There are no age restrictions, however, according to personal experience teenagers could find the game childish, while especially young children will be very fond of it.

#### *The table*

This writing activity is very useful. We can apply it while teaching groups of children, young or adult students and individuals, too. It can be used repeatedly in many variants.

#### *“Proud Briton and American”*

This pair activity could be used if students have already learnt the basic vocabulary, for example after the “Table” exercise. This activity is suitable for groups of young as well as adult students. Another benefit of this pair work is grammar revision - making negations of all sentence types.

#### *A story*

Having introduced the British and American English problems we can practice “A story” activity. If we have time students can do it in the lesson, however it could be more suitable to assign it as homework.

### *Anagrams*

This activity is very useful and amusing especially for younger students. It can be easily prepared on a sheet of paper for each student (if an individual or pair-activity is preferred) or can be written on the board and be done as whole-class work (if there are not many students in the class).

### *Odd one out*

This activity can again be used at the beginning of learning because it requires only passive knowledge of the vocabulary.

### **Phrasal verbs**

There are also some phrasal verbs whose meanings differ in British and American English. For example a Briton can say: “I was *done over* by the mugger on the street.”, being at that moment beaten up and injured. The American on the contrary would use this verb in this context: “I’ve *done over* my essay, because there was a lot of nonsense.” meaning he has rewritten it.

As another example let us introduce the verb *hold up*. Two men will be late at home, the explanation will be the same, however, the reasons differ. The American was *held up* by the mugger, while the Briton was *held up* in the traffic jam with his car.

A real misunderstanding can happen in the case when a British girl among Americans would say: “I was *knocked up* by my neighbour last night.” She was only woken up by the noise he had made, however, the Americans would understand that she is now pregnant. No American would argue about *washing up*, because it has nothing to do with the crockery as in Britain. *Wash up* means in the USA have a shower or wash yourself, they just *wash* plates and glasses.

On the other hand, there are some phrasal verbs which have different forms in American and British English. For example we *take* the meal *away* in British English but *out* in American, the match would be *rained off* (cancelled because of the rain) in the UK but *rained out* in the USA and the guy can *pull in* (to get the favour of) the girl in Britain but *pick up* in America. For practicing please see the appendix 6.3.4.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The examples used from: Svoboda

### **Set expressions**

There are also some differences in the use of set expressions in British and American English which are to be mentioned. Let us introduce a common example: When two English speakers, however, one from the UK, the other from the USA are asked in a café: “Tea or coffee?” the first will answer “*I don't mind*”, while the latter: “*I don't care*”. Both alternatives are equally acceptable in English, although either sounds odd to the other.

The same situation can be observed while using the idioms. It is better for our students to be introduced those having its equivalents in Czech, for example: The British say *to sweep under the carpet*, while the Americans *to sweep under the rug*. Czech *kapka v moři* would be *a drop in the ocean* in British and *a drop in the bucket* in American English. The Czech *mít kostlivce ve skříni* would be in English either *to have a skeleton in the cupboard*, according to the British or *to have a skeleton in the closet*, according to the Americans.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Examples used from Wikipedia – British and American English

## 3 Methodology of Teaching British and American Differences

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### 3.1

#### **Different Approaches in Textbooks**

According to my teaching experience there are two main methods of including this topic into the study plan of a textbook. The first is to mention the most frequent American synonyms to British vocabulary while teaching particular words of the topic. For example while teaching the topic *clothes* the American word *pants* as a synonym for British *trousers* should be mentioned. Otherwise, we can introduce the words *TV antenna* and *aerial*, *first floor* and *ground floor*, *mailbox* and *letterbox*, *elevator* and *lift* together, while speaking about the *house* and *flat*. British and American synonyms are taught this way for example in the textbook for children beginners Magic Time 2, Unit 16. This way the teacher should notice that the British word is more important to know and the knowledge of the American synonym could be only passive. The indubitable advantage of this method is that students learn the words in the particular thematic circle.

Another way of approaching the problems with the differences is to teach them as isolated vocabulary topic in one unit. There are to be chosen British and American English synonyms, mostly put into the table (given by the authors or it is one of the students' tasks to do so). Subsequently these words appear as synonym pairs in other practicing exercises. This method can be found for example in the textbook English in Mind 2, Unit 5 (Puchta, 36) and Total English Intermediate, Unit 9 (Clare,127). The main merit lies in the good arrangement of new vocabulary, the possibility of comparison and teaching in pairs. This method also offers many various entertaining exercises as provided above.

Both ways of teaching can be found in various textbooks. Although in most of them this issue is taught quite perfunctorily or it is even not mentioned. Other differences between British and American English for example in grammar and pronunciation are mostly not introduced in the textbooks at all (e.g. series English Project or New Headway). So it is only upon the teacher to point them out.

## 3.2

### **Class Management**

There are many possibilities how to organise work in the class. It is necessary to consider number of students, their ages, language levels, writing and reading skills and external factors as the time left or the atmosphere in the class. Students work individually, in pairs, groups or the whole class interaction can be set. The organisation of the class is closely connected to the chosen activities.

There are brisk activities suitable for competitions between groups or pairs, e.g. games with “pexeso”, the “waking up game” and anagrams. On the other hand, there are reflective, slow activities mainly for individualized tasks based on writing. These are for example the spelling crossword, text editing and phrasal verbs exercise. It is better to focus on activities based on spoken language while teaching young children since they are not fluent in reading and writing yet. In this case using flashcards (pexeso pictures and flags) can be recommended.

The approach towards teaching and the choice of activities depends on the teacher’s goal, too. Our topic might be included as an additional, marginal, while students’ knowledge of the words and points at issue remains passive. However, if students want to be able to work with synonyms and differences in an active way, they have to spend more time and effort learning the issue. Before students reach active knowledge of the word they have to learn its pronunciation, spelling and appropriate use in context. At this level the scaffolds as semantic webs or fields, picture dictionaries and flashcards might be used. Students practise to perceive the word, repeat, understand and write it. After students have stored the word they learn how to use it in practice. At this stage different exercises and communication activities can be introduced e.g. text comparison and editing, crosswords, tables, “odd one out” or “Proud Briton and American” games.

## 4 The Different Use of British and American English in Literature

In this chapter the use of different English forms in practice will be presented. Introducing the examples of British and American English differences in literature we prove the actuality of our issue. The text comparison will be provided, encouraging students to conduct their own survey in a book which most of them know and like. Working with the text can improve students' reading and text comprehension skills while practising British and American differences. Finally, the students can be asked to edit the American text from the appendix and prepare its correct British version for a publisher. This exercise could serve as a revision activity, since it covers the differences in spelling, grammar and vocabulary, too.

### 4.1

#### **Text Comparison**

To use authentic English texts in class (articles from books, magazines, short stories, newspapers and so on) can be recommended since it demonstrates how the natural language works. It also leads students to using dictionaries and guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context. Nevertheless, we can use the authentic English texts just to attract students' attention. Comparing two identical texts, one written for an American, another for a British reader, can give a straight example of the differences between American and British English in practice. It is possible to let students themselves mark the differences and then discuss them. Eventually we can let the students deduce some regulations of the British and American writing forms.

The comparison of the two English verses of J.K.Rowling's Harry Potter can serve for this purpose. Being popular among children and adults too, it gives us a good opportunity to make a teaching tool of something quite enjoyable and at least well known for students.

Practical example of a comparison:

*British edition - Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

*American edition - Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

Chapter One

**Differences in spelling of individual words (vocabulary and spelling differences):**

*moustache X mustache* (simplifying of spelling in American English) (p.7)

*useful X handy* (differences in vocabulary) (p.7)

*realise X realize* (use of S and Z differs by many verbs, e.g. : specialise X specialize) (p.8)

*get-ups X getups* (use of hyphens typical for British English) (p.9)

*dialling X dialing* (simplifying of spelling in American English) (p.10)

*behaviour X behavior* (simplifying of spelling in American English) (p.12)

*living-room X living room* (differences in vocabulary) (p.12)

*news reader X newscaster* (differences in vocabulary) (p.12)

*lot X crowd* (differences in vocabulary) (p.13)

*towards X toward* (p.16)

*sherbet lemon X lemon drop* (differences in vocabulary) (p.17)

*dustbin X trash can* (differences in vocabulary) (p.21)

### **Examples of the differences in the sentences (grammatical and syntactic differences):**

“*Mr Dursley hummed as he picked out his most boring tie for work and Mrs Dursley gossiped away...*” (p.8)

“*Mr. Dursley hummed as he picked out his most boring tie for work, and Mrs. Dursley gossiped away ...*”(p.1)

The differences in the punctuation could be appointed to.

“Dudley had *learnt* a new word (*'Shan't!*)” (p.12)

“Dudley had *learned* a new word (*“Won't!”*)”(p.4)

In American English many irregular verbs turned to regular. Shall is not used in American English.

“It was staring down Privet Drive as though it *was* waiting for something.” (p.14)

“It was staring down Privet Drive as though it *were* waiting for something.” (p.5)

Typical grammar difference is presented here – dropping the use of a special verb form for third person.

“It didn't so much as quiver when a car door slammed *in* the next street.” (p.14)

“It didn't so much as quiver when a car door slammed *on* the next street.” (p.6)<sup>11</sup>

Different use of prepositions is to be found there.

---

<sup>11</sup> Quotations from: Rowling

4.2

### **Text Editing**

Now students can try to transform American text from the appendix 6.4 to the British one. They are editors now and are supposed to provide the publisher with the British form of the American original. They can work individually or in pairs. It is a suitable revision activity because it summarizes the differences of vocabulary, spelling and grammar.

## 5 Research Projects and Analysis of their Results

In this chapter the importance of our topic will be proved. Two research projects based on acquired data are provided with substantiated and summarised results.

### 5.1

#### **Questionnaire 1 – Do students need and wish to learn differences between American and British English?**

For the questionnaire see the appendix 6.5. In this survey we are going to present how much the beginners and pre-intermediate students are familiar with the vocabulary differences between American and British English. Mainly, we want to demonstrate the need of systematic learning of this area.

Students are given the questionnaire and they are asked to choose the correct answer – to find a British synonym for an American word. The initial figures are as followed. Altogether 45 learners have responded. The respondents are students of a private language school and also those who take only private lessons and learn or learnt English only at state schools. Out of these 45 students, 15 are adults, 15 teenagers (from the age of 14 to 18) and 15 children (from the age of 9 to 13).

#### **The results of the survey:**

The successfulness is presented in a percentage of the correct answered questions. There are 15 questions in total, so for one correct answer there are 6,67 %.

The success rate of the students depending on age:

adults	57%
teenagers (14-18)	70,5%
children (9-13)	40%
total	56%

The answers to the additional question:

	yes	no
adults	13	2
teenagers (14-18)	15	0
children (9-13)	10	5
total	38	7

The students' success depending on the fact, if there was British and American English synonym problem included in their course-book or not (alternatively if students learnt about our issue from other sources or not):

Adults:

Learnt	Not learnt
80%	33,5%

Teenagers (14-18):

Learnt	Not learnt
94%	47%

Children (9-13):

Learnt	Not learnt
67%	13%

in total:

textbook included (or students have learnt about our issue from other sources): 80%

textbook not included ( students have not learnt about our issue yet): 31%

Summary:

At first initiated results of the success rate depending on the student's age indicate that teenagers have already had some experience with American expressions. This might be thanks to reading the articles on the internet, online communication with native speakers or watching American films.

The following results depend on the fact, if there was British and American English synonym problem included in their course-book (learnt) or not. These show that some American words less known or having a form quite different from the British one are difficult to be understood for students who have not learnt them in a passive form at least. In this case it is impossible for them even to guess the meaning from the context. And this is exactly the moment when the differences between British and American English can create a misunderstanding or complication. Students who have learnt these words in a unit or two of their textbooks were more or less successful in this test. However, they admitted they would be mostly unable to recollect the meaning of the American word without being given a choice of the British ones. The majority of respondents expressed a wish to learn more British and American synonyms. So we can suppose at least some of them are really interested in the issue.

5.2

### **Questionnaire 2 – Is there an unsuitable use of American English by the students of British English ?**

The questionnaire is to be found in the appendix 6.6. In this research it will be shown how frequently students of English unintentionally use American expressions even if they are supposed to use British English. The influence of American English is significant especially in media. This is the reason why there is a need to teach the basic differences to help students to understand, differentiate and use correctly both forms of English.

Initial figures are of this survey are as follows. There were 60 respondents in total divided into two groups – A and B. Group A represents 30 students who have already learnt basic American and English differences. In group B there are 30 students who have not learnt any yet. As in the previous survey the respondents are students of a private language school and also those who take only private lectures and learn/ learnt English only at state school. Each student has to translate 15 words. It means 450 words (cases) in each group.

## Results of the survey:

Students of group A:

number of cases	percentage of cases
120	26,7%
124	27,5%
206	45,7%

Students were not able to translate the word:

Students used American word:

Students used British word:

Students of group B:

number of cases	percentage of cases
155	34,4%
189	42%
109	24,2%

Students were not able to translate the word:

Students used American word:

Students used British word:

Summary:

This research indicates that students who have already learnt American and British English differences (group A) have better vocabulary than students who have not learnt them yet (group B). Further, students of group A used American expression less frequently than students of group B. The reason is that students A were aware of frequent mistakes made by using American spelling or word instead of the British one. The most frequent mistakes according to British English (American spelling or word was used) are listed below. Answers of all 60 respondents were included.

Wrong spelling:

word	number of mistakes
programme	15
colour	8
centre	8

Wrong translation:

word	number of mistakes
tin	16
maize	15
weistcoat	10

## Conclusion

The results of the analysis indicate that students who have been taught American and British differences are much better at finding the correct British word while translating from Czech. My personal teaching experience shows that learning the topic students improved other language skills as well. Apart from enriching their vocabulary, they got to know how to use phonetic symbols and they revised the basic grammar rules. The communication and reading comprehension skills were also practiced doing the text comparison and lexical activities. Younger students mainly enjoyed the games with the pictures. Those attract their visual memory and enable the teacher to apply different activities. Some can be set as a competition of individuals, pairs or as group work. This enhances the participants' motivation and can also create a brisk atmosphere in the class. On the other hand, the adults were mainly interested in individual activities as text comparison and editing. These exercises lead to relaxed interaction and discovery approach. The exercise practising the differences in British and American phrasal verbs seemed to be favourite too, since it presents the issue in a funny way. Nowadays all students use the internet and travel a lot, so they find this topic quite useful to learn. However, I would like to point out that not all information, activities and exercises are suitable for all students. The teacher should choose from the provided materials according to the time he or she can spend on this topic, age and size of the students' group and the achieved language level.

This thesis should be profitable especially for teachers. It provides a list of basic differences between British and American English. Moreover, there are some useful materials and instructions which can be used not only for practising this issue but can be applied to other topics, too. Of course there are a lot of web pages, dictionaries and other books offering a vast list, especially of differences in vocabulary. However, none of them summarizes the basic facts from all language areas (like spelling, pronunciation and grammar) and they do not offer any exercises and ideas for practice. On the other hand, English course books do not seem to find this issue important. Their authors sometimes mention this topic only marginally, giving a few examples of lexical differences, if so. On the contrary, American English is still more to be heard and read and is having a significant influence on the British form, trying to simplify it. So there is no doubt about this issue being useful, no matter how much it is still being neglected.

Having worked on this thesis I came to the idea that on the basis of the study a short portfolio could be created. It might be useful both for students and teachers to have a list of the differences between British and American English. Since they are well-arranged according to the language disciplines, learners might use it both for systematic learning and as a source of information. The text comparison and teaching materials in the appendix might be inserted in course books or they might be provided independently as an additional material for English language teachers. Possibly, the issue concerned in this thesis could be taken as an inspiration or a base of a new textbook dealing with teaching American and British English differences.

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▪

## 6 Appendices

### 6.1

#### Materials for teaching differences in the British and American pronunciation

##### 6.1.1

##### List of the practiced words – Br., Am. pronunciation:

There is a list of the most frequent words with different British and American pronunciation. The first phonetic transcription is according to British, the second according to American English. Before introducing the pronunciation of the given words (or as a revision activity after being introduced), we can ask students to try to pronounce the words by themselves. They can see whether they are able to pronounce the word correct without the teacher's help. Otherwise, we can offer two possible pronunciations and let them guess which is the American and which is the British.

laboratory /lə'brɒrətəri, 'læbrə,tɔ:ri/

squirrel /'skwɪrəl, 'skwɜ:rəl/

new /nju:, nu:/

vase /vɑ:z, veɪz/

sloth /sləʊθ, sloʊθ/

bath /bɑ:θ, bæθ/

leisure /'leɪʒər, 'li:zər/

fast /fɑ:st, fæst/

pasta /'pæstə, 'pɑ:stə/

jaguar /'dʒæɡjuər, 'dʒæɡwɑ:r/

yogurt /'jɒɡət'jəʊɡət/

horror /'hɒrə/'hɔ:rər/

magazine /,mægə'zi:n, 'mægə,zin/

zebra /zebərə 'zi:brə;'/

hurricane /'hʌrɪkən 'hɜ:rɪ,kem/

dance /dɑ:ns,dæns, /

sure /ʃʊər, ʃʊr/

poor /pʊə, pʊr/

laugh /lɑ:f, læf/

**6.1.2.**  
**Lifting flags**

Students can use the flags to mark the British or American pronunciation. Each student has their own pair of flags. When they hear American English pronunciation they lift up American flag. When they hear British English, they lift the flag of the United Kingdom.



### 6.1.3

#### American X British pronunciation exercise:

Students practise both British pronunciation and phonetic symbols in this exercise. They are supposed to choose the right symbol for pronounced vowel in each word. The clue provides examples of particular sounds in other British words.

Instructions for students:

Which of the two sounds would a Briton use to pronounce each word? Choose the right symbol, write down its letter and find the secret word. Can you pronounce the word right? (There is a help - clue, how to recognise the symbols.)

1. fast -  $\alpha$ : = J  
-  $\text{æ}$  = G
2. zebra -  $i$ : = O  
-  $\varepsilon$  = A
3. dance -  $\text{æ}$  = B  
-  $\alpha$ : = G
4. yogurt -  $o$  = U  
-  $\text{əʊ}$  = A
5. bath -  $\text{æ}$  = C  
-  $\alpha$ : = A
6. vase -  $\alpha$ : = R  
-  $e\text{ɪ}$  = K

The clue:

$e\text{ɪ}$  - play, hey  
 $\alpha$ : - past, far  
 $\text{æ}$  - apple, ham  
 $\varepsilon$  - then, smell  
 $o$  - dog, frog  
 $\text{əʊ}$  - phone, blow  
 $i$ : - feel, meal

Solution: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

(Solution = JAGUAR / according to American pronunciation solution = GO BACK)

## **6.2**

### **Materials for teaching differences in the British and American spelling:**

#### **6.2.1**

##### **Cards**

All cards are handed out among students. The board is divided into two columns, for British and American spelling (to mark the columns we can use the flags from the pronunciation exercise – appendix 6.1.2). Afterwards students will be asked to write their words in the right column according to the previously introduced spelling rules.

<b>colour</b>	<b>color</b>	<b>theatre</b>	<b>theater</b>
<b>favourite</b>	<b>favorite</b>	<b>defence</b>	<b>defense</b>
<b>litre</b>	<b>liter</b>	<b>licence</b>	<b>license</b>
<b>centre</b>	<b>center</b>	<b>traveller</b>	<b>traveler</b>
<b>waggon</b>	<b>wagon</b>	<b>jewellery</b>	<b>jewelry</b>
<b>programme</b>	<b>program</b>	<b>tyre</b>	<b>tire</b>
<b>catalogue</b>	<b>catalog</b>	<b>cosy</b>	<b>cozy</b>
<b>cheque</b>	<b>check</b>	<b>criticise</b>	<b>criticize</b>

### 6.2.2

#### Crossword (American X English spelling)

Students are supposed to fill in correct British English spelling of American words to find a secret.

Students' task: Write the American word according to British English spelling:

1. cozy
2. program
3. center
4. color
5. traveler
6. license
7. honor
8. catalog

1.										
2.										
3.										
4.										
5.										
6.										
7.										
8.										

Secret: ..... is easy!!! ☺

Solution:

1.				c	o	S	y			
2.						P	r	o	g	r
3.			c	e	n	t	r	E		
4.						c	o	L	o	u
5.	t	r	a	v	e	l	L	e	r	
6.						l	I	c	e	n
7.						h	o	N	o	u
8.	c	a	t	a	l	o	G	u	e	

## 6.3

### Materials for teaching lexical differences between British and American English:

#### 6.3.1

##### The list of British-American synonyms

Teacher can choose the number of words which will be introduced according to students' level.

##### *Clothes:*

trousers	pants
trainers	sneakers
swimming costume	bathing suit
waistcoat	vest
wellington Boots	galoshes
mac (slang for Macintosh)	rain coat
dressing-gown	bathrobe

##### *School words:*

rubber	eraser
headmaster/mistress head teacher	principal
holiday	vacation
staff room	teachers lounge
marking scheme	grading scheme
Maths	Math

##### *On the road:*

tram	streetcar
underground (tube)	subway
lorry	truck
petrol	gas / gasoline
pavement	sidewalk
roundabout (road)	traffic circle
boot	trunk
number plate	license plate
zebra crossing /pedestrian crossing	cross walk

##### *Buildings and shops:*

ground floor	first floor
shop	store
block of flats	apartment house
first floor	second floor
chemist	drug store / druggist
bill	check (restaurant)
banknote	bill
newsagent	news dealer/news stand
surgery	doctor's office
ironmonger	hardware store

*Food:*

sweets  
biscuit (sweet)  
chips  
starter  
take-away  
maize  
scone  
crisps

candy  
cookie  
French fries  
appetizer  
take out  
corn  
biscuit  
chips

*People:*

mum  
postman  
policeman / bobby/copper  
solicitor  
dustman  
nutter

mom  
postal worker / mailman / mail carrier  
cop  
lawyer/attorney  
garbage man  
crazy person

*House:*

toilet / loo / bog / WC  
garden  
cupboard  
wardrobe  
bin / dust bin  
cooker  
curtains

bathroom / restroom  
backyard / yard  
closet  
closet  
trash can  
range /stove  
drapes

*Sport:*

football  
rounders  
bat (table tennis)

soccer  
baseball  
paddle (ping pong)

*Other words:*

luggage  
tin  
torch  
autumn  
lift  
queue  
film  
cinema  
ill  
fortnight  
to behave  
plaster  
quid (slang for pound)  
nick  
mobile

baggage  
can  
flashlight  
fall  
elevator  
line  
movie  
movies  
sick  
two weeks  
to act  
band-aid  
bucks  
steal  
cell

6.3.2

Cards for British and American synonyms – activities (see the appendix 6.3.3)

 <p><b>trousers</b></p>	 <p><b>pants</b></p>	 <p><b>rubber</b></p>
 <p><b>eraser</b></p>	 <p><b>truck</b></p>	 <p><b>lorry</b></p>
 <p><b>tram</b></p>	 <p><b>streetcar</b></p>	 <p><b>block of flats</b></p>
 <p><b>apartment house</b></p>	 <p><b>candy</b></p>	 <p><b>sweets</b></p>



**bill**



**banknote**



**chips**



**French fries**



**toilet**



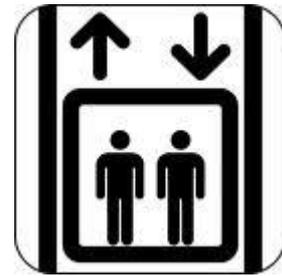
**restroom**



**tin**



**can**



**lift**



**elevator**



**mobile**



**cell**



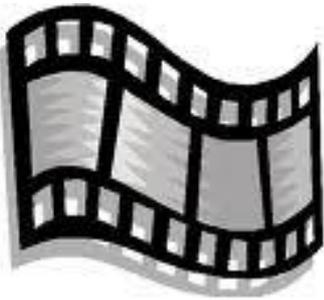
**football**



**soccer**



**film**



**movie**



**underground**



**subway**



**torch**



**flashlight**



**autumn**



**fall**



**garbage man**



**dustman**

### 6.3.3

#### British and American synonyms – activities

##### *“Pexeso”*

Cards (6.3.2) are mixed and lie on the table or the ground face down. A student turns one picture and if he or she knows where its pair is, they pick it up. If there are two of the same pictures turned over, the student takes them and has another try. If he or she is wrong and the turned pictures do not make a pair, it is another student’s turn. Students go in a line until all the pairs are found. The winner is the student with the most pairs.

##### *“Kvartet”*

Although we have not got four cards, just two, we can divide the cards among students and ask them to try to find the pairs. They should ask each other in a line for the word they need. They use the phrase: “Have you got a ....” or “I need ....” . They can ask only one person, if they get lucky they can ask again for something else. The winner is the student who is the first to find all of their pairs.

##### *Waking up game*

Children sit behind their desks and put their arms on the table. They lay their heads on their arms face down and close eyes pretending they are sleeping. We should be sure that the children cannot observe each other or see their neighbours waking up. Now the teacher slowly says the words children have already learnt. If the word is British, children have to “wake up” if it is American they should stay “asleep”. Who gets it wrong, drops out. The winner is the one who remains in the game last. If we want to play the game more times, we can ask the winner to replace the teacher and to dictate the words.

##### *The table*

The basis lies in a table where there are British and American words in columns. At first we can prepare the table on the chalkboard. We read all the words with the students aloud, then wipe off some words and ask students what is missing. Then we prepare another table and again students as a group guess what is missing. For the third time they could try to fill in the blanks individually. At the end we can include pair-work in which each student prepares a short table with blanks for his or her partner (we should monitor that the student himself knows the correct answer, because he or she will have to correct their neighbour’s mistakes).

Naturally, we should ask for questions or problems when students themselves correct their partner's work.

### *"Proud Briton and American"*

The teacher divides students into pairs where one of them plays the Briton and the other one the American. The students now create simple sentences including some of the newly learnt vocabulary, however, each of them must use only the words from his or her new mother tongue (British English for the British and American English for the American). They should create a dialogue, when the first one comes up with a sentence, for example the Briton says: "I'm wearing black trousers today." The proud American denies it and says using a negation: "Oh, you're not. You're wearing black pants today." Then the American creates a sentence with an American word for example: "I live in an apartment." and again the Briton denies: "Oh, you don't. You live in a flat." and so on. We give students enough time to make up their dialogues and we check for potential mistakes. Then each pair is asked to perform their conversation before others, while they guess who plays the Briton and who the American.

### *A story*

Students are asked to create a short story for example of 10 sentences (the number of sentences should be given considering their level and the amount of learnt vocabulary). The story should include as many British-American synonym words as possible, however, students should use the British ones only. Of course, the story must make sense. In the following lesson students read their texts aloud then they do it again, exchanging the British words for the American ones. Others count the synonym vocabulary used and observe the potential grammar mistakes. At the end the person with the greatest number of synonym words used can be rewarded as the winner.

### *Anagrams*

The teacher writes anagrams of American words, this means, he or she writes the word with the letter in jumbled order and lets the students guess the word. If they solve it, they have to add a British synonym. This activity can also be done as a contest among the students or groups by giving a point for each word and each correct synonym.

*Odd one out*

The teacher prepares several lines of four or five words, each time typically British words, including one American “intruder” word. The words can be written on paper, the board or can be read by the teacher and students are asked to find the odd word. Like the previous activity this one can be done as a contest or the students can be asked to prepare their own “odd one out” lines for their colleagues.

### 6.3.4 Phrasal verbs

Students practise the phrasal verbs introduced in subchapter 6.3.4 (p.44). Phrasal verbs practised: *do over, hold up, wash up*

Students' task:

These people are late for a date. Fill the excuses with a correct form of the given phrasal verbs. Use each of them twice. What is the nationality of the person in the picture? (Brit X American)



"I have been \_\_\_\_\_ by a mugger." - \_\_\_\_\_



"I had to \_\_\_\_\_ my essay." - \_\_\_\_\_



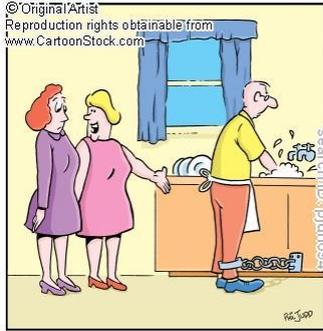
"I was \_\_\_\_\_ by an unknown man." - \_\_\_\_\_



"I was \_\_\_\_\_ because of the traffic jam." - \_\_\_\_\_



„I had to \_\_\_\_\_, because I was really dirty.“ - \_\_\_\_\_



“Herbert just loves to help with the dishes.”

“I had to do the \_\_\_\_\_ . “ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phrasal verbs - solution:



“I have been **done over** by a mugger.“ - **Briton**



“ I had to **do over** my essay.“ - **American**



'You're too late.'

“ I was **held up** by an unknown man.“ - **American**



“I was **held up** because of the traffic jam.“ **Briton**



„I had to **wash up**, because I was really dirty.“ - **American**



“Herbert just loves to help with the dishes.”

“I had to **wash up** the dishes.“ - **Briton**

## 6.4

### Text Editing – British X American English

Students try to transform American text to the British one. They are editors now and are supposed to provide the publisher with the British form of the American original. They can work individually or in pairs. It summarizes the differences of vocabulary, spelling and grammar.

American text (task):

Home, sweet home...

I am not a much experienced traveler. For me it is a real labor to find a theater in the city center. Once, in emergency, I almost bled to death before I got to the hospital because I lost my direction on the traffic circle. Traveling by subway or streetcar is my nightmare. I don't even have a driving license. Once I went by train to visit my friend Peter last week. First I was very glad, because I had gotten in a quite cozy free wagon. After two hours, however, I realized, that I'm on the wrong train. My sense of direction is different from that of Peter's. Maybe, I don't have any at all. But this is between Peter and I. We have been the best friends since we played on the same soccer team at high school. Last night I dreamed about a long journey around the world. When I talked with Peter about my dream, he laughed. He just arrived from Thailand and has been planning a two-week vacation in Peru. I was so happy when he offered me to go with him!

First I need a catalog to find some towns there providing hotels, stores and gas. Then we must think a program out. Packing the baggage won't be a problem, I think. I don't have a lot of clothes in my closet, so there is no place for hesitation. Let's take some pants, T- shirts, trainers, maybe a warm vest, of course a pair of waterproof galoshes and a raincoat. I will certainly need some foreign change, bills and coins, too. I should visit my doctor's office and ask what to buy in the drugstore in case I am sick there. Oh, there is so much to do! In the end, I will have to tell my mom and inform the mailman and all my neighbors...

Maybe, I'd rather stay at home.

British text (solution):

Home sweet home...

I am not a much experienced **traveller**. For me it is a real **labour** to find a **theatre** in the city **centre**. Once, in emergency, I almost bled to death before I got **to hospital** because I lost my direction on the **roundabout**. Travelling by **underground** or **tram** is my nightmare. I **haven't** even **got** a driving **licence**. Once I went by train to visit my friend Peter last week. First I was very glad, because I had **got** in a quite **cosy** free **waggon**, after two hours, however, I **realised**, that I'm on the wrong train. My sense of direction is **different to** that of Peter's. Maybe, I **haven't got** any at all. But this is between Peter and **me**. We have been the best friends since we **played in the same football team** at the **secondary** school. Last night I **dreamt** about a long journey around the world. When I **talked to** Peter about my dream, he laughed. He **has just arrived** from Thailand and has been planning a **fortnight** vacation in Peru. I was so happy when he offered me to go with him!

First I need a **catalogue** to find some towns there, providing hotels, **shops** and **petrol**. Then we must think a **programme** out. Packing the **baggage** won't be a problem, I think. I **haven't got** a lot of clothes in my **wardrobe**, so there is no place for hesitation. Let's take some **trousers**, T- shirts, **sneakers**, maybe warm **waistcoat**, of course a pair of waterproof **wellingtons** and a **mac**. I will certainly need some foreign change, **banknotes** and coins, too. I should visit my doctor's **surgery** and ask what to buy at the **chemist's** in case I am **ill** there. Oh, there is so much to do! In the end I will have to tell my **mum** and inform the **postman** and all my **neighbours**... Maybe, I'd rather stay at home.

## 6.5

### Research questionnaire

Student's task: Choose the synonym for the word in italics

1. I often wear my *pants* and T-shirt.
  - a) socks
  - b) jacket
  - c) trousers
  - d) shorts
2. Call the *elevator* please.
  - a) lift
  - b) dog
  - c) assistant
  - d) waiter
3. I like warm *fall* the most.
  - a) spring
  - b) autumn
  - c) rain
  - d) coat
4. There are some *candies* on the table.
  - a) candles
  - b) glasses
  - c) sweets
  - d) flowers
5. To go far we need some *gas*.
  - a) petrol
  - b) car
  - c) water
  - d) air
6. There is an *aerial* on the house.
  - a) chimney
  - b) antenna
  - c) roof window
  - d) roof
7. When do you go on *vacation*?
  - a) trip
  - b) flight
  - c) education
  - d) holiday
8. Where can I find the *restroom* please?
  - a) living room
  - b) toilet
  - c) bathroom
  - d) waiting room
9. Can we have the *check* please?
  - a) control
  - b) recipe
  - c) bill
  - d) address
10. The *subway* is so expensive here.
  - a) train
  - b) cab
  - c) tram
  - d) underground
11. Let's go for a *movie*!
  - a) film
  - b) disco
  - c) walk
  - d) trip
12. She goes to the *high school*.
  - a) university
  - b) basic school
  - c) secondary school
  - d) public school
13. She lives in the *apartment*.
  - a) college
  - b) villa
  - c) hotel room
  - d) flat
14. Go on the *sidewalk*!
  - a) pavement
  - b) path
  - c) street
  - d) road

15. Take out the *garbage* please.

- a) chairs
- b) rubbish
- c) things
- d) luggage

16. Additional question: Would you like to learn these (or more) American and British English synonyms? Do you find it interesting and useful?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Answers:

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1) c | 6) b  | 11) a |
| 2) a | 7) d  | 12) c |
| 3) b | 8) b  | 13) d |
| 4) c | 9) c  | 14) a |
| 5) a | 10) d | 15) b |

## 6.6

### Research questionnaire 2:

Students' task: Write in English the missing word:

- 1) My father wears every Sunday his black \_\_\_\_\_ (vesta).
- 2) Blue is my favourite \_\_\_\_\_ (barva).
- 3) On Saturday I saw an interesting \_\_\_\_\_ (film) in the cinema.
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ (hranolky) are not healthy.
- 5) Peter drives \_\_\_\_\_ (nákladní auto)
- 6) Put your suitcase into to \_\_\_\_\_ (kufr) of my car.
- 7) I like \_\_\_\_\_ (kukuřice) very much.
- 8) Please lend me 20 Euro \_\_\_\_\_ (bankovka).
- 9) I bought two \_\_\_\_\_ (plechovka) of beans.
- 10) We will use the \_\_\_\_\_ (výtah).
- 11) I will write you a \_\_\_\_\_ (šek).
- 12) There is an interesting TV \_\_\_\_\_ (program) today.
- 13) We both like going to the \_\_\_\_\_ (divadlo).
- 14) She lives in the town \_\_\_\_\_ (centrum).
- 15) You can buy it in the \_\_\_\_\_ (lékárna).

Possible answers:

American English:

vest  
color  
movie  
French fries  
truck  
trunk  
corn  
bill  
can  
elevator  
check  
program  
theater  
center  
drugstore

British English:

waistcoat  
colour  
film  
chips  
lorry  
boot  
maize  
banknote  
tin  
lift  
cheque  
programme  
theater  
center  
chemist's