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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AMERICAN ENGLISH AND THE  
COMPARISON OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ENGLISH WITH  
STANDARD BRITISH ENGLISH

Bakalářská práce

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Čestně prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracoval samostatně a použil jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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# INTRODUCTION

English is ubiquitous. The United Kingdom had once been a great empire and spread its language almost everywhere. Then, the power had shifted to a similarly ambitious nation – The United States of America. Though there are many variations of English language in several other places in the world, whether that concerns grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation, the differences between British and American English are arguably the most significant ones. Despite that, many native English speakers are not actually aware of the fact that their English is different from the one across the ocean.

My experience with English language has always been through school or media – music, movies, TV shows, internet content, videogames etc. I haven't been to an English speaking country once, yet English language has always been all around me. And though British English is the very much respected original, American English makes its way through media very aggressively and it has a noticeable effect on our youth, who know plenty of English words, idioms and sentences, sometimes before they even start learning English at school.

The aim of the thesis is to demonstrate how much American English has affected Czech teenagers' knowledge of English language. For these purposes, a questionnaire had been created and handed to students of a small town grammar school. The particular school has been selected based on the fact that it only teaches British English. The practical part will examine the unconscious preference of the school's students between British English and American English. The selected differences as well as brief historical context of the development of American English are described in the theoretical part.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter offers a summary of American English throughout its history. The second chapter deals with selected differences, which are related to grammar. The third chapter lists differences in British and American spelling. The second and third chapters are then utilized in the fourth chapter, which delivers results of the questionnaire.

# **1 BRIEF HISTORY OF AMERICAN ENGLISH**

English was brought to America by colonists in the 17th century (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 331), and through various linguistic processes rapidly developed a uniformity and standardisation of its own, with a unique pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. The language spoken by the first settlers along the Atlantic coast was the language spoken by Shakespeare and Milton (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 331). The following chapter describes the development of American English since the early colonial times. It focuses on the demographic factors that reshaped the original English through immigration from Europe as well as from other parts of the world, constant movement of masses of people across America and mingling of various nationalities within and between the colonies. It also questions whether there is a case of a 'colonial lag', which will be described in the second part of the chapter.

## **1.1 Demography**

According to Marckwardt (1980, p. 24), during the early beginnings of the colonies, the Native American languages were a rich source of words and expressions that were necessary for the early colonists to be able to describe new sights, tastes and experiences of their newly adopted homeland. However, many of these languages contained sounds unfamiliar to speakers of English, which inevitably led to considerable changes to the borrowed words, both in form and meaning, for ease of assimilation.

A prominent characteristic of the occupation of the United States is the constant mingling of settlers from one part with settlers from other parts. In most colonies, there were all sections of the British Isles represented, with some admixture of the French and the Germans (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 336). Not only that, but as a new section was opened, it attracted colonists from districts that had become overcrowded or unsatisfactory for living (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 336). Many of the people were unsettled and moved frequently from place to place, which made them not so liable to local peculiarities either in accent or phraseology. America is actually thought of as showing a high degree of uniformity when it comes to dialectal differences, either today or in the past (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 337). Compared to dialectal differences in various parts of England, American English has very small differences in their dialects. As far as pronunciation is concerned, the mass of people in America are thought to speak better English than the mass in England. This notion was pushed even further by the characteristic American patriotism, which led to many Americans being persuaded that this is

in fact the reality, that they speak far better English than their mother country (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 337).

As Davies (2005, p. 2) states, the early settlers of the original colonies had no verbal contact with the people of England, and so the division of the language began. English remained a dominant language in America. In fact, according to Baugh and Cable (1993, p. 331), by 1790, when the first census was taken, the population of America numbered approximately 4 million people. 90 percent of this population were people originating from the British Isles. There were several French colonies, and New York was originally a Dutch settlement, called New Amsterdam (Davies, 2005, p. 2). German was widely spoken in the 1800s, partly because of the immigrants, who came to America after a failed revolution in 1848. Outside of European immigration, there was the forced immigration of Africans through the slave trade that began in the 17th century and continued until the mid 19th century. Although the influence on the language from the Africans was relatively small due to the diversity of the tribes involved, and the fact that they were slaves afforded them no respect or value for language or tradition (Baugh and Cable, 1993, p. 331). Each of the immigrant languages left their mark on spoken English. Still, many books were imported from England. That kept American English from straying too far (Davies, 2005, p. 2).

The industrial revolution brought new words such as 'railroad' or 'windshield'. "The US was no longer conforming to the British standard with new words. Britain was already using other words". Each country had its own engineers and designers (Davies, 2005, p. 3). New inventions were created, hundreds of new terms were needed. There was no standard to follow, people did travel across the Atlantic, many educated people knew about these differences, but nobody made any great effort to unify these terms (Davies, 2005, p. 3).

In the early 19th century, Thomas Jefferson was confident that American English is predestined to separate itself from British English. He believed, that the American people, "as they increased in numbers and in the diversity of their national interests and racial strains", would, as changes were made in the political institutions of their inheritance, create new words, new phrases and transfer old words to new objects. He believed an American dialect would be formed (Mencken, 1936, p. 1).

Nearly a quarter of a century before Jefferson's claims, Noah Webster "had ventured upon a prophecy even more bold and specific". Webster argued that the time of submitting to English authority had already passed and it was necessary and unavoidable that a completely new language would be formed (Mencken, 1936, p. 1). "Numerous local causes, such as a new country, new associations of people, new combinations of ideas in arts and sciences, and some

intercourse with tribes wholly unknown in Europe, will introduce new words into the American tongue. These causes will produce, in a course of time, a language in North America as different from the future language of England as the modern Dutch, Danish and Swedish are from the German, or from one another". (Mencken, 1936, p. 2)

"Neither Jefferson nor Webster put a term upon his prophecy". Unable to visualize what is to come in the future, neither of the two accounted for the vast improvement in communications across the ocean, which essentially brought New York nearer to London today, than it was to Boston during Jefferson's presidency (Mencken, 1936, p. 2).

## **1.2 Colonial lag**

One of the most popular notions for relating American English to British English is of 'colonial lag'. The term was coined by Albert Marckwardt in 1958. In the mid 19th century it was remarked that American English was more conservative than British English in some pronunciation features (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 13). Alexander Ellis (1869-89, p. 19) remarked: "There is a kind of arrest of development, the language of the emigrants remains for a long time at the stage in which it was at when emigration took place, and alters more slowly than the mother tongue, and in a different direction. Practically the speech of the American English is archaic with respect to that of the British English". Others, like Bryant (1907, p. 281) pointed out that American English was both conservative and innovative in comparison to British English, with most innovative features found in the lexicon. Marckwardt applied the term 'colonial lag' more generally, though. He saw it as a phenomena occurring not only in language, but also in culture and essentially in the whole nation. He viewed the post-colonial nation as a transplanted civilization, whose certain features remained static as opposed to its mother nation. Like Bryant, Marckwardt also included the possibility of innovative tendencies (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 13). The author of the chapter in Rohdenburg and Schlüter (2009, p. 14) questions whether the concept makes sense and criticizes it for implying far too simplistic view of such complex patterns and processes of language change. He demonstrates "that it is not enough to show the layering of both aspects, conservative and innovative tendencies, in contemporary American English to evaluate the hypothetical archaicness of American English." Görlach (1987, p. 55) also hints that although syntactic lags are possible under certain circumstances of isolation or different educational policies, there has been less of this in the overseas history of English than in other fields, "and even less likely to evolve in a world characterized by increasing communication".



## 2 SELECTED DIFFERENCES IN GRAMMAR

### 2.1 The present perfect

According to Rohdenburg and Schlüter (2009, p. 228), there are two verbal constructions that are most commonly used to refer to past time in English as well as in other languages – the periphrastic present perfect (1) and the synthetic preterite (2). Periphrastic means: "formed by the use of function words or auxiliaries instead of by inflection" and synthetic means: "characterized by frequent and systematic use of inflected forms to express grammatical relationships" (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

Examples:

(1) I have seen him recently. (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 228)

(2) I saw him recently. (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 228)

The distribution of the two constructions varies greatly between languages as well as within them. In comparison to other languages, like German or French, English almost never allows the usage of present perfect in combination with the information about the time of an event in the past (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 228). Without the specification of time, though, it is possible, more likely in American English rather than British, to use preterite as in example (2). (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 228)

In case of the perfect aspect, it is used by the British more than the Americans by a ratio of approximately 4:3. This preference is strongest in news media (Algeo, 2006, p. 24). The present perfect in British English is normally used in connection to adverbs such as 'already', 'ever', 'just' and 'yet' and adverbial clauses introduced by the temporal conjunction 'since'. It is also used in such sentences where the verb refers a past action with relevance to the present (3) (Algeo, 2006, p. 24).

Example:

(3) I have returned the book. (Algeo, 2006, p. 24)

There is also an instinctive avoidance of the present perfect (4) in American English by using a simple present tense (5) (Mencken, 1936, p. 204).

Examples:

(4) I have dined. (Mencken, 1936, p. 204)

(5) I am through dinner. (Mencken, 1936, p. 204)

In addition to the standard usage of the present perfect (6), there are colloquial dialects in American English, which use a slightly modified form of it. One of the most common vulgates is omitting 'have' and thus forming a sentence such as in example (7) (Mencken, 1936, p. 204). This phenomena is simultaneously one of the historical contributors to using preterite in the place of the present perfect. However, in some places it has persevered in this form and is used even today (Mencken, 1936, p. 204).

Examples:

(6) I have taken (Mencken, 1936, p. 204)

(7) I taken (Mencken, 1936, p. 204)

Another form, which may occur in some isolated dialects of American English, is replacing 'have' with 'be', which is shown in example (8) (Wolfram and Schilling, 2015, p. 439).

Example:

(8) I'm been there (Wolfram and Schilling, 2015, p. 439)

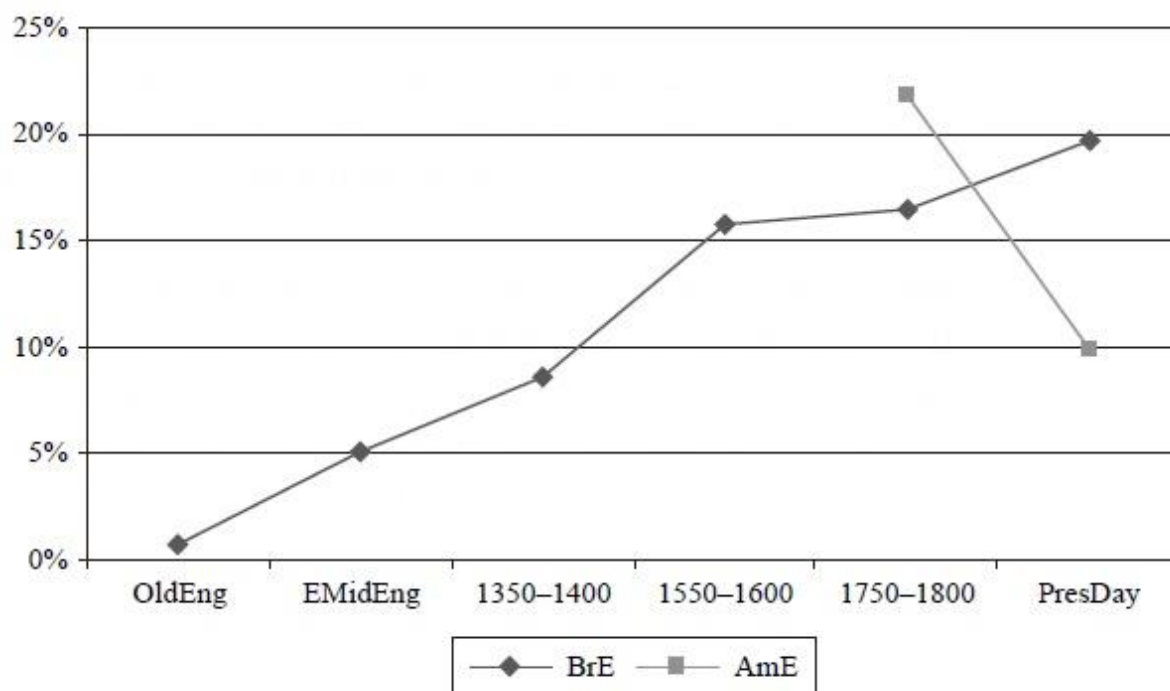
### **Historical context**

In Old and Middle English, various perfect forms have become more frequent than the preterite. That does not continue in the Modern English, though (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 230). While there has been a steady increase in the frequency of the present perfect in Old and Middle English, this development has been arrested in the Modern English period. According to evidence in Rohdenburg and Schlüter (2009, p. 235), the growth of the English present perfect has not only been arrested, but reversed.

In case of American English, there is a drop in the usage of present-perfect forms from 1750-1800 to the present day. In British English, the increase of the present perfect slowed down from 1550-1600 to 1750-1800, but "may then seem to get a second wind in the last 200-year span" (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 230).

	Old English	Early Middle English	1350–1400	1550–1600	1750–1800 BrE	1750–1800 AmE	Present-day BrE	Present-day AmE
	n = 989	n = 916	n = 906	n = 859	n = 880	n = 854	n = 1883	n = 1588
Present perfect	0.7	5.0	8.6	15.8	16.4	21.7	19.7	9.8
Preterite	83.3	79.1	66.6	62.6	62.0	57.7	61.9	76.2

**Tab. 1** The present perfect (with auxiliary HAVE) and the preterite as percentages of all past-referring verb forms in the history of English. Passive as well as active verb forms included (but not progressive forms). From the corpus used in Elness (1997) (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 230)



**Fig. 1** The present perfect (with HAVE, active/passive) as percentage of all past-referring verb forms. (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 230)

### 2.2.1 Have versus have got

While 'have got' is an idiomatic version of 'have' and it is acceptable in both British and American English (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 111), the British perceive a sentence composed of the idiomatic version as more complete than without it. There are certain rules where 'have got' cannot be used in any of the varieties of the English language, as demonstrated in examples (9) and (10) (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 111).

Examples:

(9) She has a swim every day. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 111)

(10) She has got a swim every day. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 111)

In case of example (9), 'have' in this sentence expresses an event rather than a state. It thus functions not as stative, but as a dynamic verb (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 111).

Very marginal and uncommon use of the idiomatic 'have got' also includes example in the plain form (11) or the preterite (12) (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112).

Examples:

(11) She may have got plenty of money but that doesn't mean she can push us around.  
(Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)

(12) She had got too much work to do. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)

This supports the fact that 'have got' occurs predominantly in the present tense (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112). In the form of present tense, it is restricted to informal style, even in American English. A further development of the idiomatic form 'have got' leads to the elision of the verb 'have' and leaving just 'got' (13) (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 318).

Example:

(13) I got a great chance, don't I? (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 318)

In American English, stative 'have' has always the function of a lexical verb, thus being the main verb in a sentence as opposed to auxiliary, and is preferred over 'have got' (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 113). In British English, "the lexical use has become common too, and the auxiliary use is tending to sound relatively formal or old-fashioned" (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 113).

## Historical context

The idiomatic form 'have got' is derived from a perfect construction. In British English, this is clear since 'got' is the past participle of 'get', so there is homophone between the idiom (14) and the perfect with 'get', as in (15) and (16) (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112).

Examples:

- (14) I have got enough tea. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)
- (15) She has got arrested. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)
- (16) She has got him a tie for Christmas. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)

American English makes these constructions distinct from each other by having a different past participle for 'get'. The past participle for 'get' in case of American English is 'gotten' (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112). The perfect origin, however, has caused the fact that the 'have' component of the idiom is an auxiliary and thus incompatible with 'do' (17). This applies to both the American and the British variety (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112).

Example:

- (17) We don't have got enough tea. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)

### 2.2.2 Have to versus have got to

Contrary to the difference between 'have' and 'have got', 'have to' and 'have got to' have very little to do with the variety of English language, in which they are used. They mean the same, only 'have got to' is more informal (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Although they do essentially have the same meaning, some examples show that the meaning of one of the two can be extended. While both in example (18) and (19), the meaning of the construction is a single obligation, only example (19) can, additionally to the single obligation, express a habitual obligation as well (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112).

Additionally, 'have got to', usually in its contracted form, can be used instead of 'must' to draw conclusions and make deductions (20). But, it is less commonly used than 'must' (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017).

Examples:

- (18) I have got to mow the lawn. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)
- (19) I have to mow the lawn. (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002, p. 112)
- (20) Why? There's got to be a reason. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017)

Also, 'have got to' can only be used in the present tense, while 'have to' can be used in a variety of forms (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017).

## 2.3 Should versus shall

Should and shall are both modal verbs (Koltai, 2013). Modal verb is "a verb used with another verb to express an idea such as possibility that is not expressed by the main verb (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Normally, should is the past tense of shall (Koltai, 2013). However, when a question is to be asked politely, an American speaker will prefer using the modal auxiliary 'should' (21) to 'shall' (22) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62).

Examples:

(21) Should I drink this now? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62)

(22) Shall I drink this now? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62)

In indicative sentences that have 'shall' in British English (23), 'shall' is very rare in American English, usually only used in legal documents and very formal styles. It is replaced by 'will' (24). The negative shan't is even less frequent in American English (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62).

Examples:

(23) I shall tell you later. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62)

(24) I will tell you later. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 62)

## 2.4 Prepositions

### 2.4.1 At the weekend versus on the weekend

According to the brief explanation by Trudgill and Hannah (1982, p. 80), speakers of British English will most probably use 'at the weekend', while Americans tend to say 'over the weekend' or 'on the weekend'. In case of the British version, 'at the weekend' means 'time when'. If articles are included, then the frequency of the plural 'at the weekends' and 'on the weekends' is similar in British English, while 'on weekends' is twice as frequent as either of them. In American English, 'on the weekend' and 'on weekends' have similar frequencies, but 'at the weekends' is very rare. (Algeo, 2006, p. 44)

### 2.4.2 To versus through

The main difference in the choice between 'to' and 'through' in British and American English is inclusiveness. It is sometimes necessary in British English that the inclusiveness be stated separately to avoid ambiguity (25) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80). In American English, the preposition 'through' can mean 'up to and including'. According to Algeo (2006, p. 190), it is a characteristic American construction when used without other additional prepositions such as 'through to'.

According to the number of instances per ten million words in Cambridge International Corpus, the construction in example (26) is used approximately twice as much in British English than in American, while still showing very significant usage in both varieties (Algeo, 2006, p. 190). The characteristically American construction (27) occurs in even more instances in its variety than the 'to' construction in the British variety. To compare, in British English, the 'through' construction without additional prepositions occurs more than forty times less than in American (Algeo, 2006, p. 190). The construction in example (28) with the additional preposition 'to' has a much less significant occurrence in both varieties, but still occurs five times more in British English (Algeo, 2006, p. 190).

Examples:

- (25) Monday up to and including Friday (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (26) From a period of time to a later period of time (Algeo, 2006, p. 190)
- (27) From a period of time through another period of time (Algeo, 2006, p. 190)
- (28) From a period of time through to another period of time (Algeo, 2006, p. 190)

### **2.4.3 Telling the time**

While using 'to' (29) or 'past' (30) when telling the time is used in both British and American English, American has its characteristic way, which does not occur in British, by substituting 'to' with 'of' (31) or 'till' (32) and 'past' with 'after' (33) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80).

Examples:

- (29) Twenty to three (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (30) Twenty past three (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (31) Twenty of three (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (32) Twenty till three (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (33) Five past eight (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)
- (34) Five after eight (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80)

Algeo (2006, p. 190) finds that British Cambridge International Corpus texts have 'to' in relation to telling the time seven times as often as American texts do. American texts, on the other hand, have 'of' fifteen times more than British texts. However, British uses 'of' very rarely, so even fifteen times more in American is a rather minor occurrence. Moreover, other prepositions including 'till' or 'before' are negligible in British and unrecorded in American Cambridge International Corpus texts (Algeo, 2006, p. 190).

#### **2.4.4 Presence of a preposition**

In American English, a preposition can be omitted when speaking about a specific date or day of the week that indicates a time different from the present. This usually concerns the preposition 'on' (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 80). Examples (34) and (36) are cases of British English, where the preposition is not omitted and examples (35) and (37) demonstrate the above mentioned omission of the preposition 'on'.

Examples:

- (34) The sale started on January the first. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)
- (35) The sale started January first. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)
- (36) I'll do it on Sunday. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)
- (37) I'll do it Sunday. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)

In American English, the preposition can also be deleted before nouns specifying time in a repetitive or habitual action. Additionally to the omission, in this case, the nouns must become plural (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81). While this omission (38) is characteristic only for American English, the option without omission (39) is common in both varieties (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81).

Examples:

- (38) He works days and studies nights. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)
- (39) He works by day and studies at nights. (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)

In British English, there is a difference in meaning between the phrases 'to be home' and 'to be at home'. While example (40) deals with the physical presence of the subject, example (41) focuses on the action of returning home (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81).

Examples:

- (40) Is John at home? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)
- (41) Is John home? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 81)

#### **2.5 Concord with collective nouns**

Collective nouns, such as 'family', 'team' or 'audience', are called collective because they refer to group of animate or inanimate objects that act as a whole – collectively (Soanes, 2011). A collective noun denotes a single entity, but one composed of separate members, and can be thought of as either singular or plural (Algeo, 2006, p. 279). A grammatical issue therefore emerges, one of agreement, or matching subjects and verbs (Soanes, 2011).



In British English, most collective nouns take plural verb agreement (42) as well as plural pronoun substitution, as shown in the question tag of example (42). American English will nearly always take singular verb agreement (43) and singular pronoun substitution (43), though it is possible for a question tag to occur in plural form with singular agreement, which is called mixed agreement (44) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 73).

Examples:

(42) Your team are doing well this year, aren't they? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 73)

(43) Your team is doing well this year, isn't it? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 73)

(44) Your team is doing well this year, aren't they? (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 73)

A factor that influences the choice between singular or plural in both varieties is whether the group that is being referred to is viewed as acting as individuals or as a single unit. This again differs based on the variety, as British English prefers to stress the individuality of the members, whereas American English strongly tends to view the group as a unit (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 73).

When studying instances per ten million words in Cambridge International Corpus, Algeo (2006, p. 279) finds that words such as 'team', 'military', 'press', 'council' or 'union' all range approximately from ten to forty percent of all instances found in British texts when followed by plural 'are', 'were', or 'have'. On the other hand, in American texts, the plural construction never reaches one percent in any of the mentioned cases.

### **Historical context**

When relating concord of collective nouns to colonial lag, Marckwardt (1980, p. 77) believes that American English is more conservative in concord patterns than British English. "Originally, the singular would have been demanded, but as early as 1000, plural verbs began to appear with collective nouns when the idea of a number of individuals took precedence over the group concept" (Marckwardt, 1980, p. 77). Levin (2001, p. 36) reports that in British English, the usage of plural verb agreement peaks in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and decreases in the nineteenth. American English has retained the older practice with the singular form (Marckwardt, 1980, p. 77). Various studies since the 1950s have shown that American English is actually leading world English in an increasing use of the singular concord in the twentieth century (Rohdenburg and Schlüter, 2009, p. 28).

## **3 SELECTED DIFFERENCES IN SPELLING**

### **3.1 Introduction**

English has been described as a borrowing language. Although English is called a Germanic language, only approximately half the words in the dictionary are of Germanic origin (Fulford, 2012, p. ). The rest has been acquired from Latin and a significant amount of other languages. English is thus a polyglot language. Polyglot means "speaking or using several different languages" (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017). Today, almost every language in the world has made at least a small lexical contribution to English (Fulford, 2012, p. ).

Though according to Trudgill and Hannah (1982, p. 59) the vocabulary differences between British and American English are numerous and capable of causing confusion in mutual comprehension, this chapter aims to examine only differences in spelling. Spelling differences do not inhibit mutual understanding as much as vocabulary differences and are far less numerous in quantity. Spelling differences are in many cases not apparent in the spoken language, in words such as 'color' vs. 'colour', the pronunciation is the same, but there are also differences that do project themselves into pronunciation, for example 'dreamed' vs. 'dreamt'. Despite the fact that spelling differences are not as numerous (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 59), they often apply to words that are used on a daily basis in both varieties of the English language.

Some of the differences are due to American innovations, some due to apparent attempts to regularize spelling. Others are simply the outcome of each variety's adopting a different variant as their standard (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 59).

### **3.2 Selected spelling differences**

#### **British -our versus American -or**

Perhaps the most representative of this difference is the couple 'color' and 'colour'. 'Color' with the omitted letter 'u' is a typical American spelling, while British English, along with all other main varieties of English, prefer 'colour'. All derivatives of the word are influenced by this difference as well, so for example British 'coloured' is 'colored' in American English, or 'colouring' is spelled 'coloring' (Grammarist, 2013). What is now regarded as the American spelling, in fact dates centuries back before the United States even existed. There were several other spellings such as 'colur', 'coolor', etc., before the modern British spelling gained prevalence in the 17th century (Grammarist, 2013). The preference for 'color' in America that took hold in the 19th century, was in large part the result of conscious simplification of

English spelling by people such as the lexicographer Noah Webster. Though nowadays 'color' occasionally appears outside the United States, it is usually considered a misspelling (Grammarist, 2013). Another prime example of this difference is the couple 'armor' vs. 'armour'. 'Armor' is also only typical for the American variety of all main English varieties (Grammarist, 2013) and the difference applies to all of its derivatives as well as in all cases of the following examples.

<i>EngEng: -our</i>	<i>USEng: -or</i>
<i>colour</i>	<i>color</i>
<i>favour</i>	<i>favor</i>
<i>honour</i>	<i>honor</i>
<i>labour</i>	<i>labor</i>
<i>odour</i>	<i>odor</i>
<i>vapour</i>	<i>vapor</i>

**Tab. 2** Examples of words with -our vs. -or difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 83)

This difference does not apply to words ending with -or that signify persons, for example 'governor' or 'emperor' (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 83).

### **British -re versus American -er**

In British English, some words of foreign origin end with a consonant followed by -re, which is pronounced /əɾ/. In American English, most of these words, though not all, have a more phonetic spelling and end with -er (LearnEnglish, 2017). Exceptions include many -re words in Modern French, which are spelled with -er in both British and American English, such as 'chapter', 'perimeter', 'disaster', etc. On the other hand, the ending -cre in 'mediocre' or 'massacre' is preserved in American English to prevent mispronouncing the 'c' as /s/ instead of /k/ (LearnEnglish, 2017).

In case of words that do differ such as 'theatre' vs. 'theater', there is generally no difference in meaning, but some Americans believe that for instance 'theater' denotes a place while 'theatre' is an art form, or that 'theater' is a movie theater whereas 'theatre' is a drama venue (Grammarist, 2012). Another example of meaning difference is 'center' vs. 'centre', where some people do make distinctions that 'center' is a word for a place or an institution, while 'centre' stands for a middle point of something (Grammarist, 2011). Generally, 'theater' and 'center' are characteristic of American English, while 'theatre' and 'centre' are considered correct in British English (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84).

<i>EngEng: -re</i>	<i>USEng: -er</i>
<i>centre</i>	<i>center</i>
<i>fibre</i>	<i>fiber</i>
<i>litre</i>	<i>liter</i>
<i>metre</i>	<i>meter</i>
<i>spectre</i>	<i>specter</i>
<i>theatre</i>	<i>theater</i>

**Tab. 3** Examples of words with -re vs. -er difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84)

### **British -ce versus American -se**

As in the case of -our vs. -or, most differences in this category apply to most derivatives, so for example 'defence' in British English can extend to 'defenceless', whereas American 'defense' is derived to 'defenseless'. However, there are exceptions, as words such as 'defensive' or 'defensively' have an 's' in all varieties (Grammarist, 2012). Similarly, the word 'practice' is most frequently spelled with a 'c' in American English regardless of what part of speech it is. Outside of the United States though, the distinction is made, as 'practice' is regarded as a noun and 'practise' serves as a verb (Grammarist, 2012).

<i>EngEng: -ce</i>	<i>USEng: -se</i>
<i>defence</i>	<i>defense</i>
<i>licence (n.)</i>	<i>license (n. and v.)</i>
<i>offence</i>	<i>offense</i>
<i>practice (n.)</i>	<i>practise or practice (n.)</i>
<i>pretence</i>	<i>pretense</i>

**Tab. 4** Examples of words with -ce vs. -se difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84)

### **British -ise versus American -ize**

In British English, both spelling alternatives are acceptable, so a British speaker would correctly use 'realise' as well 'realize', but the -ize alternative is the only correct one in American English (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84). There is a small set of verbs that must always be spelled with -ise in either variety, because the ending is a part of a longer element, for example -cise (meaning cutting) in the word 'excise' (Oxford Dictionaries, 2017). Though today, the spelling of the word 'realise' is ten times as common as 'realize' in British English, the latter

predates the United States by nearly two centuries and used to be the preferred spelling throughout most of the word's history (Grammarist, 2012).

<i>EngEng: -ise</i>	<i>USEng: -ize</i>
<i>apologise</i>	<i>apologize</i>
<i>capitalise</i>	<i>capitalize</i>
<i>dramatise</i>	<i>dramatize</i>
<i>glamorise</i>	<i>glamorize</i>
<i>naturalise</i>	<i>naturalize</i>
<i>satirise</i>	<i>satirize</i>

**Tab. 5** Examples of words with -ise vs. -ize difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84)

### **British doubled consonant versus American single consonant**

In British English, the final consonant of a word is doubled if the word ends in a single consonant preceded by a short vowel and the suffix is a vowel suffix (Webster, 1823, p. 62). In such words, if the stress is not on the last syllable of the stem, American English often bypasses the doubling and leaves a single-consonant ending. While British English only accepts doubled-consonant spelling, American English is open to both alternatives (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84).

<i>EngEng: doubled consonant</i>	<i>USEng: single consonant</i>
<i>counsellor</i>	<i>counselor</i>
<i>kidnapper</i>	<i>kidnaper</i>
<i>levelled</i>	<i>leveled</i>
<i>libellous</i>	<i>libelous</i>
<i>quarrelling</i>	<i>quarreling</i>
<i>travelled</i>	<i>traveled</i>
<i>worshipping</i>	<i>worshiping</i>

**Tab. 6** Examples of words with doubled vs. single consonant difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84)

### **Miscellaneous noun spelling differences**

There are several other spelling differences that fall under no category. One of these words included in the practical part of this thesis is the word 'programme'. 'Programme' is the standard British spelling and is used for all senses of the noun with the exception of computer

programs, which are spelled 'program'. American English doesn't use 'programme' at all, instead it extends the spelling 'program' to all meanings of two British alternatives (Grammarist, 2012).

<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>EngEng</b>	<b>USEng</b>
<i>buses</i>	<i>busses or buses</i>
<i>cheque (banking)</i>	<i>check</i>
<i>draught</i>	<i>draft</i>
<i>gaol</i>	<i>jail</i>
<i>gauge</i>	<i>gage or gauge</i>
<i>jewellery</i>	<i>jewelry</i>
<i>kerb</i>	<i>curb</i>
<i>moustache</i>	<i>mustache</i>
<i>plough</i>	<i>plow</i>
<i>programme</i>	<i>program</i>

**Tab. 7** Examples of miscellaneous spelling differences (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 84)

### **Regular versus irregular preterite and past participle verb forms**

Generally, there is a stronger tendency towards regularity in past forms of verbs in American English than in any other variety (Kövecses, 2000, p. 189). According to Johansson (1979, p. 206), irregular -t forms such as 'dreamt' or 'learnt' are almost completely lacking in American English, while in British English they are the preferred choice, though -ed forms as in 'dreamed' and 'learned' are also frequent.

	<b>EngEng</b>	<b>USEng</b>
<b>Present</b>	<b>Past and Past Participle</b>	<b>Past and Past Participle</b>
<i>burn</i>	<i>burnt</i>	<i>burned</i>
<i> dwell</i>	<i>dwelt</i>	<i>dwelled</i>
<i>learn</i>	<i>learnt</i>	<i>learned</i>
<i>smell</i>	<i>smelt</i>	<i>smelled</i>
<i>spell</i>	<i>spelt</i>	<i>spelled</i>
<i>spill</i>	<i>spilt</i>	<i>spilled</i>
<i>spoil</i>	<i>spoilt</i>	<i>spoiled</i>

**Tab. 8** Examples of past and past participle spelling differences (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English) (Trudgill and Hannah, 1982, p. 60)

## 4 QUESTIONNAIRE

The practical part demonstrates students' preference of either British or American English before the other. The research does not study conscious preference, it is not clear in any of the questions in the questionnaire, which option represents which variety of English. Students were given 18 pairs of sentences. From each pair, they were asked to circle the option that more reflects their knowledge of English. The sentences were created in a nonsuggestive way and without a pattern, categories were randomly spread throughout the questionnaire and a) and b) options were placed in a randomly altering order of British and American English. The following results are presented in a different order than in the questionnaire, mainly for the purposes of clarity.

The aim is to find, which variety students incline to, with consideration of the fact that the school involved in the research teaches only British English. With that in mind, the goal is to find to what extent American English influences high school students' knowledge of English. The ways that American English might do so nowadays are plenty. Most today's teenagers have full access to the internet through computers or smartphones, they can instantly watch internet videos, listen to music and often play video games, particularly boys at high school age.

Questionnaires were handed to students of the grammar school in Moravská Třebová – Gymnázium Moravská Třebová, Svitavská 310. The classes involved in the research include all high school classes. There are six high school classes on Gymnázium Moravská Třebová: 5.AV, 6.AV, 7.AV, 8.AV, 3.IS, and 4.IS. Classes marked with 'AV' are those students, who attend Gymnázium Moravská Třebová since the 6th grade of elementary school. 'IS' classes are students who have come from various elementary schools to study grammar school with extended specialization in information systems.

For clarity, the grades are as follows: 5.AV attends 1st grade of high school, 6.AV attends 2nd grade of high school, 7.AV and 3.IS attend 3rd grade of high school and 8.AV and 4.IS attend 4th grade of high school. The total sample of respondents amounts to 102 students. Number of respondents from each class are as follows: 5.AV – 16 students, 6.AV – 27 students, 7.AV – 23 students, 8.AV – 14 students, 3.IS – 8 students, 4.IS – 14 students, thus making it a total of 16 student for the 1st grade, 27 students for the 2nd grade, 31 students for the 3rd grade, and 28 students for the 4th grade.

Since the results of the research are delivered in percentages and the number of respondents differs greatly between some of the classes, in order for the data to be presented

more accurately (75% of 8 students is fewer people than 30% of 27), each percentage will be followed by the actual number of students and the size of the full sample after a virgule. The number of students / size of each sample will always be placed in parentheses following the percentage, for example 30% (8/27).

## 4.1 Grammar results

### The present perfect

Two pairs of sentences were selected to examine the students' usage of the present perfect, or alternatively the American way of using the preterite in place of the present perfect.

Pair 1:

- A) American variant: *Robert feels sick, he ate too much.*
- B) British variant: *Robert feels sick, he has eaten too much.*

Pair 2:

- A) American variant: *Did you finish your homework yet?*
- B) British variant: *Have you finished your homework yet?*

From pair 1, most students have selected the American variant over the British one. This difference is most visible in classes: 8.AV, where 79% (11/14) of students have selected A) and only 21% (3/14) have selected B); and 3.IS, where 75% (6/8) of students have selected A) and 25% (2/8) have selected B). The second largest class, 7.AV, has also opted for A) by the majority 65% (15/23). The largest class, however, has selected the British variant over the American one, with 45% (12/27) for A) and 55% (15/27) for B). It is the only class of all six to have selected the British variant over the American, but the overall percentage is still in favor of the American preterite construction. 61% (62/102) out of all respondents have chosen A) and 39% (40/102) have chosen B).

In case of pair 2, which presented a pair of questions, the obvious favorite was the British construct. As many as 93% (12/14) of 8.AV students have chosen B). In almost all other classes, the predominance of B) was similarly visible, 6.AV with 89% (24/27), 7.AV with 87% (20/23), and 3.IS with 88% (7/8). 4.IS showed a slightly lower predominance of the British variant compared to other classes with 64% (9/14). Still, all classes have selected the British variant over the American. Overall 79% (86/102) have selected B) and 21% (16/102) have selected A).

If the overall usage of preterite vs. present perfect is compared by combining percentages of pairs 1 and 2, the results are in favor of the British construct, with 62% (126/204) of selections being for British variants and 38% (78/204) for American variants.



It is important to note that the influence of American English may not be the only cause for students' choice between preterite and present perfect. The indicative sentences have visibly smaller predominance of one variant over the other than the questions do. There is a possibility that while selecting from the pair of indicative sentences, students opted for the simpler construction. While there are mechanical clues that help students remember the rules of using the present perfect correctly (look whether there is information about time of the preterite event), these clues are not as visually apparent as in the case of questions in pair 2. The questions contain the word 'yet', which is taught to be an automatic indicator to use the present perfect tense.

### **Have versus have got**

A pair of questions was selected for examining the students' preference between 'have' and 'have got'.

Pair 3:

- A) American variant: *Do you have a car?*
- B) British variant: *Have you got a car?*

The majority of students has selected the American variant over the British one. This difference stands out the most in classes: 3.IS – 75% (6/8) of students have selected A) and 25% (2/8) have selected B); and 8.AV, where 71% (10/14) of students have opted for A) and 29% (4/14) have opted for B). The two largest classes have similar percentage of 65% (15/23) for 7.AV and 63% (17/27) for 6.AV. Almost all of 5.AV aside from three students have selected the opposite variant to all other classes, meaning variant B). 81% (13/16) of students in 5.AV have selected the British variant. Overall, option A) still has the majority with 59% (60/102) students opting for it, while 41% (42/102) have chosen B).

### **Have to versus have got to**

Two short indicative sentences were used in the questionnaire to compare preferences between 'have to' and 'have got to'.

Pair 4:

- A) American variant: *I have to leave now.*
- B) British variant: *I have got to leave now.*

In this case, the American variant has been selected by definite majority of students. In 8.AV, 100% (14/14) of students have selected A) and none have selected B). Similarly, in the larger 7.AV, 91% (21/23) have opted for A), as well as in 5.AV with 94% (15/16). However, the 100% of 8.AV are balanced by 4.IS, where 57% (8/14) have selected option B) and thus make the combined total of 4th grades 71% (20/28) for A) and 29% (8/28) for B). 4.IS is the

only class to opt for the British variant, the remaining classes have selected A). 67% (18/27) in 6.AV and 88% (7/8) in 3.IS. Overall, the preference tends towards the American variant with 79% (81/102) selecting A) and 21% (21/102) selecting B).

Perhaps the tendency to select A) over B) is in this case again influenced either by choosing the simpler variant or by the fact that B) is not in a contracted form 'I've got to leave now', which might be more recognizable, as that is the way the 'have got to' construction is very often used.

### **Should versus shall**

A pair of questions was used in the questionnaire to find students' preference between present 'shall' and past 'should' in polite questions.

Pair 5:

- A) American variant: *Should we go now?*
- B) British variant: *Shall we go now?*

In the overall outcome, this is the most evenly selected grammatical difference in the questionnaire. At the level of individual classes, it is the least one-sided one. Each class appears to have a slight preference for one or the other variant. Option A) was selected in classes including 4.IS, where 86% (12/14) have circled A), 5.AV, where 56% (9/16) have circled A) and 6.AV, where also 56% (15/27) of students have circled A). Option B) was prevalent in classes 8.AV with 64% (9/14) for B), 7.AV with 61% (14/23) for B), and 3.IS with 63% (5/8) for B). While 3rd grade classes appear to have a similar preference, 4th grade classes contradict each other in preference and create a total of 61% (17/28) for A) and 39% (11/28) for B). The total sum of students preferring the American variant with 'should' is 52% (53/102) and of those who prefer the British variant with 'shall' is 48% (49/102).

### **Prepositions**

Three pairs of sentences were selected to examine preferences in preposition usage.

Pair 6:

- A) American variant: *What are you doing on the weekend?*
- B) British variant: *What are you doing at the weekend?*

Pair 7:

- A) American variant: *James will be gone Monday through Friday.*
- B) British variant: *James will be gone Monday to Friday.*

Pair 8:

- A) American variant: *It's quarter after six.*
- B) British variant: *It's quarter past six.*

In all three pairs, the British variant is by far the most preferred choice. The British variant in pair 6 has been selected by 100% of students in classes 3.IS, 4.IS, and 5.AV. In 6.AV, 19% (5/27) have selected the American variant. A) has also been selected by 17% (4/23) of students in 7.AV and by 7% (1/14) in 8.AV. The overall preference of B) is 90% (92/102) over 10% (10/102) of those who have opted for A).

Pair 7 also sees a 100% preference of the British variant in three different classes, more precisely in 4.IS, 7.AV, and 8.AV. In 3.IS, 13% (1/8) have selected A). In 5.AV, 19% (3/16) have selected A) and in 6.AV, 15% (4/27) have selected A). Overall, 92% (94/102) of students have selected the British variant and 8% (8/102) have selected the American one.

Option B) in pair 8 has a 100% preference in classes 3.IS, 7.AV, and 8.AV. In 4.IS, 36% (5/14) have selected option A), which is the highest percentage as well as the highest found number of students who have selected an American variant in any of the pairs 6 through 8. Additionally, 13% (2/16) of students in 5.AV and 19% (5/27) of students in 6.AV have selected option A). In total, 88% (90/102) of students have selected option B), while 12% (12/102) have selected option A).

After combining responses from pairs 6 through 8, the overall percentage in favor of British prepositional constructs is 90% (276/306), while 10% (30/306) fall on the American way of using prepositions.

The overwhelming preference of the British usage of prepositions is not surprising. Although the reason for it is only open to speculations and could again be just the result of choosing the more simple-looking answer, it is for example possible that when British preposition use is taught at an early age, it is fixed through repetition. In a non-school environment, the American way of using prepositions then does not stand out enough to change an already fixed habit.

### **Collective noun concord**

One pair of sentences has been selected to examine students' usage of collective nouns.

Pair 9:

A) American variant: *The audience is very quiet.*

B) British variant: *The audience are very quiet.*

Concord with collective nouns has provided the most one-sided result of the entire questionnaire. 100% of students from 4.IS and 7.AV have selected A), as well as 94% (15/16) of students from 5.AV and 96% (26/27) from 6.AV. 86% (12/14) of 8.AV students and 88% (7/8) of 3.IS students have also selected A). A total of 95% (97/102) of students have selected the American variant of the two sentences.

A possible explanation for this overwhelming preference may be the fact that there is not much attention placed on teaching children the primary British usage of collective nouns and since there is no 's' at the end of the word that would signify that a noun is plural, students intuitively opt for the singular option.

The overall results of grammatical preference, which have been calculated from all received grammar-related responses are as follows:

	American English	British English
3.IS	43,1%	56,9%
4.IS	46,8%	53,2%
5.AV	41,7%	58,3%
6.AV	43,2%	56,8%
7.AV	43,5%	56,5%
8.AV	42,9%	57,1%
Overall	43,5%	56,5%

**Tab. 9** Overall results of the grammar-related part of the questionnaire

## 4.2 Spelling results

### Nouns

Six pairs of nouns differing in spelling have been selected for the questionnaire and used in various sentences to examine which spelling the students are more familiar with.

Pair 10:

- A) American variant: *What color is your car?*
- B) British variant: *What colour is your car?*

Pair 11:

- A) American variant: *We're going to the theater.*
- B) British variant: *We're going to the theatre.*

Pair 12:

- A) American variant: *Do you realize what you've done?*
- B) British variant: *Do you realise what you've done?*

Pair 13:

- A) American variant: *In his defense, Josh wasn't making it easy.*
- B) British variant: *In his defence, Josh wasn't making it easy.*

Pair 14:

A) American variant: *What is it like, traveling across the desert?*

B) British variant: *What is it like, travelling across the desert?*

Pair 15:

A) American variant: *During the middle ages knights wore heavy armor made of metal.*

B) British variant: *During the middle ages knights wore heavy armour made of metal.*

Pair 16:

A) American variant: *Peter has a hard training program.*

B) British variant: *Peter has a hard training programme.*

Most of the results are very close. Pair 16 shows greatest difference in students' preference, 72% (73/102) prefer the American spelling 'program', while 28% (29/102) prefer the British spelling 'programme'. Both second and third largest differences are in favor of the British spelling of each pair. In case of pair 10, 66% (67/102) of respondents have selected the sentence with the British spelling 'colour' and from pair 13, 65% (66/102) have selected the sentence with the British spelling of 'defence'. 51% (52/102) of all students have circled the British option with 'theatre' in pair 11 and 53% (54/102) have selected the American option with 'realize' in pair 12. Both pair 14 and pair 15 have returned exactly 50% (51/102) for each option.

No class has shown a unified preference of either of the two varieties of spelling in all of the nouns, each class prefers American spelling in some of the pairs and British in others. The class that came the closest to a unified preference is 6.AV, whose 27 students have selected all British spellings by majority, but 70% (19/27) have selected the American spelling of 'program'.

### **Past verb spelling**

Two pairs of sentences were selected to examine the students' preference of spelling of verbs in past tense.

Pair 17:

A) American variant: *All the shoes fit in to the shelves.*

B) British variant: *All the shoes fitted in to the shelves.*

Pair 18:

A) American variant: *She learned to play the piano.*

B) British variant: *She learnt to play the piano.*

In case of pair 17, 79% (11/14) of students from 8.AV, as well as 75% (6/8) of students from 3.IS, 70% (16/23) of students from 7.AV, and 57% (8/14) of students from 4.IS prefer the American variant with 'fit'. On the other hand, 56% (15/27) of the most numerous class, 6.AV,

along with 56% (9/16) of students from 5.AV prefer the British spelling 'fitted'. Put together, the total percentage of students preferring A) is 59% (60/102), while the total of students preferring B) is 41% (42/102).

Pair 18 shows similar results. 79% (11/14) of students from 8.AV along with 71% (10/14) of students from 4.IS prefer option A). 52% (14/27) of students from 6.AV and 52% (12/23) of students from 7.AV prefer option A) as well. There is no majority preference for option B), though it is definitely taught at the particular grammar school. Two classes – 3.IS and 5.AV are divided exactly by 50% in selection from pair 18. Overall, the option of the American regularized spelling of 'learned' has been selected by 58% (59/102) of all students.

Classes including 4.IS, 7.AV, and 8.AV have a unified preference of the American spelling in both pairs.

The overall results of spelling preference, which have been calculated from all received spelling-related responses are as follows:

	American English	British English
3.IS	61,1%	38,9%
4.IS	50%	50%
5.AV	56,2%	43,8%
6.AV	39,9%	60,1%
7.AV	57,5%	42,5%
8.AV	51,6%	48,4%
Overall	51,1%	48,9%

**Tab. 10** Overall results of the spelling-related part of the questionnaire

The overall results of preference of a variety of the English language, which have been calculated from all received responses are as follows:

	American English	British English
3.IS	52,1%	47,9%
4.IS	48,4%	51,6%
5.AV	49%	51%
6.AV	41,6%	58,4%
7.AV	50,5%	49,5%
8.AV	47,2%	52,8%
Overall	47,3%	52,7%

**Tab. 10** Overall results of the spelling-related part of the questionnaire

## CONCLUSION

The questionnaire showed students' unconscious preference between American and British variety of English. Technically speaking, from the perspective of percentage, British English has proved to be the preferred variant. However, in the overall result, it has gained the given preference by only approximately five percent, meaning that almost half of the students' knowledge tends to the American variant. Given that teachers and textbooks on Gymnázium Moravská Třebová teach only British English, the share of American English grammar constructs and spelling is more than noticeable. Moreover, despite the fact that overall preference goes to the British variety, in case of spelling differences, American English has the slightly bigger half of students' preferences. This is quite surprising, since vocabulary is something that students have to learn by heart.

The influence of American English might come from non-school environments, especially from the virtual ones. Or the teachers' knowledge of English may simply be a combination of the two varieties that then gets projected on the students. Or the students carry their knowledge of elements of American English from their elementary school. The speculations can lead to numerous places and sources, but it is undeniable that, though American English sometimes has a connotation of incorrectness and informality in Czech schools, it manages to make its way into the minds of young boys and girls in our country.

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## ABSTRACT

<b>Jméno a příjmení:</b>	David Rouš
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<b>Rok obhajoby:</b>	2017

<b>Název práce:</b>	Vývoj americké angličtiny a srovnání současné americké angličtiny s britskou standardní angličtinou
<b>Název v angličtině:</b>	The Development of American English and the Comparison of Contemporary American English with Standard British English
<b>Anotace práce:</b>	Práce se zabývá vybranými gramatickými a pravopisnými rozdíly mezi Britskou a Americkou angličtinou. Vybrané rozdíly byly použity ve výzkumu, který zjišťuje, do jaké míry ovlivňuje americká angličtina výuku na gymnáziu, které vyučuje britskou angličtinu.
<b>Klíčová slova:</b>	britská angličtina, americká angličtina, rozdíly, gramatika, pravopis, dotazník
<b>Anotace v angličtině:</b>	The thesis deals with selected grammatical and spelling differences between British and American English. These selected differences were used for a research, which examines, to what extent American English influences the students' knowledge of English at the grammar school, which only teaches British English.
<b>Klíčová slova v angličtině:</b>	British English, American English, differences, grammar, spelling, questionnaire
<b>Rozsah práce:</b>	40 stran
<b>Jazyk práce:</b>	Anglický jazyk

# **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1:** Questionnaire

**Appendix 2:** Figures and tables

## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

### Rozdíly mezi britskou a americkou angličtinou

Dotazník je anonymní, slouží pro výzkum k bakalářské práci. Vyplnění trvá jen chvíli, přečtěte si pozorně každou dvojici a zakroužkujte vždy možnost, která více odpovídá vaší znalosti angličtiny:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a) What color is your car?                              | a) Do you realize what you've done?                                |
| b) What colour is your car?                             | b) Do you realise what you've done?                                |
| a) Robert feels sick, he has eaten too much.            | a) In his defense, Josh wasn't making it easy.                     |
| b) Robert feels sick, he ate too much.                  | b) In his defence, Josh wasn't making it easy.                     |
| a) I have got to leave now.                             | a) What was it like, traveling across the desert?                  |
| b) I have to leave now.                                 | b) What was it like, travelling across the desert?                 |
| a) All the shoes fit in to the shelves. (minulý čas)    | a) During the Middle Ages knights wore heavy armor made of metal.  |
| b) All the shoes fitted in to the shelves. (minulý čas) | b) During the Middle Ages knights wore heavy armour made of metal. |
| a) She learnt to play the piano.                        | a) Peter has a hard training program.                              |
| b) She learned to play the piano.                       | b) Peter has a hard training programme.                            |
| a) The audience are very quiet.                         | a) What are you doing at the weekend?                              |
| b) The audience is very quiet.                          | b) What are you doing on the weekend?                              |
| a) Have you finished your homework yet?                 | a) James will be gone Monday to Friday.                            |
| b) Did you finish your homework yet?                    | b) James will be gone Monday through Friday.                       |
| a) Do you have a car?                                   | a) It's quarter past six.  |
| b) Have you got a car?                                  | b) It's quarter after six.   |
| a) We're going to the theatre.                          | a) Shall we go now?  |
| b) We're going to the theater.                          | b) Should we go now?   |

Pro účely výzkumu ještě prosím vyplňte, ve kterém jste ročníku střední školy: .....

Děkuji za váš čas.

## **Appendix 2:** Figures and tables

**Fig. 1** The present perfect (with HAVE, active/passive) as percentage of all past-referring verb forms.

(ROHDENBURG, Günter a Julia SCHLÜTER. *One language, two grammars?: differences between British and American English*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, s. 230)

**Table 1:** The present perfect (with auxiliary HAVE) and the preterite as percentages of all past-referring verb forms in the history of English. Passive as well as active verb forms included (but not progressive forms). From the corpus used in Elness (1997)

(ROHDENBURG, Günter a Julia SCHLÜTER. *One language, two grammars?: differences between British and American English*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009, s. 230)

**Table 2:** Examples of words with -our vs. -or difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. *International English: a guide to varieties of standard English*. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 83)

**Table 3:** Examples of words with -re vs. -er difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. *International English: a guide to varieties of standard English*. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 84)

**Table 4:** Examples of words with -ce vs. -se difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. *International English: a guide to varieties of standard English*. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 84)

**Table 5:** Examples of words with -ise vs. -ize difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. *International English: a guide to varieties of standard English*. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 84)

**Table 6:** Examples of words with doubled vs. single consonant difference (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. International English: a guide to varieties of standard English. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 84)

**Table 7:** Examples of miscellaneous spelling differences (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. International English: a guide to varieties of standard English. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 84)

**Table 8:** Examples of past and past participle spelling differences (EngEng for British English, USEng for American English)

(TRUDGILL, Peter a Jean HANNAH. International English: a guide to varieties of standard English. London: Edward Arnold, 1982, s. 60)