Standard English vs. Non-standard English

Global English, SS 2010

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Structure

1. Standard English
   A. Vocabulary
   B. Grammar
   C. Spelling
   D. Pronunciation
   E. Pragmatics

2. Conclusion
Standard English / Non-standard English
(Jenkins 2003, ch. A5)

- **Standard English:**
  - avoids non-standard grammar, slang + swear words
  - associated with better education + middle class manners
  - usually used in print
  - taught in school

- **Non-standard English:**
  - includes types of English which do not conform to the vocabulary + grammar of StE
  - StE is part of GenE
Standard English / Non-standard English

Four criteria for Standard English
(Jenkins 2003 : 71)

1. Vocabulary
2. Grammar
3. Spelling
4. Pronunciation
Vocabulary
(Jenkins 2003 : 71-75)
Vocabulary

Same concept – different expression

- there is some vocabulary in AmE and BrE which is different

-> ex.: almost all vocabulary referring to the car and railway industry varies
Vocabulary
Same concept – different expression

- the use of a BrE word in AmE (and vice versa) is recognised in the same way as a borrowed word from any other language

-> ex.: usage of *mate* or *amigo* in AmE

- this can lead to confusion!
Vocabulary

Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

Driving license
Driver’s license
Vocabulary

Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

BrE - Driving license
AmE - Driver’s license
Vocabulary
Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

faucet

tap
Vocabulary

Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

BrE – tap
AmE – faucet
Vocabulary
Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

grade
form
Vocabulary
Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

*BrE - form*

*AmE - grade*
Vocabulary

Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

She read Biology at Cambridge.
She majored in Biology at Harvard.
Vocabulary
Same concept – different expression

What do you think – to which variety (BrE / AmE) do the following expressions belong?

BrE - She read Biology at Cambridge.
AmE - She majored in Biology at Harvard.
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

pants
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

pants

BrE: underwear
AmE: trousers
Vocabulary
Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

fag
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

fag

BrE: cigarette
AmE: highly offensive term for a homosexual male
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

pavement
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

pavement

BrE: footpath
AmE: road surface (sidewalk in some parts of the US)
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

suspender
Vocabulary Quiz!

Same word – different meaning

**suspenders**

BrE: *short, elastic fastening for stockings*
AmE: *two elastic straps to hold up trousers*
Vocabulary
Same word – additional meaning (in one variety)

- *bathroom* in general: room with shower, toilet & sink -> AmE: *toilet*

- *school* in general: institution of education at elementary level -> AmE: *all institutions of education, including universities*

- *smart* in general: intelligent -> BrE: *well-groomed*
Vocabulary
Same word – difference in style

- BrE: *autumn* is used in every register
- AmE: *autumn* is more commonly in literary context
Grammar
Grammar
(Jenkins 2003 : 71)

- **Nouns**
  - greater use of certain noun endings
    -> AmE: <-ee> retiree, draftee, <ster> ex. “teamster”, “gamester”
  - difference in derivational ending
    -> AmE: candidature vs. BrE: candidacy
  - greater tendency to use verbs as nouns in AmE
    -> To run down (the run-down); To be shut in (a shut-in); To try out (the try-out)

- **Verbs**
  - morphology, differences in past and participle endings
    -> BrE: dived, got vs. AmE: dove, gotten
  - auxiliaries, use of epistemic must :
    -> BrE: can’t vs. AmE: must not -> “you can't go there!” vs. “you must not go there!”
Grammar
(Jenkins 2003 : 71)

- **Adjectives**
  - the comparative adjective “different” is followed by
    -> AmE: *than* vs. BrE: *from/to*
  - “this one is different than/from…”

- **Adverbs**
  - yet and already cannot occur with the simple past tense in BrE but in AmE
    -> BrE: would use present perfect tense (*I haven’t bought one, yet*) vs. AmE: *I didn’t buy one, yet*

- **Prepositions**
  - a few prepositions differ in form
    -> BrE: *I put it behind the shed* vs. AmE: *I put it in back of the shed*
  - differences in prepositions in expressions of time
    -> BrE: *I haven’t seen him for ages* vs. AmE: *I haven’t seen him in ages.*
  - clock time
    -> BrE: *20 to 3, 5 past 8* vs. AmE: *20 of/till 3, 5 after 8*
  - different uses of *in + on*
    -> BrE: *to live in a street. To be in a sale* vs. AmE: *to be on a street. To be on sale.*
Spelling
Spelling
Spelling
(A short history of English Spelling:
http://www.englishspellingproblems.co.uk/html/history.html)

AmE - BrE

analyze – analyse
center – centre
check – cheque
color – colour
defense – defence
enroll – enrol
fulfill - fulfil
jewelry – jewellery
liter – litre
meter – metre
pajama – pyjama
theater – theatre
tire - tyre
Pronunciation

KEEP CALM AND FAKE A BRITISH ACCENT
Pronunciation

Click
Pronunciation

“Accent refers pronunciation only. (...) There are a large number of standard accents, and they are usually regionally based. These include:

RP (England), SSE (Scotland), GenAm (N. America), General Australian”

(S. Gramley 2008 in Gramley & Gramley 2008 : 271)
Pronunciation

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(Gramley & Gramley 2008 : 271)

- (Mid) Ulster English
  - Hiberno-English
Pronunciation

- differences in pronunciation are due to:
  - class
  - ethnicity
  - gender
  - age
  - region
Differences

“motor”

RP:

AmE:

SSE:

AusE

Ulster:

Hiberno:
Differences

“motor”

RP:
/məʊtə/
AmE:
/mɒʊdər/
SSE:
/moːtər/
AusE:
/mʌʊdər/
Ulster:
/moːtəɾ/
Hiberno:
/mɔʊtəɾ/

(partly adapted from: Language variation, Gramley 2009)
Pragmatics

What is meant by pragmatics?
Pragmatics

- What's de craig?
  - How's things?
- What's up, mate?
- How do you do?
  - What's up?
- You're alright?
- How is it goin'?
- How are you?
Pragmatics

Click
Process of Standardization
Process of Standardization

Selection

- most critical phase in standardizing process
- refers to the choice of one variety instead of another
- it could also involve selection of features from several varieties or from a language variety which has no native speakers
Process of Standardization

**Codification**

- the chosen variety has to be fixed in grammar books and dictionaries
Process of Standardization

Elaboration of function

- standard forms have to be capable of performing a wide range of institutional and literary functions
Process of Standardization

Acceptance

- the relevant population has to accept the selected variety as their standard: national language
Conclusion

- Non-standard English is everything that does not belong to Standard English, but:
Conclusion

- Non-standard English is everything that does not belong to Standard English, but:
  
  - Standard English is not easy to identify
Sources

Language variation, Gramley 2009

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    http://www.englishspellingproblems.co.uk/html/history.html


    (02.05.2010; 13:10)

Pictures:

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