



THE UNIQUE DIFFERENT FEATURES OF VOCABULARY OF THE BRITISH ENGLISH (BRE) AND AMERICAN ENGLISH (AME): A REVIEW

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Abstract

It is a fact that there are some amazing differences between British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) such as spelling, meaning, pronunciation, usage, and even vocabulary. The two varieties of English, as a matter of fact, are often confusing especially who study and use English as second and foreign language. Because of their differences and distinctive features, the speakers often find difficulties which one to use. This condition, then can lead to misunderstanding and misinformation and this finally causes ineffective communication. This paper is attempting to review the unique features of BrE and AmE focusing on the vocabulary.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a story about the daily life of New York Nate, who lives in the United States; and London Laura, who lives in England. As you can see, they have very similar lives but the vocabulary words they use are very different! Take a look how the women have different vocabulary usages. They have a lot different and diverse vocabulary to convey the same meaning in their lives.

First, New York Nate lives in an apartment, and London Laura lives in a flat. Second, every morning, when getting dressed, New York Nate puts on a pair of pants whereas London Laura puts on a pair of trousers. Both New York Nate and London Laura have babies, but New York Nate needs to change the baby's diaper, and London Laura needs to change the baby's nappy. Third, when it's time to go to work, New York Nate takes the subway and London Laura takes the underground (which is also called the tube). After getting off at the right stop, New York Nate walks along the sidewalk and London Laura walks along the pavement to reach their offices. Fourth, New York Nate works on the first floor of the building, and London Laura works on the ground floor. This means neither of them needs to take the elevator (for New York Nate) or the lift (for London Laura). Fifth, At work, both Nate and Laura need to send some important documents to a client – but New York Nate sends them by mail and London Laura sends them by post. Sixth, During the day, New York Nate snacks on cookies, french fries, and potato chips. London Laura eats the same things, but she calls them biscuits, chips, and crisps.

Both Nate and Laura get stomachaches, so on the way home from work New York Nate stops at the drug store or pharmacy and London Laura stops at the chemist's shop to pick up some medicine. Seventh, After work, Nate and Laura go shopping. They drive to the mall, and New York Nate puts his car in the parking lot, whereas London Laura puts hers in the car park. Both of them buy a lot of stuff, so New York Nate puts his purchases in the trunk, and London Laura puts hers in the boot. Eighth, on the way home, New York Nate stops to fill up the car with gas and London Laura fills up her car with petrol. At the station, New York Nate sees a truck, and London Laura sees a lorry. They both get home late, and New York Nate needs to take out the

garbage or trash; London Laura also needs to take out the rubbish. It's dark outside, so New York Nate takes a flashlight, and London Laura takes a torch. Ninth, it's been a long day, and New York Nate thinks he's going to go crazy; London Laura thinks she might go mad. Finally, it must be time for a vacation for New York Nate and a holiday for London Laura!

(<http://www.espressoenglish.net/british-english-vs-american-english-vocabulary/> the story goes as follows).

DESCRIPTION

Historically, most of the differences in lexis or vocabulary between British and American English are in connection with concepts originating from the 19th century to the mid 20th century, when new words were coined independently. For example, almost the entire vocabularies of the car/automobile and railway/railroad industries are different between the UK and US. Other sources of difference are slang or vulgar terms (where frequent new coinage occurs) and idiomatic phrases, including phrasal verbs. The differences most likely to create confusion are those where the same word or phrase is used for two different concepts http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_American_and_British_English.

Actually the differences in vocabulary between British and American English may be able to be classified into three categories such as 1) the complexity of form of the vocabulary, 2) idioms, and 3) social and cultural different by context.

The Complexity Form Vocabulary of the British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

The complexity form of vocabulary of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) actually can be divided into two patterns namely single word and compound word. These two types of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) vocabulary are different and unique.

First, single word form refers to both British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) vocabulary that only consists of one single word form in order to refer and convey the meaning. The single form, in this context is originally based in

BrE which may or may not be single or compound word in AmE. Table 1 shows the list of the different vocabulary between British and American English of single form.

Table 1 The list of single form vocabulary of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)	British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)
<i>autumn</i>	<i>autumn, fall</i>	<i>lift</i>	<i>elevator</i>
<i>aerial</i>	<i>antenna</i>	<i>lorry</i>	<i>truck, semi, tractor</i>
<i>autumn</i>	<i>autumn, fall</i>	<i>luggage</i>	<i>baggage, luggage</i>
<i>accelerator</i>	<i>gas pedal, accelerator</i>	<i>mad</i>	<i>crazy, insane</i>
<i>anorak</i>	<i>jacket, parka</i>	<i>maize</i>	<i>corn</i>
<i>braces</i>	<i>suspenders</i>	<i>mark</i>	<i>grade</i>
<i>barrister</i>	<i>attorney</i>	<i>match</i>	<i>game</i>
<i>bath</i>	<i>bathtub/bath</i>	<i>nappy</i>	<i>diaper</i>
<i>bill (restaurant)</i>	<i>bill, check</i>	<i>pants, underpants</i>	<i>underpants, drawers</i>
<i>biscuit</i>	<i>cookie</i>	<i>pavement</i>	<i>sidewalk</i>
<i>booking</i>	<i>reservation</i>	<i>pylon</i>	<i>utility pole</i>
<i>bonnet (clothing)</i>	<i>hat</i>	<i>property</i>	<i>real-estate</i>
<i>bonnet (car)</i>	<i>hood</i>	<i>petrol</i>	<i>gas, gasoline</i>
<i>boot</i>	<i>trunk</i>	<i>post</i>	<i>mail</i>
<i>cap</i>	<i>guy/man/boy</i>	<i>pram</i>	<i>baby carriage; stroller</i>
<i>car</i>	<i>automobile/car</i>	<i>primary (school)</i>	<i>elementary (school)</i>
<i>caravan</i>	<i>trailer</i>	<i>pub</i>	<i>bar</i>
<i>cot</i>	<i>crib</i>	<i>remould (tyre)</i>	<i>retread</i>
<i>chips</i>	<i>fries, French fries</i>	<i>queue</i>	<i>line</i>
<i>chemist</i>	<i>drugstore</i>	<i>receptionist</i>	<i>desk clerk</i>
<i>cigarette; fag (slang)</i>	<i>cigarette or cigaret (in the US fag or faggot means homosexual man (rude, offensive))</i>	<i>rubbish</i>	<i>garbage/trash</i>
<i>cinema</i>	<i>the movies</i>	<i>shop</i>	<i>store</i>
<i>coffin</i>	<i>coffin, casket</i>	<i>serviette</i>	<i>napkin</i>
<i>crisps</i>	<i>potato chips</i>	<i>stater/entree</i>	<i>appetizer</i>
<i>cooker</i>	<i>stove</i>	<i>surname (British preferred)</i>	<i>last name (American preferred)</i>
<i>curtain</i>	<i>drapes</i>	<i>reception (hotel)</i>	<i>front desk</i>
<i>diamante</i>	<i>rhinestone</i>	<i>ring up/phone</i>	<i>call/phone</i>
<i>dairy (personal account)</i>	<i>Journal/dairy</i>	<i>return (ticket)</i>	<i>round-trip</i>
<i>diversion</i>	<i>detour</i>	<i>rubber</i>	<i>eraser (rubber means condom in the US)</i>
<i>draught</i>	<i>draft</i>	<i>rubbish</i>	<i>garbage, trash</i>
<i>dummy (for baby)</i>	<i>pacifier</i>	<i>saloon (car)</i>	<i>sedan</i>
<i>dummy</i>	<i>pacifier</i>	<i>shop</i>	<i>shop, store</i>
<i>duvet</i>	<i>comforter</i>	<i>silencer (car)</i>	<i>muffler</i>
<i>engine</i>	<i>engine, motor</i>	<i>single (ticket)</i>	<i>one-way</i>
<i>film</i>	<i>film, movie</i>	<i>solicitor</i>	<i>lawyer, attorney</i>
<i>foyer</i>	<i>lobby/foyer</i>	<i>spanner</i>	<i>wrench</i>
<i>flat</i>	<i>apartment, flat, studio</i>	<i>sweets</i>	<i>candy</i>

<i>flannel</i>	<i>washcloth</i>	<i>taxi</i>	<i>taxi, taxi cab</i>
<i>Floor</i>	<i>storey</i>	<i>term</i>	<i>semester (quarter)</i>
<i>fringe</i>	<i>bangs</i>	<i>tick</i>	<i>check mark</i>
<i>garden</i>	<i>yard</i>	<i>timber</i>	<i>lumber</i>
<i>grill</i>	<i>broil</i>	<i>tin</i>	<i>can</i>
<i>handbag</i>	<i>purse</i>	<i>toilet</i>	<i>rest room</i>
<i>hire</i>	<i>rent</i>	<i>torch</i>	<i>flashlight</i>
<i>holiday</i>	<i>vacation</i>	<i>trainers</i>	<i>sneakers</i>
<i>hoarding</i>	<i>billboard</i>	<i>tram</i>	<i>streetcar; cable car</i>
<i>hob</i>	<i>stovetop</i>	<i>trolley</i>	<i>shopping cart</i>
<i>hoover</i>	<i>vacuum cleaner</i>	<i>trousers</i>	<i>pants, trousers</i>
<i>indicator</i>	<i>turn signal</i>	<i>tube (train)</i>	<i>subway</i>
<i>jam</i>	<i>jelly</i>	<i>vest</i>	<i>undershirt</i>
<i>jam</i>	<i>jam, preserves</i>	<i>wallet</i>	<i>wallet, billfold</i>
<i>jug</i>	<i>jug, pitcher</i>	<i>zed (letter Z)</i>	<i>zee</i>
<i>jumper</i>	<i>sweater</i>	<i>wing (of a car)</i>	<i>fender</i>
<i>kennel</i>	<i>doghouse</i>	<i>wagon (on a train)</i>	<i>car</i>

Second, compound word-refers to that both British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) vocabulary which are compound in order to refer and convey the meaning. The compound form, in this context is originally based in BrE which may

or may not be single or compound word in AmE. Table 2 shows the list of the different vocabulary between British and American English of compound form:

Table 2. The list of compound form vocabulary of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

British (BrE)	English	American (AmE)	English	British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)
<i>action replay</i>		<i>instant replay</i>		<i>jacket potato</i>	<i>baked potato</i>
<i>aerofoil</i>		<i>airfoil</i>		<i>Joe Bloggs</i>	<i>John Doe</i>
<i>aeroplane</i>		<i>airplane</i>		<i>jumble sale</i>	<i>yard sale</i>
<i>agony aunt</i>		<i>advice columnist</i>		<i>juggernaut</i>	<i>18-wheeler</i>
<i>Allen key</i>		<i>Allen wrench</i>		<i>ladybird</i>	<i>ladybug</i>
<i>American Indian</i>		<i>Native American</i>		<i>lay the table</i>	<i>set the table</i>
<i>at the weekend</i>		<i>on the weekend</i>		<i>letter box</i>	<i>mail box</i>
<i>asymmetric bars</i>		<i>uneven bars</i>		<i>lost property</i>	<i>lost and found</i>
<i>aubergine</i>		<i>eggplant</i>		<i>mackintosh</i>	<i>raincoat</i>
<i>anti-clockwise</i>		<i>counter-clockwise</i>		<i>managing director</i>	<i>CEO (chief executive officer)</i>
<i>articulated lorry</i>		<i>trailer truck</i>		<i>mashed potato</i>	<i>mashed potatoes</i>
<i>baking tray</i>		<i>cookie sheet</i>		<i>mobile (phone)</i>	<i>cellphone</i>
<i>bank holiday</i>		<i>national holiday,</i> <i>federal holiday</i>		<i>main road</i>	<i>highway</i>
<i>base rate</i>		<i>prime rate</i>		<i>motorbike</i>	<i>motorcycle</i>
<i>(bathing) costume</i>		<i>swimsuit</i>		<i>motorway</i>	<i>freeway, expressway</i>
<i>breakdown van</i>		<i>tow truck</i>		<i>monkey tricks</i>	<i>Monkeyshines</i>
<i>breeze block</i>		<i>cinder block</i>		<i>mangetout</i>	<i>snow pea</i>
<i>bridging loan</i>		<i>bridge loan</i>		<i>market garden</i>	<i>truck farm</i>
<i>bumbag</i>		<i>fanny pack</i>		<i>marshalling yard</i>	<i>railroad yard</i>

<i>black economy</i>	<i>underground economy</i>	<i>naughts and crosses</i>	<i>tic-tack-toe</i>
<i>blanket bath</i>	<i>sponge bath</i>	<i>number plate</i>	<i>license plate</i>
<i>block of flats</i>	<i>apartment building</i>	<i>needlecord</i>	<i>pinwale</i>
<i>boiler suit</i>	<i>coveralls</i>	<i>newsreader</i>	<i>newscaster</i>
<i>boob tube</i>	<i>tube top</i>	<i>noughts and crosses</i>	<i>tic-tac-toe</i>
<i>bottom drawer</i>	<i>hope chest</i>	<i>off-licence</i>	<i>liquor store; package store</i>
<i>clothes peg</i>	<i>clothespin</i>	<i>opencast mining</i>	<i>open-pit mining</i>
<i>common seal</i>	<i>harbor seal</i>	<i>ordinary share</i>	<i>common stock</i>
<i>consumer durables</i>	<i>durable goods</i>	<i>oven glove</i>	<i>oven mitt</i>
<i>cornflour</i>	<i>cornstarch</i>	<i>paddling pool</i>	<i>wading pool</i>
<i>candyfloss</i>	<i>cotton candy</i>	<i>paracetamol</i>	<i>acetaminophen</i>
<i>car park</i>	<i>parking lot</i>	<i>pay packet</i>	<i>pay envelope</i>
<i>central reservation</i>	<i>median strip</i>	<i>pinafore dress</i>	<i>jumper</i>
<i>chest of drawers</i>	<i>dresser/bureau</i>	<i>plain chocolate</i>	<i>dark chocolate</i>
<i>chemist's shop</i>	<i>drugstore, pharmacy</i>	<i>plain flour</i>	<i>all-purpose flour</i>
<i>chest of drawers</i>	<i>dresser, chest of drawers, bureau</i>	<i>physiotherapy</i>	<i>physical therapy</i>
<i>clothes peg</i>	<i>clothespin</i>	<i>polo neck</i>	<i>turtleneck</i>
<i>crossroads</i>	<i>intersection; crossroads (rural)</i>	<i>positive discrimination</i>	<i>reverse discrimination</i>
<i>cupboard</i>	<i>cupboard (in kitchen); closet (for clothes etc)</i>	<i>postal vote</i>	<i>absentee ballot</i>
<i>cot death</i>	<i>crib death</i>	<i>public toilet</i>	<i>rest room, public bathroom</i>
<i>cotton bud</i>	<i>cotton swab</i>	<i>pavement</i>	<i>sidewalk</i>
<i>city centre</i>	<i>downtown, city center</i>	<i>pet hate</i>	<i>pet peeve</i>
<i>cloakroom</i>	<i>checkroom, coatroom</i>	<i>pocket money</i>	<i>allowance</i>
<i>clothes peg</i>	<i>clothespin</i>	<i>postbox</i>	<i>mailbox</i>
<i>cotton wool</i>	<i>cotton ball</i>	<i>postcode</i>	<i>zip code</i>
<i>crossroads</i>	<i>crossroad (in the country)</i>	<i>postman</i>	<i>mailman, mail carrier, letter carrier</i>
<i>crossroads</i>	<i>intersection (town and country)</i>	<i>potato crisp</i>	<i>potato chip</i>
<i>cotton wool</i>	<i>absorbent cotton</i>	<i>power point</i>	<i>electrical outlet</i>
<i>council estate</i>	<i>(housing) project</i>	<i>public school</i>	<i>private school</i>
<i>court card</i>	<i>face card</i>	<i>public transport</i>	<i>public transportation</i>
<i>crash barrier</i>	<i>guardrail</i>	<i>punchbag</i>	<i>punching bag</i>
<i>crocodile clip</i>	<i>alligator clip</i>	<i>pushchair</i>	<i>stroller</i>
<i>cross-ply</i>	<i>bias-ply</i>	<i>quantity surveyor</i>	<i>estimator</i>
<i>crotchet (music)</i>	<i>quarter note</i>	<i>reverse charge</i>	<i>collect call</i>
<i>current account</i>	<i>checking account</i>	<i>ring road</i>	<i>beltway, freeway/highway loop</i>
	<i>résumé</i>		
<i>curriculum vitae (CV)</i>	<i>curriculum vitae (depending on the professional field)</i>		
<i>dinner jacket</i>	<i>tux, tuxedo</i>		

<i>directory enquiries</i>	<i>directory assistance</i>	<i>road surface</i>	<i>pavement, blacktop</i>
<i>double cream</i>	<i>heavy cream</i>	<i>roundabout</i>	<i>traffic circle, roundabout</i>
<i>drawing pin</i>	<i>thumb tack</i>	<i>rubbish-bin</i>	<i>garbage can, trashcan</i>
<i>dressng gown</i>	<i>(bath) robe</i>	<i>railway</i>	<i>railroad</i>
<i>drink-driving</i>	<i>drunk driving</i>	<i>return (ticket)</i>	<i>round-trip</i>
<i>driving licence</i>	<i>driver's license</i>	<i>racing car</i>	<i>race car</i>
<i>dual carriageway</i>	<i>divided highway</i>	<i>railway</i>	<i>railroad</i>
<i>dustbin</i>	<i>garbage can, trash can</i>	<i>real tennis</i>	<i>court tennis</i>
<i>dustman</i>	<i>garbage collector</i>	<i>recorded delivery</i>	<i>certified mail</i>
<i>danger money</i>	<i>hazard pay</i>	<i>registration plate</i>	<i>license plate</i>
<i>demister (in a car)</i>	<i>defroster</i>	<i>remould (tyre)</i>	<i>retread</i>
<i>dialling tone</i>	<i>dial tone</i>	<i>reverse the charges</i>	<i>call collect</i>
<i>diamante</i>	<i>rhinestone</i>	<i>reversing lights</i>	<i>back-up lights</i>
<i>double cream</i>	<i>heavy cream</i>	<i>right-angled triangle</i>	<i>right triangle</i>
<i>draughts (game)</i>	<i>checkers</i>	<i>ring road</i>	<i>beltway</i>
<i>drawing pin</i>	<i>thumbtack</i>	<i>room only</i>	<i>European plan</i>
<i>dressng gown</i>	<i>robe; bathrobe</i>	<i>roundabout (at a fair)</i>	<i>carousel</i>
<i>drink-driving</i>	<i>drunk driving</i>	<i>roundabout (in road)</i>	<i>traffic circle</i>
<i>drinks cupboard</i>	<i>liquor cabinet</i>	<i>rowing boat</i>	<i>rowboat</i>
<i>drinks party</i>	<i>cocktail party</i>	<i>sailing boat</i>	<i>sailboat</i>
<i>driving licence</i>	<i>driver's license</i>	<i>sandwich cake</i>	<i>layer cake</i>
<i>dual carriageway</i>	<i>divided highway</i>	<i>sanitary towel</i>	<i>sanitary napkin</i>
<i>dust sheet</i>	<i>drop cloth</i>	<i>self-raising flour</i>	<i>self-rising flour</i>
<i>earth wire</i>	<i>ground wire</i>	<i>semibreve (music)</i>	<i>whole note</i>
<i>everywhere</i>	<i>everyplace, everywhere</i>	<i>semitone (music)</i>	<i>half step</i>
<i>expiry date</i>	<i>expiration date</i>	<i>share option</i>	<i>stock option</i>
<i>estate agent</i>	<i>real estate agent</i>	<i>shopping trolley</i>	<i>shopping cart</i>
<i>estate car</i>	<i>station wagon</i>	<i>show house/home</i>	<i>model home</i>
<i>estate agent</i>	<i>realtor</i>	<i>silencer (on a car)</i>	<i>muffler</i>
<i>ex-directory</i>	<i>unlisted</i>	<i>silverside</i>	<i>rump roast</i>
<i>flannel</i>	<i>face cloth, wash cloth</i>	<i>skeleton in the cupboard</i>	<i>skeleton in the closet</i>
<i>fancy dress</i>	<i>costumes</i>	<i>skimmed milk</i>	<i>skim milk</i>
<i>Father Christmas</i>	<i>Santa Claus</i>	<i>skipping rope</i>	<i>jump rope</i>
<i>fill in</i>	<i>fill out</i>	<i>skirting board</i>	<i>baseboard</i>
<i>fire brigade</i>	<i>fire department</i>	<i>sleeper</i>	<i>railroad tie</i>
<i>first floor</i>	<i>second floor</i>	<i>sleeping partner</i>	<i>silent partner</i>
<i>fish-fingers</i>	<i>fish-sticks</i>	<i>slowcoach</i>	<i>slowpoke</i>
<i>flick knife</i>	<i>switchblade</i>	<i>snakes and ladders</i>	<i>chutes and ladders</i>
<i>fitted carpet</i>	<i>wall-to-wall carpeting</i>	<i>stockholder</i>	<i>shareholder</i>
<i>full board (in hotels)</i>	<i>American plan</i>	<i>single ticket</i>	<i>one-way ticket</i>
<i>flexitime</i>	<i>flexitime</i>	<i>splashback</i>	<i>backsplash</i>
<i>faith school</i>	<i>parochial school</i>	<i>spring onion</i>	<i>green onion</i>
<i>financial year</i>	<i>fiscal year</i>	<i>stag night</i>	<i>bachelor party</i>
<i>fire brigade/service</i>	<i>fire company/department</i>	<i>Stanley knife</i>	<i>utility knife</i>
<i>football</i>	<i>soccer</i>	<i>state school</i>	<i>public school</i>
<i>full (punctuation)</i>	<i>stop period</i>	<i>storm in a teacup</i>	<i>tempest in a teapot</i>

<i>gear-lever</i>	<i>gearshift</i>	<i>timetable</i>	<i>schedule</i>
<i>gear lever</i>	<i>gear shift</i>	<i>toll motorway</i>	<i>toll road, turnpike</i>
<i>Gents</i>	<i>Men's Room</i>	<i>toffee apple</i>	<i>candy apple</i>
<i>goods train</i>	<i>freight train</i>	<i>touch wood</i>	<i>knock on wood</i>
<i>ground</i>	<i>floor</i>	<i>trade union</i>	<i>labor union</i>
<i>first floor</i>	<i>ground floor, first floor</i>	<i>trading estate</i>	<i>industrial park</i>
<i>groundsman</i>	<i>second floor</i>	<i>transport cafe</i>	<i>truck stop</i>
<i>goods train</i>	<i>groundskeeper</i>	<i>takeaway (food)</i>	<i>takeout; to go</i>
<i>greaseproof paper</i>	<i>wax paper/waxed paper</i>	<i>taxi rank</i>	<i>taxi stand</i>
<i>green fingers</i>	<i>green thumb</i>	<i>tea towel</i>	<i>dish towel</i>
<i>holdall</i>	<i>carryall</i>	<i>terrace house</i>	<i>row house</i>
<i>high street</i>	<i>main street</i>	<i>third-party insurance</i>	<i>liability insurance</i>
<i>high</i>	<i>school,</i>	<i>underground (train)</i>	<i>subway</i>
<i>secondary</i>	<i>school,</i>	<i>wedding ring</i>	<i>wedding band/ring</i>
<i>comprehensive</i>	<i>high school (junior high, senior high)</i>	<i>windscreen</i>	<i>windshield</i>
<i>school</i>		<i>zebra crossing</i>	<i>pedestrian crossing</i>
<i>hire purchase</i>	<i>installment plan</i>	<i>wellington boots</i>	<i>rubber boots, rain boots</i>
<i>hairslide</i>	<i>barrette</i>	<i>windscreen</i>	<i>windshield</i>
<i>hatstand</i>	<i>hatrack</i>	<i>water ice</i>	<i>Italian ice</i>
<i>hen night</i>	<i>bachelorette party</i>	<i>weatherboard</i>	<i>clapboard</i>
<i>hot flush</i>	<i>hot flash</i>	<i>white coffee</i>	<i>coffee with cream</i>
<i>housing estate</i>	<i>housing development</i>	<i>white spirit</i>	<i>mineral spirits</i>
<i>hundreds</i>	<i>and sprinkles (for ice cream)</i>	<i>wholemeal bread</i>	<i>wholewheat bread</i>
<i>thousands</i>		<i>windcheater</i>	<i>windbreaker</i>
<i>headmaster,</i>	<i>head</i>		
<i>teacher</i>	<i>principal</i>		
<i>hire purchase</i>	<i>installment plan</i>		
<i>icing sugar</i>	<i>confectioners' sugar</i>		
<i>lollipop</i>	<i>lady (or man)</i>		
	<i>crossing guard</i>		
<i>loudhailer</i>	<i>bullhorn</i>		
<i>low loader</i>	<i>flatbed truck</i>		
<i>lucky dip</i>	<i>grab bag</i>		
<i>luggage van</i>	<i>baggage car</i>		

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/british-and-american-terms>

The Different Idioms of the British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

In terms of idioms, the facts show that British will say "*peaks and troughs*," Americans say "*peaks and valleys*," and the British "*spanner in the works*" becomes a "*wrench*" or "*monkey wrench*." A British "*know-all*" often becomes a "*know-it-all*" over here, and hilariously, a "*fuss-pot*" is now a "*fussbudget*" (Toni Hargis <http://www.bbcamerica.com/mind-the-gap/2013/08/06/close-but-no-cigar-british-vs-american-idioms/>).

Linguistically, idioms can have a literal meaning in one situation and a different idiomatic meaning in another situation. It is a phrase which does not always follow the normal rules of meaning and grammar (http://lostinthepond.blogspot.com/2013/02/british-english-vs-american-english_4388.html#.VKWEE3ua3IU). Actually, there are number of English idioms that have essentially the same meaning showing lexical differences between the British and the American version for instance as shown by table 3 below.

Table 3. The list of British English (BrE) and British English (BrE) idioms

British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)
<i>a home from home</i>	<i>a home away from home</i>
<i>a drop in the ocean</i>	<i>a drop in the bucket, a spit in the ocean</i>
<i>a new lease of life</i>	<i>a new lease on life</i>
<i>a storm in a teacup</i>	<i>a tempest in a teapot</i>
<i>blow one's own trumpet</i>	<i>blow (or toot) one's own horn</i>
<i>flogging a dead horse</i>	<i>beating a dead horse</i>
<i>haven't (got) a clue</i>	<i>don't have a clue or have no clue (haven't got a clue is also acceptable)</i>
<i>lie of the land</i>	<i>lay of the land</i>
<i>not touch something with a barge pole</i>	<i>not touch something with a ten-foot pole</i>
<i>Put in your tuppence worth</i>	<i>Put in your two cents' worth</i>
<i>see the wood for the trees</i>	<i>see the forest for the trees</i>
<i>sweep under the carpet</i>	<i>sweep under the rug*</i>
<i>skeleton in the cupboard</i>	<i>skeleton in the closet</i>
<i>put a spanner in the works</i>	<i>throw a (monkey) wrench (into a situation)</i>
<i>take it with a pinch of salt</i>	<i>take it with a grain of salt</i>
<i>touch wood</i>	<i>knock on wood</i>

<http://www.transpanish.biz/en/english-language.html>.

The Different Vocabulary due to Social and Cultural Context

It is generally known that historically American is built against the British social and cultural values. American opposed some social and cultural values of British such as social stratification, religious beliefs, democracy, aristocracy system, social class, etc. American since its settlement would like to be the new people which are different from their mother country England. The development and improvement of the English is one of the domains showing that American is different from English.

The social and cultural differences also create the difference between British and American English in vocabulary domain. Some of the different vocabulary and lexical item between the two English such as: in education, transportation, telecommunication, monetary amounts, date, and time, etc.

In education domain, both British and American English have different terms in vocabulary. The naming of school years in British (except Scotland) and American English are different. In British English at the age of 1-4 is named Nursery Playgroup while in American English, it is named Day care Preschool. Then, the

year of 5 – 6 in British, it is called Infants year whereas in it is Kindergarten in American English. The next level is called Secondary school or High School in British English and American English is called Junior High School (Longman, 1982).

In addition, in the US, 5th grade is typically a part of elementary school while 8th grade is often the third and final year of junior high. The US does not have a uniform nationwide system of schooling and even within individual states there can be different systems depending on the school district or town/city. In the UK the US equivalent of a *high school* is often referred to as a *secondary school* regardless of whether it is state funded or private. Secondary education in the United States also includes *middle school* or *junior high school*, a two- or three-year transitional school between elementary school and high school. "Middle school" is sometimes used in the UK as a synonym for the younger *junior school*, covering the second half of the primary curriculum—current years 4 to 6 in some areas.

At university level, in the UK a university student is said to *study*, to *read* or informally simply to *do* a subject. In the recent past the expression '*to read a subject*' is more common at the older universities such as Oxford and

Cambridge. In the US a student *studies* or *majors in* a subject (although *concentration* or *emphasis* is also used in some US colleges or universities to refer to the major subject of study). *To major in*

something refers to the student's principal course of study; *to study* may refer to any class being taken. In detail, table 4 shows how the terms are different.

Table 4. The different sentence patterns of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)
"She read biology at Cambridge."	"She majored in biology at Harvard."
"She studied biology at Cambridge."	"She studied biology at Harvard."
"She did biology at Cambridge." (informal)	"She concentrated in biology at Harvard."

In the context of higher education, the word *school* is used slightly differently in BrE and AmE. In BrE, except for the University of London, the word *school* is used to refer to an academic department in a university. In AmE, the word *school* is used to refer to a collection of related academic departments and is headed by a dean. When referring to a division of a university, *school* is practically synonymous to a college.

Then, the "*Professor*" has different meanings in BrE and AmE. In BrE it is the highest academic rank, followed by Senior Lecturer and Lecturer. In AmE "*Professor*" refers to academic staff of all ranks, with (Full) Professor (largely equivalent to the UK meaning) followed by Associate Professor and Assistant Professor.

In term of school fee, the word "*tuition*" has traditionally had separate meaning in each variation. In BrE it is the educational content transferred from teacher to student at a university. In AmE it is the money (the fees) paid to receive

that education (BrE: Tuition fees) (Longman, 1982).

In general, in both the US and the UK, a student *takes* an exam, but in BrE a student can also be said to *sit* an exam. The expression *he sits for* an exam also arises in BrE but only rarely in AmE; American lawyers-to-be *sit for* their bar exams and American master's and doctoral students may *sit for* their comprehensive exams, but in nearly all other instances, Americans *take* their exams. When preparing for an exam students *revise* (BrE) and *review* (AmE) what they have studied; the BrE idiom *to revise for* has the equivalent *to review for* in AmE. Examinations are supervised by *invigilators* in the UK and *proctors* (or (*exam*) *supervisors*) in the US (a *proctor* in the UK is an official responsible for student discipline at the University of Oxford or Cambridge). In the UK a teacher *sets* an exam, while in the US, a teacher *writes* (prepares) and then *gives* (administers) an exam. Look at the table 5 below they are different.

Table 5. The different sentence patterns of British English (BrE) and American English (AmE)

British English (BrE)	American English (AmE)
"I sat my Spanish exam yesterday."	"I took my exams at Yale."
"I plan to set a difficult exam for my students, but I don't have it ready yet."	"I spent the entire day yesterday writing the exam. I'm almost ready to give it to my students."

In BrE, students are awarded *marks* as credit for requirements (e.g. tests, projects) while in AmE, students are awarded *points* or "*grades*" for the same. Similarly, in BrE, a candidate's work is

being *marked*, while in AmE it is said to be *graded* to determine what mark or grade is given.

In politics and in business and finance, both in Britain and America have different vocabulary.

In politic, the political candidates *stand for election*, while in the US, they *run for office*. There is virtually no crossover between BrE and AmE in the use of these terms. Then, in business/finance, the financial statements it is called *revenue* or *sales* in AmE and it is known in BrE as *turnover* (Hornby, 1973).

There are also differences in terminology in the context of rail transport. The best known is *railway* in Britain and *railroad* in America, but there are several others. A *railway station* in the UK is a *railroad station* or *train station* in the US; trains have *drivers* (often called *engine drivers*) in Britain, while in America trains are driven by *engineers*; trains have *guards* in the UK and *conductors* in the US. Then, a place where two tracks meet is called a set of *points* in the UK and a *switch* in the US; and a place where a road crosses a railway line at ground level is called a *level crossing* in Britain and a *grade crossing* in America. In Britain, the term *sleeper* is used for the devices that bear the weight of the rails and are known as *ties* or *cross-ties* in the United States. The British term *platform* in the sense "*The train is at Platform 1*" would be known in the US by the term *track*, and used in the phrase "*The train is on Track 1*". Also, the British term *Brake Van* or *Guard's Van*, is a *Caboose* in the US. Finally the American English phrase "*All aboard!*" when getting on a train is rarely used in Britain; the nearest British equivalent is "*Take your seats!*", and when the train reaches its final stop, in Britain the phrase used by announcers is "*All change!*" while in America it is "*All out!*" (Houghton Mifflin Company (2005).

It is also generally known that BrE and AmE have different names in terms of levels of buildings or there are also variations in floor numbering. In most countries, including the UK, the "*first floor*" is one above the entrance level, while the entrance level is the "*ground floor*". In the US the *ground floor* is considered the *first floor*. In a British lift one would press the "G" or "0" button to return to the ground floor, whereas in an American elevator, one would push the "1", "G", or "L" (for Lobby) button to return to the ground floor. The "L" button (or sometimes "-1") in a British lift would take you to the lower ground floor, which implies that the building is built on a slope and thus there are two ground floors - there would similarly be a

"U" button (or "0") for upper ground floor. Also, American (AmE) *apartment buildings* (BrE) *blocks of flats* are frequently exceptions to this rule. The ground floor often contains the lobby and parking area for the tenants, while the numbered floors begin one level above and contain only the flats (AmE *apartments*) themselves.

In terms of immigration, BrE and AmE have different vocabulary usage. In AmE, when immigrants apply for immigration benefits but are unsuccessful, they are said to be *denied* (e.g. visa application is denied, application for extension of stay is denied, entry to the US is denied). But, in BrE, those whose applications are unsuccessful are said to be *refused* that benefit¹ (e.g. visa application is refused, entry to the UK is refused).

The domains of units and measurement are also different in BrE and AmE. These domains include numbers, monetary amounts, dates, time, mass, mathematics, and holiday greetings, etc. They are described in detail how units and measurement are different in BrE and AmE.

First, when saying or writing out numbers, the British inserts an 'and' before the tens and units, as in *one hundred and sixty-two* or *two thousand and three*. In the United States it is considered correct to drop the 'and,' as in *one hundred sixty-two* or *two thousand three*. For the house number (or bus number, etc.) 272, British people tend to say *two seven two* or *two hundred and seventy two*, while Americans tend to say *two seventy-two*. In addition, when referring to the numeral '0,' British people would normally use *nought*, *oh*, or *zero*, although *nil* is common in sports scores. Americans use the term *zero* most frequently; *oh* is also often used (though never when the quantity in question is nothing), and occasionally slang terms such as *zilch* or *zip* (Salim, 2006); (Webster, 1996);

Second, in monetary amounts-the monetary amounts in the range of one to two major currency units are often spoken differently. In AmE one may say *a dollar fifty* or *a pound eighty*, whereas in BrE, these amounts would be expressed *one dollar fifty* and *one pound eighty*. For amounts over a dollar an American will generally either drop denominations or give both dollars and cents, as in *two-twenty* or *two dollars and twenty cents* for (\$2.20). An American would not say *two dollars twenty*. On the

other hand, in BrE, *two-twenty* or *two pounds twenty* would be most common. Then, in BrE, particularly in television or radio advertisements, integers can be pronounced individually in the expression of amounts. For example, *on sale for £399* might be expressed *on sale for three nine nine*, though the full *three hundred and ninety-nine pounds* is at least as common. An American advertiser would almost always say *on sale for three ninety-nine*, with context distinguishing (\$399) from (\$3.99). In British English, the latter pronunciation implies a value in pounds and pence, so *three ninety-nine* would be understood as £3.99.

In addition, in BrE, the use of 'p' instead of *pence* is common in spoken usage. Each of the following has equal legitimacy: *3 pounds 12 p*; *3 pounds and 12 p*; *3 pounds 12 pence*; *3 pounds and 12 pence*; as well as just *8 p* or *8 pence*. While in AmE, words such as *nickel*, *dime*, and *quarter* for small coins are common. In BrE, the usual usage is a *10-pence piece* or a *10p piece* or simply a *10p*, for any coin below £1, but pound coin and two-pound coin. BrE did have specific words for a number of coins before decimalisation. Formal coin names such as half crown (2/6) and florin (2/-), as well as slang or familiar names such as bob (1/-) and tanner (6d) for pre-decimalization coins are still familiar to older BrE speakers but they are not used for modern coins. In older terms like two-bob bit (2/-) and thrupenny bit (3d), the word bit had common usage before decimalisation similar to that of piece today.

Third, dates-dates are usually written differently in the short (numerical) form. Christmas Day 2000, for example, is *25/12/00* or *25.12.00* in the UK and *12/25/00* in the US, although the formats *25/12/2000*, *25.12.2000*, and *12/25/2000* now have more currency than they had before. However, the difference in short-form date order can lead to misunderstanding. For example *06/04/05* could mean either *June 4, 2005* (if it is read as US format), *6 April 2005* (if it is seen as in UK format) or even *5 April 2006* if it is taken to be an older ISO 8601-style format where 2-digit years were allowed. A consequence of the different short-form of dates is that in the UK, many people are reluctant to refer to "9/11", although its meaning is instantly understood. On the BBC

"September the 11th" is generally used in preference to 9/11. However, 9/11 is commonplace in the British press to refer to the events of September 11, 2001 (Houghton Mifflin Company (2005).

Fourth, time-the 24-hour clock (*18:00*, *18.00* or *1800*) is considered normal in the UK and Europe in many applications including air, rail and bus timetables. It is largely unused in the US outside of military, police, aviation and medical applications. British English tends to use the full stop or period (.) when telling time, compared to American English which uses Colons (:). i.e. *11:15 PM* or *23:15* for AmE and *11.15 pm* or *23.15* for BrE). Then, the fifteen minutes after the hour is called *quarter past* in British usage and *a quarter after* or, less commonly, *a quarter past* in American usage. Fifteen minutes before the hour is usually called *quarter to* in British usage and *a quarter of*, *a quarter to* or *a quarter 'til* in American usage; the form *a quarter to* is associated with parts of the Northern United States, while *a quarter 'til* is found chiefly in the Appalachian region. Thirty minutes after the hour is commonly called *half past* in both BrE and AmE; *half after* used to be more common in the US. In informal British speech, the preposition is sometimes omitted, so that *5:30* may be referred to as *half five*. The AmE formations *top of the hour* and *bottom of the hour* are not used in BrE. Forms such as *eleven forty* are common in both dialects.

Fifth, mass-in British usage, human body mass is colloquially expressed in stones (equal to 14 pounds). People normally describe themselves as weighing, for example, "11 stone 4" (11 stones and 4 pounds) and not "158 pounds" (the conventional way of expressing the same weight in the United States). Stones are never used in the United States, and most Americans are unfamiliar with the term. Kilogrammes (note the difference from the U.S. spelling, *kilograms*) are the official measurement in the United Kingdom although very few people know their weight in kilogrammes. This is rarely noticed by the British (one such occasion might be a weight measurement at a hospital). When it is used as the unit of measurement the plural form of *stone* is correctly *stone* (as in "11 stone"). When describing

the units, the correct plural is *stones* (as in "Please enter your weight in stones and pounds").

Sixth, Mathematics - besides the differences between the shorthand word for the subject itself (i.e. *Maths* for BrE and *Math* for AmE), there are also differences in terms within the subject. In geometry, what is referred to as a *trapezoid* (a quadrilateral with exactly 1 pair of parallel sides) in US textbooks is a *trapezium* in its UK counterparts. The *slope* of the line in AmE is said to be the *gradient* of a line in BrE. The skill of *factoring* polynomials in AmE is called *factorisation* in BrE; likewise, the words *factor* and *factorise*, respectively refer to their present tense forms. In addition, in BrE the term mathematics is not commonly used for simple arithmetic. $2 + 2 = 4$ is referred as arithmetic, not mathematics.

Seventh, holiday greetings-when people greet one another with Christmas in North America, they say, "Merry Christmas!" In the U.K, "Happy Christmas!" is heard. It is increasingly common for Americans to say "Happy holidays", referring to all winter holidays (Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year's Day, Hanukkah, Winter solstice, Kwanzaa, etc.); though it remains chiefly a commercial practice in which they are used mostly at stores or in advertising. The phrase is rarely heard in the U.K. "Season's greetings" is a common phrase printed in greeting cards in both America and Britain. In Britain, the term "holiday season" or "holiday period" refers to the period in the summer when most people take their major annual holiday (Am*Evacation*), and many people are absent from work (Houghton Mifflin Company (2005)).

Finally, both BrE and AmE use the expression "I couldn't care less" to mean the speaker does not care at all. Many Americans use "I could care less" to mean the same thing. This variant is frequently derided as sloppy, as the literal meaning of the words is that the speaker *does* care to some extent. In both areas, saying, "I don't mind" often means, "I'm not annoyed" (for example, by someone's smoking), while "I don't care" often means, "The matter is trivial or boring". However, in answering a question such as "Tea or coffee?", if either alternative is equally acceptable an American may answer, "I don't care", while a British person may answer, "I don't mind". Either sounds odd to the other. In addition, In BrE the

phrase *I can't be arsed (to do something)* is a recent vulgar equivalent to the British or American *I can't be bothered (to do it)*. To non-BrE speakers this may be confused with the Southern English pronunciation of *I can't be asked (to do that thing)*, which sounds either defiantly rude or nonsensical.

CONCLUSION

In real sense, to know and understand the British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) vocabulary is not simple and easy to do. In learning English, it is important to understand the differences between British and American English in order to avoid misunderstanding, confusion, and embarrassment. For example, the word *fanny* is a slang word for *vulva* in British English, but means *buttocks* in American English. In American English, the word *fag*, for instance is a highly offensive term for a gay male, but in British English, it is a normal and well-used term for a cigarette. However, to mix the two varieties will make your English sound strange and unnatural so it is best to choose just one and use it all the time. There is no "better" or "worse" variety of English and both British and American have their advantages depending on how and where you intend to use the English. Both are correct and common to use when communicating with English.

To sum up, the differences between the British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) in term of vocabulary can be classified into three domains such as word form, idioms, and words or vocabulary form in terms of social and cultural perspectives. These three ways show how vocabulary the British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) are made and constructed. Those finally reflect the typical English both in British English (BrE) and American English (AmE) varieties.

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