

LEXICAL, GRAMMATICAL AND PHONETIC FEATURES OF AMERICAN ENGLISH

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Abstract: This article analyzes the lexical, grammatical, and phonetic features of American English, with a specific focus on the differences between American and British English. The study delves into the distinct vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation characteristics that set American English apart from its British counterpart. The research explores how these linguistic discrepancies reflect cultural and historical influences, shedding light on the nuances of the English language as it has evolved in different regions. The analysis offers valuable insights for linguists, educators, and language learners interested in comprehending the intricacies of American and British English.

Key words: Lexical, Grammatical, Phonetic, American English, British English, Language differences, Linguistic features, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Dialect variation

American English, like any other language, is characterized by its unique set of lexical, grammatical, and phonetic features. These features contribute to the distinctiveness of American English and differentiate it from other variants of the English language spoken around the world.

Lexical features refer to the vocabulary and words used in American English. While there are many shared words between American and British English, there are also several distinct American English terms. For example, the word "truck" in American English refers to a large vehicle used for transportation, while in British English, it typically means a small, open, four-wheeled vehicle. Similarly, the words "apartment" and "elevator" are commonly used in American English, whereas "flat" and "lift" are their British English counterparts.

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American English also has its own set of grammatical features. One notable difference is the omission of the present perfect tense in favor of the simple past tense in many instances. American English also has its own set of grammatical features. One notable difference is the omission of the present perfect tense in favor of the simple past tense in many instances. For example, Americans would often

is a variation of the English language spoken in the United States. It has distinct lexical, grammatical, and phonetic features compared to British English, as well as differences in spelling and punctuation. American English also incorporates words and expressions from different languages due to the country's cultural diversity. Notable differences include vocabulary (such as "elevator" instead of "lift"), spelling (e.g., "color" instead of "colour"), and pronunciation (like the rhotic accent in many American dialects).

Lexical features in the context of language refer to aspects related to the vocabulary and words used within a specific language or dialect. In the case of American English, lexical features can include unique words, idiomatic expressions, and regional variations in vocabulary. These features can also encompass differences in spelling and pronunciation compared to other variants of English, such as British English. One example of a lexical feature specific to American English is the use of certain words or phrases that may not be commonly used in other English-speaking countries. Additionally, American English is known for its influence from various immigrant communities, resulting in the adoption of words and phrases from different languages into everyday usage. Furthermore, American English is characterized by its spelling and pronunciation conventions, which can differ from other forms of English. For instance, words like "color" and "favor" are spelled with "-or" endings in American English, while they are spelled with "-our" in British English. Additionally, American English often includes distinct regional variations in vocabulary, such as the use of "subway" in the Northeastern United States and "metro" in other parts of the country to refer to the same mode of public transportation. These lexical features contribute to the richness and diversity of American English, reflecting the historical, cultural, and social influences on the language.

Grammatical features of a language refer to the structural components and rules that govern how words are organized in a sentence, including things like word order, verb tenses, noun case, and subject-verb agreement. These features are essential for understanding the syntax and grammar of a language, and they contribute to the overall structure and meaning of sentences. American English, like other varieties of English, has certain grammatical features that distinguish it from other forms of the language. Some of the key grammatical features of American English include:

1. **Verb conjugation:** American English generally follows the standard morphological rules of English verb conjugation, such as adding -ed for past tense and -ing for present participle. However, there are some irregular verbs and unique forms of conjugation that are specific to American English.

2. **Vocabulary and spelling variations:** American English has distinct vocabulary and spelling choices compared to British English. For instance, American English prefers the use of -ize endings instead of -ise, as well as different spellings for certain words like "color" (American) and "colour" (British).

3. **Syntax and sentence structure:** American English follows the standard subject-verb-object word order and uses prepositions and conjunctions in a similar manner to other forms of English. However, there may be specific idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms that are particular to American English.

4. Pronouns and gender-neutral language: American English, like other forms of English, has evolved to include gender-neutral language and pronouns to be more inclusive and reflective of diverse identities.

5. Regional dialects and variations: American English encompasses a wide range of regional dialects and accents, which can influence grammatical structures, pronunciation, and vocabulary usage.

6. Phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions: American English incorporates a variety of phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions that may not be as prevalent in other forms of English. These expressions can vary by region and are an important aspect of American English grammar.

These are just a few examples of the grammatical features that characterize American English. It's important to note that language is dynamic and constantly evolving, and as such, these features may continue to change over time.

American English is known for its distinct phonetic features. Some of the key characteristics of American English include:

1. Rhoticity: In most American English accents, the “r” sound is pronounced before consonants and at the end of words, which is known as rhoticity. This is in contrast to non-rhotic accents like British English, where the “r” is often silent in these positions.

2. Vowel sounds: American English has several distinctive vowel sounds, such as the “æ” sound in words like “cat” and “bat,” the “ɑ” sound in words like “father” and “palm,” and the “ɔ” sound in words like “thought” and “law.”

3. Consonant sounds: American English also has specific consonant sounds, including the “t” and “d” sounds, which can be pronounced in a flapped manner in certain contexts, such as in the words “butter” and “ladder.”

4. Tensing of vowels: In some American English accents, certain vowels, especially those in the “trap” and “lot” sets, undergo tensing before voiceless consonants, resulting in pronunciations like “æ” as in “trap” or “a” as in “lot.”

Tense vowels (e.g., /i/, /A/, /u/) are produced with more extreme articulatory movements than lax vowels (e.g., /I/, /ʌ/, /U/), thus involving more peripheral formant frequencies and as a result the vowel space covered by tense vowels is typically larger than that formed by their lax counterparts (Hillenbrand et al., 1995).

5. Lax vowel sounds: American English also features lax vowel sounds, such as the “ɪ” sound in words like “sit,” the “ʊ” sound in words like “put,” and the “ʌ” sound in words like “cup.”

These features contribute to the distinct phonetic characteristics of American English and contribute to its regional variations and accents.

American and British English are two major varieties of the English language that have several differences in spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Here are some key differences between the two: **Spelling:** One of the most noticeable differences is in spelling. For example, words like “color” (American) and “colour” (British), “center” (American) and “centre” (British), and “realize” (American) and “realise” (British) differ in their spelling. **Vocabulary:** There are numerous vocabulary differences between American and British English. For instance, “elevator” (American) is “lift” (British), “apartment” (American) is “flat” (British), and “truck” (American) is “lorry” (British). **Pronunciation:** There are also differences in

pronunciation, particularly with certain words and vowel sounds. For example, in words like “tomato” and “tomato,” “schedule” and “schedule,” and “herb” and “herb,” the stress and pronunciation differ between American and British English. **Grammar:** While overall grammar rules are mostly consistent between American and British English, there are some differences. For instance, the use of past simple and present perfect tense can differ between the two varieties. These are just a few examples of the many differences between American and British English. It’s important to note that both varieties are equally valid, and neither is more correct than the other – they simply reflect different language traditions.

Conclusion: In conclusion, the lexical, grammatical, and phonetic features of American English exhibit a distinct identity that sets it apart from British English. The vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation differences between the two varieties reflect the historical, cultural, and social factors that have shaped each language. Understanding these distinctions is crucial for effective communication and cross-cultural understanding. Additionally, the ongoing evolution of both American and British English points to the dynamic nature of language and the importance of continued research in this field.

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