

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BRITISH AND AMERICAN VERSIONS OF ENGLISH

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Различия между британским и американским вариантами английского языка

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Abstract. At the very beginning of the journey, pupils often become faced with a choice: which of these two language options is closer to them and which to learn. After all, the difference is not only in pronunciation, but also in writing and translating words. From this article you will learn how British English differs from American English on real examples and will be able to understand which of these two options you need.

Аннотация. В самом начале пути ученики часто становятся перед выбором: какой из этих двух вариантов языка им ближе и какой изучать. Ведь разница не только в произношении, но и в написании и переводе слов. Из этой статьи вы узнаете, чем британский английский отличается от американского на реальных примерах и сможете понять, какой из этих двух вариантов нужен именно вам.

Keywords: English language; The American version; The British version; differences.

Ключевые слова: английский язык; американский вариант; британский вариант; различия.

English is one of the most common languages in the world. For those who begin to study it, the difficulty is that they face a choice - what option is English to teach: British or American? Despite the fact that the American option is more affordable due to the large number of television and music products, still British is a solid foundation. If you own it, you can learn any other option, be it American or any other.

Let's look at the main differences between the two versions of English. There are several aspects in which the difference between the two is obvious - writing, pronunciation, grammar, and word meanings. For short, we will introduce designations known throughout the world: British English is reduced as BrE and American English as AmE.

One of the main differences is their writing. In the British version of English, words tend to retain the traits of the languages (French, Italian) from which they moved into English, while in the American version of English, the spelling of these words adapts to sound.

The most common difference is in the endings "-our" (BrE) and "-or" (AmE). For example:

BrE: colour, humour, favourite

AmE: color, humor, favorite

Another striking example is the differences in the endings "-tre" (BrE) and "-ter" (AmE):

BrE: centre, litre, theatre

AmE: center, liter, theater

Some words in American English are shorter than in British English due to America adapting borrowed words.

BrE: catalogue, programme

AmE: catalog, program

But Americans don't always seek to remove extra letters. In many words, where the British use just one consonant "l," in the American version it is double.

BrE: skilful, traveling

AmE: skillful, travelling

Verbs in the British version of English can end with "-ize" or "-ise," whereas for the American version it is typical only to write "-ize."

BrE: apologize/apologise, organize/organize, recognize/recognize

AmE: apologize, organize, recognize

Words ending with "-yse" in British English end with "-yze" in American English.

BrE: analyse, paralyse

AmE: analyze, paralyze

As for the writing of abbreviations and abbreviations, in American English Mister, Missis and Street are abbreviated to Mrs. And St. With the point following the abbreviation. In British English, there is no post-reduction point.

Another clear difference is also the difference in pronunciation. No doubt the words in the British and American versions of English vary dramatically in their pronunciation. One of the brightest examples is that in the British version of English the letter r is not pronounced if it stands after the vowel, and in the American, on the contrary, it is pronounced. The British option means pronunciation of the word hard as [h ɑ: d/], and American [h ɑ: rd/]. Or to take the floor more: British - [m ɔ: r/], American - [/moor/].

The American option pronunciation of a vowel of "u" in words - [u:], and British - softer [ju :]. For example, the British pronounce the word new as [nju :] and Americans - [nu :].

If in the word after the vowel letter "a" there is any consonant, the British pronounce this sound as [ɑ:], and in America often say this sound as [æ], which sounds like something average between "a" and "e." As an example, we take the word ask, the British version of pronunciation [ɑ: sk], and the American version - [æsk].

In British English, one sound from the endings "-ery," "-ary," "-ory" falls out, while in American they get one syllable longer. For example, the word secretary in Great Britain is read as ['to sekretri], and in America - ['sekre'teri], inventory - the British option ['i nvəntri], American - ['i nvənt ɔ: ri].

As a rule, Americans make an additional emphasis in words in which 2 or more syllables. This rule is quite closely related to the previous one, because in AmE there is one more syllable. For example, in the same word secret. In BrE option the accent is put only on the first syllable ['by sekretri] while in AmE the additional accent on the second letter "e" appears: ['sekre'teri].

Often the British version from the American version can be distinguished not only by pronunciation, but also by the construction of proposals. Differences in grammar between BrE and AmE do exist. It is often British grammar taught in schools, as it is considered more classical and correct.

Between the verbs shall/will Americans prefer the word will, while in the UK you can still hear "I shall...." Examples:

BrE: I shall never forget about this

AmE: I will never forget about this

In the British English there are two negative forms of the verb "need": "needn't" and "don't need to". Americans use only the second option (don 't need to). For example:

BrE: You needn't reserve a table

AmE: You don't need to reserve a table

As for the phrase "auxiliary verb do," it is much more common for Britons than Americans to hear a construct using "do" after verbs such as "have," may "and others. Americans often drop it in response. For example, in a formal conversation when answering the question "May I borrow your pen?," the British is likely to answer "You may do," but the American is "You may."

In American English, the word "like" is more commonly used instead of unions "as if" or "as much." Examples:

BrE: She looks as if she won the prize

AmE: She looks like she won the prize

If in the British English adverb in the middle of the sentence are used after auxiliary verbs, in the American version they can be put before them. For example:

BrE: He has probably arrived by now

AmE: He probably has arrived by now

In American English, the pretext "on" is often dropped before the days of the week. For example, the sentence "I 'm searing her Sunday morning" is a AmE option. The British will always say this proposal with the pretext:... "on Sunday morning."

Of course, this is far from all the differences in grammar between American and British English, but some of the most notable and often popping up in conversation or correspondence. Another important difference between British and American versions of English is also the difference in meaning of words.

One of the interesting ones is the symbols of the first floors of the building. In the UK, the ground floor will be called the "ground floor" and in America the "first floor." The second and third floors in the BrE will be marked as "first" and "second," respectively, and in the AmE as familiar to us "second" and "third." Also an interesting example can be given with the word flat. In British English this word translates as "apartment," in America flat is called a broken wheel (abbreviated from flat tire), while "apartment" on the AmE will be apartment. People in England and America speak the same language, but use it differently. British and American versions of English have far more similarities than differences. Brits and Americans understand each other without much difficulty. If you understand one option, you will understand another. We looked at the most popular and common differences that you need to know in order to avoid awkward situations during communication and be able to select expressions correctly depending on which version of English you are communicating with at the moment.

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