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British vs American English
Pronunciation in the EFL Classroom

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Abstract

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Abstract: Today English is a world language; it is spoken by millions both as first and second language almost all over the world. The varieties best known to Swedish pupils are the varieties British and American English. Another variety of English, which is spoken by both native and non-native speakers, is a mixture of British English and American English called Mid-Atlantic English. As long as the English language has been a part of the Swedish curriculum, the leading variety taught has been British English, but lately American English has influenced Swedish teenagers because of its prominent status in media. Since both British English and American English are used in Swedish schools, different attitudes can be perceived among pupils and teachers towards these two varieties. The aim of this paper is to determine if Swedish pupils are using British or American English or if they mix these two varieties. Attitudes and prejudice amongst pupils and their teachers towards these two varieties are looked into as well as whether the pupils speak the variety of English they claim they speak. The question of why the pupils speak the variety they do is also investigated. The results show that most pupils mix British and American English and that American English features predominate in the mix. According to this investigation, teachers and pupils find British English to be a bit “snobbish” while American English can sound a bit “cocky” to them. This investigation concludes that the two major influences on the pupils are their teachers and different kind of media.

Nyckelord: British English, American English, Mid-Atlantic English, pronunciation, attitudes, prejudice, English as a foreign language, English as a second language, EFL, ESL
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1. Introduction and aims

Today English is a world language; it is spoken by millions both as first and second language almost all over the world. In Swedish schools, English has been a required subject for the last 40 years and it is the first foreign language pupils meet in school. According to Rönnerdal & Johansson (2005:11) English is without a doubt the most important language to know. Because the English language is a world language, it has a number of dialects and is spoken with a variety of accents. The varieties best known to Swedish pupils are the British English variety Received Pronunciation (RP) and the American English variety General American (GA).

As long as the English language has been a part of the Swedish curriculum, the leading variety taught has been British English. Different surveys show that Swedish pupils in general have good English pronunciation, mainly because they are exposed to English in TV, films and music on a daily basis. Lately American English has begun to influence us because of its prominent status in the media. Moreover, American English has become more accepted in the classroom. Despite this fact, many teachers continue to use British English in their classroom (Modiano, 1998:245-247).

Another variety of English spoken by both native and non-native speakers, a mixture of British English and American English, is known as Mid-Atlantic English. Most pupils, even though they are not aware of it, use Mid-Atlantic English. One reason for this might be the teachers’ use of British English combined with the influence of the American media.

In this paper my aim is to determine which pronunciation pupils are using in one Swedish school, i.e., if they are using British English, American English, or a mix of the two varieties. I will also look into what attitudes pupils and teachers have towards these two varieties. The investigation is a study of pronunciation differences and will focus on differences in vowel, consonant and stress production. The sounds which will be investigated will be presented in section 2.6, Investigated differences in pronunciation between RP and GA. Another factor that will be taken into consideration is if the pupils speak the kind of variety they think they speak and if the teachers’ varieties of English influence the pupils’ pronunciation. The paper will also include an investigation of whether pupils and teachers are aware of the third variety, Mid-Atlantic English.
2. Background

English is one of the most important languages in the world. It is spoken by more than one billion people as a native or a second language. With a total sum of 380 million speakers in the United Kingdom and the United States, British English and American English are the two major varieties of English (Baugh, 2002:4-6).

2.1 British English

The variety British English has developed over many centuries to become what it is today; it has been influenced by languages such as German, French and even the Scandinavian languages, due to the Vikings. All modern varieties of English derive from British English. British English spread outside Britain and became a world language because of British colonisation. British English is in fact a term used to make a distinction between the forms of written English in the United Kingdom from other spoken forms of English (Wikipedia contributors A, 2005). However, it has become a general term for describing the English spoken in the U.K., in spite the fact that several dialects are spoken there. English is also spoken with different accents not only in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but also within England itself.

When thinking of British English, many people think of Received Pronunciation (RP). Received stands for “socially accepted” (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:12). Although RP developed in the south-east of England it does not have any regional features; it is a social variant which is predominantly used by the upper-class. RP is considered to be the most prestigious pronunciation, not only in Britain, but throughout the world. “The prestige of British English is probably due partly to its long history, to the influence of the former British empire and to its many unrivalled authors” (Odenstedt, 2000:137). Nevertheless, it is only spoken by as little as 3 per cent of the population of Britain (Modiano, 1996:11).

According to Rönnerdal & Johansson (2005:12), certain demands can be made on a pronunciation model for teaching. It should be a form of English that is not regionally or socially limited. The pronunciation model should be easy to understand in most situations. It should also represent a variety that people come in contact with e.g. when travelling and in media. Another consideration is the teaching material available. RP has traditionally been used as a model since it fits all of these requirements. It is still being taught to non-native speakers in most schools in Europe.
2.2 American English

The English language was brought to America by colonists from England who settled along the Atlantic seaboard in the 17th century. After the British Empire won the Seven Years’ War against France in the 18th century, the British colonies gained control over all lands east of the Mississippi River. It was the British colonists who established the speech and forms of English in America. American English evolved even more when the first wave of immigrants came to the country from the British Isles. These immigrants are often called economic-immigrants, because they left the British Isles for economic reasons, to search for a new life in America (Wikipedia contributors B, 2005). The different American English accents are a result of a mixture of various accents from the British Isles (Baugh, 2002:356). The English spoken in the U.S. became recognised as a distinct variety, American English, after the publication of Noah Webster’s An American Dictionary of the English language. American pronunciation varies less than British English. On the other hand, General American (GA) is in many ways similar to RP: it has never been a variety spoken by a whole nation and it is generally used by newscasters.

More than two thirds of the native speakers of the English language speak some form of American English. The English spoken in certain areas in the U.S. is closer to the language of Shakespeare than the English spoken in the United Kingdom today (Tottie, 2002:1-2). “This is because language groups cut off geographically from the mother country tend to be more conservative, and as such retain older features, while in the country of origin there is a natural inclination for the language to evolve at a quicker pace” (Modiano, 1996:10). Most of the varieties of pronunciation in the U.S. are found on the east coast and are often spoken by small groups such as the former French speaking population in Louisiana and other parts of the South. Unlike the case of RP “the establishment of AmE [American English] has not been based on prestige, educational snobbishness, or any conscious effort to promote a national standard. Instead, it has evolved naturally” (Modiano, 1996: 10).
2.3 Mid-Atlantic English

Mid-Atlantic English refers to “something which has both British and American characteristics, or is designed to appeal to both the British and the Americans” (Melchers, 1998:263). Although American English has developed through the years to become a world language, it is still not given that American English is the strongest candidate for a lingua franca. Rather, as Modiano (1996:135) observes, Mid-Atlantic English is the strongest candidate because it provides the clarity and ease of communication which are required in a cross-cultural setting. Nowadays, the majority of speakers, at least in Western Europe, use features from both American English and British English. Pupils are beginning to speak Mid-Atlantic English because they tend to prefer forms which suit their communicative needs best (Modiano, 1998:242-244). Modiano (1996:5) also claims that not only second language learners but also an increasing number of native speakers are mixing features of American and British English. As a result, pupils are often confused when confronted with their errors in British or American English usage. Like their pupils, however, even teachers occasionally find it difficult to separate the two varieties. Although the English-language curricula for schools in most European countries still emphasize that pupils should either speak British English or American English, an investigation of teachers’ attitudes to varieties of English which is a recurrent assignment in Melcher’s courses, showed that many Swedish teachers have begun to use and accept Mid-Atlantic English (Melchers, 1998:263-266).

2.4 Attitudes towards British and American English

In the 19th century when Noah Webster introduced the first American English dictionary and American English began to be regarded as a distinct variety of English, Americans were often accused of corrupting the English language by introducing new and unfamiliar words, when in fact, they continued to use terms that had become obsolete in England. Perceiving the injustice of this, the Americans began to defend their use of English and demand parity for their speech with British English (Baugh, 2002:390).

British English is considered to be the more prestigious variety while American English is regarded as vulgar by many people (Odenstedt, 2000:136). Despite this, American English is regarded as “slower, clearer and easier to follow, while the ’slurred’ quality of British speech makes it more difficult to understand” (Odenstedt, 2000:137). Until recently, “American English was considered less educated, less cultured and less beautiful than British English” (Tottie, 2002:1), but with its status in media, international business, computing and science,
American English has gained as a world language (Tottie, 2002:245). Furthermore, American English is more accessible to a larger number of native and second language speakers and, naturally, this has made American English more international.

Different attitudes towards British and American English are perceived in today’s classroom. Most teachers, having been brought up with British English, will try to pass this variety on to their pupils. Until recently, it was forbidden to speak or write in American English in Swedish schools; it was also forbidden to mix British English and American English (Odenstedt, 2000:137). One of the reasons for the predominance of British English in the classroom has been publishing traditions. “Britain has a long tradition of producing textbooks and dictionaries and of marketing them all over the world, whereas there have been relatively few American textbooks or dictionaries written for audiences worldwide” (Tottie, 2002:1)

Because of the enormous impact of American media, many pupils prefer to learn American English. Another reason why pupils prefer American English may be that American intonation is relatively straightforward and easy for a Swede to imitate, while British intonation is very difficult for Swedish speakers to master (Odenstedt, 2000:137). And according to Trudgill (2000:200), it is important to let the pupils speak the variety they prefer. Otherwise they can easily lose their identity and group membership. But pupils may not have the opportunity to choose variety because many teachers prefer to teach British English and not American English, which may be preferred by some pupils. Most teachers believe that they are better equipped to decide which educational material ought to be used in schools. “As ‘experts’ they mistakenly believe that their choice of variety is more valid than the preferences of their students … Whatever one may think of AmE [American English], it is the variety which the majority of native speakers use” (Modiano, 1998:247). Thus, it is important that both teachers and pupils appreciate the importance of knowing more than one variety of English.

2.5 Differences between RP and GA

“The differences between AmE [American English] and BrE [British English] with respect to pronunciation are apparent to native speakers, but not always so clearly differentiated in the ears of the second language speaker” (Modiano, 1996:9). RP and GA differ in the pronunciation of vowels, consonants, stress, vowel reduction and intonation. Vowel reduction
and intonation will not be included in the investigation but will be mentioned here. The most important differences between RP and GA vowels are in the sounds:

- /ɒ/ vs /ʌ/: Generally, RP has a slightly rounded /ɒ/ in words like hot, stop, nod, where GA has an un-rounded /ʌ/ sound. E.g. hot: [hɒt] in RP but [hɑːt] in GA.
- /ɒ/ vs /ɔ/: RP uses /ɒ/ while GA uses /ɔ/ before the consonants /θ/, /ʃ/, /s/ and /θ/. This can be seen in words such as long, song, coffee. E.g. long: [lɒŋ] in RP but [lɔŋ] in GA.
- /ʌ/ vs /ɔ/: RP uses /ʌ/ while GA uses /ɔ/ before the consonant /t/. This is found in words like courage, hurry, worry. E.g. hurry: [hʌrɪ] in RP but [hɔːrɪ] in GA.
- /ɑ/ vs /æ/: RP uses /ɑ/ while GA uses /æ/ before the consonants /θ/, /ʃ/, /s/ and before the endings –nce, -nch, -nd and –nt. This difference is found in words like dance, path and command. E.g. dance: [dɑːns] in RP but [dæns] in GA.
- /ou/ vs /ʌu/: RP uses /ʌu/ while GA uses /ʌu/ in words like boat, coat and note. E.g. boat: [bɔət] in RP but [bʌt] in GA.

When it comes to consonants, both RP and GA uses the same phonemes but there are differences in the pronunciation of some of them.

- /r/ is pronounced in all positions in GA. E.g. car: [kær] in GA and [kɔː] in RP.
- In some positions [t] is pronounced [ʈ] in GA, [ʈ] is pronounced with a /ð/ sound. E.g. better: [betər] in GA and [betə] in RP.
- /ʃ/ is often missing in GA where RP has /ʃ/ in words like student: [stʊdɛnt] in GA and [stʃuːdɛnt] in RP.

According to Rönnerdal & Johansson (2005:95), stress is the relative prominence of the syllables in a word and of words in a sentence. The stress may occur differently in some words in RP and GA.

- In some words the primary stress is placed earlier in GA than in RP. E.g. ´address in GA but ad´dress in RP.
On the other hand it can be the other way around; the primary stress is placed later in GA than in RP, and this occurs in many French loanwords. E.g. bal’let in GA but ‘ballet in RP.

In addition to these differences double stress is less common in compounds GA than in RP. E.g. headquarters in GA but head’quarters in RP.

The vowels in unstressed syllables are often reduced in the English language. It is more common for GA to have less vowel reduction than RP.

Some suffixes which are reduced in RP have a full vowel in GA. E.g. laboratory: [læbrɔtɔrɪ] in RP and [læbrɔtɔrɪ] in GA.

The ending –ile has a full vowel sound in RP but is reduced in GA. E.g. fragile: [frædʒaɪl] in RP and [frædʒl] in GA.

“By intonation we understand the systematic variations in pitch in longer stretches of speech. Whether the pitch goes up, down or changes in other ways is very significant” (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:105). The differences in intonation between RP and GA are difficult to describe, since British and American phoneticians use different marking convention.

GA may sound more monotonous than RP because it uses a narrower pitch range.

Words before the nucleus in a sentence are usually pronounced low in GA, and then it is followed by a pitch change on the nucleus.

2.6 Investigated differences in pronunciation between RP and GA

Since this is a study in pronunciation focus will be laid on differences between /ɑː/ vs /æ/, /ɒ/ vs /æ/, /ɔː/ vs /oʊ/, /juː/ vs /uː/, [t] vs [t], /l/ vs /ɾ/ and on word stress.

2.6.1 /ɑː/ vs /æ/

In RP, the vowel sound used to pronounce the letter a is often /ɑː/, while in GA the vowel sound is often pronounced /æ/. At the end of the 18th century people in southern England began to change their pronunciation on the letter a. They changed from a flat a to a broad a in words like fast, dance and can’t. The change also took place in New England but most of America preserved the old sound. Even though some American speakers use the broad a, the flat a must be regarded a typical American pronunciation (Baugh, 2002:373). According to
Rönnerdal & Johansson (2005:123), RP uses /a:/ and GA uses /æ/ when the vowel a appears before the voiceless fricatives /f/, /s/ and /θ/ and before –nce, nch, -nd and -nt. This vowel difference is seen in words like: half, class, bath, dance, branch, command and aunt.

2.6.2 /o/ vs /ɔ/:

The greatest phonemic differences between RP and GA are the ones in the area of the low back vowels. Both RP and GA use a /ɔ:/ in words like car and hard but in general, RP has a slightly rounded /o/ in words like hot, stop, nod, where GA has an un-rounded /ɔ:/ sound (Celce-Murcia et al, 1996:363).

2.6.3 /u:/ vs /ou/:

According to Celce-Murcia (1996:364), the differences in allophonic variation between RP and GA are much more extensive than the phonemic difference. The most obvious phonetic difference occurs in words like boat, coat and note, where GA has /u:/ and RP has the centralized /ɔu:/.

2.6.4 /ju:/ vs /u/:

The letter u is pronounced /ju:/ in RP and /u:/ in GA. According to Ekwall (1946:22) both variants of pronouncing the letter u existed and were accepted by the people living in England. In RP, /ju:/ was the variant to be retained while /u:/ disappeared. However, /u:/ was preserved in GA and it is still used. GA’s /u:/ is being used where RP has /ju:/ after /t/, /d/ and /n/ and now less frequently after /l/, /s/ and /z/ (Celce-Murcia, 1996:366). E.g. student: [stju:dent] in GA and [stʌ:dent] in RP.

2.6.5 [t] vs [ɾ]

The letter t is pronounced differently in RP and GA. In GA, the letter t is often voiced and sounds like a /d/; this voiced allophone is called a flap [ɾ]. The flap occurs after a vowel or an /r/ and before an unstressed syllable (Celce-Murcia, 1996:64). This variety of pronouncing the letter t is not found in RP, where t is always voiceless (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:123). E.g. better: [beɾɔr] in GA and [beta] in RP.
2.6.6 /-/ vs /r/

In RP, the letter $r$ has disappeared except before vowels and when it occurs at the beginning of a word. The letter $r$ is not pronounced when it occurs before another consonant or at the end of a word, unless the next word begins with a vowel. The /r/ at the end of a word or before a consonant is known as non-prevocalic /r/. In RP, the non-prevocalic /r/ is usually not pronounced but in GA the /r/ is pronounced in all positions. The /r/ in GA is either retention of the old English pronunciation or it is a result of the influence by the Northern England speech (Baugh, 2002:373-375). The non-prevocalic /r/ is found in words like: car, farm and hard.

2.6.7 Word stress

There are words in RP and GA in which the primary difference in pronunciation are differences in word stress. A characteristic of English sentence rhythm is the regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables. In a word, one or two syllables stand out more than the others. This is where a speaker uses the stress (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:95). In many two-syllable words ending in –ate, GA tends to stress the first syllable and RP the second: ‘dictate in GA but dic’tate in RP. These words ending in –ate seem to represent exceptions that American English speakers generally put primary stress later in a multi syllabic word than British English speakers. In words of French origin, GA uses the French syllable-final stress pattern, while RP anglicizes these words with stress on the first syllable: gar’age in GA but ´garage in RP (Celce-Murcia, 1996:367). In addition to these differences double stress is less common in compounds in GA than in RP: ‘headquarters in GA but ´head’quarters in RP (Rönnerdal & Johansson, 2005:125).

3. Method

The investigation consists of a study of pronunciation differences and will focus on vowel, consonant and stress production. My aim is to determine which pronunciation, i.e., British, American, or a mix of the two varieties pupils are using in one Swedish school. Another factor that will be taken into consideration is if the pupils speak the kind of variety they think they speak and if the teachers’ varieties of English influence the pupils’ pronunciation. I will also look into what attitudes pupils and teachers have towards these two varieties and also if they are aware of a third variety, Mid-Atlantic English which is growing as an English variety in Europe.
3.1 Target group
The target groups for my investigation are EFL\(^1\) pupils and their teachers in a Swedish school. I did my investigation on three different ninth-grade groups and their teachers. The pupils were between fourteen and fifteen years old, and the total numbers of pupils tested were twenty-two. As I mentioned earlier, I investigated three groups; therefore, three teachers were tested.

3.2 Material
To be able to determine which variety the pupils used, I have chosen to use Received Pronunciation (RP) as the British English variety and General American (GA) as the American English variety. In order to find out if the pupils use British English, American English or a mix of the two varieties, I looked at words (see section 2.6) which are pronounced differently in RP and GA. To determine which variety the pupils used, I made a wordlist (see Appendix 1) of fourteen words, where each word exemplified one of the investigated differences; each difference was represented twice. In addition to the wordlist, ten sentences (see Appendix 2) were constructed. These sentences contained words that represented the investigated differences; each difference appeared at least two times. I constructed both a wordlist and sentences, to see whether or not the pupils’ pronunciation of the investigated differences was the same when a word was pronounced in isolation as when pronounced in the context of an utterance. Moreover, two different questionnaires (see Appendices 3 and 6) were made, one for the pupils and one for their teachers. The questions were formulated with the purpose of finding out what attitudes pupils and the teachers have towards British and American English as well as what, if any, knowledge they have about the third variety, Mid-Atlantic English. On the pupil questionnaire, I asked what variety the pupils thought they were speaking; this was done with the intention of finding out if the pupils actually spoke the variety they thought they were actually speaking. Regarding the pupil questionnaire, I chose to write it in Swedish instead of English. I found this necessary in order to get the most out of the questionnaire. Time constraints were also a consideration.

\(^1\) English as a Foreign Language
3.3 Test-session
The pupils were tested one by one and I used a laptop to record them when reading the wordlist and sentences. The pupils were recorded so that I would have the opportunity to analyse their pronunciation afterwards, and therefore obtain the most reliable result. When the pupil had read the wordlist and sentences, s/he was given the questionnaire to fill out. The questionnaires were numbered so I knew which questionnaire belonged to which pupil. In addition to the questionnaires for the pupils, a questionnaire was given to the three teachers. The teachers’ questionnaires were numbered as well, to enable me to separate them from one another and match them with the right group of tested pupils.

3.4 Problems during test-session
A few problems occurred during the test-session. Firstly, it was difficult to get pupils to participate in my investigation. I aimed for ten pupils in each group which would have given me a sum total of thirty pupils to work with. In the first group, thirteen pupils volunteered while in the other two groups only four and five pupils respectively were willing to participate in the test. Secondly, the word ‘advertisement’ from the wordlist appeared to be difficult for the pupils to pronounce. Since many pupils pronounced this word with neither a British nor American English accent, I chose to remove it from the investigation.

4. Results
The results will be presented below in tables. Group 1 (thirteen pupils) and Group 2 (four pupils) have British English speaking teachers while Group 3 (five pupils) has an American English speaking teacher. I will present the results in section 4.1 and 4.2. In section 4.1 the total results will be examined as a group while in section 4.2 they will be examined individually. In section 4.3, I will present the results of the questionnaires. The last section, 4.4, will be devoted to analyse the results. One word, grandparents, was subsequently removed from the results since it is pronounced the same in both varieties.
4.1 Group results

Table 1 presents the three Groups’ pronunciation of the words in the wordlist. In Group 1, RP was used 46 per cent of the time and GA was used 54 per cent of the time. In Group 2 and 3, RP was used 38 per cent of the time while GA was used 62 per cent of the time. Altogether RP was used 40 per cent of the time and GA was used 60 per cent of the time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RP/GA</td>
<td>RP/GA</td>
<td>RP/GA</td>
<td>RP/GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>0/13 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/22 (0/100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>2/11 (15/85%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>1/4 (20/80%)</td>
<td>4/18 (18/82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>/ou/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td>/ou/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>/ɔ/</td>
<td>13/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>5/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>22/0 (100/0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>/ɔ/</td>
<td>10/3 (77/23%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>18/4 (82/18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>/juː/</td>
<td>10/3 (77/23%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>1/4 (20/80%)</td>
<td>12/10 (55/45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>/juː/</td>
<td>2/11 (15/85%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>3/19 (14/86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>13/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>3/1 (75/25%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>20/2 (90/10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>12/1 (92/8%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>20/2 (90/10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird</td>
<td>/-/</td>
<td>2/11 (15/85%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>2/20 (10/90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>/-/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrate</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>8/5 (62/38%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>16/6 (73/27%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total sum of what varieties the groups used:

|        |       | 46/54% | 38/62% | 38/62% | 40/60% |

Table 2 presents the three Groups’ pronunciation of the words in context. In Group 1, RP was used 38 per cent of the time and GA was used 62 per cent of the time. In Group 2, RP was used 30 per cent of the time and GA was used 70 per cent of the time. In Group 3, RP was
used 23 per cent of the time while GA was used 77 per cent of the time. Altogether RP was used 30 per cent of the time and GA was used 70 per cent of the time.

Table 2. Group results (context)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Group 1 (RP/GA)</th>
<th>Group 2 (RP/GA)</th>
<th>Group 3 (RP/GA)</th>
<th>Total (RP/GA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>/ɑː/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>8/5 (62/38%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>1/4 (20/80%)</td>
<td>10/12 (45/55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat</td>
<td>/ɔu/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soap</td>
<td>/ɔu/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/21 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nod</td>
<td>/ɑ/ vs /ɑ/</td>
<td>12/1 (92/8%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>2/3 (40/60%)</td>
<td>15/7 (68/32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On</td>
<td>/ɑ/ vs /ɑ/</td>
<td>5/8 (62/38%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>5/17 (23/77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>13/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>5/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>22/0 (100/0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/22 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>[t] vs [l]</td>
<td>11/2 (85/15%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>19/3 (86/14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party</td>
<td>[t] vs [l]</td>
<td>13/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>2/3 (40/60%)</td>
<td>19/3 (86/14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɒ/</td>
<td>4/9 (30/70%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>4/18 (18/82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɒ/</td>
<td>4/9 (30/70%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>4/18 (18/82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɒ/</td>
<td>1/12 (8/92%)</td>
<td>0/4 (0/100%)</td>
<td>0/5 (0/100%)</td>
<td>1/22 (5/95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>2/11 (15/85%)</td>
<td>1/3 (25/75%)</td>
<td>1/4 (20/80%)</td>
<td>4/18 (18/82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballet</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>11/2 (85/15%)</td>
<td>4/0 (100/0%)</td>
<td>4/1 (80/20%)</td>
<td>19/3 (86/14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total sum of what varieties the groups used: 38/62% 30/70% 23/77% 30/70%

When comparing Table 1 and Table 2 it is noticeable that the American English variety GA is more frequently used when the pupils are pronouncing words in a context than when they are pronouncing them individually. All three Groups increased their number of GA features when the words were pronounced in a context. Also, worth mentioning is that more American features are seen in Group 3 who had an American English speaking teacher.
4.2 Individual results

Most pupils mixed the features of British and American English, although the level of mixing the varieties differed from pupil to pupil. In order to decide what variety the pupils spoke, I determined that the pupils who used one or the other variety eight or more times would be considered speakers of that variety. For example, if a pupil used American English features eight times and British English features the remainder of the times when reading the words from the wordlist, s/he will be referred to as an American English speaker.

Table 3 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in Group 1 of the words on the wordlist. Seven pupils (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9) claimed they spoke a mix of British and American English, though four of these pupils (numbers 1, 2, 7 and 8) actually used a predominance of American English features. Four pupils (numbers 5, 6, 11 and 13) were not certain what variety they spoke, but according to their results, three of them (numbers 5, 6 and 13) spoke American English and the last pupil (number 11) spoke a mix. Two pupils (numbers 10 and 12) claimed they spoke British English, but one of them (number 12) spoke a mix. No one in Group 1 claimed they spoke American English.
Table 3. Individual results, group 1 (wordlist)

M=A mix of British and American English, U=The pupil was unsure what variety s/he spoke, B=British English, A=American English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil nr.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sound</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>U</strong></td>
<td><strong>U</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>U</strong></td>
<td><strong>U</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɒ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɒ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrate</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in Group 1 of the words in context. Seven pupils (numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9) claimed they spoke a mix of British and American English; three of these pupils (numbers 1, 2 and 9) spoke American English, two pupils (numbers 3 and 8) spoke British English and other pupils (numbers 4 and 7) spoke a mix. Out of the four pupils (numbers 5, 6, 11 and 13) who did not know which variety they spoke, three pupils (numbers 5, 6 and 11) spoke American English and the last pupil (number 13) mixed the varieties when using the words in context. One of the two pupils (number 10)
who claimed they spoke British English spoke British English; the other pupil (number 12) mixed the varieties.

**Table 4. Individual results, group 1 (context)**

M = A mix of British and American English, U = The pupil was unsure what variety s/he spoke, B = British English, A = American English

| Variety pupils claimed they spoke: | M | M | M | M | U | U | M | M | M | M | B | U | B | U |
| Variety actually spoken: | British English: | 6 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 13 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| American English: | 8 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 10 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 7 |

Table 5 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in Group 2 of the words on the wordlist. Two of the pupils (numbers 14 and 15) thought they spoke a mix while the other two
pupils (numbers 16 and 17) thought they spoke British English. All four pupils spoke a mix of the varieties of British English and American English.

**Table 5. Individual results, group 2 (wordlist)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil nr.</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sound</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>/ɑː/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>/ɑː/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>/əʊ/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td>/əʊ/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɑː/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /ɑː/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>/juː/ vs /uː/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>/juː/ vs /uː/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>[t] vs [t]</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>[t] vs [t]</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrate</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupils claimed they spoke:  

**Variety actually spoken:**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British English</th>
<th>American English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in Group 2 of the words in context. All four pupils spoke American English, although none of them thought they did. Two of the pupils (numbers 16 and 17) believed they spoke British English and the other two (numbers 14 and 15) believed they mixed the two varieties.
Table 6. Individual results, group 2 (context)

M=A mix of British and American English, U=The pupil was unsure what variety s/he spoke, B=British English, A=American English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil nr.</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /ɑ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coat</td>
<td>/ɑʊ/ vs /ɒʊ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soap</td>
<td>/ɑʊ/ vs /ɒʊ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nod</td>
<td>/ɑ/ vs /ɑ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On</td>
<td>/ɑ/ vs /ɑ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New</td>
<td>/juː/ vs /uː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>/juː/ vs /uː/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>[t] vs [t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Party</td>
<td>[t] vs [t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over</td>
<td>/-/- vs /r/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>/-/- vs /r/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Your</td>
<td>/-/- vs /r/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ballet</td>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pupils claimed they spoke:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety actually spoken:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British English:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American English:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in group 3 of the words on the wordlist. In Group 3 four pupils (numbers 18, 19, 20 and 21) believed they spoke American English and the last pupil (number 22) was not sure which variety s/he spoke. Two of the pupils (numbers 18 and 19) who thought they spoke American English did speak American...
English. Two other pupils (numbers 20 and 21) spoke a mix. Pupil number 22, who was not sure which variety s/he spoke, spoke American English.

**Table 7. Individual results, group 3 (wordlist)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Pupil nr.</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dance</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>/ɔ/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td>/ɔ/ vs /ou/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /a:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>/ɒ/ vs /a:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suit</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>/-/ vs /t/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibrate</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Pupils claimed they spoke: | A | A | A | A | U |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety actually spoken:</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British English</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 presents the pronunciation of individual pupils in Group 3 of the words in context. The four pupils (numbers 18, 19, 20, 21) who claimed they spoke American English did speak American English. The last pupil (number 22) who was not sure whether s/he spoke British or American English also used American English in the sentence-reading section.
Table 8. Individual results, group 3 (context)

M=A mix of British and American English, U=The pupil was unsure what variety s/he spoke,
B=British English, A=American English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil nr.</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sound</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>/æ/ vs /æ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coat</td>
<td>/ɔʊ/ vs /əʊ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>Soap</td>
<td>/ɔʊ/ vs /əʊ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>Nod</td>
<td>/o/ vs /ʌ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>On</td>
<td>/o/ vs /ʌ/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>/ju:/ vs /u:/</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
<td>[t] vs [θ]</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>/-/ vs /r/</td>
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<td>A</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garage</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballet</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
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Pupils claimed they spoke:

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>19</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Variety actually spoken:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>British English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American English</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

When I compared the pupils’ results from the wordlist and context, most of the pupils were found to speak with more American English features when they pronounced the words in context than they did when they pronounced words from the wordlist. I am aware that there are contributory factors which may influence the results in favour of one or the other varieties of English; these will be discussed in section 4.4, analysis of results.
4.3 Student and teacher questionnaires

As a part of my investigation I made two questionnaires, one for the pupils and one for their teachers (see Appendices 3 and 6). The questionnaire for the pupils was written in Swedish; this was done because I thought it would minimize misunderstanding. An English version of the pupils’ questionnaire was made (see Appendix 4). The results of the pupils’ and teachers’ questionnaires can be found in Appendix 5 and Appendix 7.

My questionnaires provided information about pupils’ and teachers’ attitudes and prejudices towards British English and American English. I will not deal with question number 3 from both the pupils’ and teachers’ questionnaires. Regarding prejudices, twelve pupils and all three teachers considered British English to sound a bit “snobbish” and “posh” and indicated that it can sound “superior” on certain occasions. American English, on the other hand, was considered to sound a bit “tougher”, “cocky”, and “vulgar”; for four pupils, it sometimes sounds like American English speakers “brag” when they speak. Three pupils said they did not have any prejudices and both varieties sounds “cool”. The remaining seven pupils did not answer the question about prejudices, so I interpret this to mean that they do not have any special prejudices regarding British and American English.

Ten pupils preferred American English, nine pupils preferred British English and the remaining three pupils did not prefer either variety over the other. I discovered that two of the pupils who preferred American English and had a British English speaking teacher did not want their teacher to speak any other variety of English. Also, two of the pupils who preferred American English and had an American English speaking teacher wanted their teacher to speak the other variety. However, the majority of the pupils (eighteen pupils) were satisfied with their teacher’s variety of English.

Twelve of the pupils believed they had discussed the differences between British and American English in class. On this question, all three teachers stated they discussed the differences. But even if only twelve of the pupils said they had discussed the differences, all of them claimed they could hear the differences between British and American English. According to the teachers, however, both British and American English appear in textbook-based listening tasks, the pupils are unanimous in that only British English is involved. This suggests that the pupils are not as familiar with the differences between the varieties as they think they are. Both the pupils and the teachers had knowledge of the most common
differences between British and American English but they had not, however, heard about Mid-Atlantic English. It appears that it was just the term Mid-Atlantic English they were not familiar with because they were fully aware that mixing English varieties exists and the pupils are allowed to mix English varieties in class. Due to the fact that the teachers are interested in the pupils’ communicative skills, it does not matter to them what variety the pupils speak, just as long as they participate in class discussions.

Twenty of the pupils believed that their grades would not be affected negatively if they did not speak the same variety as the teacher. However, the remaining two pupils did think that their grades would be affected negatively if they did not speak the same variety as the teacher. Nevertheless, the numbers changed when they were asked if they thought their grades would be affected positively if they spoke the same variety as the teacher. As many as nine pupils thought their grades would be affected in a good way if they used the same variety as the teachers. The other thirteen pupils did not believe that this to be the case.

The two major reasons that the pupils gave for speaking British English, American English or a mix of both varieties were that they were influenced either by their teachers (thirteen pupils) or influenced by different kinds of media, such as TV, music, films and computers (fifteen pupils). Of these, eight pupils were influenced by both teachers and media. On the other hand, the main reason for all the teachers was that they were influenced by friends and/or they had lived in either England or the USA.

4.4 Analysis of results

The pupils mixed British and American English features more than I originally thought they would do. When I analysed their questionnaires, however, it became clear to me why: their two major influences are their teacher, who often is a British English speaker, and/or American TV, music, film and computers. Thus, it is no wonder they mix British and American English features. Another possible reason, at least for some of the pupils, for mixing the varieties is that they believe their grades will be affected positively if they speak the same as the teacher. Accordingly, they interlard their otherwise American English way of speaking with British English features.

A tendency I noticed in the results of my investigation was that pupils used more American English features when they pronounced the words in context than they did when they
pronounced the words from the wordlist. I think this has to do with the two major sources of English to which they are exposed, namely, teachers and media. When pupils read and learn words in school, it often happens that either the teacher reads the word out loud first and then the pupils repeat or they listen to a recording of the individual words pronounced with a British accent (as indicated above, teaching materials are traditionally British). On the other hand, when pupils hear words in context, it is often when watching a film, listening to music or playing with the computer. As a result, when pupils pronounce words in context, it is more natural to pronounce them as they most often hear them pronounced, i.e., with an American English pronunciation. One thing that struck me was that some of the pupils who did not prefer the same variety as their teacher spoke did not want their teacher to speak another variety. E.g. one pupil preferred American English, but had a teacher who spoke British English. S/he did not want, however, the teacher to speak American English. A possible reason for this might be something personal which made the pupil not want the teacher to change variety.

I am aware that there are contributory factors which influenced the results in favour of one or the other variety. If there are British English pronunciations of words that resemble the Swedish pronunciations of the same words, it is likely that British pronunciation will be used. Of course, it can be the same way with American pronunciations that are similar to the Swedish ones. For example, it is more likely that a pupil pronounces the word “student” [stu:dent], not [stju:dent] because it is more similar to the Swedish pronunciation. According to my investigation, the word “new” was often pronounced [nju:] but the word “student” was often pronounced [stu:dent]; I think that if these two words had been given together, the first would have affected the other i.e. new student [nju: stju:dent]. This was not anything I thought of when I made up my wordlist or sentences.

5. Conclusion
Today, English is gaining as a world language with its many speakers around the globe. Although it is impossible to indicate one specific reason for the spread of the English language. One factor is its expansion through the media. Of the two major varieties of English, British English and American English, American English is the variety which has begun to influence the English spoken in Europe, and that spoken in Sweden is no exception. Nevertheless, British English is still dominant in the schools. Furthermore, most teachers speak British English and most educational material is based on the British English variety.
This investigation deals with pronunciation only. One of my aims has been to determine which pronunciation pupils are using in one Swedish school, i.e., if they are using British English, American English, or a mix of the two varieties. The results indicate that pupils are mixing both varieties, although they mix the varieties differently; some of them use more features from British English. However, this is not as common as mixing the varieties and using American English features. Most pupils tend to use more British English features when they read the words from the wordlist but, on the other hand, they applied more American English features when they were reading the words in a context.

The pupils were given a question on what variety they thought they spoke. The four options they could choose from were: British English, American English, a mix of British American English; the last option could be chosen if they did not what variety they spoke. To my astonishment very few pupils spoke the variety they stated. One out of four pupils, who stated they spoke British English, actually did speak it. Furthermore, three out four pupils, who stated they spoke American English, pronounced the words with American English features. Finally, three out of nine pupils spoke the mix of varieties, which they stated.

I am aware that it is difficult to determine what variety a pupil is speaking from this rather small investigation; I am also aware that it is difficult to decide where to draw the line if a pupil is speaking British English, American English or a mix of these varieties. Actually, all but three pupils mixed the varieties with one or the other, usually American, predominant.

Neither the teachers nor the pupils had heard of the variety Mid-Atlantic English but I assume it was just the term they were not familiar with because mixing varieties is something that takes place during their lessons. One of the reasons for mixing the varieties is that the teacher’s variety influences their pupils. Today, most teachers speak British English and most media events, which influence the pupils, are produced in the U.S. Since these are the two major influences on the pupils, a mix of varieties is only natural. The results of my investigation indicate that pupils with British English speaking teachers tended to use more British English features and the ones who had an American English speaking teacher tended to use more American English features.
In conclusion, I think it is important to let the pupils speak the variety they want to speak, whether it is British English, American English or a mix of the two varieties. It appears that British English will cease to be the variety taught in school since American English and its features are so widespread. In the future, naturally, more English teachers will be speaking American English in Sweden since it is no longer forbidden to use and teach American English in the Swedish classrooms. Moreover, the next generation teachers will be brought up in and influenced by our Americanized world. I do not, however, think that the British English will disappear completely. Nevertheless, instead of talking of someone who speaks British English or American English I think the term Mid-Atlantic English will be used more frequently.
References


Appendix 1: Wordlist

WORDLIST

Boat
Letter
Dance
Duke
Hot
Farm
Vibrate
Float
Tomato
Command
Suit
Stop
Bird
Advertisement
Appendix 2: Context

CONTEXT

1. Will you pass me the coat over there?

2. The party tonight is going to be fun.

3. Eminem's new CD will be released next Saturday.

4. I must paint the garage tomorrow.

5. I’m not going to my grandparents this Christmas.

6. I love to watch sports.

7. There is a soap on the sink you can use.

8. I have promised myself to never go to a ballet show again.

9. All students are longing for the Christmas vacation.

10. Nod your head if you understand.
Appendix 3: Student questionnaire in Swedish

Enkät

1. Vilken typ av engelska pratar du?
   - Brittisk engelska
   - Amerikansk engelska
   - En blandning
   - Jag vet inte

2. Vilken typ av engelska föredrar du?
   - Brittisk engelska
   - Amerikansk engelska
   - Jag föredrar ingen typ mer än den andra

3. Vilken typ av engelska är lättast att uttala?
   - Brittisk engelska
   - Amerikansk engelska
   - Båda är lika lätta/svåra

4. Vilken typ av engelska pratar din lärare?
   - Brittisk engelska
   - Amerikansk engelska
   - En blandning
   - Jag vet inte

5. Kan du höra skillnad mellan Brittisk och Amerikansk engelska?
   - Ja
   - Nej
   - Jag vet inte

6. Diskuterar ni skillnaderna mellan Brittisk och Amerikansk engelska på lektionerna?
   - Ja
   - Nej

7. “Mid-Atlantic English” är en blandning mellan Brittisk och amerikansk engelska, har du hört talas om denna typ av engelska?
   - Ja
   - Nej

8. Är ni tillåtna att blanda Brittisk och Amerikansk engelska när ni diskuterar i klassrummet?
   - Ja
   - Nej

9. Vilken typ av engelska används mest i er textbok, då ni lyssnar på hörövningar?
   - Brittisk engelska
   - Amerikansk engelska
   - Båda typer används lika ofta

10. Skulle du vilja att din lärare pratade någon annan typ av engelska?
    - Ja
    - Nej

11. Tror du att dina betyg blir påverkade negativt om du inte pratar samma typ av engelska som din lärare?
    - Ja
    - Nej

12. Tror du att dina betyg blir påverkade positivt om du pratar samma typ av engelska som din lärare?
    - Ja
    - Nej

13. Hur kommer det sig att du pratar den typ av engelska du pratar?
    - Påverkad av lärare
    - Påverkad av TV, musik, data och TV-spel
    - Påverkad av förälder
    - Påverkad av vänner
14. Har du några fördomar emot Brittisk engelska, i så fall vilka?

15. Har du några fördomar emot Amerikansk engelska, i så fall vilka?
Appendix 4: Student questionnaire in English

Student questionnaire

1. Which variety do you speak?
   - British English
   - American English
   - A mix of the two
   - I don’t know

2. Which variety do you prefer, British or American English?
   - British English
   - American English
   - Neither

3. What variety do you find easiest to pronounce?
   - British English
   - American English
   - Both are equal

4. What variety does your teacher speak?
   - British English
   - American English
   - A mix of the two
   - I don’t know

5. Can you hear the difference between British and American English?
   - Yes
   - No
   - I don’t know

6. Do you talk about the differences between British English in class?
   - Yes
   - No

7. Mid-Atlantic English is a mix between British and American English, have you heard of Mid-Atlantic English?
   - Yes
   - No

8. Are you allowed to mix British and American English when you speak in the classroom?
   - Yes
   - No

9. What variety is mainly in your textbooks (the listening tasks)?
   - British English
   - American English
   - Both varieties appears equally

10. Would you like your teacher to speak another variety?
    - Yes
    - No

11. Do you think your grades will be affected negatively if you don’t speak the same variety as the teacher?
    - Yes
    - No

12. Do you think your grades will be affected positively if you don’t speak the same variety as the teacher?
    - Yes
    - No

13. How come that you speak the variety you’re speaking?
    - Influenced by teacher
    - Influenced by TV, music and videogames
    - Influenced by parents
    - Influenced by friends
14. If you have any prejudices towards British English and people who speak British English, what are they?

15. If you have any prejudices towards American English and people who speak American English, what are they?
Appendix 5: Results from student questionnaire

Student questionnaire with results (the number of pupils in brackets)

1. Which variety do you speak?
   British English (4)  American English (4)  A mix of the two (9)  I don’t know (5)

2. Which variety do you prefer, British or American English?
   British English (9)  American English (10)  Neither (3)

3. What variety do you find easiest to pronounce?
   British English (2)  American English (12)  Both are equal (7)

4. What variety does your teacher speak?
   British English (14)  American English (3)  A mix of the two (3)  I don’t know (2)

5. Can you hear the difference between British and American English?
   Yes (22)  No  I don’t know

6. Do you talk about the differences between British English in class?
   Yes (13)  No (9)

7. Mid-Atlantic English is a mix between British and American English, have you heard of Mid-Atlantic English?
   Yes  No (22)

8. Are you allowed to mix British and American English when you speak in the classroom?
   Yes (22)  No

9. What variety is mainly in your textbooks (the listening tasks)?
   British English (22)  American English  Both varieties appears equally  I don’t know

10. Would you like your teacher to speak another variety?
    Yes (4)  No (18)

11. Do you think your grades will be affected negatively if you don’t speak the same variety as the teacher?
    Yes (2)  No (20)

12. Do you think your grades will be affected positively if you don’t speak the same variety as the teacher?
    Yes (9)  No (13)

13. How come that you speak the variety you’re speaking?
    Influenced by teacher (13)  Influenced by TV, music and videogames (15)
    Influenced by parents (3)  Influenced by friends (3)
Appendix 6: Teacher questionnaire

Teacher questionnaire

1. Which variety do you speak?
   - British English
   - American English
   - A mix of the two

2. Which variety do you prefer your students speak, British or American English?
   - British English
   - American English
   - It doesn’t matter just as long they speak

3. What variety did your teacher speak?
   - British English
   - American English
   - A mix of the two
   - I don’t know

4. Are you familiar with the differences between British and American English?
   - Yes
   - No

5. Do you talk about the differences between British English and American English in class?
   - Yes
   - No

6. Mid-Atlantic English is a mix between British and American English, have you heard of Mid-Atlantic English?
   - Yes
   - No

7. Are your students allowed to mix British and American English when they speak in the classroom?
   - Yes
   - No

8. What variety is mainly in your textbooks (the listening tasks)?
   - British English
   - American English
   - Both varieties appears equally

9. Do you think it is important that your students knows the differences between British and American English?
   - Yes
   - No

10. How come you speak the variety you’re speaking?
    - Influenced by teacher
    - Influenced by TV, music and videogames
    - Influenced by parents
    - Influenced by friends

11. What variety is being taught in your classroom?
    - British English
    - American English
    - A mix of the two
    - Both varieties

12. If you have any prejudices towards British English and people who speak British English, what are they?

13. If you have any prejudices towards American English and people who speak American English, what are they?
Appendix 7: Results from teacher questionnaire

Teacher questionnaire with results

1. Which variety do you speak?
   British English (2)   American English (1)   A mix of the two

2. Which variety do you prefer your students speak, British or American English?
   British English   American English   It doesn’t matter just as long they speak (3)

3. What variety did your teacher speak?
   British English (3)    American English   A mix of the two   I don’t know

4. Are you familiar with the differences between British and American English?
   Yes (3)   No

5. Do you talk about the differences between British English and American English in class?
   Yes (3)   No

6. Mid-Atlantic English is a mix between British and American English, have you heard of Mid-Atlantic English?
   Yes   No (3)

7. Are your students allowed to mix British and American English when they speak in the classroom?
   Yes (3)   No

8. What variety is mainly in your textbooks (the listening tasks)?
   British English (1)    American English   Both varieties appears equally (2)

9. Do you think it is important that your students knows the differences between British and American English?
   Yes (2)   No (1)

10. How come you speak the variety you’re speaking?
    Influenced by teacher (1)   Influenced by TV, music and videogames (3)

    Influenced by parents   Influenced by friends (3)

11. What variety is being taught in your classroom?
    British English   American English   A mix of the two   Both varieties (3)