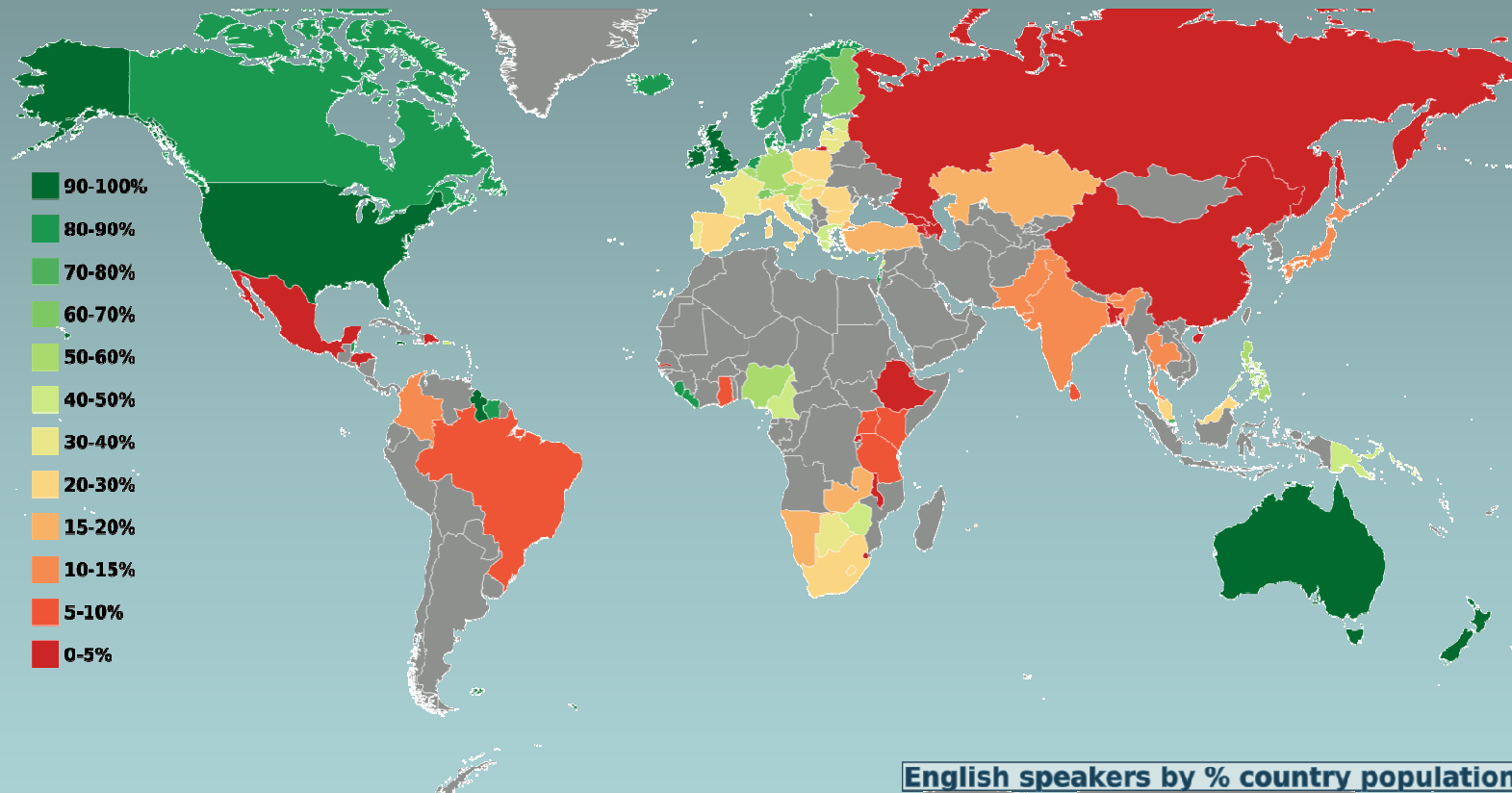


ONE language, **THREE** Versions – Differences in British / American / Australian English

By Zheng Guo 2005760



Where is English spoken in the world ?



Clearly, English dominates in North America, Oceania and Europe. It is also spoken or officially used by some coastal countries in Africa, South America and Southeast Asia.

Which Countries speak English the most ?



From the previous picture, we can clearly see that Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States has the most English speakers in Oceania, Europe and North America respectively.

Country	Region	Population(2020 estimate)	Primary Language	Total English speakers (%)
Australia	Oceania	25,689,000	English	97%
United Kingdom	Europe	67,886,004	English	97.74%
United States	North America	328,239,523	English	95.46%

Their Differences : Pronunciation

The difference in pronunciation is noticeable in vowel. The consonant can also be very interesting! American English is distinguished for its clear /r/ sounds (full rhoticity), whereas British or Australian English lose the /r/ sound if it is at the end of a word or syllable. The word "carter" is pronounced /kɑrtər/ in American English, but /kɑ:tə/ in British and Australian English.

Besides pronunciation, the intonation is different. In American English, the voice of a yes/no question goes up at the end. But in Australian English or British English, the voice goes down!





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Phonological Comparison In British English(1), American English(2) and Australian English(3).



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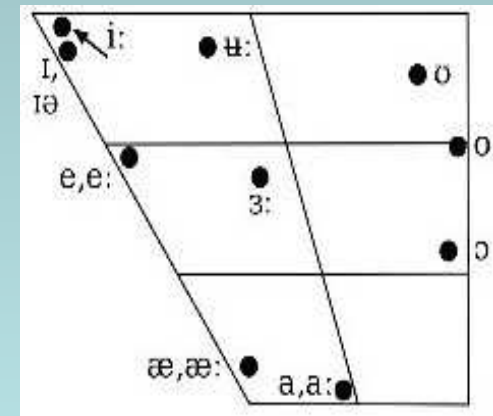
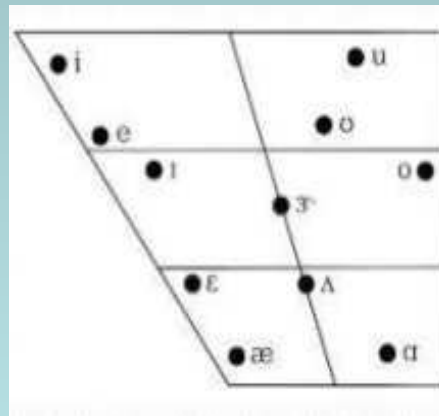
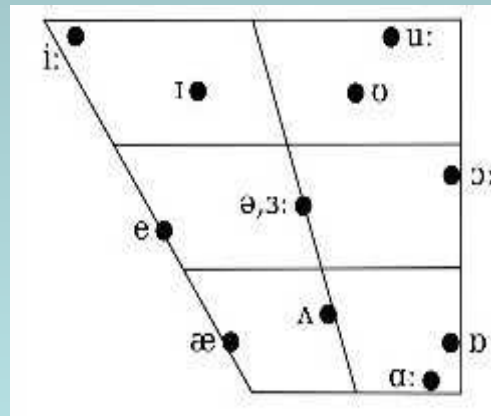
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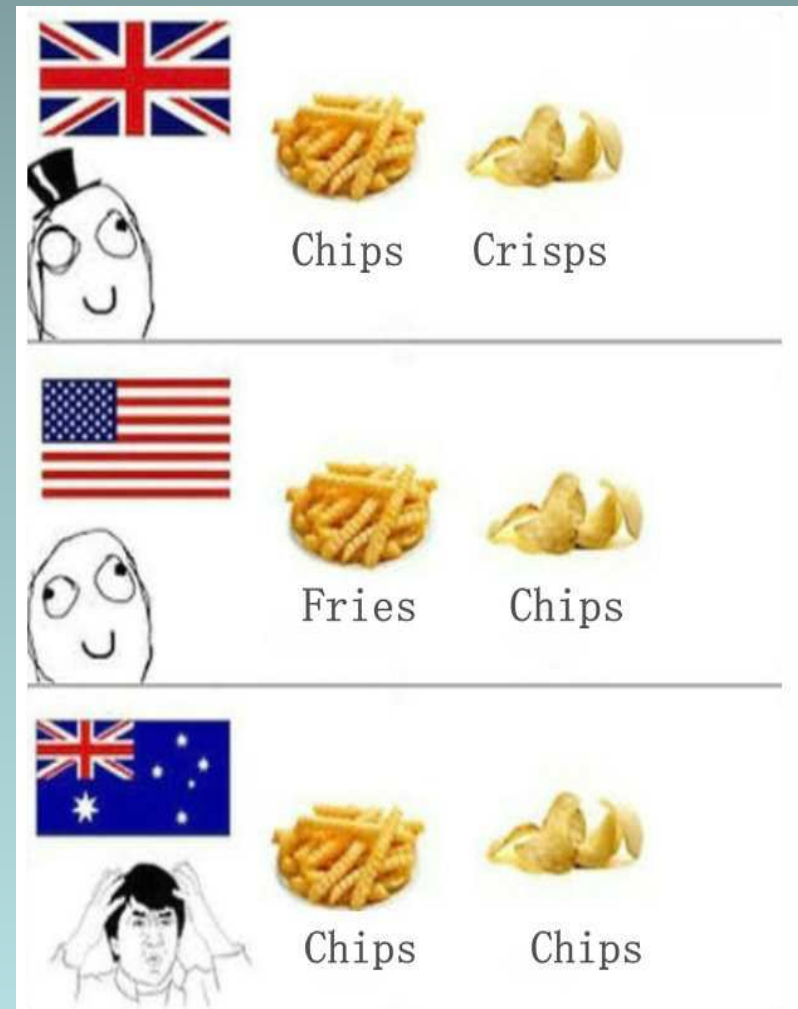
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Their Differences: Vocabulary (especially *slang*)

British	American	Australian
Trousers	Pants / Slacks	Trousers / Slacks
Rubber	Eraser	Rubber
Biscuit	Cookie	Bickie
Nappy	Diaper	Nappy
Jumper	Sweater	Jumper
Petrol Station	Gas Station	Servo
Mate	Friend	Mate/Buddy
Sweets	Candy	Lollies
Bloody	Very	Bloody
Foot Path	Sidewalk	Foot Path



Their Differences: Spelling



The UK and Australia almost share the same spelling, while the United States decided to create its own spelling system.

USA	Australia/UK
-er (center) -or (color) -ize (organize) -og (analog) -led (traveled)	-re (centre) -our (colour) -ise (organise) -ogue (analogue) -lled (travelled)

*Australia uses a mix of American and British spelling. Words less than five letters tend to be spelt in the British style, while those over five letters are likely to be American.

Their Differences: Grammar

Grammar must be the least noticeable difference between them. There are only a few examples such as collective nouns or past tenses.

USA	Australia	UK
The class is happy.	The class is happy.	The class are happy.
I'd for gotten .	I'd for got .	I'd for got .
I learned ed it.	I learnt t it.	I learnt t it.

One other difference is the use of the Present Perfect (for example, I have finished homework already). This is much more common in Australian and British English. While in the USA, people would use past simple more often — "I finished homework already."

Why they are different: Age

British English: Over 1,400 years. The earliest forms of English, a group of West Germanic (Ingvaeonic) dialects brought to Great Britain by Anglo-Saxon settlers in the 5th century.



American English: Around 400 years. It is a result of British colonization of the Americas. The first wave of English-speaking settlers arrived in North America during the 17th.



Australian English: Less than 300 years. Australian English began to diverge from British English after the First Settlers, who set up the Colony of New South Wales, arrived In 1788.



Why they are different: Development

British English: In the 17th century, people from the new higher classes in the south of UK wanted a way to distinguish themselves from everyone else, so they invented what British people now refer to as Received Pronunciation, the foundation of British English nowadays.

American English: During the 17th century, dialects from many different regions of England existed in every American colony, allowing a process of extensive dialect mixture and leveling in which English varieties across the colonies became more homogeneous compared with varieties in England.(Kretzchmar (2004:258–9))

Australian English: In the 18th century, children of the colonists in early New South Wales created a new dialect that became primarily spoken in Australia. They were exposed to a wide range of dialects from around the British Isles. Later, Australian English was greatly influenced by American English during World War 2. Australian English is considered as a kind of fossilised Cockney of the Dickensian era.(Burgess, Anthony (1992). A Mouthful of Air: Language and Languages, especially English. London: Hutchinson. ISBN 0091774152.)

Fun Facts



1. British English is more like French.

William the Conqueror invaded Britain in the 11th, bringing Norman French with him and making it the high language. During the 1700s, it became super trendy in the UK to use French-style words and spelling.

2. American spelling was invented as a form of protest.

The American dictionary was made by a lexicographer named Noah Webster. He wanted American spelling to not only be more straightforward but different from UK spelling, as a way of America showing its independence from the former British rule.

3. American English likes to drop words completely.

When an American person tells someone they'll write a letter to them, they say "I'll write them" rather than "I'll write to them". When you ask an American if they want to go shopping, they might say "I could".

4. English has borrowed words from different languages

It is very common with words for food: examples include coriander (British, derived from French) and cilantro (American, derived from Spanish), and aubergine (British, derived from Arabic) and eggplant (American, so called because it looks like a purple egg).

Read More:

1. ONE language, THREE accents - UK vs. USA vs. AUS English!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66aG5P0kQpU>

2. Discover the History of English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEH2GkuRIHs>

3. American English - The History of English

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbvumrknAKs>

4. Where did the Australian accent come from?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKhA7FOmsn8>

5. How Are British English and American English Different?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdJQdt3xkFQ>



Rationale

Description

After learning Kachru's 1980s model of Users of English, I learned that the Inner Circle was formed by countries who use English as main and official language. However, within the circle, those native speakers still speak 'different' English. In this PowerPoint, I mainly focused on the countries within the Inner Circle and discuss the differences in their English and went further into the reasons behind it.

Feelings

I felt very excited to do this presentation. I happen to have friends who lives in USA, UK, and Australia, so I have already had some knowledge concerning this topic. It is interesting to dig deeper in this topic and find out more about their differences, and especially why they are different.

Evaluation

In my presentation, I feel that I need to go deeper in why these Englishes are different. Clearly, historical reason matters the most, yet there are many other relevant reasons that need to be considered. What I chose to present is a big research topic. However, I believe I have done a good job in listing their differences vividly.

Rationale

Analysis

I mainly studied their differences in vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling and grammar. I chose three representative nations, UK, USA and Australia, not only by considering their significant English-speaking population, but their geographically location in different continents as well. Canada is not listed because it is an officially bilingual country, with French and English as official languages. 20.6 % of the Canadian population speak French (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.) Putting aside those rules we are familiar with; I discovered several new theories. Australian spelling is a mix of British and American spelling, words under five letters turn to use American spelling. (Mitchell, A. G., & Delbridge, A. (1965)). American computer grammar checks has a huge influence on both British and Australian English. (Taylor, B. A. (2001). Australian English in interaction with other Englishes. In D. Blair & P. Collins (Eds.), English in Australia (pp. 317-340). Moreover, I discovered that the reason that American English has a standard itself is because it is a mix of all kinds of English dialects (Kretzchmar, William A. (2004), Kortmann, Bernd; Schneider, Edgar W. (eds.), A Handbook of Varieties of English, Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 262–263,).

Rationale

Conclusion

The more I read the more I realized that these variations are results of history. I also learned that climate, economy, and migrants have impacts on how a language develops. Nowadays, people are connected by the internet, I believe a topic on how globalization relates to language variations or what has been contributing to the development of these variations would be very meaningful.

Action Plan

To continue this study, I need to read more on language histories and these countries' histories. Moreover, to put my experience into practice, by combining journalism, communication and language theories together, there is more to discover in how a same language develops in various ways. I have already discussed this topic with my friend from the IOC, who told me that sports cover from 1980s used a totally different language style compared with nowadays for promotion purpose and building a common international standard.

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