

# Grammatical Differences in British and American English in the Students' Instagram Accounts

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## ABSTRACT

This research contains an analysis of grammatical differences in British and American English in the students' Instagram accounts of the Nahdlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto (UNU Purwokerto). The purpose of this study was grammatical differences in British and American English that were used by students in developing writing skills. This study uses a qualitative approach using descriptive analysis methods. The sampling technique was carried out by means of purposive sampling of the captions used for English writing practice. The Instagram accounts were analyzed 50 students accounts. The results of this study are; (1) Grammatical Differences in British and American English, (2) The Using of Grammatical British English and American English on Caption Writing.

## 1. Introduction

There are four aspects of language skills taught in English, namely reading (reading), writing (writing), listening (listening) and speaking (speaking). In this case the four skills have a high contribution and can be used as an indication of increasing the ability of students effectively, because these four skills are part of language which is essentially a means of communication. From the four aspects above, one aspect that is difficult for students to learn is writing. Many students have difficulty understanding words or sentences to be written down. In general, they find it difficult to understand English expressions or sentences. So, they have limited vocabulary knowledge and are afraid of making mistakes when writing. Writing skills in English are still lacking. Many factors make it difficult for them to learn English, such as limited vocabulary, the level of concentration on the material they are listening to or the pronunciation is too fast so they can't keep up. These problems make it difficult for them to learn writing in the end they become lazy and afraid to learn English writing. Even though writing is one of the most important abilities. Writing skills must be trained and practiced regularly. So that the use of the popular media Instagram in the era of technological advancement is one way of developing writing skills.

Ledward and Hirata in Fandino (2013) proposes 21st century skill consist of an integrated of content knowledge, particular skills, proficiency, and literacy of technologies which include

skill in critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and team work. From the quote above, it is explained that 21st century skills consist of integrated content knowledge, specific skills, skills, and technological literacy which include skills in critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and teamwork. The ability to write is one of the indicators seen to assess the progress of a nation. The level of national progress can be assessed from the habits of the community in practicing writing habits. Koc and Koc, (2016) There are many technological tools in the form of web 2.0 technologies, for instance wiki, blog, podcast, instant messenger, online social communities, online video sharing, an online video and audio-conferencing tools in which they give contribution to teaching and learning in 21st digital age. One of types Web 2.0 that the students are familiar with is an Instagram as online social communities.

Agustrianita (2017) social media is the online communities in which people interact to each other. Social networking activities have the possibility of enhancing lecturers' professional and adding media/ways in their teaching. Social Media users can create and organize a profile for them, edit and comment on each other's posts and share information to each other. The Instagram as one of the famous social media, it can be well integrated into their world and society in general. Inference, social media is digital and online communities to build interaction with others. The students are familiar with Instagram as an online social community. Instagram is one of the social network platforms in which the students usually use it to share their personal information, such as uploading their pictures or videos and writing Instagram captions. This study analyzed on grammatical differences in British and American English in the students' Instagram accounts.

## **2. Literature Review**

Alhabash and Ma (2017) Instagram is a photo-sharing mobile application that allows users to take pictures, apply filters to them, and share them on the platform itself. Instagram has over 400 million active monthly users who shared over 40 billion pictures. Anggraeni (2017) states the students have different perspectives about the use of Instagram in teaching and learning process. The notion of perspective derives from the idea of viewpoints or perception about a case of applying Instagram. Johnson in Alnujaidi (2017) proposes that perception is an external factor on participants' point of view, understanding, belief, and reaction to an innovation. Regarding to the phenomenon of using social media, it is needed to use social media platform in teaching and learning process of English class especially in improving writing skill.

Rahman (2009) In the recent years, there has been a growing concern developing in writing skills in the higher education. Learners go on into specific knowledge acquiring situation which is their writing has to be more specific oriented. Uddin (2014) writes in his study, "writing is the most focused but the least developed English language skill among the university learners. According to previous research, social media is an online community where people interact with each other. Social networking activities have the possibility to enhance lecturers' professionalism and media in their teaching. The lecturers will be close to their students and will be interactive to enrich the competence of English students. Students and lecturers can arrange activities such as writing skills, grammar comprehension, and so on. Social Media users can create and manage profiles for them, edit and comment on each other's posts and share information with each other. Instagram as one of the well-known social media, can be well integrated into the world and their society in general. In conclusion, social media is a digital and online community to build

interactions with other people. Students are familiar with Instagram as an online social community. Instagram is one of the social networking platforms where students usually use it to share their personal information, such as uploading their pictures or videos and writing Instagram captions.

Widagdo (2017) Writing skills are an important part of communication for students throughout their academic life because it allows them to organize their feelings and ideas clearly as well as to convey meaning through well-constructed text. Nunan (2003) wrote that writing is both a physical and mental act. At the most basic level, writing is the physical act of committing words or ideas to some medium. On the other hand, writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. Developed countries tend to have a high level of intellectuality because of the habits and writing skills of their high society. Writing is one basic skill in learning English beside listening, speaking, and reading. Writing means producing or creating a piece of text. That is why it belongs to productive skills together with speaking (Harmer, 2001, p.199, 246). Many previous studies have also examined the use of other social media such as Facebook. Among the media used is the popular social media Instagram. Alhabash and Ma (2017) state Instagram is a photo-sharing mobile application that allows users to take pictures, apply filters to them, and share them on the platform itself. Instagram has over 400 million active monthly users who shared over 40 billion pictures. Anggraeni (2017) Uploading writing assignments in Instagram is one of types of online assignments. Throughout the writing assignments that should be submitted in Instagram, there are benefits and barriers of using Instagram in writing class that are shown based on the students' perspectives. Zappavigna (2016) proposed sharing pictures online in social networking platform such as Instagram is an omnipresent practice. Students need to understand the differences between British English and American English in order to be precise and have a good written language.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Participants / Subject / Population and Sample**

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach so that it emphasizes more words. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), this research is fundamentally seeking truth and analyzed the circumstances, content, and experience of social action, rather than transforming it into a mathematical or other formal transformation. Researchers used purposive sampling, namely taking a sample of the Instagram account of students at the Nahdlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto. Accounts analyzed as data were 50 Instagram accounts containing English captions (English writing) in English classes with has tag #learningenglishwithmrsade.

#### **3.2 Instruments**

Information obtained through the process of analyzing 50 students Instagram accounts containing writing assignment captions from subject lecturers who provide writing skills.

#### **3.3 Data Analysis Procedures**

The data collection method used was to take 50 samples of Instagram accounts of students at Nahdlatul Ulama University Purwokerto. Researchers analyzed the caption on the Instagram account of the students of Nahdlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto.

#### 4. Findings

Regarding with the purposes of this research which is to find out the British English and American English vocabularies used by students of the Nahdlatul Ulama Purwokerto University (UNU Purwokerto) in developing writing skills on their Instagram account. This data was analysed by using qualitative approach using descriptive analysis methods. The sampling technique was carried out by means of purposive sampling of the captions used for English writing practice. The researchers analysed the students' Instagram accounts of the Nahdlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto. The accounts were analysed 50 students accounts. The researchers captured 50 captions on the 50 accounts. The results of this research showed that from the process of data analysis, we looked grammatical differences in British and American English, the using of grammatical british english and american english on caption writing.

iqbal.riyanto.92 Hi! I want to introduce my self  
My name is Ikbal Riyanto  
You can call me Ikbal  
I com from Cilacap  
I was born on May 26 1999. I am 20 year old  
I am live in karang klesem  
I have 1 sister  
My hobby is playing football  
Laik: I love playing football because by playing football I can  
know that life needs someone else  
Dis laik: I don't like bitter melon,because bitter melon is like a  
promise you have broken bitter

#ade.nicia  
#unupurwokerto  
#learningenglishwithmrsade  
October 11, 2019

Figure 1. Instagram



Figure 2. Instagram

#### 5. Discussion

##### Grammatical Differences in British and American English

There are many grammatical differences in detailed aspect of British and American English. In some structures, they use different grammatical form to express same meaning; they also use integrated grammatical form while other adopts the omitted form. However, overall, here is no judgment where it is better or advanced. Bin Zhang (Asian Social Science, 2008) classified some types of grammatical differences in American and British English.

The researcher took those theories to analyze the finding of Instagram captions which had been written by students of Nahdlatul Ulama University below.

##### 1) Differences in Verbs

- a. In British English, the past tense of "get" is "got" while American English usually uses past participle "eaten". When Americans use "got", they mean "own, possess and dominate." For example, "They have got no pride."
- b. British English uses "Have you any children?" or "Have you got any children?" and Americans commonly expresses with "Do you have any children?"

## 2) Differences in Prepositions

Differences between British and American English in preposition are shown in the following two aspects:

- a. Different use of prepositions in the construction of phrases

*My son's name stands first in the list. (BrE)*

*My son's name stands first on the list. (AmE)*

- b. Omitting preposition

In British English, before "day", "week", or "certain day", preposition "on" shall be used, while American English is not. *The new semester starts on August. (BrE)*

*The new semester starts August. (AmE)*

In American English, when "home" is used as adverb, it does not use the preposition "at". However, in British English, they use "at home".

*Is he home? (AmE)*

*Is he at home? (BrE)*

## 3) Differences in Tense

There are differences in the use of tense in British and American English when it is expressing the event that just happened. British English uses past perfect tense, such as "*I have just eaten your brownies cake*" or "*I have just taken your gift*". However American English adopts past tense such as "*I just ate your brownies cake*" or "*I just took your gift.*"

## 4) Differences in Use of Subjunctive Mood

In subjunctive mood, American English will reserve traditional subjunctive words. For example:

*I suggest that event should be postponed. (AmE)*

*I suggest that event be postponed. (BrE)*

However, British English will include "should" in subordinate clause in non-formal and nonlaw English.

*I insist that you go. (AmE)*

*I insist that you should go. (BrE)*

## 5) Differences in Use of Noun

- a. Differences in Forms

BrE	AmE
Candidature	Candidacy
Centenary	Centennial
Cookery (book)	Cook (book)
Transport	Transportation

b. Same Word, Different Meanings

There are two types in this classification. The first one is to add meanings. When Americans want to express a new thing or object, it seems to them that the most convenient method is to add a new meaning to one existing word. For example:

*Clout* refers to power, influence of prestige, especially in politics.

*Family* means one of the operational units of the mafia

The other is to change the meaning. Many words that originate from the UK now possess a totally different meaning in US.

Words	AmE
Bill	Bank note
Billion	A thousand million
Guy	Fellow, any person
Pressman	An operator of printing office
Public school	A municipal-run school

c. Same Meaning, Different Meaning

There are different words which are used in expressing certain object, thing or concept in British and American English.

AmE	BrE
Bar	Public house, pub
Can (as a can of soup)	Tin
Candy	Sweets
Cookie	Sweet biscuit, small cake
Cracker	Biscuit (dry)
Long distance call	Trunk call
Package	Parcel
Intersection	Junction, crossroads
Railroad	Railway
Subway	Tube, underground
Superhighway, speedway	Motorway

## 6) Differences in Articles

a. The Omitting Articles

Most phrases of British English have articles, while American English do not have the articles. "The" in the standard of expression in British English "*all the afternoon*", "*all the winter*", "*all the week*" are usually omitted in American English. For example, "*my dad works all week*" or "*he rides his new car all afternoon.*"

British English also uses article in front of *sickness* or *river*, such as the *measles*, *the flu*, the *Niagara Falls*, the *Black river*.

BrE	AmE
Go into hospital	Go into the hospital
In hospital	In the hospital
At university	At the university

Other Examples are as follow:

*Next day, the class began.* (BrE)

*The next day, the class began.* (AmE)

*In future, I'd like to invite you.* (BrE)

*In the future, I'd like to invite you.* (AmE)

b. The position of Articles

British English and American English have different position of articles. In the use of "a" or "an" with "half" in British English is "a" follows "half", for example "half a dozen", "half an hour", "half a pound." While American English puts "a" in front of "half", for example, "a half dozen", "a half hour.

## 7) Differences in Pronouns

British and American English use different pronouns to repeat the indefinite pronoun "one".

British English uses "one" for example, "One cannot succeed unless one tries hard". While American uses "he" for example, "One cannot succeed unless he tries hard."

## 8) Differences in Adjective and Adverbs

- In non-formal American English adjectives can be used as adverbs, for example "a real good meal." However, in British English and formal American English only adverbs can be used "a really good meal."
- In American English, adverbs can be used more freely in respect of position. They can either be placed in front of auxiliary verbs or behind them, while the meaning of the sentences remains same. For example, "they never will agree with your opinion" or "they will never agree with your opinion." However, in British English the position of adverbs placed behind the first auxiliary verb.
- In British English, the adverbs "yet" and "already" cannot be used in past tense and can only be used in past perfect tense. However, in American English, they can be used in both. For example:  
*I haven't bought the books yet.* (AmE, BrE)  
*I didn't buy the book yet.* (AmE)

## THE USE OF GRAMMATICAL BRITISH ENGLISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH ON CAPTION WRITING

Table 1. Grammatical Differences on Caption

Nama Akun	Caption	Grammatical Differences	
		British English	American English
@idah.lestarii	Beautiful flower gardens, cheap tickets, and cool air. Complete <b>package</b> here. You can vacation with your family and enjoy the fresh air of the mountains and the beauty of flowers.		Type: <b>Differences in Use of Noun (Same meaning, Different Word)</b> It is found the use of American noun in her caption. The use of "package" is a noun which usually used in American English and has same meaning with "parcel" in British English.
@riri2t	Hi friends! My name is Ririt Dwigayati. My major is Sariah Law. This is a pereng tourist place located in Kali Manggis Village, Cilongok District, Banyumas, Central Java Province. <b><i>This Pereng tour was recently built and is not yet 100% finished.</i></b> In the new tourism site there is a garden, a swimming pool for children, and a hanging bicycle. Because the tourist attractions are not perfect, the entrance ticket is still cheap, at that time it was still ten thousand rupiah.		Type: <b>Differences in adverbs</b> <i>This Pereng tour was recently built and is not yet 100% finished.</i>  The use of "yet" in the caption refers to the use American English grammatical because the adverb "yet" in British English is only used in past perfect tense, not past tense. It is different with American English because they can be used in both.
@etuslank	Hello, my name is Restu Pratomo from the Management Study Program at Nahdlatul Ulama University, Purwokerto. I will describe the nature of <i>the Dieng Crater</i> . Dieng is a plateau in Central Java that is included in the Banjarnegara Regency and Wonosobo Regency. The Sikidang Dieng Crater is an	Type: <b>Differences in Articles</b>  "The" can be used in geographical location like mountain, island, beach but not all use it. The use of "the" in	

	active volcanic region and can be said to be a giant volcano. Even so, <i>the Dieng plateau</i> actually has its own charm. Come and enjoy the natural charm of Dieng.	Dieng is British English style. In American English, the use of "the" in name is omitted	
@didi_habibii_2818	Assalamu'alaikum. Hi guys. My name is Didi Ubaedillah. I'm from Bantarkawung Brebes. I'm studied in Nahdlatul Ulama University of Purwokerto. My major is Syariah Law. I want to tell you about my small village. This is a waterfall what is in my village Bantarkawung. The name of this waterfall is Biul waterfall. This waterfall which has wonderfully, a faceair, and amazing view. To get to this waterfall, you can simply trace the river flow in the village of Parasi. But it has a quite extreme path. Especially during the rainy season with slippery stones. But it didn't reduce the enthusiasm of the visitors to get to this waterfall, especially on weekends. Visitors will not regret having visited this waterfall. Therefore, if you go to Bantarkawung, don't forget to stop by <i>the Biul waterfall</i> . I think enough and thank you.	Type: <b>Differences in Articles</b> "The" can be used in geographical location like mountain, island, river, waterfall but not all use it. The use of "the" in "the Biul Waterfall" shows that it uses British English. American English will omit "the" and use "Biul Waterfall" instead.	
@asfiah27	Last weekend, my friend and I went to Sekar Gumilang Orchid Garden. The location in Ketenger Village, Baturraden. There are many kind of orchid. We can saw and buy some beautiful orchid. Beside that <b>we also can saw</b> cultivation of orchid. So, I very enjoy in there. Its very suitable for orchid lovers.		Type: <b>Differences in adverb</b> In American English, adverb can be used more freely in the position. Adverb can be either placed in front of auxiliary verb or behind them, while meaning remains same. It can be seen in the caption, it is written " <i>we also can saw cultivation</i> ". Adverb "also" is placed before auxiliary verb.  In British English, it is mostly placed after the

			auxiliary verb.
@bachtiar1597	<p>BENDUNG GERAK SERAYU is a dam for <i>the Serayu river</i> flow. Was built in 1996 and was inaugurated by the Indonesian president at that time Mr. Suharto. I agreed with the construction of this dam even though my agreement had no impact because it was built before I was born. This dam brings many benefits, one of which is to anticipate flooding if water is overflowing. Even as water storage during the dry season. In this moderation the function of the dam is growing, besides indeed carrying out its original function now also as an educational recreation place. Especially with the background of the hills on the north and south side.</p> <p>Rawalo, April 7, 2019 By: Nurul Bachtiar</p>	<p>Type: <b>Differences in Articles</b></p> <p>"The" can be used in geographical location like mountain, island, river, waterfall but not all use it. The use of "the" in "<i>the Serayu river</i>" shows that it uses British English. American English will omit "the" and use "Serayu river" instead</p>	
@arum_septio3	<p>Assalamu'alaikum wr. wb. Hello guys, let me introduce my self. My name is Arum Septi Utami. You can call me Arum. I come from Banyumas. I was born in Banyumas, September 3th, 2001. I am 18 years old. I live in Beji, at RT 04 RW 14, Kedungbanteng. I have one brother. My hobby is listening music. My future is college teacher. My motto is "Man Jadda Wajada". I think enough, thank you.</p> <p>Wassalamu'alaikum wr. wb.</p>		<p>Type: <b>Same word &amp; Differences in Meaning</b></p> <p>The word guys is used in America. It means Fellow, any person</p>

There are grammatical differences of American and British English that found on Instagram captions. In the analysis, there are 3 types grammatical differences found; the difference in use of noun, difference in adverb and difference in articles.

As far as the differences of British and American English are concerned to English learners. Although both share the same sources and items but they still have grammatical differences. However, these differences are not so fundamental in learning activity. But the students do need to have comprehension about British and American English. English teachers should explain more about the grammatical differences to the students. In English teaching, the teachers should guide students more to know the differences and encourage them to write exactly one style in writing.

## 6. Conclusion

Having finished discussing the subject concerning the grammatical differences in British and American English in Instagram. The data analysis showed that some students used American English Vocabulary in their writing of accounts Instagram. There are 13 accounts used in American English vocabulary. In general, there are some grammatical differences written by the students in the use of British English and American English. The students do need to have comprehension about British and American English. English lecturers/teachers should explain more about the grammatical differences to the students. Instagram is one of the media to develop writing ability.

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