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**BRITISH OR AMERICAN STYLE OF WRITING: A QUALITATIVE
CONTENT ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN TEXT IN STUDENTS' THESES AT
ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF *TARBIYAH* FACULTY OF
*IAIN SYEKH NURJATI CIREBON***

THESIS

**Presented to
English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of
Syekh Nurjati State Institute for Islamic Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I)***



By

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CIREBON
2012**



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ABSTRACT

**DERY TRIA AGUSTIN: BRITISH OR AMERICAN STYLE OF WRITING:
A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
WRITTEN TEXT IN STUDENTS' THESES AT
ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF
TARBIYAH FACULTY OF IAIN SYEKH NURJATI
CIREBON**

English has many varieties; each variety of English has its own conventions and rules. In fact, it is found that the British style and the American style of writing are mixed and alternated by students of English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing theses. Ideally, a thesis, as an academic writing, must be written appropriately and consistently in only one preferred variety of English as it is done by native-English writers. Thus, there is a contradiction between the fact the students write English and the ideal standard of academic writing which are interesting to be investigated.

Darragh (2000) argued that in writing, American English and British English are different. The language of academic writing is so formal that used vocabulary and style must be specialized. So, only one variety of English may be employed when writing theses.

The objective of the research is to find out the variety of English used by the students in writing theses if it is American English or British English. The samples used in this research are three theses out of ninety-nine population ratified in February 2012 written by students of English Education Department, namely Husnul Khotimah (cumlaude student), Siti Nur Rokayah, and Rokhmat Hidayat. This research is a library research. The method used in this research is qualitative content analysis. The technique of collecting data is documentation and the data are analyzed by using data reduction strategy, coding, and categorizations.

The results show that the style of English used by the students in writing thesis is apparently neither American English nor British English. It is only spelled in American style of spelling. However, it is not the real American style. Besides that, there are so many grammatical errors found in the theses.

From the results, it can be concluded that the qualities of theses written by the students of English Education Department are poor. The results imply the department to improve the quality of English instruction and issue official handbooks for students and lecturers concerning the rules of academic writing including the allowed variety of the English language and the choice of language styles.



PREFACE

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds. I thank Allah for His graciousness and His mercy that I can accomplish my thesis entitled “**British or American Style of Writing: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Written Text in Students’ Theses at English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon.**” *Shalawat* and *Salam* be always to the prophet Muhammad SAW (peace be upon him), his family, his companions, and his followers.

This thesis is presented to the English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *Syekh Nurjati* State Institute for Islamic Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I)*.

There are many people who gave such contribution, support, guidance, and inspiration in writing this thesis. Thus, for the people, the writer would like to express his sincere gratitude:

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The writer realizes that this thesis is not perfect. Therefore, any suggestion given for the sake of improvement in the future will be gladly welcome and appreciated. Expectantly, this thesis will be useful for readers especially for students of English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*.

Cirebon, July 2012

The Writer



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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

English is spoken by hundreds of millions people in many countries around the world. In 2001 population, as L1 (first language), English is spoken by approximately 329.140.800 people worldwide. And as L2 (second language), it is spoken by at least 430.614.500 people all around the world (Crystal, 2003: 62-65). It can be concluded that English is spoken in all world corners.

Regarding the great number of English speakers and as a global language, nowadays English has many varieties: In the other words, each English-speaking country has their own characteristics of English. As it is pointed out by Algeo (2006: 1) that “there are many varieties of English other than British (here the English of the United Kingdom) and American (here the English of the United States).” McArthur (in Bauer, 2002) stated that English is differently spoken by people worldwide, and differences among varieties of language people refer to as “English” is growing. It is clear that since everyone speaks in their own idiolect, every group of people and every community will have their own “dialect” or what is further referred to as “variety.” Therefore, it can be concluded that every group of people in each English speaking-country speak English in their own ways with their distinctive characteristics that are different one another.



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In this thesis, the writer will focus only on British and American English. Why British and American English? The writer has at least three significant reasons in determining these two varieties of English as a choice, they are:

Firstly, concerning the issue of world Englishes, that is “the emergence and establishment of the many varieties of English, both international and intranational” (Oxford & Jain, 2008: 14), Kachru divided the spreading concept of “world Englishes” into three types of circle i.e inner circle, outer circle, and expanding circle. The first circle is inner circle. Kachru’s inner circle refers to the spread of Englishes “from the United Kingdom to countries where native English speakers have settled down in large numbers (Kachru’s Inner Circle countries, 1992): Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and the United States as a *first language* for many” (Oxford & Jain, 2008: 4). The second one is the outer circle. Outer circle refers to countries within which English is a second language: For example, English in Singapore, India, Hongkong, and Malaysia. The last is the expanding circle which refers to countries where English is a foreign language: For example, English in Japan, China, and Indonesia.

Since English in countries either which belong to outer circle or expanding circle is only a second or foreign language, thus, varieties of English in those countries are not taken as the standard in this research. Rather, the researcher takes Englishes in countries where the Englishes are the first language. Remembering that Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada preserve



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British English (Received Pronunciation) as the standard and only the United States that has own conventions of English (General American), therefore, British English and American English are chosen as two major varieties of English worldwide because British and American English also have the status as the main varieties of English spoken by most native speakers and learned by most people around the world. Algeo found the following:

All of those other varieties are intrinsically just as worthy of study and use as British and American. But these two varieties (British and American English) are the one spoken by most native speakers of English and studied by most foreign learners. They have a special status as the two principal national varieties of the languages simply because there is more material available in them than in any other variety. (2006: 1)

The writer estimates that approximately half of English-native speakers throughout the world live in the United States. Here, the researcher is in agreement with Edmond H. Weiss who claimed:

English is the most widely spoken language in the world. The current estimate is that about 1.5 billion people speak English well enough to use the language for business or education. Less than a third of these, however, speak English as their first language (E1); there are only about 400 million E1s in the world, and about half of them are in one country: the United States of America. (2005: 4)

Secondly, The United States of America has its own convention of English. The language developed in America and further is referred to as G.A. (General American) is a reformed language. Bauer remarked that he was Noah Webster (1758-1843) who did some reformations of English in the U.S. which now distinguishes American English from British English. Bauer (2002: 97) said that “Noah Webster (1758–1843) was an advocate of spelling reform. In 1789 he



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published a work calling for a radical spelling reform, omitting unnecessary letters and making a number of simplifications.”

In 1783, Webster published a book entitled “*The American Spelling Book*” which listed American style of spelling. Then, in 1828, he published a dictionary “*An American Dictionary of the English Language.*” Those works were the most influential works which are now used and developed in the United States. The works have very significant role in distinguishing American English from British English in present-days.

Thirdly, Take, for example, South Hemisphere Englishes i.e. African English, Australian English, and New Zealand English all preserve British English or what is so-called R.P. (Received Pronunciation) as the Standard. Bauer argued that even after 200 years of settlement, “*The Australian National Dictionary*” was not published. This was at least until 1988. And New Zealand shares “*The Dictionary of Austral English*” with Australia and New Zealand published the first “*Dictionary of New Zealand English*” just in 1997. Accordingly, in responding Bauer statement, the writer concluded that it happened just because either Australia or New Zealand preserves British English and there are no significant differences between both varieties and also African English from British English especially in Standard language.

Similarly, Canadian English is not selected since the number of population in the country is not as large as in the United States. Crystal (2003) pointed out



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that in 2001, the population in Canada is only about 31 million. Canada has so small population that Canadian English is not as popular as British and American English. Besides, there are two official languages in Canada i.e. English and French; not all populace of Canada speak English as native language.

French in Canada has a great role since it has been being spoken since fifteenth century. Edward (2008: 380) argued that “English came to Newfoundland (a British colony until it joined Canada in 1949) in the late fifteenth century, French was the first European language on the mainland, arriving with fishermen and explorers in the early sixteenth century.” Moreover, there was not any advocate who seriously attempted to list Canadian words or new form of spelling in a dictionary as well as Webster did. Even in this case Bauer (2002) claimed that the first dictionary of Canadian English had not been published until 1967. Bauer statement proves the writer’s opinion and thus it means that Canadian English is not significantly different from either British or American English.

In determining American English (General American) and British English (Received Pronunciation) as the standard of International English within which English in Indonesia is involved, again we must remember that British and American English are two different varieties of English which have significant differences in many ways; it has been internationally known that there are some linguistic differences between those two varieties of the English language. The



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differences occur not only in speaking (spoken language) but also in writing (written language).

When a Brighton and an American meet, they are soon aware of the differences in the speech of each other. They are different in accents, vocabulary, idiom and syntax. Therefore, individual words are misunderstood or not understood at all. It is estimated that approximately 4.000 words and expressions in common use in Britain today either do not exist or are used differently in the United States. Not only in speaking, but these differences are also reflected in the way British and American English are written, so that it is inevitable avoiding the emergence of variations in spelling and punctuation (Darragh, 2000: v). This idea is also supported by Weiss who stated:

There is more than one way to spell and punctuate English and that there are even differences in idiom, grammar, and meaning as we travel from one English-speaking country to another. Americans use *company* as a singular, the British as a *plural*. Americans put all commas and periods inside closing quotation marks; the British only some. The verb *to table* has opposite meanings in America (*postpone*) and England (*discuss at once*). (2005: 47)

From the explanation above, it is clear that British and American English are two varieties of English which are different in many ways.

The idea of writing this thesis arose since the government of Indonesia in Government Regulation No. 19 Year 2005 concerning National Standard of Education in Chapter III the Second Section Article 9 No. 2 reads that curriculum of higher education in Indonesia must contain some courses as Religious Education, Civic Education, *Bahasa Indonesia*, and English. In the other word,



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English must be taught in higher education in Indonesia. In fact, Indonesia is not an English-speaking country. In the Constitution of Indonesia No. 24 Year 2009 in Chapter 1 Article 1 No. 2 reads that the language of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia which is further referred to as *Bahasa Indonesia* is a nationally official language used throughout the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. It means that English which is taught in Indonesia is English as a foreign language because English is neither the first nor the second language.

According to Kachru's circle of the spread of Englishes, Indonesia belongs to the expanding circle which means that English in Indonesia is English as a foreign language. A country in which English is a foreign language has a choice of which language variety to learn as the target. For example, in Japan, English is a foreign language; both British and American are equally acceptable and taught. Differently, Mexico and the Philippines tend to learn American English. Countries in the European Union tend to learn, of course, British English. And Papua New Guinea chooses Australasia (Australia and New Zealand English) as the target due to its geographical location (Broughton et al, 2003: 7).

Interestingly, in the Government Rule concerning National Standard of Education in Indonesia, it is not specifically mentioned which variety of English is a target intended or recommended by the government concerning the availability of teachers, political influence or geographical location of Indonesia.



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The writer never heard the government of Indonesia recommended American English due to relationship with the United States of America nor Australian English due to geographical location and Indonesia-Australia partnership in politics and education.

Further, in article 9 number 1 of the regulation reads that the structure of curriculum in higher education is developed by every department in each college. Or the writer says that each college has authority to make policy on implementing the curriculum. Accordingly, the English Department of *IAIN syekh Nurjati Cirebon* has own rules and policies concerning the curriculum. One of the policies is that all students of English Education Department must write their theses in English. This has been compulsory since the department was officially established. Thesis is one of academic writings so it must be written correctly, appropriately, accurately, and based on the rules and principles of academic writing.

In fact, the writer found that there is inconsistency of language style used by students of English Department *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing the theses. Take, for example, in a thesis entitled ***“The Correlation between Students’ Reading Comprehension by Using Short Story and Their Achievement in English at the Ninth Year Students of MTs Mafatihul Huda Kasugengan Kidul-Cirebon”*** by Rokhmat Hidayat which was written in 2012. On one hand, in Ratification section, it reads ***“...On 02***



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December 2011.” (Hidayat, 2012: ii). Theoretically, British write and say 23 June as *the twenty-third of June* while American write and say *June 23* as *June twenty-third* (Eastwood, 2002b, Appendix 5, N). It is clear that the way of writing date in the case used by Hidayat above is British style in which the date precedes the month namely **“02 December 2011.”** On the other hand, he wrote **“13 kilometers.”** (Hidayat, 2012: 37). Theoretically in the matter of spelling, Darragh (2000) pointed out that most British words end in “-tre” while American words end in “-ter.” Thus, British write “metre” and American write “meter.” The way of spelling in the case used by Hidayat Above is obviously American spelling because people in Britain write **“kilometres”** instead of **“kilometers.”** In conclusion, alternation and combination of those two varieties of language occurs. So, it can be assumed that there is an inconsistency in variety and style of the English language used in academic writing, in this case, in theses written by students of English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*.

Remembering that British and American English are two varieties of the English language which have their own rules in both grammar and academic writing and regarding all the facts the writer have described above, the writer then finds that it is interesting to identify what variety of English actually and practically used in academic writing in English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*, particularly theses written by a student who got cumlaude title, a student who conducted qualitative research about novel (especially a



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female student), and a student who conducted quantitative research (especially a male student) who graduated in 2012.

The matters or elements of writing that will be the focus of the research are grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation. The researcher wants to know whether the students write English consistently by using only one preferred style of writing English e.g. only British style or only American style or perhaps another particular existing style of writing English without alternating some styles of English in their theses. Or there are perhaps many alternations occur in writing theses by mixing British and American grammars, vocabulary, spellings, punctuations, and abbreviations which would lead readers to confusion, make the writings lose their language identity, and make them become academically unacceptable.

The writer's inquiry does not stop at that point. Rather the writer wants to know if apparently proven that English used by the students is a combination of American English and British English, so what are the distinctive characteristics of the English language practically used in writing theses in English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* especially in the latest theses year 2012 written by Husnul Khotimah (Reg. No. 07430329) as the only student who got cumlaude title, Siti Nur Rokayah (Reg. No. 07430422) as the female student who conducted qualitative research about novel, and Rokhmat Hidayat (Reg. No. 07430384) as the male student who conducted quantitative research?



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When a student gets the cumlaude title, it means that the student is smart, intelligent, qualified, and the best among others. Skills and qualification had by a cumlaude student can be tools for measuring the quality of the other students. As illustration, when the GPA (Grade Point Average) of the cumlaude student (Khotimah) is 3.55, it means that the GPA of the other students are below 3.55 and of course the skills and qualification had by the other students are lower or worse rather than the cumlaude one. So, when a cumlaude student did even some inconsistency and made so many errors in her thesis, what about the quality of theses written by the other students whose GPA are less than 3.55? It must be worse.

B. Identification of the Problem

This thesis “**British or American Style of Writing: A Content Analysis of Students’ Theses at English Education Department *Tarbiyah* Faculty of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon**” focuses on Sociolinguistics field, variety of language. As one of the students of English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* for more than three years, the researcher has been so familiar with the inconsistency i.e. combination and alternation between American English and British English occur during English learning process as a very phenomenon in speaking and writing in many English courses which are not only done by students but also regretfully by some of lecturers.



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Then, from the title of the thesis and the background of the study above, the researcher finds and lists some problems to be identified, they are:

1. Which variety and style of English used and adopted by students of English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing theses?
2. Were the theses consistently written in one preferred variety and style of writing English?
3. Is it British or American style of writing used by the students in writing theses? Or perhaps another particular one?
4. Were British and American style or perhaps many different styles of writing alternately mixed and combined by the students in their theses?
5. In what basics or items of writing do the mixings and alternations mostly occur?
6. Is it British or American grammar used by the students in writing theses?
7. Is it British or American vocabulary used by the students in writing theses?
8. Is it British or American style of spelling used by the students in writing theses?
9. Is it British or American style of punctuating used by the students in writing theses?
10. Is it British or American style of abbreviating used by the students in writing theses?



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11. If apparently British English and American English particularly in such styles and basics of writing as grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation were found alternately mixed and combined in the theses, the researcher wants to know to what extent the mixing, the combination, and the alternation of both styles done by students of English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing their theses?
12. What are the characteristics and the distinctive features of English style of writing used by students at English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* especially theses written by the three students mentioned above?

C. Limitation of the Problem

There are many problems and questions stated in the previous sections which are related to English style of writing. However, not all the problems and questions will be discussed and answered in this thesis, but the researcher focuses his topic only on the title of this thesis namely **“British or American Style of Writing: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Written Text In Students’ Theses at English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*”** which is limited into some important points:

1. The styles of language chosen in this research are British style of writing and American style of writing which are focused on such basics of writing as



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grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation between both varieties.

2. The objects of the research are the theses written by Husnul Khotimah (Reg. No. 07430329) as the student who got cumlaude title who conducted a mixed research, Siti Nur Rokayah (Reg. No. 07430422) as the female student who conducted qualitative research about novel, and Rokhmat Hidayat (Reg. No. 07430384) as the male student who conducted quantitative research.
3. The department from which the theses were taken is the English Education Department of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*.
4. The theses which is used in this research are theses written in academic year 2011/2012 which were ratified in February 2012.

D. Research Questions

Based upon the description and explanation which has been previously stated, the researcher has posed some questions to help and guide him in answering, solving and finishing his thesis, they are:

1. How were the theses written? Were they consistently written in one preferred variety and style of writing English?
2. Are there any mixings and alternations done? If yes, in what basics or items of writing do the mixings and alternations mostly occur?
3. Which grammar, vocabulary, style of spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation used by the students in writing their theses?



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4. Thus, what variety of the English language used and adopted by students of English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing theses as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I)*? Is it British English, American English, or neither?

E. Aims of the Research

In line with the questions of the research above, this study is meant to answer those queries. The aims of this thesis are:

1. To find out how the theses were written. Whether they were consistently written in one preferred variety and style of writing English.
2. To find out the occurrence of mixings and alternations and to know in what basics or items of writing the mixings and alternations mostly occur.
3. To find out whether British or American grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation used by the students in writing their theses.
4. To find out what variety of the English language used and adopted by students of English Education Department of *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* in writing theses as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I)* if it is British English, American English, or neither.



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F. Significances of the Research

The significances of this research are both theoretically and practically contributed to a number of parties. This research contributes to the course of Sociolinguistics, the Department of English Education, lecturers, and students as the following:

1. Theoretically, since the research about British English and American English differences is small in number, this research is made in order to enrich the course of Sociolinguistics especially about variety of language, in this case, in understanding British English and American English divergences chiefly on the styles of writing in the matters of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and abbreviation.
2. For lecturers, this research gives a new perspective both in teaching English and in writing English for academic purposes. This research gives a general overview about the variations of the English language especially between British English and American English; thus, it is expected that in the near future, there will be awareness from the lecturers to be consistent in teaching English and writing English to students by only taking and clinging to one preferred variety and style of writing English so that the quality of the instruction of the English course in the Department of English Education of *Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* will improve and get better.



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3. For the Department of English Education, this research is an overview and an evaluation of the quality of the latest academic writing namely theses written by the students of English Education Department. The results of this research will give general description about the superiority and weakness of theses written by the students. Thus, if it is proven that students did the inconsistency in the choice of language variety and style in writing their theses and made a number of mistakes in the language used in academic writing, the researcher will propose the department a guide to academic writing. In the other words, the English Education Department must issue students' handbook concerning guide to academic writing consists of many rules and standard of academic writing including how to write, quote, paraphrase, make reference, variety and style of English allowed, and choice of referencing system which are ratified and issued by the authority of the department. As the result, students will no longer confuse about writing either papers or theses. Many universities issued the handbook; so, why doesn't the Department of English Education in *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* do it? Thus, there will be a standardized convention about writing theses and the contradiction between students and lecturers in writing theses can be minimized. The most importantly is that the quality of research and theses at *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon*, particularly at the Department of English Education will get better and hopefully meet the minimum standard of



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academic writing so that in the near future, in the matter of academic writing, *IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon* can compete with other universities and/or colleges.

4. For students, besides providing a reference and giving descriptions and explanations about common differences between two major varieties of English, this research is also like a critical lure. This research reminds students that English as an international language has many varieties and each variety has their own conventions which represent their own countries where they come from; thus, hopefully students will be aware that doing code mixing even just among the varieties of English is a fault or error. Moreover, if the guide to academic writing is issued, in the future, students will be consistent when they are writing English especially when writing theses.

G. Previous Studies

There are some studies prior to this research which are related and have things in common although the objects, titles, and scopes of the studies are not the same with this research. Those studies are as follow:

1. A B.A. major thesis entitled "*A Comparison of Phrasal Verbs Used in British and American English*" by Martin Oros supervised by PhDr. Jarmila Fictumová: Department of English and American Studies, English Language and Literature, 2006.



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The study deals with comparison of only phrasal verbs which are used in British English and American English. It does not concern about the whole style of writing English used in British English and American English.

2. A B.A. major thesis entitled "*Comparison of British and American Idioms with Equivalent Meaning*" by Petr Mařák supervised by PhDr. Jarmila Fictumová: Masaryk University, Faculty of Arts, Department of English and American Studies, English Language and Literature, 2006

The study deals with comparison of only idioms with equivalent meaning which are used in British English and American English. The research is specified into idiom only, it does not concern about the whole vocabulary used when writing English.

3. A thesis entitled "*British English or American English vocabulary? A sociolinguistic study of Swedish upper secondary school pupils' choice of vocabulary and their attitude towards the two language varieties*" by Charlotte Spångberg supervised by Joe Trotta: C-level paper, interdisciplinary paper, Göteborg University/ Department of English, Teacher Education Program, Date: May 2, 2007, Grade: VG/JT.

The study deals with preferred vocabulary used by pupils if it is British English or American English. However, researching vocabulary only is not enough to know what variety of English used by the pupils, because probably the pupils claimed themselves preferring American English but it is possible



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the ways they spell and punctuate English are combination of both varieties. Thus, investigation about varieties of English must be researched not only in the matter of vocabulary, but also in grammar, spelling, punctuation and abbreviation.

4. A thesis entitled *“Influence of American English on British English”* - Summary – by Phd Candidate: Daniela Popescu, supervised by Scientific Adviser: Prof. Dr. Stefan Oltean: Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca Faculty of Letters, 2011.

The study deals with how British English is being influenced by American English. However, the study only focused on the matters of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and pronunciation. The study did not focus on academic writing, thus, influence in the style of punctuating and abbreviating was not discussed.

5. *Jurnal penelitian agama “British and American English: A Comparative Study in Relation to Teaching English at STAIN Purwokerto”* by Munjin (a lecturer of *Tarbiyah* Faculty of *STAIN Purwokerto*).

The study concerns with the differences between British and American English; however, there is no specific matter as spelling, vocabulary, or grammar became the focus of the study, or the study only tried to find British and American differences in general. The study intended more to the problem



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that is rising for learners due to the differences, and what should be done by the English lectures in responding the differences.

There are not any studies concern the differences between British and American English in Academic writing especially which are really focused on the whole basics or matters of writing as grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation. Thus, this research concerning British and American style of writing used in writing theses is different with the previous studies and hence the researcher claim that this research is significantly urgent and important. This research is a new research, and the result of this research will give students a comprehensive insight about the differences between British and American English especially in academic writing.

Why a research concerning choice of language style in academic writing is important? In a handbook of a workshop entitled “*Introduction to Academic Writing*” published by James Cook University Australia, it is mentioned that the vocabulary and style of language used in academic writing must be specialized. Style in a language is “the correct or conventional use of a language” (Hornby, 1995: 1189) with respect to spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. According to the definition, it means that academic writing must be written in the correct use of a language. Since each variety of English has its own correct and conventional use, thus, the specialized style here means a certain variety of English.



H. Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding of the problem that is investigated in this research, the writer would like to clarify three important terms which are used frequently in this research. They are as follow:

1. Variety or Varieties

The term “varieties” or “varieties of English” refers to some different classes of the English language i.e. American English, British English, Canadian English, Australian English, New Zealand English, etc.

2. Variant or Variants

The term “variants” refers to differences found in one variety of English. Take, for example, in American English, people may spell “dialogue” or “dialog.” The spelling “dialogue” is the main spelling, and the spelling “dialog” is the variant. In British English, people may spell “tsar,” “czar,” or “tzar.” In this case, the spelling “tsar” is the main spelling, and the spellings “czar” and “tzar” are the variants.

3. Style of Writing

Style is “the correct or conventional use of a language” (Hornby, 1995: 1189) with respect to such matters of writing as spelling, punctuation, abbreviation, etc. Hence, style of writing greatly deals with a certain variant of, for example, spelling, punctuation, and abbreviation accepted in a particular variety of English.



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