

C2.1 – MTSL

(Week 9)

LINGUISTIC VARIATION

TASK 1: BRITISH VS. AMERICAN ENGLISH

Worksheet 1:

Fill in the blanks to the right of the words listed in the column labeled “American English” with the letters corresponding to their equivalents in the column marked “British English”.

AMERICAN ENGLISH

- 1) antenna_____
- 2) apartment_____
- 3) baby carriage, stroller_____
- 4) candy_____
- 5) closet_____
- 6) cookie_____
- 7) diaper_____
- 8) drapes/curtains_____
- 9) elevator_____
- 10) eraser_____
- 11) fall/autumn_____
- 12) faucet/tap_____
- 13) gasoline/gas_____
- 14) hood(of a car)_____
- 15) line_____
- 16) mailman/postman_____

BRITISH ENGLISH

- a) aerial
- b) autumn
- c) biscuit
- d) bonnet
- e) boot
- f) curtains
- g) flat
- h) fortnight
- i) holiday
- j) jumper
- k) lift
- l) lorry
- m) nappy
- n) pavement
- o) petrol
- p) postman

17) pantyhose_____	q) pram
18) sidewalk_____	r) queue
19) sweater_____	s) rubber
20) trash/garbage_____	t) rubbish
21) truck_____	u) spanner
22) trunk (of a car)_____	v) sweet(s)
23) two weeks_____	w) tap
24) vacation_____	x) tights
25) wrench_____	y) wardrobe

 **Worksheet 2:**

Fill in the blanks in the chart below with the American and British meanings of the words listed on the left.

	AMERICAN ENGLISH	BRITISH ENGLISH
bill		
chips		
fanny		
first floor		
football		
pants		
purse		
rubber		
staff		
subway		
taffy		
to table an issue		
to wash up		
vest		

Worksheet 3:

Identify the origin of the following ten text excerpts as British or American. Underline any words in the texts which reveal their geographical origins.

Text 1:

In the Middle Ages it was one of the social and economic powerhouses of Europe, the province of princes and industrious merchants. Today Ghent, in Belgium's East Flanders heartland, remains a thriving business centre and port where old traditions live on. As Brueghel and others immortalised on canvas, the Flemish value fine food and good times and make the most of the bountiful natural products of their land and sea. Food is taken seriously here. Though its population is only around 250,000, Ghent has over 350 restaurants...

Much favoured by the business fraternity is the small, exclusive restaurant of Chef Jean Bode. **Het Cooremetershuys** is at no. 12, one of the original houses on the illustrious Graslei, an ancient riverside quay...

At 8-10 on the Beensteeg, one of the busiest pedestrian malls is **De Gustibus**. With a warm, welcoming rose-coloured decor it is popular with locals, tourists and business people alike...

Text 2:

Van Heusen, the smart shirt people, are 75 years old this year. It all began when "the original semi-stiff collar" was patented by one John Manning Van Heusen and delivered in New York City. Seventy-five years on from these beginnings as a collar manufacturer, Van Heusen has gone on to produce formal and leisure shirt collections. Favourites for the traveller are their non-iron range. Rinse them out, hang them up and they emerge, as wrinkle-free as we wish we were by next morning.

Text 3:

Female sterilization can be done with either a general or a local anesthetic. The operation takes less than an hour to perform, and can be performed with a laparoscope (a viewing tube equipped with blades for cutting) as outpatient surgery.

Text 4:

Symptoms of menopause are mostly due to lack of estrogen, so the logical treatment is to replace it. Hormone replacement therapy has been prescribed for millions of women, and its advantages and drawbacks are still being researched.



Text 5:

Observing a group of children walking in a park recently, supervised by two adults, I noted that the adults synchronised their steps and direction, while the children ran and skipped apparently at random, running ahead, lagging behind, and deviating from the common course.

Perhaps these children, unpolluted by society's emphasis on conformity, have not yet learned that it is unacceptable to march to your own drum.



Text 6:

On-site work is not all hard labor. You should allocate a good deal of time to watching the transformation in progress, seeing how materials are used, and observing the installation of everything from plumbing lines to kitchen cabinets...

Faucets. Spend the money for good-looking faucets. You or your buyer will handle them several times a day.

Wall Color. In general, lighter colors are easier to live with, and will probably look more inviting, especially if you're selling a property unfurnished. But strong colors can pull a room together, creating an exciting backdrop for furnishings.



Text 7:

Last year's summer holiday in Marrakech left Anita Simons full of enthusiasm for the colours and patterns of Morocco. "The interiors were so exotic," she recalls, "with pure white walls heavily stencilled in bright blues and terracotta."



Text 8:

"When women are given oestrogen they feel better, but not by so very much," says gynaecologist Elliot Philipp. "If you also give them testosterone, the change is enormous — their whole mood is incredibly improved. And the effect on their sex lives can be remarkable."



Text 9:

If you have diarrhea that lasts for more than 2 or 3 days, or if you have a combination of fever, chills, abdominal pain, diarrhea, and vomiting, consult your physician.



Text 10:

Did you realise there's more than one kind of fibre? Why not take a couple of minutes to digest the facts.

The fibre most people first think of, the sort that helps to keep you regular, is technically known as *insoluble*.

But there's another type found in some vegetables, fruits and cereals known as soluble fibre.



Just for fun:

BRITISH WORKER: (over phone) *I can't work today. I've got a tummy bug.*

AMERICAN BOSS: *Why didn't you just send me an e-mail?*

BRITISH WORKER: *Because I can't spell "diarrhoea".*

Adapted from CARNEY, E. (1998): "English Spelling is Kattastroffik" in BAUER, L. and P. TRUDGILL (eds.) *Language Myths*. London, Penguin.

TASK 2: REGISTER: SIMPLIFYING SENTENCES



Worksheet 4:

The sentences below have all been composed in an extremely inflated style. Read them carefully to determine their core meaning and then rephrase them as simply as possible (two to ten words will suffice).

INFLATED PROSE

1. I currently find myself gripped by a considerable and wholly debilitating lack of energetic resources and a desire for the most profound inactivity.

2. It is adoration and devotion, delightful and tender amity, as well as ardent affection that I perceive in my feelings for Rita.

3. I feel a physiological necessity for the incorporation of fluid into my body through the channel of my buccal cavity.

4. I am led to wonder if you might happen to comply in your unilaterally augmenting the expanse between us, such that one of us, who is not my humble self, becomes unaware of the other's existence, and thus has an enhanced sense of solitariness.

5. At some undefined juncture in the non-immediate future I shall attempt oral communication with you, which, by virtue of our not being in earshot of one another, will involve the Scottish-born American audiologist Alexander Graham Bell's most ubiquitous contribution to modern civilization.

6. For me, hostile abomination combines with loathing aversion in a feeling of dark antagonism and odious antipathy directed toward the science of structure, order, and relation that has evolved from elemental practices of counting, measuring, and describing the shapes of objects.

7. As a result of the paradox implied in my having misplaced my portable eye-focus-correcting apparati, and my thus temporarily lacking the acuity of vision necessary to locate them by purely visual means, and since my memory fails to shine any significant light on the matter, I enquire as to whether you can contribute key information regarding their current position.

8. I invoke my Maker, the Supreme Being and maximum representative of majestic Divinity, variously conceived as Elohim for the Ancient Hebrews, Amon-Ra for the Egyptians, Astarte for the Sidonians and Chemosh for the Moabites, such that He may extol and grace the New World country and economic superpower that has given us President George Bush, Jr.

TASK 3: CHOOSING WORDS

Worksheet 5:

Fill in the blanks in the following text, choosing words and phrases from the options given in the corresponding list.

IMPORTANT: In every case, all three options are possible. Your job is to decide which of the three sounds best. Be prepared to discuss the reasons for your answers with the rest of the class.

A) Contrary to the popular prejudice that America is the nation of unintellectual and anti-intellectual people, where ideas are at best means to ends, America is (1)_____ nothing but a great stage on which theories have been played as tragedy and comedy. Other peoples have been (2)_____, (3)_____ the gods of their various places. When they too decided to follow the principles we pioneered, they have (4)_____ awkwardly, unable (5)_____ gracefully from their pasts. Our story is the majestic and triumphant march of the principles of freedom and equality, giving meaning to all that we have done or are doing. There are almost no accidents; everything that happens among us is a consequence of one or both of our principles – a triumph over some opposition to them, a discovery of a fresh meaning in them, a dispute about which of the two (6)_____, (7)_____.

Now we have arrived at one of the ultimate acts in our drama, the informing and reforming of our most intimate private lives by our principles. Sex and its consequences – love, marriage and family – have finally become the theme of the national project, and here the problem of nature, always present but always repressed in the reconstruction of man demanded by freedom and equality, becomes insistent.

B) The change in sexual relations, which now provide an (8)_____ challenge to human (9)_____, (10)_____ in two successive waves in the last two decades. The first was the sexual revolution; the second, feminism. The sexual revolution marched under the banner of freedom, feminism under that of equality. Although (11)_____ for a while, their differences eventually put them at odds with each other, as Tocqueville said freedom and equality would always be. This is (12)_____ in the (13)_____ over pornography, which pits liberated sexual desire against feminist resentment about stereotyping. We are presented with the (14)_____ of pornography (15)_____ borrowed from the heroic struggles for freedom of speech, and using Miltonic rhetoric, doing battle with feminism, newly

(16) _____ community morality, **C**) using arguments associated with conservatives who defend traditional sex roles, and also (17) _____ an authoritative tradition in which it was (18) _____ to suggest any relation between what a person reads and sees and his sexual practices. In the background stand the liberals, wringing their hands in confusion because they wish to favor both sides and cannot.

Sexual liberation presented itself as a bold affirmation of the senses and of undeniable natural impulse against our puritanical heritage, (19) _____ and repressions, (20) _____ by Biblical myths about original sin. From the early sixties on there was a gradual testing of the limits on sexual expression, and they (21) _____ or had already disappeared without anybody's having noticed it. The disapproval of parents and teachers of youngsters' sleeping or living together was easily overcome. The moral inhibitions, the fear of disease, the risk of pregnancy, the family and social consequences of (22) _____ and the difficulty of finding places in which to have it – everything that stood in its way suddenly was no longer there. Students, particularly the girls, were no longer (23) _____ to give public evidence of sexual attraction or of its fulfillment. The kind of (24) _____ that were dangerous in the twenties, and risqué or bohemian in the thirties and forties, became as normal as membership in the Girl Scouts.

A)

1. a) actually	b) real	c) in truth
2. a) autochthonous	b) independent	c) self-governing
3. a) deriving guidance from	b) finding direction in	c) encountering a sort of guiding light in
4. a) progressed	b) hobbled along	c) proceeded
5. a) to free themselves	b) to extricate themselves	c) to escape
6. a) is more important	b) comes first	c) has primacy
7. a) and so on	b) etc.	c) and things of the sort

B)

8. a) unending	b) endless	c) incessant
9. a) inventiveness	b) resourcefulness	c) ingenuity
10. a) came over us	b) took us by surprise	c) enveloped us
11. a) the two developed together	b) they went arm in arm	c) they progressed jointly
12. a) evident	b) plain	c) manifest
13. a) debate	b) squabble	c) disagreement
14. a) entertaining curiosity	b) charming exhibition	c) amusing spectacle
15. a) clad in armor	b) couched in language	c) dressed up in metaphors
16. a) guised in the dress of	b) draped in the robes of	c) passing itself off as

C)

17.a) challenging	b) rebelling against	c) defying
18.a) taboo	b) forbidden	c) frowned upon
19.a) the conventions of society	b) society's conventions	c) social conventions
20.a) reinforced	b) strengthened	c) bolstered
21.a) melted away	b) vanished	c) dropped out of sight
22.a) sex before marriage	b) premarital intercourse	c) sexual relations between unwed youngsters
23.a) embarrassed	b) ashamed	c) hesitant
24.a) cohabitations	b) communal living arrangements	c) shared dwelling agreements

TASK 4: COMPARING NEWS STORIES

Texts 11 and 12, below, represent two different styles of newspaper reporting. Though both texts tell the same news story, one has been extracted from a broadsheet, the other from a tabloid. Skim the two texts and then go on to Worksheets 6 and 7, below.

Text 11:

Girl, 14, found strangled and dumped in woodland

BY PAUL WILKINSON

A SCHOOLGIRL was sexually assaulted, beaten and then strangled as she travelled home after meeting a friend.

The semi-clothed body of Janet Swanson, 14, was found by walkers dumped in a woodland a few hundred yards from the bus stop where she was last seen less than three hours before. Last night a youth aged 15 was being questioned by detectives.

Det. Supt. Malcolm Mawson, leading the inquiry, said that it seemed that Janet had been killed "on the spur of the moment".

The teenager died three weeks after her mother, Hazel, placed her into temporary local authority care because of domestic problems at their home in Killingbeck, Leeds. Mrs. Swanson and her husband, Andrew, who are separated, were both said to be devastated. The girl was last seen alive at 4.40 p.m. on Saturday at a bus stop on the Killingbeck retail park, less than a quarter of a mile from her mother's home.

Detectives said she was returning to her social services accommodation in the city's Stanningley area after seeing a friend living in a children's home in Killingbeck. Mr. Mawson said the teenager, who had two brothers and a sister, was a "quiet, likeable and attractive young girl".

Girls at the home where Janet was living were said to be very upset by her death. Mike Evans, the Leeds assistant director of social services said: "It is an awful tragedy and everyone is absolutely devastated." He said youngsters at the home were free to come and go as they pleased.

Mr. Evans said staff were concerned that she had not returned from her evening meal and were on the verge of raising the alarm when news of her killing came through.

Police are to check whether sticks and stones at the murder were used as weapons.

 **Text 12:**

Janet, 14, strangled just yards from shops

SCHOOLGIRL Janet Swanson was brutally beaten and sexually assaulted before being strangled — just yards from superstores packed with shoppers.

The 14-year-old's half-naked body was left dumped in a dense copse after the gruesome murder. Last night, a white tent marked the spot on the outskirts of Leeds where the auburn-haired teenager was found.

Three walkers discovered her body lying just 100 yards from the loading bay of a busy B&Q DIY store.

The fresh-faced youngster was last seen on Saturday, an hour before the shops closed, at a bus stop 200 yards from where she died.

Police yesterday quizzed shoppers at B&Q and a McDonalds takeaway nearby.

Torn

Detectives believe her killer attacked "on the spur of the moment".

Last night, police confirmed they were questioning a 15-year-old local youth.

Janet, who was described as "slim, quiet and likeable", had been staying at a children's home for three weeks following a bust up at

home. A post mortem confirmed she was strangled.

her torn clothing was found lying in undergrowth at the murder scene.

Her parents, Hazel and Andrew, who are both 33, were "distraught" after police

Sex-attack killer dumps

teenager's body by DIY store

broke news to them of the savage killing.

The couple, who have three other children, are separated.

After a dispute, Janet, who had two younger brothers and a sister, left the family home and moved into a council-run children's home in the Pudsey area of Leeds, West Yorkshire. On Saturday, she had visited a friend at another children's home, not far from where her family live in Killingbeck.

The youngster, who was travelling by bus using a Day Rover ticket, is thought to have been making her way back to Pudsey when she was murdered.

She was last seen at the bus stop on the retail park, three hours before her body was found.

Forensic experts are examining a number of items found in the woods that may have been used to beat her.

The youngster, who went to Elmet Woods School in Roundhay, Leeds, was 5ft 6in tall and had hair extensions. She was wearing an anorak and blue and white pin-striped shirt.

More than 30 officers from Killingbeck police station are working on the murder inquiry.

Leading in the hunt, Detective Superintendent Malcolm Mawson yesterday appealed for any witnesses who may have seen Janet after she was spotted at the bus stop.

"We need to speak to anyone who may have seen her after that time to get to know her movements," he said.

Loss

"It was unnecessary as all killings are. It seems to have been on the spur of the moment.

"It's a tragedy as the loss of a young life always is."

Detectives would not say last night if the murder victim had a boyfriend.

And they refused to disclose whether the youth being questioned knew Janet.

 **Worksheet 6:**

Complete the chart below with the corresponding information, quoting directly from the text in each case. Include ALL references in the texts relevant to the subjects dealt with.

	TEXT 11:	TEXT 12
Description of the victim:		
Investigators on the case:		
Suspect:		
Relatives of the victim:		
Other people mentioned:		
What happened to victim:		
Where body was found and in what state:		
Where and when victim last seen alive:		
What victim was doing when she was attacked:		
Where victim was living at the time:		
Reason why victim had been placed in public care:		
Reactions to the crime:		



Worksheet 7:

Use the questions below to guide you in a discussion of the differences and similarities to be observed in texts 11 and 12. Where necessary, jot down a few notes.

1. Compare and review the information in the chart in Worksheet 6. Discuss the differences you detect between texts 11 and 12 with regard to a) references to and description of the victim and b) description of the crime scene and body. Which of the two articles goes into greater detail on these points? What do you believe is the author's purpose in including the extra details in the article in question?
2. Continue to examine the chart in Worksheet 6 for differences in the descriptions of the victim, crime scene and body. Discuss the differences you see in the vocabulary used by the two articles. Compare the use of adjectives in each article. Which one uses more adjectives? what do you believe the adjectives in this article contribute to its overall effect?
3. Scan the chart in Worksheet 6 to find other instances in which information included in one article is not to be found in the other. Make a list of your findings below, and then state what you believe these differences might contribute to the effect of each text on the reader.

4. Scan the chart in Worksheet 6 again, this time to find any instances in which specific information provided in one article conflicts with the data included in the other. Take note of the discrepancies you find below and state whether you believe they make any sort of contribution to the overall effect of one article as opposed to the other.

Text 11 claims

Text 12 claims

5. In light of everything you have observed, describe the different types of readership at which you imagine each of the articles (texts 11 and 12) was originally targeted. Which of the two do you believe has been extracted from a tabloid? From a broadsheet? Briefly sum up the various ways in which the different types of paper, as exemplified in the articles here, caters to its readers' expectancies.