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Rohdenburg, Günter; Schlüter, Julia

New departures

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19 New departures[1]

GÜNTER ROHDENBURG AND JULIA SCHLÜTER

1 Outline

Rather than a conclusion summing up the findings from the present volume, this final chapter forms an outlook that is intended to foster a continuation of the work begun by the contributors. The authors of this chapter and editors of this volume do not pretend that the differences between BrE and AmE grammar studied in the preceding chapters can be adequately summarized in a few pages or that a few concluding remarks can do justice to the multiplicity of findings discussed (for some suggestions, see the general Introduction). The array of contrasts from the most diverse areas of grammar forbid us to even venture the attempt. Too many of the traditional generalizations about British–American contrasts have been confronted with counter-evidence, yielding a highly differentiated picture.

What becomes more than clear in view of the data gathered in this volume is that, contrary to general opinion, BrE and AmE do not differ only in their pronunciation and lexicon, but also in central domains of their grammar. Thus, the most important lesson to be drawn from the preceding studies is the one expressed by Gunnel Tottie in Chapter 18: 'the more delicate our analysis, the more differences we will find'.

In line with this conclusion, the present chapter suggests numerous avenues for further research on British–American contrasts. It contains almost four dozen pilot studies, roughly grouped into five grammatical categories. Some of them are based on a set of four matching one-million-word corpora (LOB, Brown, FLOB and Frown) and would deserve a more detailed study on a larger basis. Some others draw on an extensive collection of newspapers, totalling several hundred million words. This does not mean that they present exhaustive descriptions of the phenomena. They rather focus on selected subtypes of the structures under discussion or make use of highly restrictive search strategies in order to keep the results manageable while at the same time retrieving a sufficient number of examples.

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Hence, the following studies are not designed to do full justice to the issues under discussion but to stimulate further contrastive research into the grammar(s) of British, American and other varieties of English that may be compared to the former two. At the same time, the wide range of topics covered by the studies is intended to reinforce Gunnel Tottie's conclusion to the effect that there is more to be discovered in the area of British–American contrasts than one may expect.

Wherever possible, the diachronic dimension of the case studies will be indicated and in some cases corpus data from earlier forms of English will be adduced. In many cases, the database available for historical analyses is, however, insufficient; in other cases, limitations of space prevent us from elaborating on a sometimes very complex evolution. Similarly, it is not possible within the confines of this chapter to evaluate each phenomenon discussed with regard to overarching generalizations about British–American differences.

To palliate these shortcomings at least to a minimal extent, each of the subsections in the main part of this chapter will be appended with a table providing a synopsis of the topics treated. In these tables, each contrast will be evaluated along four parameters: firstly, which of the two varieties has the lead on the diachronic level (or, in other words, which is more progressive/less conservative); secondly, which variety is more formal (or less colloquial); thirdly, which variety has implemented a more consistent grammatical system or discarded more irregularities; and fourthly, which variety employs more explicit grammatical means and is therefore less opaque in the relevant sense.

As has been mentioned several times throughout this book, these four parameters are not new in the context of British–American differences. Therefore, they come along with certain preconceived settings. There is a long tradition that has considered AmE as more conservative (the 'colonial lag' hypothesis; cf. Marckwardt 1958: 80, Kövecses 2000: 25; for a critical assessment, see Görlach 1987 and also Chapters 1, 4 and 5 by Hundt, Mondorf and Schlüter). However, in the twentieth century, the direction of influence has been reversed, so that the leading role in world English now falls to AmE (cf. Algeo 2001). Formality is usually ascribed to BrE, while AmE is considered as strongly influenced by colloquial speech (cf. Mencken 1936: 94–6, Biber 1987: 108–13, Mair 1998: 153–4, Kövecses 2000: 235–46, Tottie 2002a: 176). Similarly, AmE is known for its tendency to eliminate irregularities (cf. Kövecses 2000: 177–202, Rohdenburg 2003a: 212, 223–4, and Chapter 3 by Levin). The fourth characteristic, explicitness, is loosely associated with the 'typical' American directness in matters interpersonal (cf. Kövecses 2000: 203–17). The synopses provided at the end of each subsection will thus allow us to assess the extent to which these prototypes are actually fulfilled.

Since quantitative corpus studies typically do not yield absolute contrasts but gradual differences between the varieties, the judgements along the lines

of these four criteria can obviously only relate to tendencies. For instance, a variety using a clarifying preposition in 60 per cent of the cases will be judged more explicit than a variety dropping the preposition in 55 per cent of the total. Despite this caveat, in some cases no clear decision is possible because the phenomenon under consideration can be viewed from two perspectives. For instance, adding *for* to the adverb *longer* dissociates the item from the paradigm of other compared adverbs like *earlier*, *sooner*, *rather*, *better*, etc., but integrates it into the paradigm of adverbials formed with *for*, e.g. *for sure*, *for good*, *for now*, *for real* and *for (too/very/so* etc.) *long* itself. In most cases the diachronic direction of the divergence is known or can be inferred, but cases where the evolution has undergone a U-turn may be problematic. In some other cases the decision as to whether BrE or AmE should be regarded as more formal, regular or explicit can only be justified with recourse to additional considerations. In the tabular form of presentation that will be adopted, limitations of space forbid us to expand upon these details. Thus, our judgement of these cases is given in brackets. Finally, there are cases where the criteria are simply not applicable to the phenomenon under consideration, or where we are ignorant of too much of the background to pronounce a judgement. Where this is the case, the corresponding cells of the tables are left empty. For instance, as long as no direct competitors can be brought into play, it is not clear whether a more frequent use of the adverb *overly* or an increased use of prepositional particle verbs like *sneak up on* or *close in on* in AmE has any consequences for the degree of consistency or explicitness of the variety. The generalizations derived from these synopses will be added up and summarized in a comprehensive table in the concluding section. It has to be kept in mind, however, that even the forty-six distinct phenomena investigated here constitute only a more or less arbitrary sample of British–American contrasts with a limited generalizability.

2 New departures

The pilot studies outlined in this chapter are arranged into five roughly defined classes. The first deals with individual adverbs and adverbials consisting of more than one word; the second concentrates on the use or omission of prepositions and the formation of new prepositions; the third treats noun phrases and their modifiers and quantifiers; the fourth focuses on components of verb phrases, in particular predicates and predicative expressions; and the fifth encompasses various kinds of sentential structures from finite to non-finite.

2.1 *Adverbs and adverbials*

The large and variegated class of adverbs and adverbial expressions contains numerous examples of British–American contrasts. They involve the use or
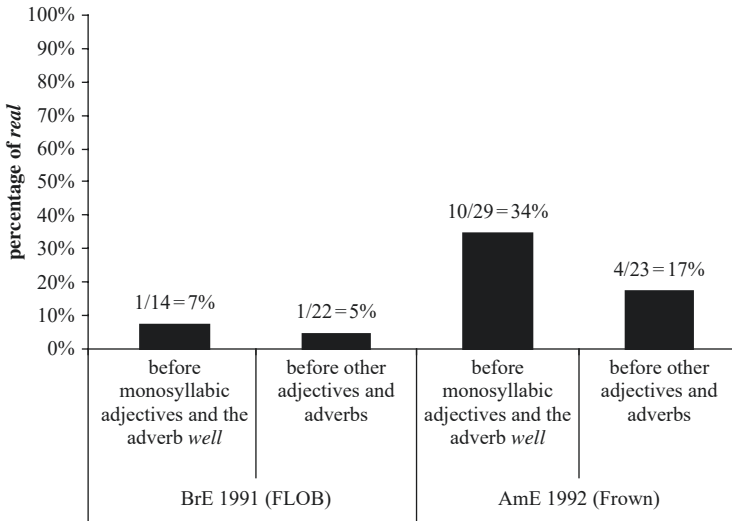
Figure 19.1 The rivalry between *really* and *real* intensifying adjectives (and the occasional adverb) in two matching British and American corpora

omission of the regular adverbial suffix –*ly*, the choice or frequency of use of individual adverbs and other aspects of adverbial usage. A further relevant example concerning different pragmatic implications of an adverb has been treated in Chapter 17 by Karin Aijmer.

1. One case in point that has often been mentioned in the literature but has rarely been quantified is the use of suffixless adverbs, which is more typical of AmE than of BrE (cf. the remarks in Mittins, Salu, Edminson and Coyne 1970: 75–7, 107–8; see furthermore Tagliamonte and Ito 2002: 238 and references therein, Tottie 2002a: 168–9 and Peters 2004: 62, 591). A showcase example of the contrast is presented by the intensifier *real(ly)*, whose suffixless form is considered as a shibboleth of informal AmE. The data in Figure 19.1 confirm the American predilection for the short form in a corpus representing written usage. In addition, a distinction emerges in AmE between monosyllabic and longer adjectives and adverbs: *real* more commonly modifies the shorter ones, with which it forms high-frequency collocations.

2. Besides *real(ly)*, another intensifier can be used to illustrate the AmE tendency to drop the adverbial suffix: before comparatives and semantically similar expressions (e.g. *different*), the adverbial use of *whole* is more typical of AmE than of BrE, which in turn uses *wholly* much more extensively. Figure 19.2 depicts the distribution of *whole*, *wholly* and a third option, *a whole lot*, premodifying the adjective *different* (which merely serves as an example here). The distribution is also subject to grammatical restrictions, which have not been teased apart in the data of Figure 19.2. Thus, *wholly* can
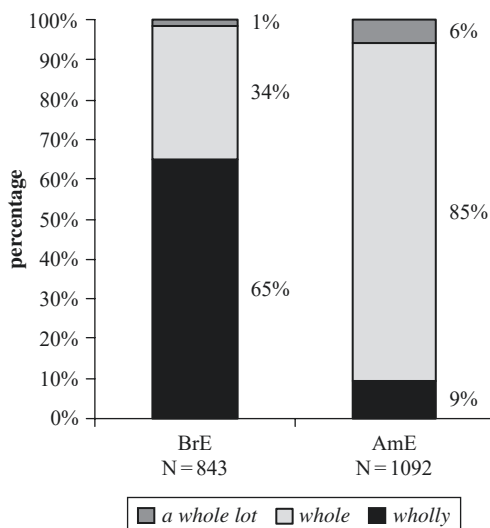
Figure 19.2 The rivalry between *wholly*, *whole* and *a whole lot* as intensifiers preceding *different* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)[2]

modify attributive, postnominal or predicative adjectives, while *whole* is only an option before attributive adjectives, and *a whole lot* is limited to post-nominal and predicative uses.

3. The British–American contrast also extends to manner adverbs, for which Figure 19.3 gives four exemplary collocations. Again, AmE uses more suffixless adverbs than BrE, though the percentages vary depending on the contexts considered. In both varieties, *funnily* tends to be avoided, but while AmE overwhelmingly resorts to the suffixless variant, BrE opts for the *way*-construction in almost a third of the instances.

Historically, there has been a longstanding competition between suffixed and suffixless adverbs, with an overall trend towards more adverbial marking in the standard. (Needless to say, this is not true of non-standard usage.) Thus, the re-establishment of unmarked adverbs in the spoken and written standard can be considered as a U-turn development led by AmE.

4. Another case where an adjective without adverbial suffix is put to use as an adverb is the form *likely*. Greenbaum (1969: 110, 122, 223) observes that this is possible only when *likely* is modified (cf. example (1)).

(1) This type will (very) likely be sold out in the near future.

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[2] Full references of the electronic corpora involved are found in the bibliography. Notice that the abbreviations indicating American and British newspapers use capital and lower-case letters, respectively.
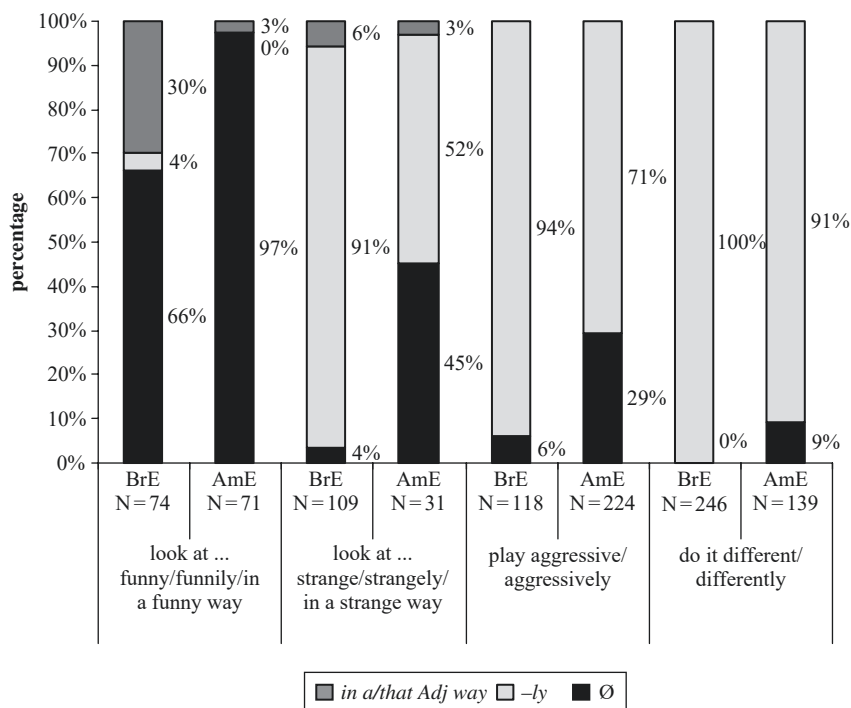
Figure 19.3 The rivalry between suffixed and suffixless manner adverbs (and the *way*-periphrasis) in selected British and American newspapers (database: *funny/funnily*: t90–03, g90–03, d91–00, i93–94, i02–04, m93–00, L92–95, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *strange(ly)*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–95, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *aggressive(ly)*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92; *different(ly)*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)[3]

As Figure 19.4 reveals, *likely* is generally better established as an adverb in AmE: not only is it more frequent, but it also dispenses with modifying material more easily than in BrE, where most instances are accompanied by *very*, *quite*, *enough*, *just as*, *(as) . . . as not*, *less*, *more (than)* or *most*. It is true that unmodified *likely* occurs only rarely in initial position even in AmE: an adverb without appropriate marking presumably poses processing problems at the beginning of a sentence. However, the frequency of the adverb *likely* per million words (Brown: 19 pmw; Frown: 37 pmw) and the share of adverbial as opposed to adjectival uses of the form (Brown: 12.6 per cent; Frown: 19.7 per cent) are increasing. Incidentally, a pilot study of British and American newspapers suggests that BrE compensates for this lack through

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[3] The *way*-periphrasis has only been taken into account for the first two collocations.
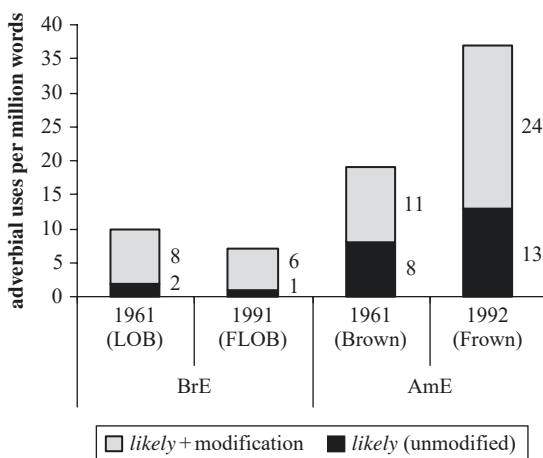
Figure 19.4 Adverbial uses of *likely* in four matching British and American English corpora

a more extensive use of the formula *it is likely that* to introduce a clause (6.82 pmw as opposed to only 1.48 pmw in AmE).

5. Our next example involves a different adverbial marker, namely the final *-s* in items ending in *-ward(s)*. It is a well-known fact that BrE is more prone to use the ending *-wards* for this group of adverbs, while AmE plumps for *-ward*, but the distinctive value of the *-s* has never been quantified so far. In effect, as Figure 19.5 demonstrates, BrE draws a fairly consistent morphological distinction between adverbs (ending in *-wards*) and adjectives (ending in *-ward*), which is absent from AmE. The contrast is illustrated in (2).

(2) The slight upward trend has been revised further upwards.

A look at the individual items shows that the distinction is however not as straightforward as one might expect: it is hardly drawn at all, even in BrE, in the case of *forward(s)*, and it applies only in part to the items *inward(s)* and *outward(s)*. Even so, BrE patently makes use of a morphological contrast that is neutralized in AmE. From a historical perspective, BrE has thus stabilized an existing functional split that AmE has abandoned by progressively giving up the adverbial marker *-s*. The contrast, by the way, carries over to the preposition *toward(s)*, which preserves the *-s* in as much as 98 per cent of the cases in BrE, but has lost it in 99 per cent of the total in AmE.

6. Apart from the use or omission of the adverbial suffix in items like *real/ really* and *whole/wholly*, the domain of degree adverbs offers several other contrasts that distinguish between British and American usage. For one thing, the two varieties manifest different preferences in the choice of intensifiers. Two items that are particularly typical of AmE are *plenty* and *overly*. The items come from two different stylistic poles: *plenty* is
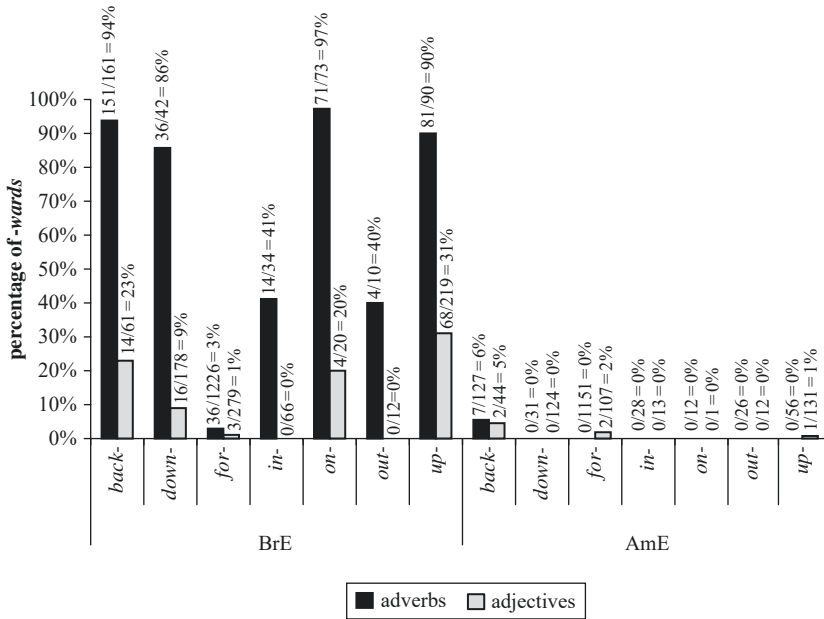
Figure 19.5 The distribution of *-ward* and *-wards* with adverbs and adjectives in selected British and American newspapers (data supplied by Imke Zander) (database: t97–99, L97–99)[4]

characteristic of informal and *overly* of formal registers. Figure 19.6 indicates their frequencies per million words.

A premodifying *plenty* is often combined with a postmodifying *enough*, as in *plenty nice enough*. In the special case of *plenty*, which is a noun in its origin, the addition of *enough*, which predominated in the nineteenth century, can be considered as a clarification of the adverbial function. In our newspaper data, BrE has a drastically higher percentage of '*enough*-support' than AmE (78 per cent vs. 10 per cent), which also speaks for a better establishment of *plenty* as an intensifier in AmE.

7. Another case in point is the intensification of the comparative *fewer* as a determiner accompanying countable plural nouns or in nominal uses (with ellipsis of the nominal head). The expected intensifier would seem to be *many*, but its combination with *fewer* creates an apparent contradiction in terms that can be avoided by using *much* (which, according to grammatical norms, is appropriate only for uncountables).[5] Figure 19.7 shows that this

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[4] In the case of *plenty*, all adjectives (predicative and attributive), but only unmarked simple adverbs (e.g. *fast*, *well*), have been considered.

[5] Another avoidance strategy that neither incurs the semantic nor the grammatical infelicity but is excluded from the present count is the use of *far* instead of *many* or *much*.
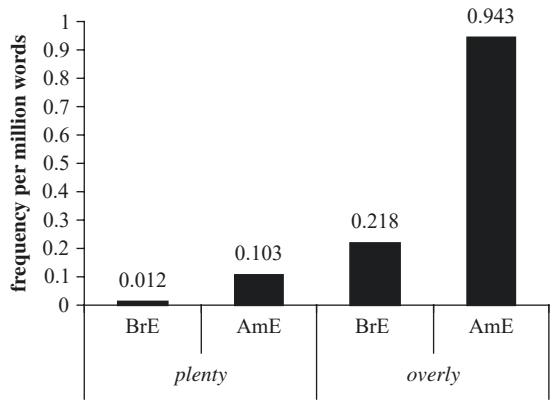
Figure 19.6 The use of *plenty* and *overly* as premodifiers of adjectives and adverbs in selected British and American newspapers (database: *plenty*: t91, t95, g92, d91, m95, D95, W91, N01 Jan-Jun; *overly*: t92, m93, D95, W92, N01)
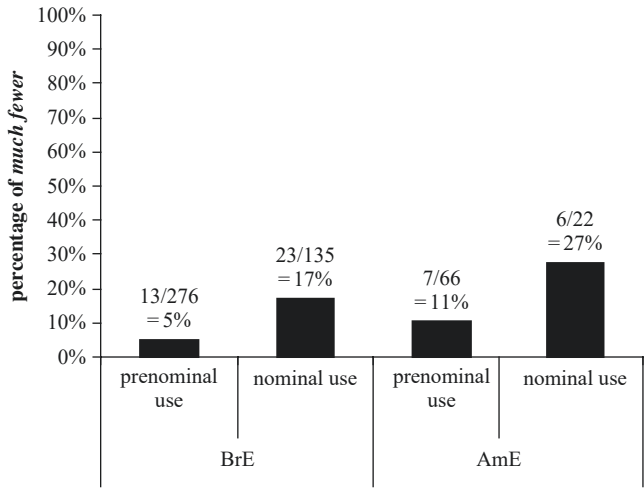

Figure 19.7 The rivalry between *many* and *much* in the type *many/much fewer (books)* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–00, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–95, D92–95, W90–92)

possibility is more frequently resorted to in AmE. In addition, the figure reveals that in both varieties the prenominal use (e.g. *many/much fewer books*) is characterized by a lower share of *much* than the nominal use (e.g. *many/much fewer*). A look at the historical dimension of the phenomenon shows that *much* before *fewer* is actually a longstanding usage: *much* was used exclusively
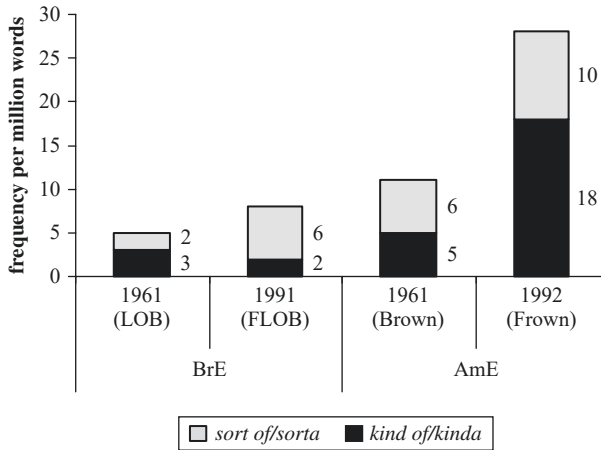
Figure 19.8 The use of *kind of/kinda* and *sort of/sorta* modifying elements other than nouns/noun phrases in four matching British and American corpora

in this context up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is only in the recent past that *many* has gained ground – *pace* Bolinger (1968: 127), who writes that '*many fewer* is next to impossible'.

8. Also within the category of degree adverbs, but belonging to the subcategory of downtoners, is another contrast that has frequently been noted in the literature: accordingly, AmE has a predilection for using *sort of* or *kind of* (and their reduced versions *sort o'/sorta* and *kind o'/kinda*) to modify many different types of syntactic elements (e.g. adjectives, adverbs, verbs and clauses introduced by *as if*) as well as in elliptical uses (where *sort of/kind of* stand on their own, mostly in affirmative replies).[6] Figure 19.8 provides suggestive empirical evidence that the downtoners are indeed more frequent in AmE, and that *sort of* is more typically British, whereas *kind of* is more widespread in AmE. What is more, the increase that can be observed in both varieties is strikingly accelerated in AmE, so that the gap between AmE and BrE is widening rather than closing. A closer analysis (not reproduced here) additionally shows that the syntactic uses of *sort of/kind of* are more highly diversified in AmE.

9. Turning now to the domain of temporal adverbs, two characteristic differences can be mentioned. The first concerns the item *twice*. While *once* is firmly established and *thrice* has been generally ousted by the more regular (analytic) equivalent *three times*, *two times* may be turning into a

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[6] For two studies of the grammaticalized uses of *sort of* and *kind of* as degree modifiers (both of which do not pay attention to British–American contrasts), see Aijmer (1984) and Tabor (1994).
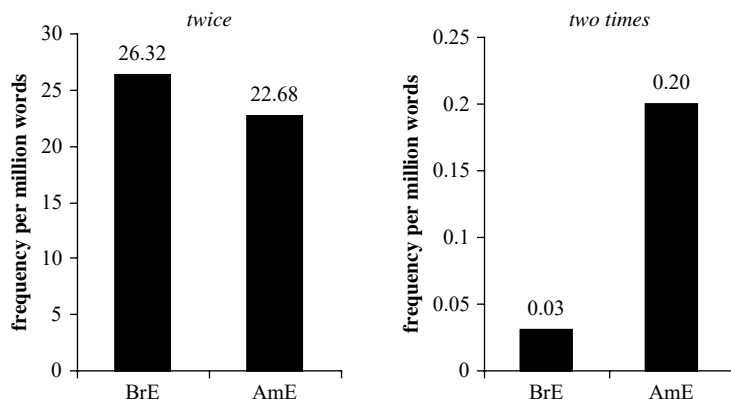
Figure 19.9 The rivalry between *twice* and *two times* in three major syntactic environments in selected British and American newspapers (database: *twice*: m00, D95; *two times*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

serious competitor for the still-frequent (synthetic) adverb *twice*. The data in Figure 19.9 show the rates of occurrence of the two items in certain high-frequency collocations.[7] Though *twice* is still well entrenched here, it is used more sparingly in AmE than in BrE. The frequencies of *two times* contrast in the reverse direction. This suggests that there might be a compensatory relationship between the two adverbs, with AmE favouring the more regular option.[8]

10. The second contrast concerning adverbials of time deals with the choice between the comparative *longer* and the extended phrase *for longer*: the extended variant has for at least two centuries been associated with following *than*-phrases (e.g. *for longer than a year*). This connection seems to have been weakening over the second half of the twentieth century, with *for longer* replacing *longer* in other contexts as well. The change is starting out from BrE, where the full collocation *for longer (. . .) than* is still comparatively frequent, but the form *for longer* is found increasingly in new environments, including sentence-finally. As Figure 19.10a shows, isolated *for longer* is hardly known in AmE, with only 0.05 occurrences per million words.

That this extension of use is a very recent phenomenon in BrE can be seen from a comparison of the frequencies per million words in the earlier and later years of the British newspapers, which are totted up in Figure 19.10a. Thus, in the data from the early 1990s (t90, g90, d91, i93 and m93), *for longer (. . .)*

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[7] The environments searched include *twice/two times as much/often/large*, etc., *twice/two times the size/length/speed*, etc. and *twice/two times a day/week/year*, etc.

[8] The case of the special temporal adverb *twice* has a (distant) parallel in the time expression *fortnight* and the derived adjective/adverb *fortnightly*. Here again, even formal AmE makes much less use of the synthetic and more opaque term: in *The Washington Times*, *fortnight(ly)* occurs merely 1.5 times pmw, while in the British *Times* it has a frequency of 28.4 pmw.
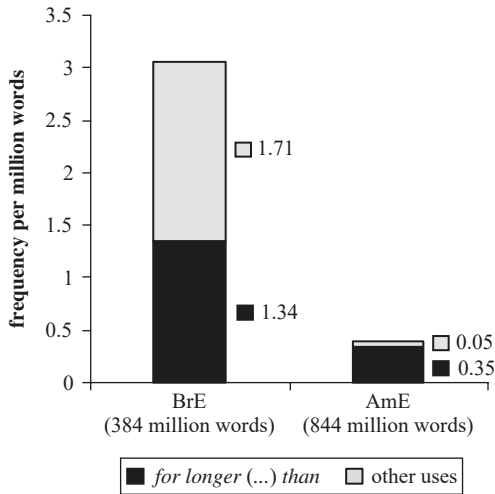
Figure 19.10a The distribution of *for longer* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90, t04, g90, g04, d91, d00, i93, i04, m93, m00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)
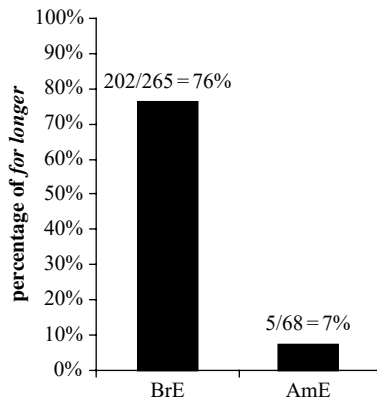

Figure 19.10b Comparative sequences of the type *fresher (for) longer* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–02, g90–00, d91–00, i93–94, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

than has a frequency of 1.17 pmw, which increases slightly to 1.45 pmw in the first years of the twenty-first century (t04, g04, d00, i04 and m00), while other uses of *for longer* increase dramatically from 0.90 pmw to 2.20 pmw in the same years. As is shown by Figure 19.10b, the British–American contrast is sharpened when another comparative precedes *(for) longer* (see example (3)).
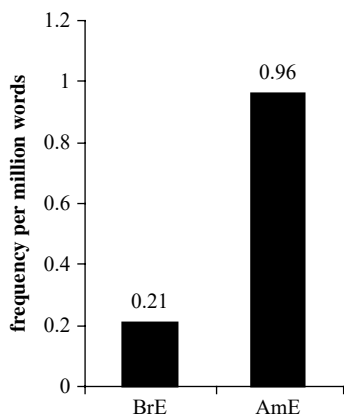
Figure 19.11 The occurrence of *nary* 'not/never/neither' in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

(3) This way it tends to keep fresher (for) longer.

In this context, BrE exhibits a striking tendency to insert *for* in 76 per cent of all cases, while AmE still only employs it in 7 per cent and tolerates the immediate adjacency of two comparatives in the remaining cases. The driving forces behind the intercalation of *for* may be the *horror aequi* effect triggered by the comparative sequence as well as the need for an upbeat introducing the constituent formed by *longer*.[9] Since *for* is hardly available in AmE, these forces operate more or less vacuously in this variety.

11. Turning now to another subclass of adverbs, viz. negators, there is one item that is more current in the American written standard than in the British. Contracted from the sequence *never a*, *nary* (meaning 'not/never/ neither') is of dialectal origin, but is found more than four times as often in American newspapers as in their British counterparts (see Figure 19.11). This contrast seems to be indicative of the more colloquial style cultivated in American papers.

12. A different type of British–American contrast in the domain of negation concerns the placement of the negator in connection with infinitives. The splitting of infinitives, long incriminated by prescriptive grammarians, is generally more common in AmE (see Fitzmaurice 2000: 61, Kato 2001):[10] a crude frequency count in newspaper data reveals that *to*-infinitives are almost

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[9] For a definition of the *horror aequi* Principle, see Chapter 11 by Vosberg; see furthermore Chapter 8 by Rohdenburg. The upbeat requirement is discussed in more detail in Schlüter (to appear); see also Fijn van Draat (1910: 113–14).

[10] For a study of split infinitives (that makes no reference to British–American contrasts), see Close (1987).
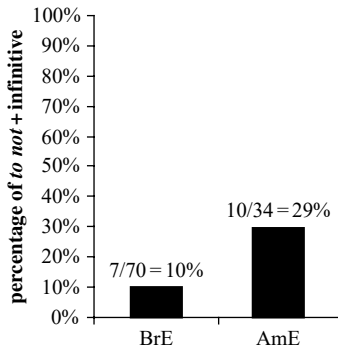
Figure 19.12a Negated infinitives governed by and immediately following the verbs *begin* and *start* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)
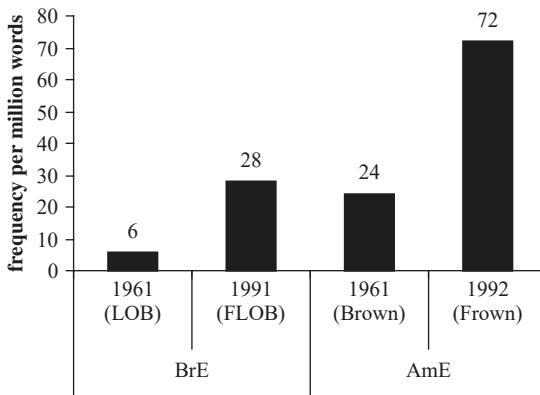

Figure 19.12b The use of infinitives split by single adverbs ending in *-ly* in four matching British and American corpora

ten times as often separated by *not* in AmE (5.26 pmw) as in BrE (0.56 pmw). More specifically, Figure 19.12a provides the results of a direct comparison of *to*-infinitives preceded by *not* (*not to* + infinitive) or split by *not* (*to not* + infinitive) in the complementation of the verbs *begin* and *start*. It turns out that 29 per cent of the infinitives in AmE are split, but only 10 per cent of the infinitives in BrE.

A similar situation obtains for other short adverbs that may intervene between *to* and the infinitive (cf. Mittins, Salu, Edminson and Coyne 1970: 69–73). Figure 19.12b compares the frequencies of infinitives split by simple (i.e. single-word) adverbs ending in *-ly*. A clear twofold division emerges: on
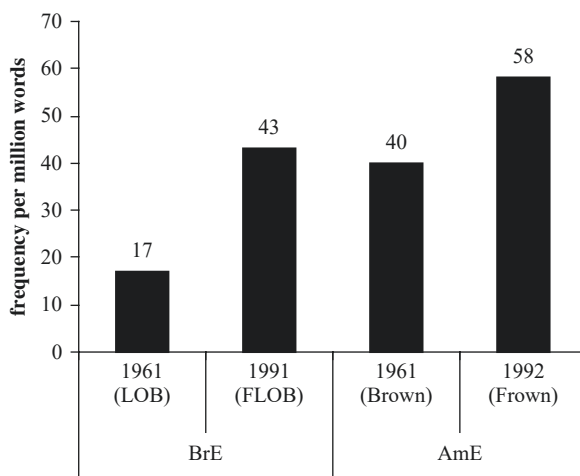
Figure 19.13 Verb-based attitudinal disjuncts like *admittedly* and *allegedly* in four matching British and American corpora

the one hand, AmE has a stronger tendency to split infinitives; on the other, in both varieties the usage gains ground between 1961 and 1991/1992. We can thus conclude that AmE is leading the way in the expansion of split infinitives, and BrE is following suit.

   13. The final two contrasts to be adduced here from the domain of adverbs are from the relatively formal department of sentence adverbs (see also Swan 1991). According to Algeo (2006: 146), 'the category as a whole is suggestive of Britishness'. At a closer look, however, this is only true of the second subtype of sentence adverbs to be discussed under item 14. The first subtype comprises adverbs derived from verbs of thinking and saying, which are based on past participles with an attached *-ly* suffix (cf. Greenbaum 1969: 95, 98, 105, Swan 1991: 418).[11] The items included in the following pilot study are *admittedly*, *allegedly*, *assuredly*, *avowedly*, *concededly*, *expectedly*, *professedly*, *purportedly*, *reportedly*, *reputedly* and *supposedly*. Figure 19.13 displays the token frequencies of these eleven types lumped together. The resultant scenario is similar to the one encountered in Figure 19.12b above: AmE is spearheading the introduction of this type of sentence adverb, but the innovation is rapidly being adopted into BrE. Compared to the 1961 data, the change has gained considerable momentum within the three decades covered. The fact that the American data contain a greater number of different types provides another piece of evidence for the better establishment of these adverbs in AmE.

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[11] In Greenbaum's classification, these so-called 'verb-based attitudinal disjuncts' belong to correspondence class J (1969: 105), which is defined by the equivalence between, e.g., *Allegedly they work hard* and *It is alleged that they work hard*.
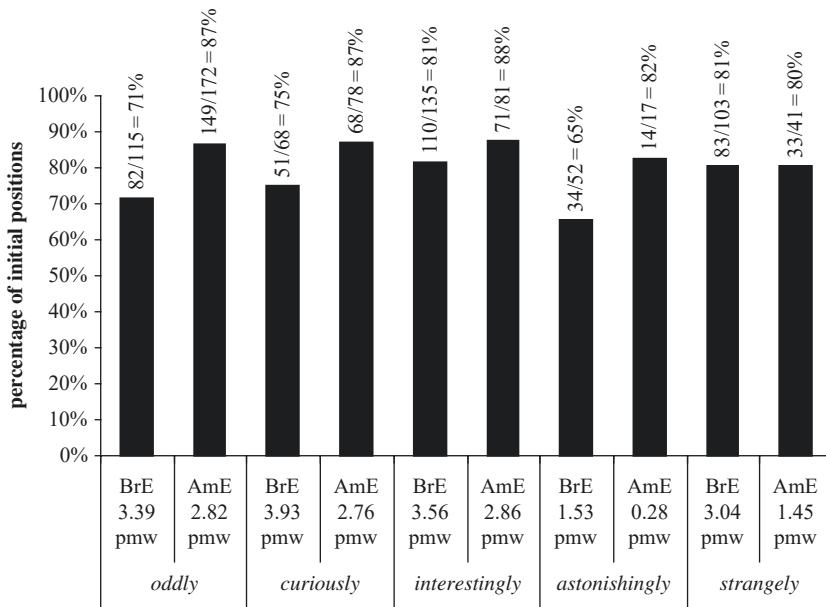
Figure 19.14a The distribution of selected sentence adverbs across different positions in British and American newspapers (The figures at the bottom of the columns give the overall frequency of the adverbs per million words.) (database: *oddly*: t91, W91–92; *curiously*: t91 Jan-Jun, W91; *interestingly*: t92, W91; *astonishingly*: t91, W91–92; *strangely*: t91, W91)

14. The second type of sentence adverb to come under scrutiny here are evaluative sentence adverbs like *oddly*, *curiously*, etc. It has been shown that the current flourishing of this class is quite unprecedented in its history (cf. Swan 1991: 418–19) and apparently more typical of BrE than of AmE (cf. Algeo 2006: 146–7). Robust evidence of three kinds can be adduced to show that evaluative sentence adverbs are generally better established in BrE – in contrast to the preceding example of adverbs based on verbs of thinking and saying. Consider first the frequency indications given below the columns in Figure 19.14a. All of the five adverbs exemplified here have more occurrences per million words in BrE than in AmE. Secondly, as the columns indicate, four out of five are more frequently found in clause-initial position in AmE than in BrE. This is certainly due to the fact that the beginning of a sentence is the prototypical and most easily recognizable position for a sentence adverb. In other words, BrE can afford to deviate from the canonical position more frequently than AmE.

A third argument for the better establishment of evaluative sentence adverbs in BrE emanates from the comparison shown in Figure 19.14b.
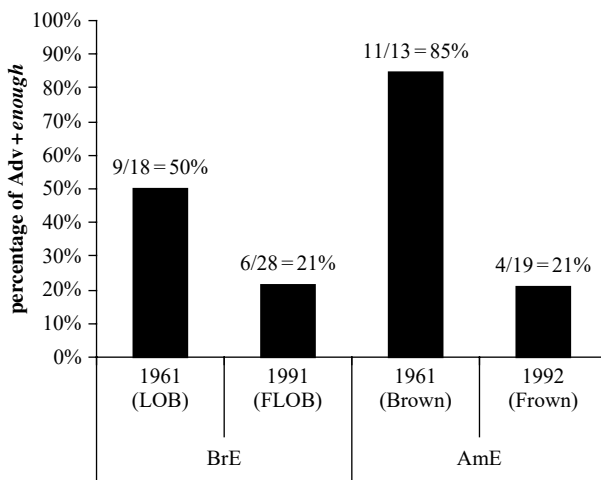
Figure 19.14b The distribution of six evaluative sentence adverbs (*amazingly*, *astonishingly*, *curiously*, *interestingly*, *oddly*, *strangely*) in four matching British and American corpora

Here, all occurrences of six sentence adverbs in four one-million-word corpora are classified according to whether or not they are postmodified by *enough*. The latter contributes little (if anything) to the semantics, but serves as a clear indicator of the syntactic and semantic function of this type of sentence adverbial, as is illustrated in example (4) (cf. Schreiber 1971).

(4) Strangely (enough), the audience received the film with enthusiasm.

In the 1961 data, the count shows a clear-cut contrast between BrE and AmE in the expected direction: AmE requires more support by *enough* to dis-ambiguate the function of the sentence adverbials. In both varieties, the share of adverbs followed by *enough*, however, decreases over three decades so that the contrast appears to be neutralized by the early 1990s. We are thus witnessing an evolution spearheaded by BrE, with AmE catching up rapidly (see Rohdenburg 1996b: 107–9).

A special case in point is provided by the sentence adverb *funnily (enough)*, which in this function is common in BrE (1.04 pmw), but virtually non-existent in AmE (0.02 pmw). It is remarkable that *enough* is most rarely dropped here even in BrE. A possible reason may be that sentence adverbs are generally foreign to spoken registers (but typical of journalese). *Funnily*, however, is the only sentence adverb that is so frequent that it spills over to spoken English, but it cannot dispense with '*enough*-support' (see Rohdenburg 1996b: 108).

As has been announced in the outline of this chapter, each subsection of the pilot studies will be followed up by a table surveying the phenomena

Table 19.1 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts in the domain of adverbs and adverbials*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
1. *real(ly)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
2. *(a) whole (lot)/wholly different*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
3. *funny/-ily/strange(ly)/ aggressive(ly)/different(ly)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
4. *likely*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
5. *-ward(s)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
6. *plenty*	AmE	BrE	(BrE)	(BrE)
overly	AmE	AmE		
7. *many/much fewer*	BrE	BrE	BrE	BrE
8. *sort of/kind of*	AmE	BrE	(BrE)	(BrE)
9. *twice/two times*	AmE	BrE	AmE	AmE
10. *(for) longer*	BrE	(AmE)		BrE
11. *nary*	AmE	BrE		
12. *to not/*Adv + inf.	AmE	BrE	AmE	AmE
13. *admittedly*, *allegedly*, etc.	AmE	AmE		
14. *oddly/curiously* etc. (*enough*)	BrE	BrE		AmE
sums BrE : AmE	3 : 12	12 : 3	8 : 2	9 : 3

covered and evaluating them with respect to four standard assumptions about British–American contrasts. Table 19.1 brings together the topics covered in the present section on adverbs and adverbials.

Far from being able to comment on every single decision here, we can highlight a few tendencies. With only three exceptions, it is usually AmE that is in the lead of a change (and we have seen that in many cases BrE is following suit). Significantly, the changes initiated by AmE are usually directed towards more colloquial structures. As a consequence of this, BrE in many cases remains more formal. Interestingly, two of the three changes spearheaded by BrE (numbers 7 and 14) are moves towards more formal structures, in line with a more formal overall character of BrE. Note that two of the changes promoted by AmE (number 6, *overly*, and number 13), however, lead to more formal structures as well. Contrary to preconceived notions of AmE as being generally more regular, this role falls to BrE in eight out of ten cases. This is due to the fact that, in the domain of adverbs in particular, BrE preserves more regular and explicit markings than AmE (numbers 1–5). Therefore, AmE also has a tendency towards more opacity as far as adverbial marking is concerned. In other respects, AmE lives up to its allegedly more explicit character (numbers 9, 12 and 14). We thus end up with a somewhat heterogeneous picture that contains ample counter-evidence to the hypotheses about the 'colonial lag' and the greater regularity and explicitness of AmE.
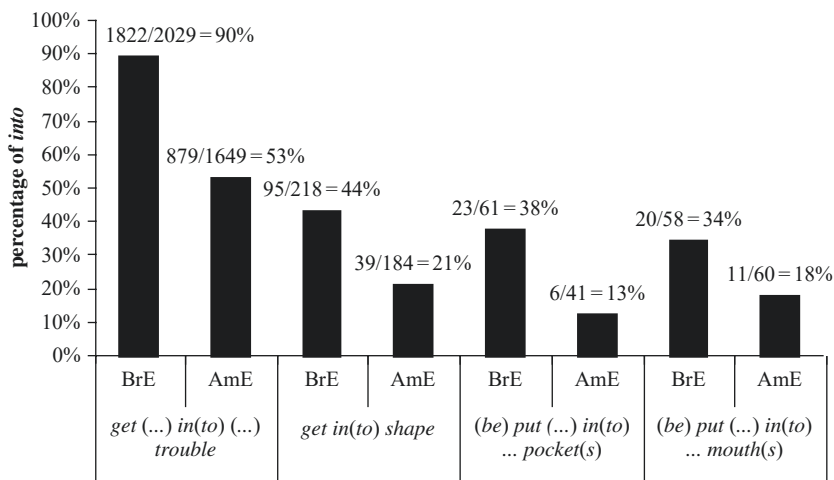
Figure 19.15 The rivalry between the prepositions *into* and *in* in four frequent collocations in selected British and American newspapers (database: *trouble*: t00–01, d91–00, m93–00, L92, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *shape*: d91–00, m93–00, W90–92, D92–95; *pocket(s)* and *mouth(s)*: m93–94, D93–94)

This concludes our exemplification of adverbial contrasts and brings us to the next domain, viz. prepositions. The data from topic 10 (dealing with the time adverb *longer* with or without *for*) could as well be used in the following section, which draws attention to several contrasts involving the use or omission of prepositions.

2.2 Prepositions

Pre- (and post-)positions are notorious for their unpredictable divergences between languages. The following case studies will show that, even between the two national varieties considered, we find some considerable contrasts. The study elaborated in Chapter 6 by Eva Berlage has already detailed a relevant example (pre- vs. postpositive *notwithstanding*) and illustrated some additional contrasts concerning the pairs *including* vs. (postpositive) *included*, *excepting* vs. (postpositive) *excepted*, *apart from* vs. (postpositive) *apart* and *aside from* vs. (postpositive) *aside*.[12]

15. Let us first consider a very general difference that cuts across many different contexts of use. Figure 19.15 gives four arbitrarily selected collocations in which the prepositions *in* and *into* are in competition. In each of them it is obvious that BrE displays a higher share of *into*, which AmE substitutes with the shorter *in*. This implies that BrE tends to distinguish

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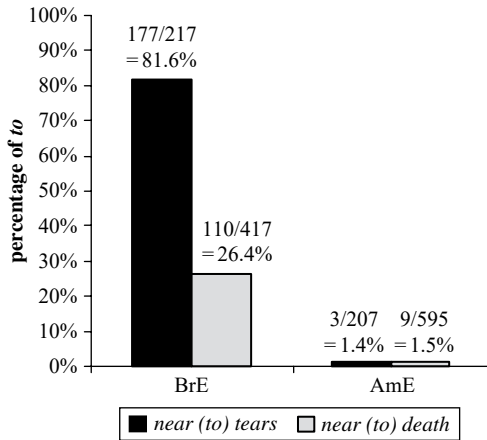[12] For further details, see Berlage (2007).

Figure 19.16 The distribution of the preposition *to* in *near (to) tears/death* in selected British and American newspapers (t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, i93–94, i02–04, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)[13]

more frequently (though by no means consistently) between indications of place (introduced by *in*) and indications of direction (introduced by *into*). In comparison, AmE remains less explicit.

16. A similar tendency can be observed in connection with the item *near*. As the analysis of two collocations in Figure 19.16 demonstrates, BrE preserves a considerable share of occurrences in which *near* is followed by the preposition *to*. This is the case where *near* has an abstract meaning, as in *near (to) tears* and *near (to) death*, but not where it has purely local semantics. Thus, BrE draws a distinction that is virtually absent from AmE. Note, however, that different collocations display clearly distinct profiles: while more than 80 per cent of the examples involving *tears* have *to*, just above a quarter of the examples involving *death* boast this additional preposition in BrE.

The historical dimension of this phenomenon is revealing. The British–American contrast is only visible in data from the twentieth century. Historical data for the collocation *near (to) death* show that *to* established itself increasingly, reaching around 60 per cent in both varieties around the end of the nineteenth century. In the light of these facts, the low rate of *to* in present-day AmE appears to result from a U-turn in the early twentieth century.

17. Another recent change implemented faster in AmE concerns the prepositional phrase *by the courtesy of*, which can be argued to be evolving into a novel preposition. This process is accompanied by a stepwise formal reduction: firstly, the definite article is deleted; then the initial preposition *by* is left out; most recently, the final preposition *of* may also be dropped.

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[13] Examples with adjectival uses of *near* meaning 'imminent' have been discounted since *near* is not interchangeable with *near to* in these uses.
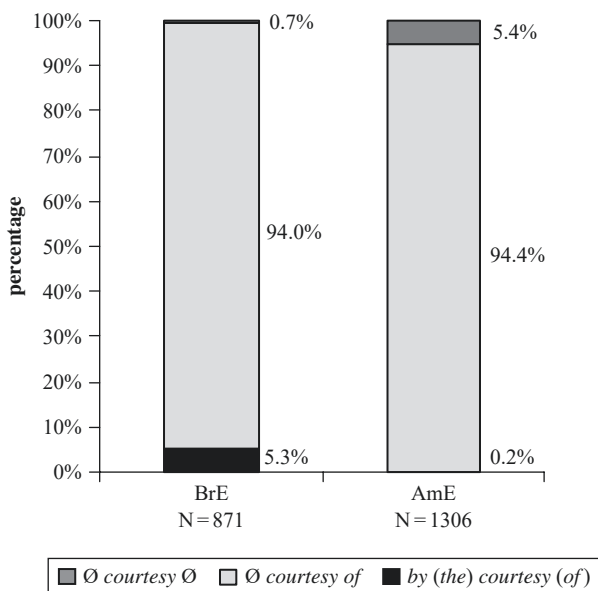
Figure 19.17 Causal/instrumental prepositional phrases involving *courtesy* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90, g90, d92, m93, t91 Jan–Mar, t93 Jan–Mar, d92 Jan–Mar, W92, Insight 90–92, L92, L95, D92–95)[14]

Figure 19.17 shows that the (near-)complete form(s) are best preserved in BrE, while the advanced reduction stage *courtesy* is practically limited to AmE.

This may be interpreted as a grammaticalization process which is further advanced in AmE than in BrE. Incidentally, it is accompanied by semantic bleaching: the novel preposition is extending its range of application from causes leading to positive results to causes leading to neutral and negative ones (cf. example (5)) and from animate to inanimate nouns (cf. example (6)).

(5)   These days, my red-eye problems are usually courtesy of a sleepless little one and rarely due to boozy, smoky clubs.

(6)   First, Martin captured the fourth set, courtesy of a superbly placed backhand return.

18. Another item that is arguably evolving into a novel preposition is the adjective *absent*, which is taking on the meaning of (and possibly competing

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[14] The traditional alternative, *through the courtesy of*, which is never reduced, has been excluded from consideration. There are three such examples in the British newspapers and four in the American.
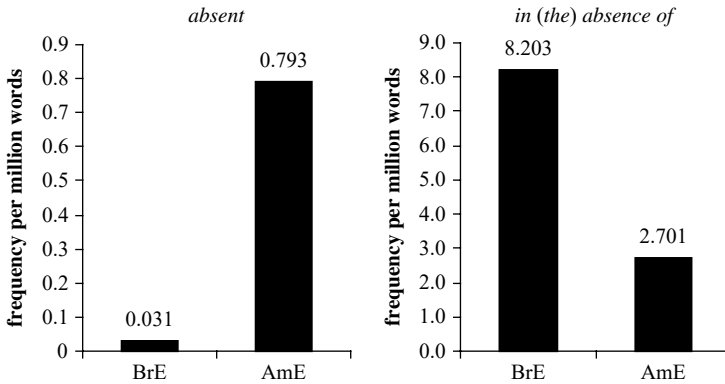
Figure 19.18 The use of the novel preposition *absent* and the prepositional phrase *in (the) absence of* in selected British and American newspapers (data for *in (the) absence of* supplied by Imke Zander) (database: *absent*: t92, g92, d92, i93, m93, L92, D92–93, W92; *in the absence of*: t90–03, g90–03, d91–00, m93–00, D92–95, L92–99, W90–92)

with) the full prepositional phrase *in the absence of* (cf. Slotkin 1985, 1994). An example is given in (7).

(7) It is going to be tough, especially absent/in the absence of any improvement in market conditions.

However, as Figure 19.18 shows, this evolution is largely limited to AmE, where *absent* in this function has achieved a considerable frequency; BrE so far only has traces of this innovative use. The fact that BrE uses the prepositional phrase *in (the) absence of* about three times as often as AmE may be taken to suggest that there exists a compensatory relationship between the use of the two semantically and functionally equivalent expressions.

19. The next prepositional contrast has to do with the verb *depend*, whose complement is usually introduced by the prepositions *on* or *upon*. However, traditional grammar writing has it that *if*-clauses may not be preceded by a preposition (see Rohdenburg 2006c: 50–2). If *it depends (up)on* is followed by an *if*-clause, one would thus expect the preposition to be dropped. In analogy with other indirect interrogative clauses, the ban on the use of prepositions is, however, increasingly being lifted in AmE. Figure 19.19 shows that the trend has reached 50 per cent in American journalistic prose, while written BrE has only traces of it.

20. A related contrast concerns the use of various prepositional links before indirect interrogative clauses dependent on *the question*. Like *if*-clauses, *whether*-clauses historically used to occur without prepositional links. In the EEPF and ECF corpora, this is true without exception (for *whether*-clauses after *the question*). However, in the nineteenth and early
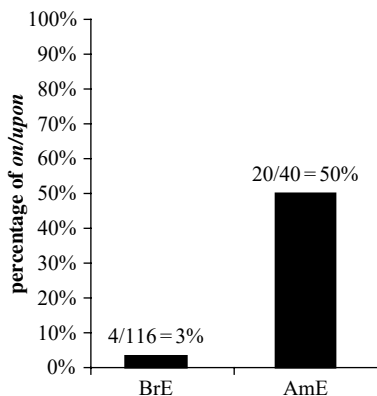
Figure 19.19 The use of prepositions (immediately) preceding interrogative *if*-clauses dependent on *it depends* in selected British and American corpora (database: BNC, t90–04, g90–04, d91–00, i93–94, i02–04, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)
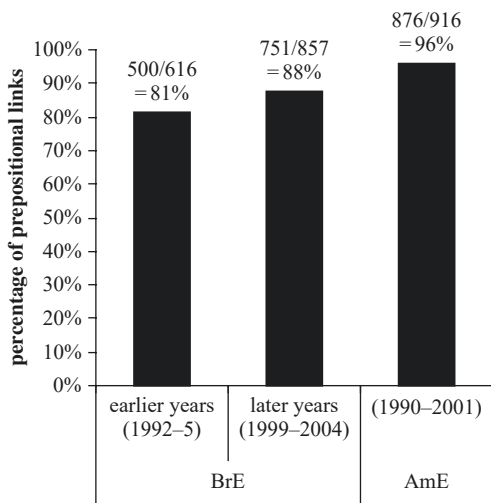
Figure 19.20 The use of prepositions introducing interrogative *whether*-clauses dependent on *the question* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t92, t04, g92, g04, i93, i04, d92, d00, m93–95, m99–00, L92, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

twentieth century collections (NCF, MNC, LNC, ETC), the two national varieties begin to split up: the BrE data have only 6.8 per cent and the AmE data boast as much as 15.3 per cent of prepositional links. Figure 19.20 illustrates the situation in Present-Day English. The prepositional links

Figure 19.21a The expression of dispreferred alternatives with the verb *prefer* by means of the prepositions *over* and *to* in selected British and American newspapers (The database used for each count is given below the corresponding column.)
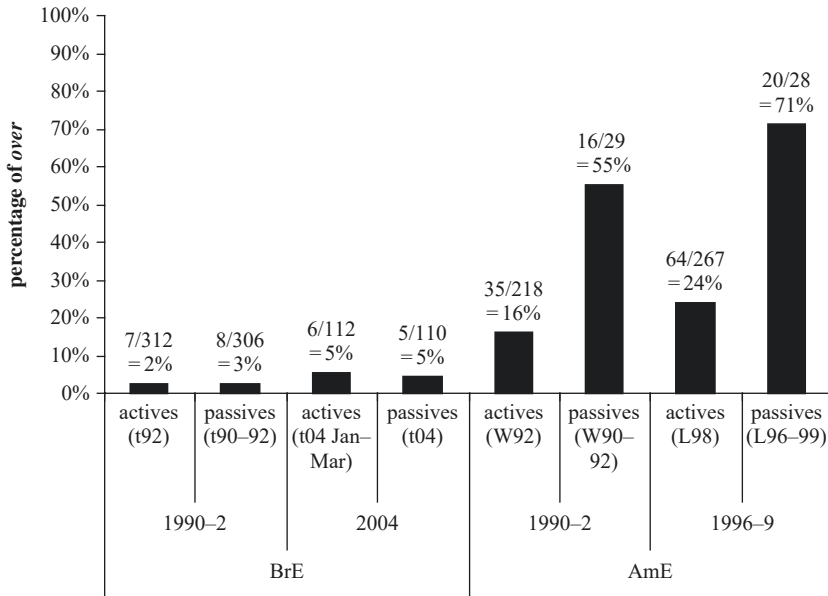
used are *of* (which is by far the most frequent), but also *as to*, *about*, *over* and *on*. It is obvious that in AmE, the change has almost reached completion, while BrE still allows *whether*-clauses without prepositional links. However, as is illustrated by the distinction between the earlier and later years of British newspapers included in the count, the gap is closing quickly.

21. We finally turn to an example where not the use or omission of a preposition but the choice of one or the other is at issue. Corpus data show that in EModE the dispreferred alternatives after the verb *prefer* were indicated by a whole range of prepositions, including *before*, *above* and *to*. The latter began to oust its competitors in the second half of the seventeenth century. The most recent variant, namely *over*, is first attested (though rarely) in the second half of the nineteenth century. Figure 19.21a illustrates the rivalry between *over* and *to* in a present-day newspaper database. For both varieties, the graph distinguishes between earlier and later years and again between active and passive uses. This shows, first, that *over* is considerably more common in AmE; second, that it is at present expanding in both varieties; and third, that there is a tendency (particularly in AmE) for it to be favoured in passive contexts. Since passives generally involve a higher processing load than actives, this can be interpreted as a compensatory effect exploiting the more explicit semantics of *over* (cf. the Complexity Principle
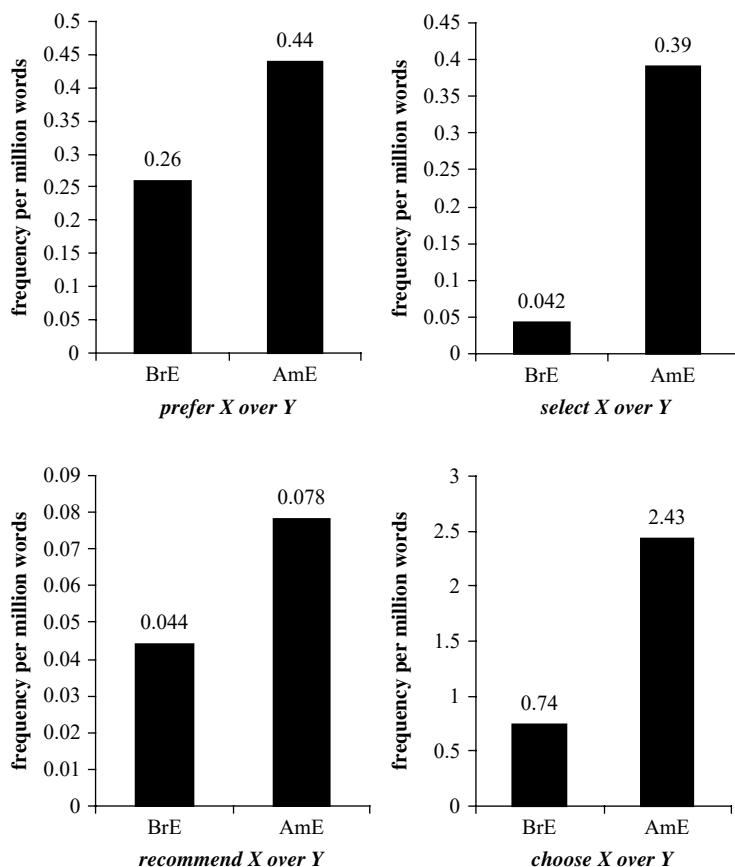
Figure 19.21b The use of the preposition *over* to indicate dispreferred alternatives with the verbs *prefer*, *select*, *recommend* and *choose* in selected British and American newspapers (database: *prefer*: t92, W92; *select* and *recommend*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *choose*: m93–00, D92–95)

referred to in Chapters 4, 6, 10 and 11 by Mondorf, Berlage, Rohdenburg and Vosberg, respectively).

In addition, *over* is extending its range of application also to other verbs of selecting and recommending, which ultimately are grounded in some kind of indirect comparison, but its establishment has progressed to different extents depending on the particular verb concerned. In many cases, it has the property of supplying an additional prepositional complement to verbs normally taking only a direct object. Figure 19.21b gives the frequencies of four exemplary verbs combined with *over* per million words, namely *prefer*, *select*, *recommend* and *choose*. It is immediately obvious that AmE

Table 19.2 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts in the domain of prepositions*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
15. *in(to)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
16. *near (to)*	AmE	BrE	AmE	BrE
17. *(by (the)) courtesy (of)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
18. *absent/in (the) absence of*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
19. *depends (on) if*	AmE	BrE	AmE	AmE
20. *the question (of/as to etc.) whether*	AmE	AmE	AmE	AmE
21. *prefer to/over*	AmE		(AmE)	AmE
sums BrE : AmE	0 : 7	5 : 1	3 : 4	4 : 3

has relatively more instances of each example. In return, we may assume that BrE uses other devices more frequently, e.g. the preposition *to* with *prefer*, or *rather than* and *in preference to* with the other verbs.

The above findings from the domain of prepositions can be summarized and evaluated in the tabular form shown in Table 19.2. Again, many of the assignments are to some extent debatable, but there is no space to enlarge upon the reasons in any detail. For what they are worth, they illustrate, however, some more or less pervasive poles of British–American divergences.

The most consistent tendency recognizable in this collection of contrasts is the conservative character of BrE and the innovative quality of AmE. This is visible in the abandonment of functional distinctions (items 15 and 16), in the grammaticalization of new prepositions from more complex prepositional phrases (items 17 and 18), in the filling of systematic gaps in the use of prepositions (items 19 and 20) and in the replacement of one preposition by another (item 21). Also relatively pervasive is the finding that BrE has a strong tendency to preserve formal structures. In contrast, AmE is more colloquial where this implies that less important meaning elements are economized. This American tendency is partly in conflict with the inclination to regularize grammatical structures, which can be seen in particular in items 16, 19 and 20. In sum, AmE turns out, however, to be hardly more regular than BrE. The imbalance observed in Table 19.1 above (showing BrE to be more regular with regard to adverbs and adverbials) is neutralized to a certain degree. As for the question of explicitness vs. opacity, the scores of BrE and AmE are very similar, thus indicating that the alleged explicitness of AmE is often over-ridden by its tendency to give up formal structures in favour of colloquial ones.

2.3 Noun phrases

Chapter 9 by Douglas Biber, Jack Grieve and Gina Iberri-Shea has already shown some general divergences in the domain of noun phrase modification.
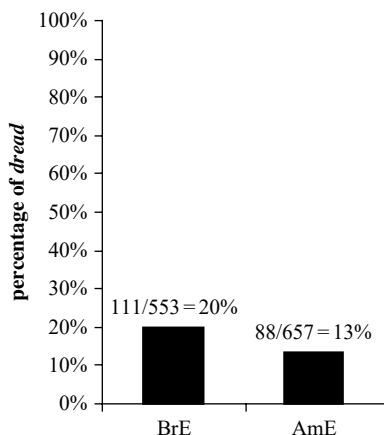
Figure 19.22 The distribution of the participial variants *dread* and *dreaded* in attributive function in British and American newspapers (database: m93–94, m99, d92, g92, t92, D92–95, LAT92–93, W90–92)[15]

In this section, we will introduce some further contrasts surrounding the modification of nouns and pronouns.

22. The first example concerns the prenominal, or attributive, use of another pair of participial variants and thus offers parallels with the group *burnt/burned*, *dreamt/dreamed*, *learnt/learned*, etc. (cf. Chapter 3 by Levin) on the one hand, and with the items *lit/lighted* and *knit/knitted* (cf. Chapter 5 by Schlüter) on the other. Historically, the verb *to dread* has two participles, the regular *dreaded* and the recessive, contracted *dread*. Unlike the other short participial variants, *dread* is only preserved in attributive function, but like in the other cases, BrE has relatively more instances of the conservative, short form than AmE, as is indicated by Figure 19.22.

23. A more complex type of premodifying structure involves the ordinal expressions *next/past/last/first* preceding nouns of various classes, e.g. those designating time units like *years/months/weeks/days/hours/minutes/seconds*. Formerly, these items could be combined directly, but over the last two centuries intervening quantifiers have become almost obligatory in many cases. Both national varieties share this trend, but there is a striking difference in the items that can intervene between adjective and noun. Figure 19.23 shows the distribution of the quantifiers in relation to the items *next/past/last/first*, each of which has its own profile. While *few* used to be and still is the most frequent element in this position in both varieties, BrE has largely caught up in the use of *couple of*, which came up in AmE in the nineteenth century. The main contrast today concerns the quantifier *several*, which also

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[15] The search concentrated on instances of *dread(ed)* immediately following the determiners *a/the/this/that/these/those*.
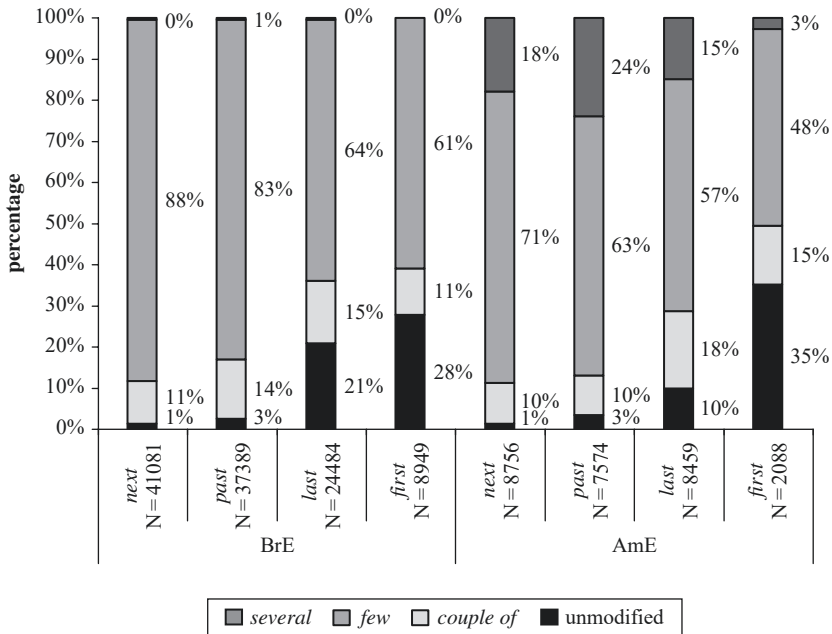
Figure 19.23 The distribution of the phrases *the next/past/last/first Ø/ few/several/couple of years/months/weeks/days/hours/minutes/seconds* in British and American newspapers (data supplied by André Schaefer) (database: t92–03, g92–03, d91–00, m93–00, D92–95, L92–95, W90–92)[16]

emerged in the nineteenth century, but has practically remained confined to AmE. What is more, there is evidence from corpus data that *several* has an even higher share in spoken registers. That this effect is part of a more pervasive divergence is suggested by the fact that in AmE *several* is generally more frequent than in BrE (unlike, for instance, *few*).

Note that the introduction of the quantifiers has brought about a precision of the entire time expressions concerned, and that by adding *several* to the set of quantifiers available AmE has extended its choices and increased its explicitness in this area.

24. A third example of British–American contrasts in the domain of noun phrases concerns the pre-determiners *both* and *all*. Historical data show that these items have increasingly adopted an additional preposition *of* when preceding a determiner or pronoun. Concentrating on *both* before *these* and *those*, Figure 19.24a provides the percentage of intervening *of* in a collection of (mostly) narrative texts by authors born in the nineteenth century. It turns out that AmE is further advanced in the establishment of the preposition than BrE. Furthermore, there is a clear distinction between examples where *both (of)*

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[16] The category *couple of* also comprises a few instances of *coupla* and *couple* (without *of*).
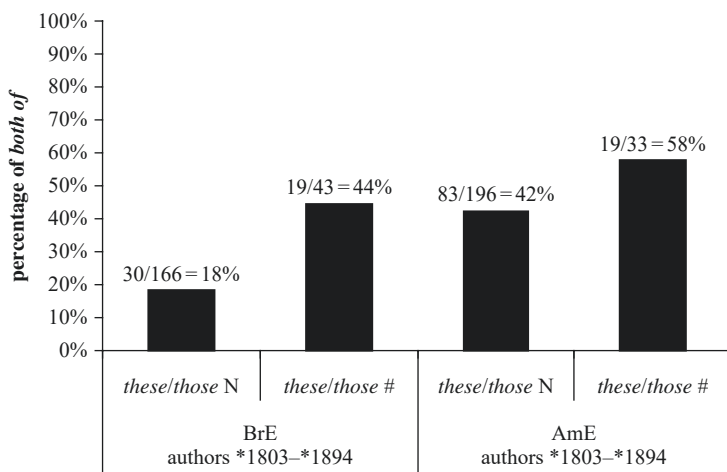
Figure 19.24a The rivalry between *both these/those* and *both of these/those* in (predominantly) narrative historical corpora of British and American English (database: MNC, LNC, ETC)

precedes the determiners *these* or *those* plus a noun and such where *these* or *those* stand on their own as pronouns: in the former case, we find a lower share of *of* than in the latter. A potential reason for the differential speed at which *of* is introduced may be the avoidance of adjacent stressed syllables (cf. Chapter 5 by Schlüter and Schlüter 2005: 39): determiner *these/those* carry less stress than pronominal *these/those*, so that a buffer syllable is more needed in the latter case.

As Figure 19.24b indicates, the trend is considerably further advanced in the spoken language of the late twentieth century. However, the contrasts between the varieties and between contexts featuring *these/those* in determiner and pronominal uses remain in place. The insertion of *of* has nowadays become almost categorical in spoken AmE when no noun follows.

In contrast to combinations with *both*, noun phrases quantified by *all* still have a lower share of intervening *of*, though the distribution across nominal and pronominal uses of *these* and the contrasts between BrE and AmE are parallel. The data in Figure 19.24c depict the situation in (relatively formal) newspapers dating from 1992.[17] We have additional evidence that within the following decade, the percentage of *of* in BrE rose by several percentage points, thus following the American trend with a certain delay. For earlier mentions of this contrast, see Strevens (1972: 51–2) and Algeo (2006: 64); for further analyses against a larger background, see Estling (2000) and Estling-Vannestål (2004).[18]

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[17] For comparison, after *both*, the percentages of *of* before *these/those N* run to 22 per cent in t92 and 64 per cent in W92.

[18] Estling-Vannestål (2004: 154–7), for example, shows a clear *horror aequi* effect triggered by an additional preceding or following *of*: the percentage of *all of* and *both of* is greatly reduced in favour of simple *all* and *both*.
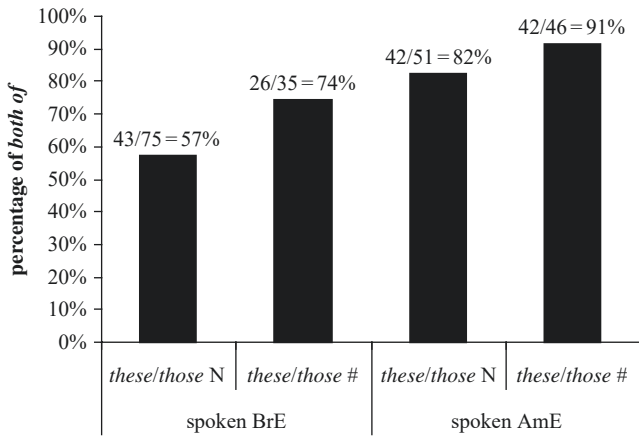
Figure 19.24b The rivalry between *both these/those* and *both of these/those* in spoken corpora of British and American English (database: BNC spokdem + spokcont, CSPAE, ANC Switchboard)
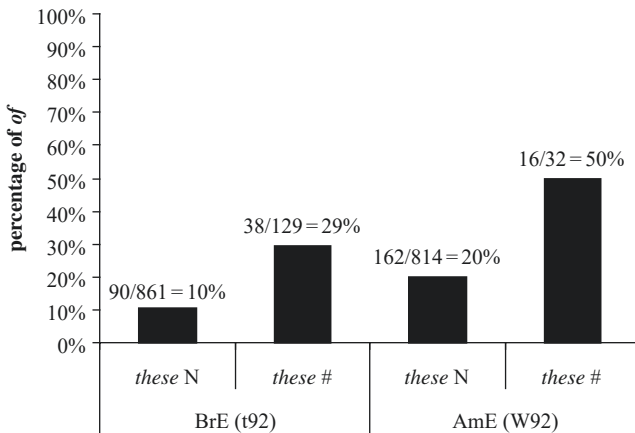
Figure 19.24c The rivalry between *all these/those* and *all of these/those* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t92, W92)

25. A very recent example of British–American differences concerns the structure of noun phrases involving the items *as*, *so*, *how*, *this*, *that* and *too* in pre-determiner function. Previous references to the structure are found in Trudgill and Hannah (2002: 78) and Fitzmaurice (2000: 56–9). BrE consistently sticks to the (non-canonical) structure *as* etc. + adjective + *a* + noun. AmE, in contrast, has begun to introduce an additional *of* between the adjective

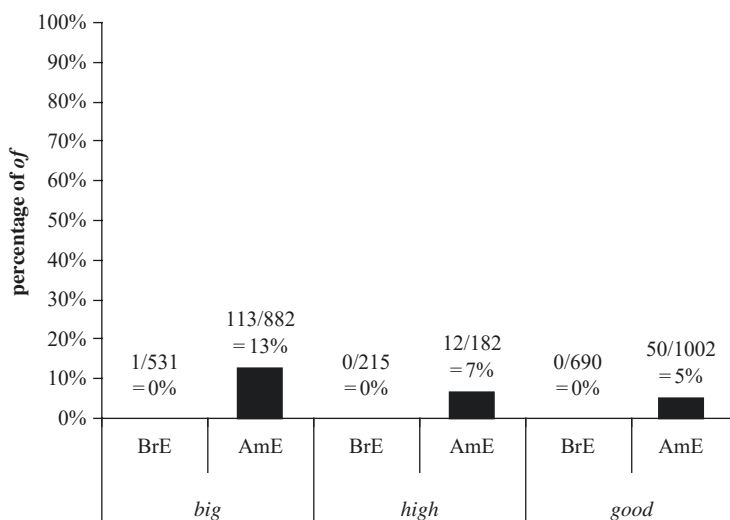Figure 19.25 The variable use of the preposition *of* after sequences of the predeterminers *as/so/how/this/that/too*, the adjectives *big/high/ good* and following nouns in selected British and American newspapers (data supplied by André Schaefer) (database: t00, g00, d00, m00, BNC, W90–92, D92–95, L93)

and the indefinite article, as is illustrated in example (8) (for a study of the structure exclusively focusing on AmE, see Fitzmaurice 2000: 56–9).

(8) How big (of) a problem do you think this would be?

As Figure 19.25 indicates, this trend is an American idiosyncrasy which leaves BrE practically unaffected. Two further observations can only be touched on in this context. Firstly, the frequency of inserted *of* in AmE is highly variable: individual adjectives (*big*, *high*, *good*) as well as individual pre-determiners (*as/so/how/this/that/too*) have different profiles. It seems that the frequency of inserted *of* depends to some extent on the frequency of the whole collocation. Thus, *how big of a deal*, for instance, is extremely frequent. Secondly, though the figures for the different American news-papers have been totted up here, there are clear differences between them: the *Los Angeles Times* has the highest percentage, the *Detroit Free Press* is intermediate and *The Washington Times* is most conservative. This sug-gests that the West Coast represents the centre of gravity of the new trend.

26. A different issue in the domain of noun phrases is presented by the recessive use of the item *sufficient* as head of a noun phrase followed by a prepositional phrase consisting of the preposition *of* and plural nouns or singular mass nouns. An example is provided in (9).
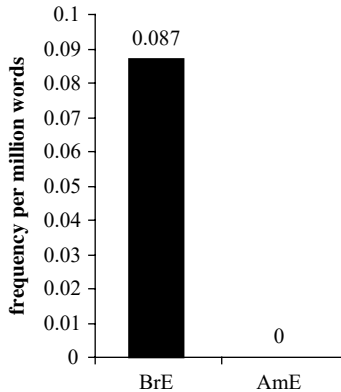
Figure 19.26 The use of *sufficient* in constructions like *sufficient of his energies/talent* in British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

(9) Some junior officers voiced their resentment about not getting sufficient of the council's financial means.

Figure 19.26 displays the relative frequencies in a large newspaper corpus. While the British corpus provides 130 instances of this type, there is not a single one in as many as sixteen years of American newspapers, suggesting that in AmE this construction, though still attested in the early 1900s, may have been phased out by now.

27. This brings us to our final item in the extended area of noun phrases. Informal AmE has developed a special use of the quantifier *all* following the interrogative pronouns *who* and *what* when they refer to an unknown but elevated number of entities (cf. Murray and Simon 2004: 232). Consider, for instance, example (10).

(10) Who (all) was there? I don't know what (all) has gone wrong.

The pilot study illustrated in Figure 19.27 indicates that the structure (in this case, *who all*) has a considerable currency in spoken AmE, but is virtually unknown in BrE, even in a spoken corpus (with just one example in over 10 million words). Furthermore, the figure shows that written AmE also occasionally uses the quantifier (in this case, *who all* plus *what all*): a newspaper corpus of over 844 million words contains (only) 22 instances in total. In contrast, BrE newspapers contain only a single instance of *who all* and none of *what all* in a sample of over 1,492 million words.[19] Further evidence suggesting that interrogative pronouns postmodified by *all* are better

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[19] Significantly, the example is found in a quotation of a Brazilian footballer.
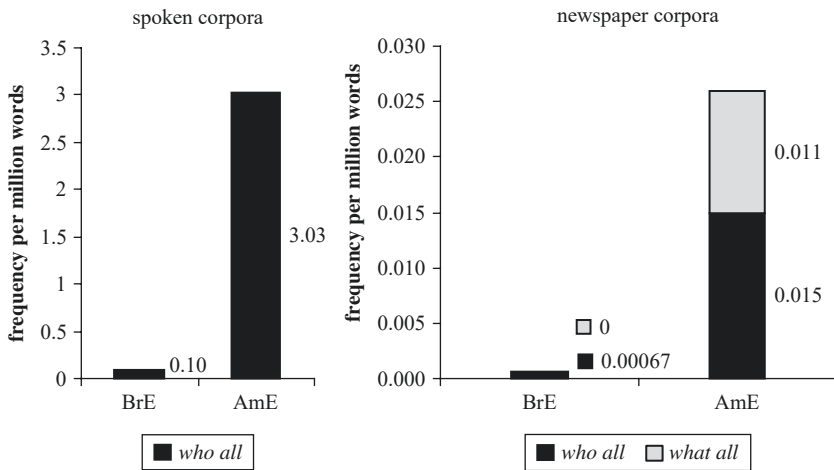
Figure 19.27 The use of *all* postmodifying interrogative *who* and *what* in selected British and American corpora (database: spoken corpora: BNC spokcont + spokdem, CSPAE; newspaper corpora: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, M93–00, L92–99, DFP92–95, W90–92, N01)

entrenched in AmE is provided by the fact that this variety uses the construction not only in direct but also in indirect interrogative clauses, as in the second example in (10).

In conclusion to this section, it is interesting to note that many of the novel contrasts identified in the area of noun phrases revolve around the quantification of noun phrases. This includes the insertion of quantifiers after *next/past/last/first*, the introduction of *of* after *both/all* and after *as/so/how/this/that/too* + adjective, the type *sufficient of the money/of his energies* and the addition of *all* after the interrogatives *who/what*.

Table 19.3 summarizes our judgements of the six phenomena addressed in this subsection with regard to the four parameters expressing generalizations about British–American divergences. In view of these evaluations, noun phrases seem to be the area in which contrasts between the varieties are the most consistent and BrE and AmE confirm the general ideas that have been formed about their characteristics. Thus, in all six examples, it is AmE that is in the lead of an innovation (items 23–25 and 27) or that more readily gives up an old-fashioned usage (items 22 and 26). In contrast, in all cases where the epithets 'formal' or 'colloquial' can be applied, it is BrE that earns the former and AmE that is described by the latter. This implies that the changes initiated by AmE typically promote informal structures into the standard or eliminate formal features from usage. The category 'consistency vs. irregularity' cannot be applied to most of the items in the domain of noun phrases; only item 22 is well in line with the general trend

Table 19.3 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts in the domain of noun phrases*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
22. *dread(ed)*	AmE	BrE	AmE	AmE
23. *the next* etc. *Ø/few/ several/couple of* N	AmE			AmE
24. *both/all (of) these*	AmE	BrE		AmE
25. *as/so/how/this/that/ too* Adj *(of) a* N	AmE	(BrE)		
26. *sufficient of*	AmE	BrE		
27. *who all/what all*	AmE	BrE		AmE
sums BrE : AmE	0 : 6	5 : 0	0 : 1	0 : 4

for AmE to favour regular past participle variants (cf. also Chapters 3 and 5 by Levin and Schlüter). As for the parameter of explicitness vs. opacity, four out of the six divergences in which AmE is in the lead can be considered to promote more explicit structures. Noun phrases are thus an area where the preconception according to which AmE tends to be more explicit than BrE receives the most consistent support.

2.4 Predicates and predicatives

Predicates and predicative structures are another area of grammar where the two major national varieties of English diverge. Not surprisingly, most contrasts concern complex predicative structures rather than simple one-word verbs.

28. The first predicate to be investigated here is, however, as short as it can be: a well-known shibboleth of non-standard English, *ain't* occurs in BrE as well as AmE. Yet, there is an important contrast that arises from the distinction between instances representing the verb *to be* and those representing the verb *to have*. Figure 19.28 shows that *ain't* is generally more frequent in written AmE and that its frequency increases from 1961 to 1991/ 1992 in both varieties.[20] Beyond the quantitative difference, it also shows that *ain't* occurs quite commonly in the sense of 'have' in AmE (though still less frequently than in the sense of 'be') but rarely has this function in BrE. It is thus in two respects that AmE makes more extensive use of the non-standard feature than BrE even within the context of the written standard.

29. The verbs *to be* and *to have* are also involved in the next contrast to be sketched here. The traditional collocation *X has/have to do with Y* is

[20] Typologically motivated arguments accounting for the increasing popularity of *ain't* and *don't* replacing *doesn't* in spoken English are provided in Anderwald (2003).
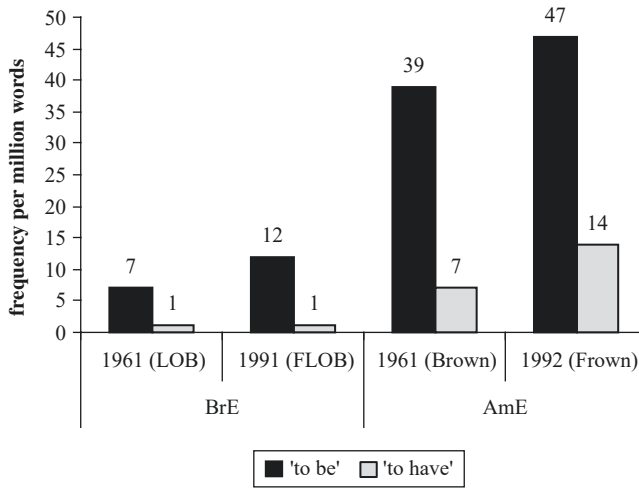
Figure 19.28 The use of *ain't / aint* representing negated forms of *be* and *have* in four matching British and American corpora
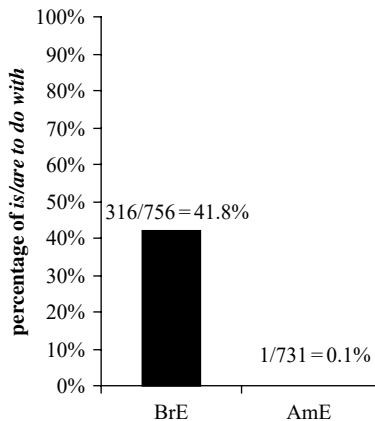
Figure 19.29 The rivalry between the types *X has / have to do with Y* and *X is / are to do with Y* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90, t00, g90, g00, d91, d00, m93, m00, L92, D93, W92)

increasingly under competition from the equivalent *X is / are to do with Y*, at least in BrE (cf. also Algeo 2006: 249). Figure 19.29 shows that while British newspapers use the new variant in over 40 per cent of all cases, it is virtually non-existent in American newspapers, the only exception evidently stemming from a British journalist writing for *The Economist*. A look at historical corpora shows that the earliest occurrences of the new type can be traced in
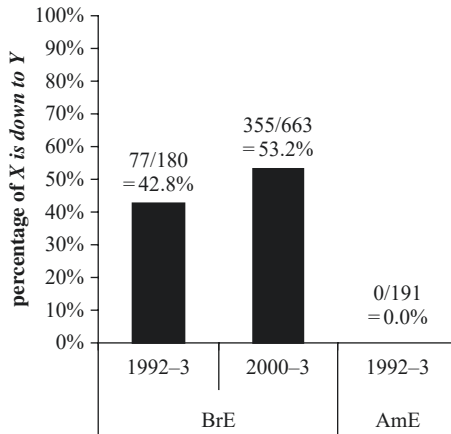
Figure 19.30 The rivalry between *X comes down to Y* and *X is down to Y* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t92, t03, m93, m00, W92, D93)

the British sections of the LNC and ETC collections (texts dated 1904, 1908 and 1915); the American counterparts of these corpora contain no instances. This time it is thus BrE that is implementing a change unilaterally.

30. A very similar contrast where *to be* is replacing another verb is portrayed in Figure 19.30. The collocation *X comes down to Y* is increasingly being ousted – once more in BrE – by the expression *X is down to Y* (cf. also the entry for *down* in the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* 1995: 416 and the remarks in Algeo 2006: 166, 258).[21] Figure 19.30 shows that the latter is not found in American newspapers, but that within a decade its proportion has risen by about 10 per cent in BrE. Again, BrE is implementing a home-grown change which is not (yet) spilling over to AmE.

31. Yet another example of a change in multi-word predicates with BrE in the lead is the competition between *take* and *have* in complex verbal structures of the type *take/have a look*. In Figure 19.31 the ETC corpus is used to illustrate the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century. The older structure is the one involving *take*, which still predominates in AmE. BrE, in line with its general use of *have* in dynamic senses (e.g. *have a drink*), exhibits a strong tendency to replace *take* with *have* (cf. Trudgill, Nevalainen and Wischer 2002, Algeo 1995; cf. also Algeo 2006: 270, 272–4). In the present-day, AmE still 'lags behind' the changeover from a British perspective.

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[21] Barber (1985: 40) sees the novel expression *X is down to Y* as a curious variant of *X is up to Y* (possibly implying a conflation between the latter and the expression *put X down to Y*).
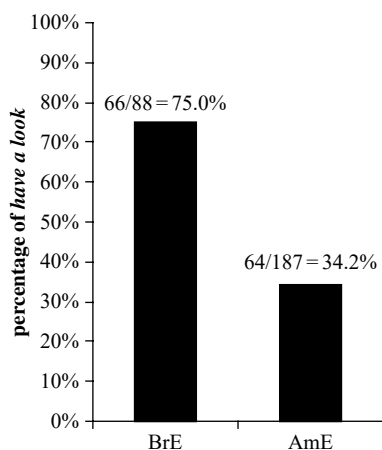
Figure 19.31 The rivalry between the verbs *have* and *take* in complex verbal structures involving the sequence *a look* (database: ETC)

32. This brings us to a set of predicate expressions of a completely different type. The so-called *way*-construction, illustrated in example (11), is a means of adding the semantic feature of 'path' to a verb which lacks it in its ordinary semantics. It can be formed with all kinds of activity verbs and is used in both national varieties (cf. Mondorf to appear b).

(11) From the position of a simple employee, he worked his way to the top.

Figure 19.32 compares the number of tokens per million words in two newspaper corpora. The data indicate that the construction is more frequent in BrE. Other productivity measures suggest the same conclusion. Thus, the type/token ratio in BrE runs to 0.1771, while AmE only reaches a ratio of 0.1151, and the ratio of hapaxes (formations occurring only once in the dataset) per tokens is 0.1024 in BrE, but only 0.0676 in AmE.[22] Once again, BrE boasts more of these novel constructions and is thus able to encode a supplementary semantic element more productively than AmE.

33. Forming novel combinations of verbs with particles is another way of creating new predicates. The frequent use of particle verbs has been claimed to be characteristic of informal registers as opposed to formal registers as well as of AmE as opposed to BrE.[23] A special case of particle verbs that is illustrative of the British–American contrast is provided by prepositional

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[22] For these measures to be valid, the corpus size has to be (near-)identical on both sides: the British corpus has 79 million words and the American 78 million, so the condition is fulfilled.

[23] For statements about the informality of particle verbs (or phrasal verbs), see Bolinger (1971: 172), Leech and Svartvik (1975: 264), Pelli (1976: 103), Biber *et al.* (1999: 408–9, 424 [on
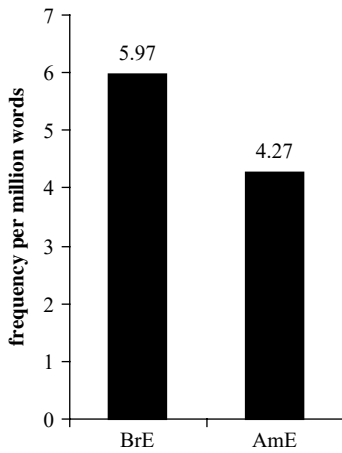
Figure 19.32 The use of the *way*-construction with different verbs in selected British and American newspapers (data supplied by Britta Mondorf) (database: t94, g94, L94)

particle verbs. The examples *sneak up on* and *close in on* feature two characteristic patterns which are employed to form numerous types. To measure the productivity of these formations, the number of different types and the total number of tokens for prepositional particle verbs involving the sequences *up on* and *in on* have been determined in four one-million-word corpora. Figure 19.33 demonstrates that this time it is AmE that has a more substantial number of tokens as well as types. It is questionable whether the apparent diachronic trends visible in the relatively small dataset can be taken at face value: in that case, BrE would be attracted towards the model of AmE (which is a likely state of affairs), but AmE would be reverting towards a less productive use of particle verbs. More data would be needed to support or reject such an implausible conclusion.

34. The next type of predicate to be considered is formed with past participles derived from verbs of motion and body posture. Though these participles have a passive form, they have active semantics similar to the present participle (and have therefore been referred to as 'pseudo-passive constructions'; cf. Klemola 1999, 2002). Thus, at least some of them are in competition with the present participles of the same verbs. The class includes the items *sat*, *stood*, *laid*, *headed*, *sprawled*, *crouched*, *huddled*,

phrasal verbs and phrasal-prepositional verbs, respectively]) and Schneider (2002: 83). For (unquantified) references to the British–American contrast, see already Robertson (1939: 253), Foster (1955: 343), Pelli (1976: 43) and Tottie (2002a: 161).
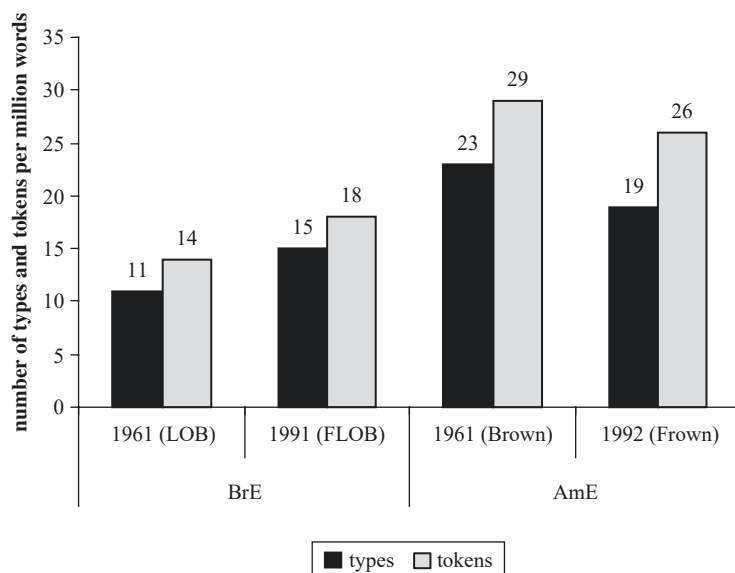
Figure 19.33 Prepositional particle verbs involving the combinations *up on* or *in on* in four matching British and American corpora[24]

hunched, *lolled*, *perched*, *squatted*, *steered* and *stooped*.[25] For present purposes, two types of pseudo-passives are worth looking at, which are distinguished by their geographical distribution.

The main representatives of the first group, illustrated in example (12), are the constructions *be sat* and *be stood* (which are in competition with their synonyms *be sitting* and *be standing*; cf. Wood 1962: 206, 220). They originate in non-standard varieties of Northern and Midland BrE (cf. Klemola 1999, 2002), but are now spreading southwards and into the British standard.

(12) I was sat/sitting in the front passenger seat.

Figure 19.34a illustrates the rapid pace of the expansion by contrasting the incidence of *be sat/be stood* in British newspapers from the early 1990s and from 2004/2005. In stark contrast, AmE shows no signs whatsoever of taking over the British innovation (cf. also Algeo 2006: 34).

The second group of pseudo-passives is an American innovation. Examples are provided by the pairs *be headed/heading* and *be sprawled/ sprawling*, which will be considered in turn. The first pair is illustrated in example (13). Figure 19.34b shows a clear-cut contrast in the choice between

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[24] The combination *be in on* has been excluded from the count.
[25] Wood (1962: 133, 206, 220) mentions (and criticizes) only the items *sat*, *stood*, *laid*.
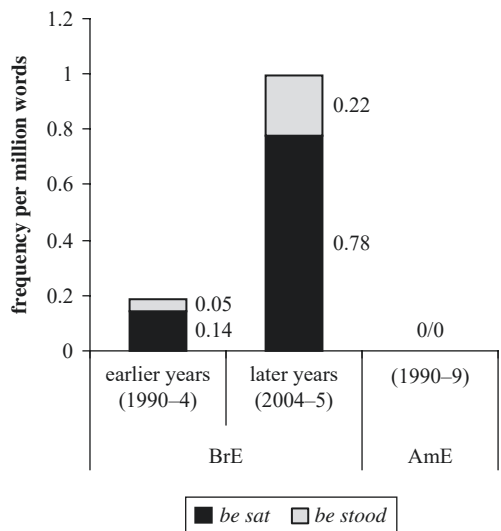
Figure 19.34a   The use of the pseudo-passive constructions *be sat* and *be stood* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–91, t04, g90, g92, g05, d91–92, d04, i93–94, i05, L99, D92–95, W90–92)[26]
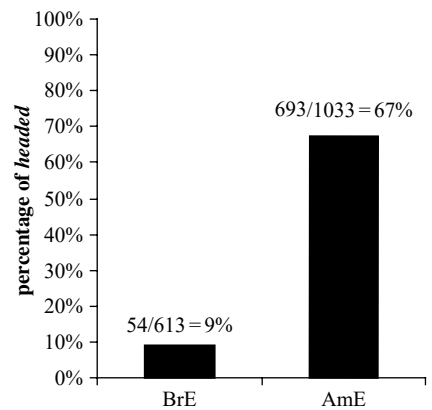
Figure 19.34b   The rivalry between *X is heading* and *X is headed* + directional phrase in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90, g90, d91, m93, L92, D92, W92)[27]

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[26] The analysis is restricted to cases where *is/are/was/were/be/being/been* immediately precede *sat* or *stood*.

[27] Only cases where *is/are/was/were* immediately precede *heading/headed* have been taken into account.

Figure 19.34c   The rivalry between non-attributive and intransitive uses of *sprawling* and *sprawled* (database: ETC, t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)[28]
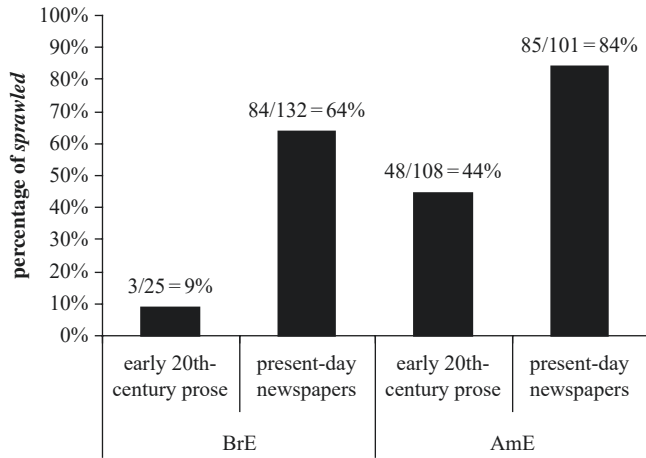
be headed and *be heading*: while the pseudo-passive is very rare in BrE, it accounts for two thirds of the American instances.

(13) The housing market was headed/heading for a crash.

Historical data (not detailed here) show that this function was originally realized by the present participle *heading*. It is only in the nineteenth century that the two national varieties began to diverge. Since the late nineteenth century, the innovative *headed*-variant has been dominant in AmE, but has only marginally been adopted into BrE.

The case of *be sprawled* and *be sprawling* is similar. The data in Figure 19.34c indicate that AmE is again in the lead as regards the replacement of *sprawling* by the pseudo-passive *sprawled*, which was relatively advanced even in the early twentieth century. By the turn of the twenty-first century, BrE has, however, caught up substantially. A closer look at the occurrences in the newspaper corpora reveals additional details. While the incoming form *sprawled* has continued the original meaning of *sprawling* as a verb of posture or remained close to it, the use of the traditional variant *sprawling* has been extending in various directions, especially in AmE: only one of the sixteen American examples of *sprawling*, but eleven of the forty-eight British examples, preserve the original sense referring to human bodies. This indicates that the functional diversification between *sprawling* and *sprawled* has progressed further in AmE than in BrE.

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[28] In the newspaper corpus, the analysis has been confined to examples of *sprawling* and *sprawled* immediately preceded by (and in construction with) *is/was*.
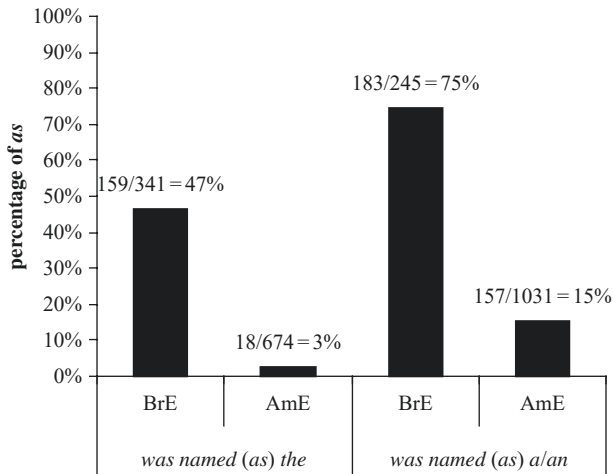
Figure 19.35 The variable use of *as* with nominal predicatives containing the definite and indefinite articles immediately following the sequence *was named* in selected American and British newspapers (database: definite predicatives: m93–00, d91–00, L92, L99; indefinite predicatives: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

35. This brings us to two examples of predicative expressions involving optional predicative markers. One such marker is the item *as*, which is in use after a wide variety of verbs taking object predicatives. The following count takes the passive structure *be named* as an example. Figure 19.35 illustrates the percentage of complements introduced by *as* compared to the zero variant without predicative marker. The distinction between the two search strings *was named (as) the* and *was named (as) a(n)* has been maintained since there is a clear contrast between definite and indefinite predicatives. It turns out that *as* is strikingly more frequent in BrE and that AmE is more economic in this respect. Besides this main difference, we see that both varieties select *as* more often in connection with indefinite than with definite noun phrases. This is presumably due to the increased complexity associated with nominal entities that have not been mentioned in the preceding context (cf. the Complexity Principle, also dealt with in Chapters 4, 6, 8 and 11).

36. The second example of predicative expressions involves the predicative marker *being*, which occurs in cases like (14) (see Rohdenburg and Schlüter 2000: 452–6, 467).

(14) The issue is far from (being) resolved.

To uncover the latent contrasts between BrE and AmE, instances of the negator *far from* in combination with selected hard-to-process predicatives have been searched in an extensive newspaper database. These contextual
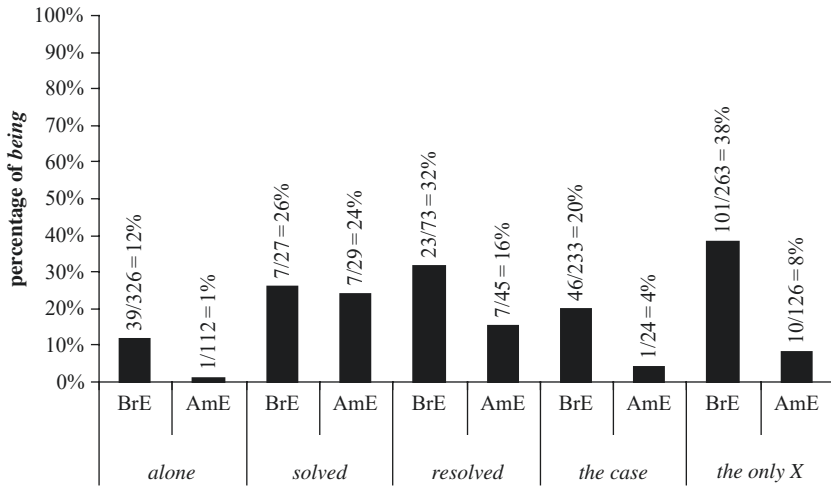
Figure 19.36 The use of *being* to introduce different predicative expressions associated with the negator *far from* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)[29]

restrictions were necessary to obtain sufficient instances of *being*, which are only sporadically found with simple predicative expressions. The results of this study are presented in Figure 19.36. Depending on the particular search expression, the crop of examples with *being* is more or less ample, but in four out of the five cases analysed BrE produces a substantially higher share of *being* than AmE. In other words, BrE prefers to make the predicative relation more explicit while AmE tends to dispense with the semantically (nearly) empty marker.

At the end of our section on predicates and predicative structures, we again have occasion to assess the degree to which the contrasts studied are in line with the generalizations about typical characteristics of BrE and AmE.

Interestingly, the contrasts observed in this section provide no clear evidence in favour of the frequently observed innovative character of AmE. In five out of ten cases, it is BrE that is developing new predicates, either by replacing one semantically light verb by another (items 29, 30, 31), by expressing new meaning components through the *way*-construction (item 32) or by taking over pseudo-passives from the non-standard (item 34). In those cases in which AmE takes the lead in introducing colloquial structures or dropping semantically superfluous material, BrE remains more

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[29] The analysis is confined to those cases where *far from* is associated with the verb *be* or some other copular verb (e.g. *look*, *seem*, *appear*).

Table 19.4 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts in the domain of predicates and predicatives*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
28. *ain't*	AmE	BrE	(AmE)	BrE
29. *to have/be to do with*	BrE	(AmE)	AmE	AmE
30. *X comes/is down to Y*	BrE	AmE		AmE
31. *take/have a look* etc.	BrE			
32. V *one's way*	BrE			BrE
33. *sneak up on/close in on* etc.	AmE	BrE		
34. *headed/heading, sprawled/sprawling*	AmE		BrE	AmE
sat/sitting, stood/standing	BrE	AmE	AmE	AmE
35. *be named (as)* + predicative				BrE
36. *be far from (being)* + predicative	AmE	BrE	(AmE)	BrE
sums BrE : AmE	5 : 4	3 : 3	1 : 4	4 : 4

formal and/or more explicit (items 28, 33, 36). Generally, there is, however, no clear preponderance of formal vs. colloquial or explicit vs. opaque structures on either side. The criterion of consistency vs. irregularity is not applicable to half of the phenomena studied, but where it does apply, AmE usually appears to be more regular (except where a pseudo-passive serves to express an active state of affairs, as in item 34). The analyses surveyed in Table 19.4 thus do not yield any uniform trends with regard to the four criteria evaluated.

2.5 Sentential structures

The final cluster of British–American contrasts to be discussed here goes beyond the level of individual constituents and concerns the domain of clauses and the relationships between them. Several phenomena relate to adverbial subordinate clauses, but we will also consider relative clauses, interrogative clauses, cleft structures and non-finite clauses.

37. Our first example concerns a set of four relatively formal subordinating conjunctions. Two of them, *given (that)* and *on the basis (that)*, are newcomers to the field of conjunctions. Figure 19.37a shows that in both cases it is BrE that has relatively more occurrences and thus is more innovative than AmE. The other two, *being (that/as (how))* and *for fear (that)*, are traditional conjunctions that had their heyday in the Early Modern English period. As it happens, these two prove to be better preserved in AmE. In the case of *being*, this can straightforwardly be seen from
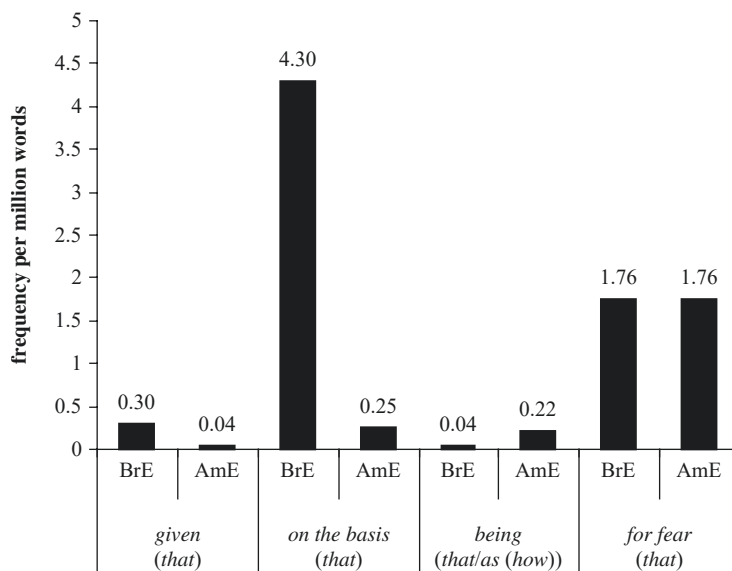
Figure 19.37a The use of the adverbial conjunctions *being (that/as (how))*, *given (that)*, *on the basis (that)* and *for fear (that)* in selected British and American newspapers (database: *being* and *given*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *on the basis*: t90–97, g90–97, d91–94, L92, L99, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *for fear*: t90–94, g90–94, m93–94, W90–92, D92–95)

the higher frequency per million words. *Being* is typically accompanied by *that* in AmE and by the regionally/dialectally flavoured *as (how)* in BrE.[30] Both serve as subordination signals identifying the preceding item as a conjunction. In the case of *for fear*, the better establishment in AmE is not mirrored by a frequency difference in the corpus data.

Robust evidence for the better entrenchment of *for fear* in AmE can, however, be derived from the fact that the conjunction is less often followed by the subordinator *that* than in BrE. It has been demonstrated that a conjunction that is poorly established (e.g. recessive or newly introduced) in this function tends to be followed by the explicit subordination signal *that* more often than a well-established and highly-frequent conjunction (cf. Rohdenburg 2008). In line with this generalization, historical data show that the use of *that* after *for fear* has been increasing over the last one or two centuries due to the fact that *for fear* as such has been falling into disuse. Thus, if *for fear* is accompanied by *that* in only 32 per cent of the cases in AmE, but in 62 per cent of the cases in BrE, this is indicative of a better

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[30] The use of *being as* is criticized by Wood (1962: 33) as a 'solecism' and 'vulgarism'.
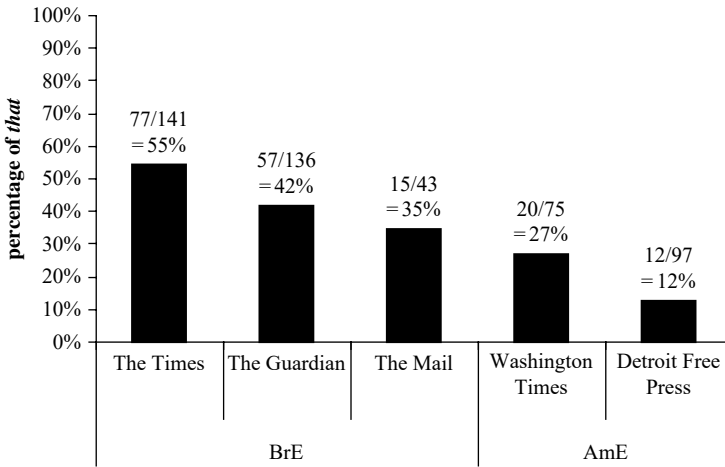
Figure 19.37b The use or omission of the subordination signal *that* with the conjunction *for fear* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–94, g90–94, m93–94, W90–92, D92–95)[31]

overall entrenchment (which need not manifest itself in a lower incidence in newspaper language). More detailed data on the use or omission of *that* are presented in Figure 19.37b. To exclude the influence of complexity factors such as complex noun phrase subjects or adverbial insertions, the data are restricted to examples where *for fear (that)* is immediately followed by personal pronouns. The graph distinguishes between three British and two American newspapers. In addition to showing the expected intervarietal contrast, the row of columns from left to right translates into a stylistic cline, with the formal papers to the left and the informal ones to the right. Note that the least formal British paper comes very close to the most formal American one. Thus, the variable use of *that* is also contingent on the degree of formality aimed at.

In conclusion to the above study of adverbial conjunctions, AmE turns out to be more conservative than BrE in that it uses more of the old and fewer of the new conjunctions. Two criteria support this conclusion: the raw frequencies of the items and the extent to which they combine with the subordinator *that*.[32]

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[31] The analysis is restricted to cases where *for fear (that)* is immediately followed by a personal pronoun subject.

[32] This generalization has to be taken with a pinch of salt, since the four case studies do not form a representative overview of the entire field of conjunctions. Exceptions that are known to the authors are the conjunctions *now (that)* (cf. Rohdenburg 2008) and *in the event (that)*. The whole field of emergent and disappearing adverbial conjunctions still awaits further research.
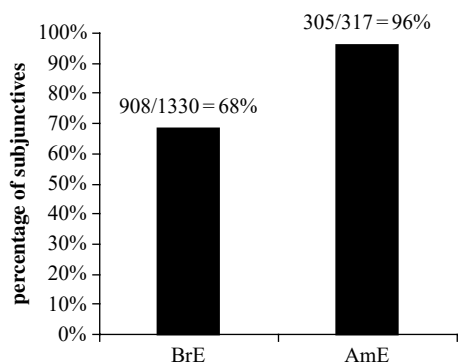
Figure 19.38 The use of subjunctives in adverbial clauses introduced by *lest* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–92, t01–04, g90–00, i93–94, i02–04, d90–00, m93–00, L92–95, D92–95, W90–92)[33]

38. The next study takes the old and now formal conjunction *lest* as a point of departure to investigate the choice of mode in dependent adverbial clauses. As has been noted, e.g. by Robertson (1939: 250), Jespersen (1931: 162) and Quirk *et al*. (1985: 158), *lest* frequently triggers the subjunctive, at least in AmE. Figure 19.38 provides quantitative evidence of the use of the subjunctive and competing verb forms (primarily modal periphrases and indicatives). The results confirm that the subjunctive is virtually obligatory in this context in AmE, and that BrE has already caught up to a considerable extent. This is also argued by the clear difference between the earlier (1990–2) and later (2001–4) years of *The Times*, which have 58 per cent and 77 per cent of subjunctives, respectively. In line with the arguments used in Chapter 13 by Kjellmer and Chapter 15 by Schlüter, this usage has to be considered as a revival rather than a conservatism in AmE.

39. This brings us to an example of what can be considered as a novel concessive conjunction. The structure *no matter* + interrogative clause, exemplified in (15), is discussed at considerable length in Culicover (1999: 105–22). But maybe due to his American focus, the author commits an interesting oversight: in BrE, *no matter* is frequently followed by another type of clause introduced by *that*, as is illustrated in (16).

(15) No matter who gave the order, it should never have been executed.

(16) No matter that the idea was not his, he should still have adopted it.

Figure 19.39 shows that *no matter that* is about twice as frequent in BrE as in AmE. The sequences *no matter if* and *no matter whether* are merely used as representatives of interrogative clauses (which of course include many more

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[33] The analysis is confined to singular subject expressions (immediately following *lest*) which are represented or introduced by *he/she/it/one/a/an/this/that*.
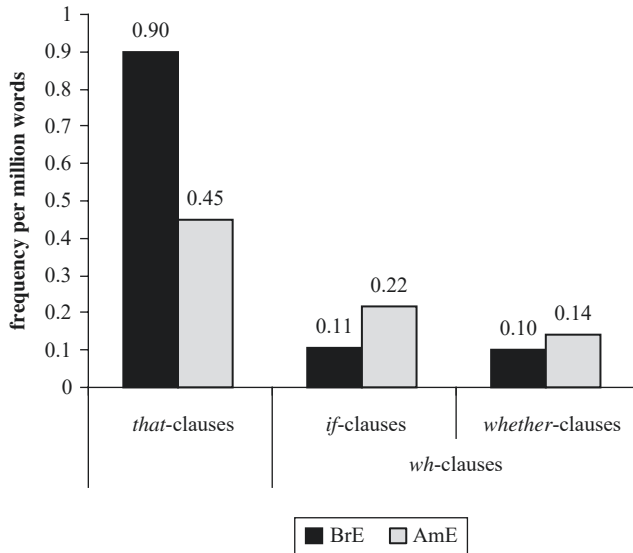
Figure 19.39 The use of *that*-, *if*- and *whether*-clauses associated with and following *no matter* in selected British and American newspapers (database: *that*: t90–92, m93–00, D92–95, W90–92, N01; *whether/if*: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

types). The comparison shows that interrogative clauses are evidently more common in AmE (and, by the way, that BrE and AmE have different predilections for the synonymous *if* and *whether*). It is interesting to note, furthermore, that in BrE *that* is beginning to be omitted in the simplest of all contexts, viz. before personal pronouns. In conclusion, *no matter (that)* has achieved a high degree of grammaticalization in BrE, but less so in AmE.

40. The next topic concerns a type of adverbial clause that has been grammaticalizing into a topic-introducing phrase without a finite verb. Example (16) illustrates the omissibility of the verbal coda in an example of this type.

(17) As far as improving myself (goes/is concerned), I haven't read any books lately.

The data in Figure 19.40, gleaned from Berlage (2007), indicate that the verbless variant is prominent in AmE, while BrE still shies away from this usage. It is also obvious that in both varieties it is the spoken language that leads the change, which suggests that the origin of the reduced structure is in colloquial speech. Correspondingly, the textual frequency of the topic-introducing phrase with or without the verbal coda is considerably higher in AmE than in BrE, particularly in the spoken registers: spoken BrE uses it 35.3 times per million words, and written BrE 8.3 times pmw, whereas spoken AmE has it 85.2 times pmw, and written AmE 10.2 times pmw.
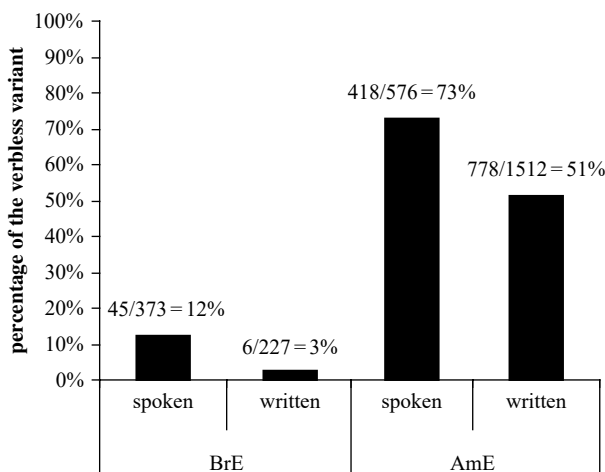
Figure 19.40 The omission of the verbal coda in topic-restricting *as far as*-constructions in written and spoken British and American corpora (data supplied by Eva Berlage) (database: g92, D92, L92, W92; spoken parts of the ANC and the BNC)

Interestingly, it has been shown that the probability with which the verbal coda is dropped increases with the length and complexity of the intervening topic expression (for further details, see Rickford *et al.* 1995, Berlage 2007).

41. In the following example of a British–American contrast, it is BrE that may deploy additional syntactic possibilities. In a comparison with *than*, the expression providing the standard of comparison can be relativized with an object-case relative pronoun. This gives rise to (typically negated) constructions like the one illustrated in (18).

(18) Dr. Winter, than whom they do not come more ambitious, has given up on the issue.

Semantically, these constructions are in most cases roughly equivalent to a superlative ('who is the most ambitious kind of person you can imagine'). Out of all syntactic positions, the position in a comparative *than*-phrase is the least accessible for extraction, i.e. only very few languages (or varieties) are able to relativize the expression following *than* (see Keenan and Comrie 1977). As Figure 19.41 demonstrates, this possibility of relativization is virtually unknown in American newspapers: there are no more than three occurrences in a corpus of over 840 million words. The use of *than whom* or *than which* came up in EModE, though it remained restricted to formal and poetic language (cf. Görlach 1999: 14–93). On the basis of various analyses exploring the available historical databases, we can assume that – despite a certain amount of fluctuation – the last four centuries have witnessed
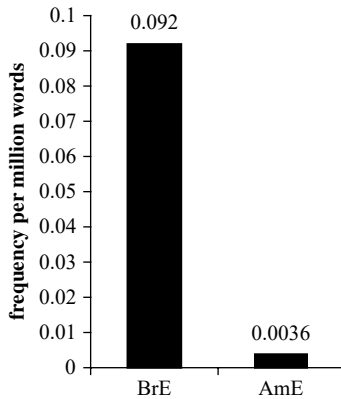
Figure 19.41 The relativization of the standard of comparison by means of *than which/whom* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t90–01, g90–00, d91–00, m93–00, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92, N01)

a general decline of the construction. This leaves no doubt that BrE is again the more conservative of the two varieties.

42. This situation is reversed in the case of the expression *how come*, which is arguably evolving into a complex interrogative in AmE (see the remark in Tottie 2002a: 164). Being an independent clause in its origin, it congealed into an interrogative introducing direct questions. The small dataset given in Figure 19.42a suggests that the use of *how come* as a complex interrogative originates in AmE. It also depicts the familiar scenario in which the change progresses quickly within the span of thirty years and begins to spill over to BrE in the 1990s corpus. Statistically more satisfactory evidence comes from the fact that in a corpus comprising forty-one years of British and sixteen years of American newspapers dating from 1990 to 2001, the relative frequency of *how come* is higher in AmE, with 2.12 pmw, than in BrE, with 1.80 pmw.

British and American usage also differ in two more respects. For one, *how come* is beginning to extend its range of application in AmE, e.g. to reversed pseudo-cleft sentences, as in example (19), and dependent interrogative clauses, as in example (20) (cf. again Tottie 2002a: 164).

(19) That's how come I lost control of myself.

(20) Nobody wanted to know how come she knew this would happen.

For another, AmE hardly ever makes use of the subordinator *that* following *how come*, which is reminiscent of the former subordinate status of the interrogative clause. As Figure 19.42b shows, *that* is mainly used in hard-to-process contexts where *how come* and the subject of the subordinate clause
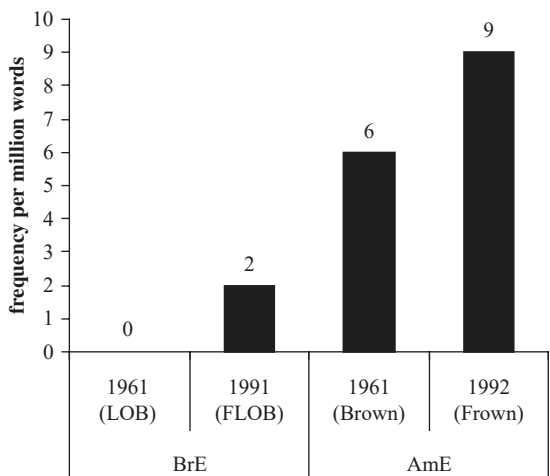
Figure 19.42a The use of the complex interrogative *how come* in four matching British and American corpora
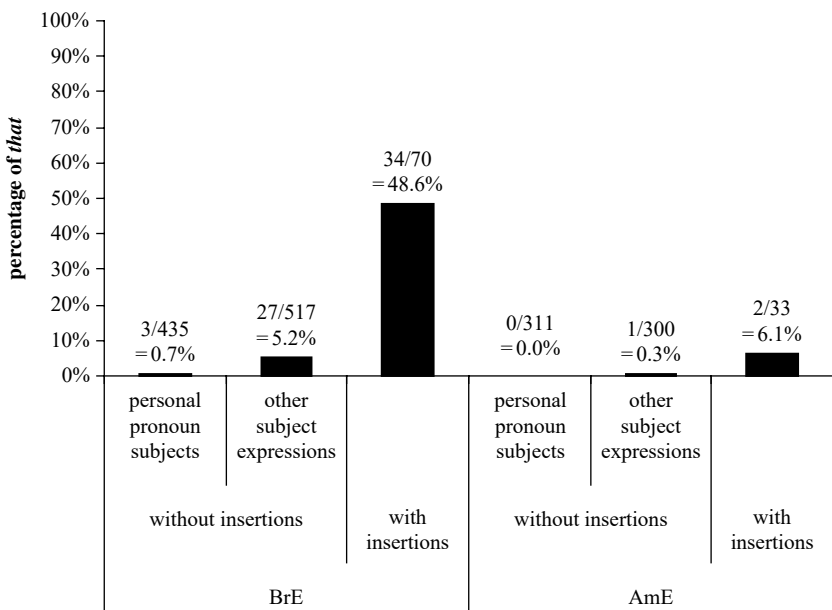

Figure 19.42b The use of the interrogative *how come* in selected British and American newspapers (data supplied by Christine Kick) (database: t90–95, g90–95, i93–94, d91–95, m93–94, m96–97, L92–99, W90–92)
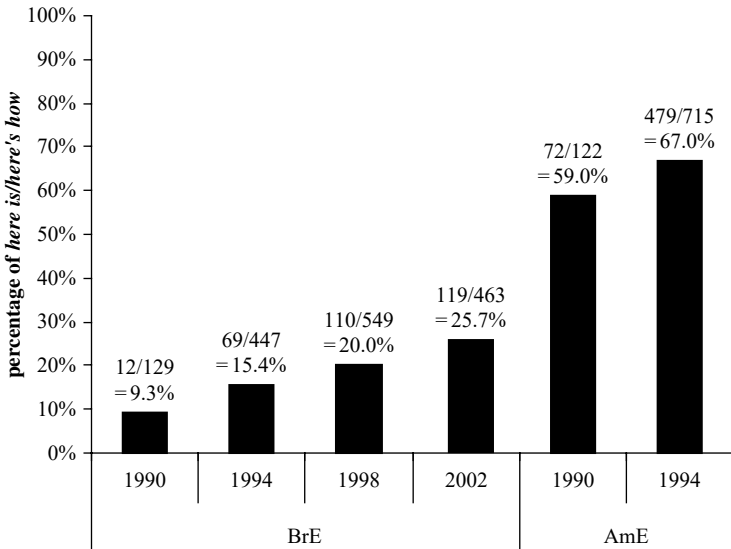
Figure 19.43 The rivalry between the reversed pseudo–cleft construction *this is how* + S and the upcoming type *here is how/here's how* + S in selected British and American newspapers (data supplied by André Schaefer) (database: t90, t94, t98, t02, g90, g94, g98, g02, d94, d98, m94, m98, W90, L94, D94)

are separated by intervening elements. In comparison, BrE shows a considerably enhanced sensitivity to this complexity factor and even reacts to the type of subject expression: more complex subjects trigger the use of *that* slightly more often than pronoun subjects, where *that* is only found exceptionally. In sum, the higher frequency, the greater syntactic flexibility and the omission of *that* all indicate unambiguously that the grammaticalization process of *how come* is further advanced in AmE.

43. AmE is also in the lead in the establishment of the incoming structure *here is/here's* plus a following *wh*-clause. Among the set of interrogative items, *how* is the one that occurs by far the most frequently with the innovative *here is/here's*. In Figure 19.43, the sequence *here is/here's how* is compared with the synonymous *this is how*. Note, however, that the two are not strictly interchangeable since *this is how* can be cataphoric as well as anaphoric, whereas *here is how/here's how* is restricted to cataphoric uses and mostly occurs in instructions with a present tense verb or modal (see example (21)).

(21) This is/Here is how you (should) go about it.

Keeping this in mind, the data in Figure 19.43 unambiguously show that the variant employing *here* is much better established in AmE and that it is continuing to encroach upon the territory of the variant involving *this*. The
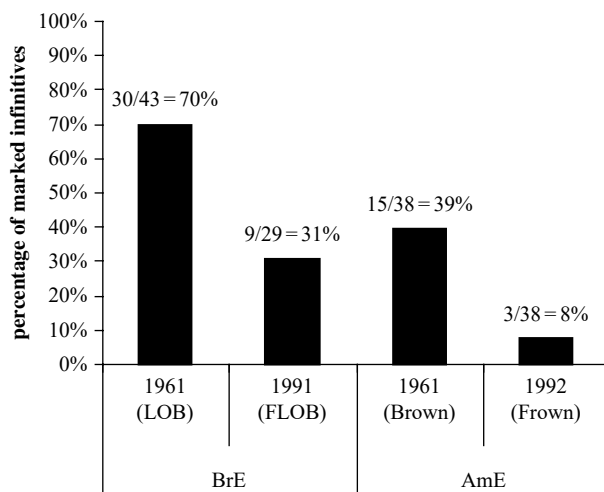
Figure 19.44 Marked and unmarked infinitives with pseudo-cleft constructions involving *what*, *all*, *thing(s)* or *the least/most/best/worst* + pro-verb *do* in four matching British and American corpora[34]

change is also spilling over to BrE, which shows a steady rise in the percentage of *here is/here's how*, but is far from catching up with AmE.

44. This brings us to three examples of contrasting usage in the domain of non-finite clauses. The first are pseudo-cleft structures of various types illustrated in example (22), which have an infinitival clause in the identifier slot.

(22)   What/All/The only thing/The least/most/best/worst he can/could do is/was (to) sell it.

The British–American difference in this case resides in the use or omission of the infinitive marker *to*. As Figure 19.44 reveals, in both varieties there is a distinct trend towards unmarked infinitives, which is accelerated in AmE. Thus, AmE is once again in the lead of a new drift towards economy while BrE remains more conservative and more explicit. Above and beyond these contrasts, the percentage of use of marked infinitives is dependent on several complexity factors. A detailed account of these is beyond the scope of the present survey, but see for instance Rohdenburg (2000: 31–2) and Rohdenburg (2006b: 61).[35]

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[34] For convenience, the search has been confined to the verb forms *is* and *was* connecting the identifier clause and the identified clause.

[35] See furthermore Berlage (2007) and Rohdenburg (2006b: 60), which deal with the effects of processing complexity on variable infinitival marking in other contexts.
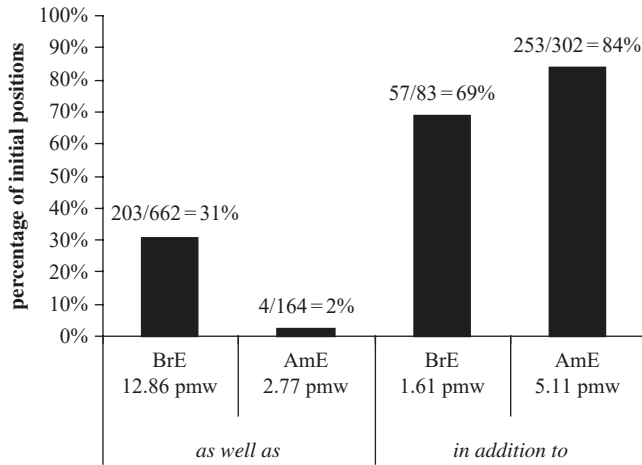
Figure 19.45a Subjectless gerunds associated with *as well as* and *in addition to* in selected British and American newspapers (database: t92, m93, W92, D93)[36]

45. The second contrast concerning non-finite clauses has to do with a particular use of gerundial *-ing*-forms with an implicit subject. The structure is illustrated in example (23).

(23) As well as/In addition to sending and receiving text messages, it can hook up to the internet.

While the type is current in BrE as well as AmE, there are important differences in the frequencies of individual introductory elements as well as of the construction as a whole. Consider first the frequency data given at the bottom of the columns in Figure 19.45a. There is, arguably, a compensatory relationship between subjectless gerunds introduced by the prepositional expressions *as well as* and *in addition to*, to the effect that BrE plumps for the former, while AmE uses more of the latter. This frequency contrast is matched by a divergence in the syntactic positions that can be occupied by the gerund phrase: allowing for the fact that *in addition to* is more strongly attracted to sentence-initial position than *as well as*, we note that the use of this position correlates to some extent with the degrees of entrenchment of the rivalling options. The share of initial positions is represented by the height of the columns in Figure 19.45a. It is evident that *as well as* occurs

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[36] To avoid ambiguities between subjectless gerunds and nominalized verbs, the analysis is confined to transitive verbs involving (mobile) direct objects. Any examples of *as well as* or *in addition to* + V-*ing* immediately following relative pronouns in subject function have been treated as non-initial.
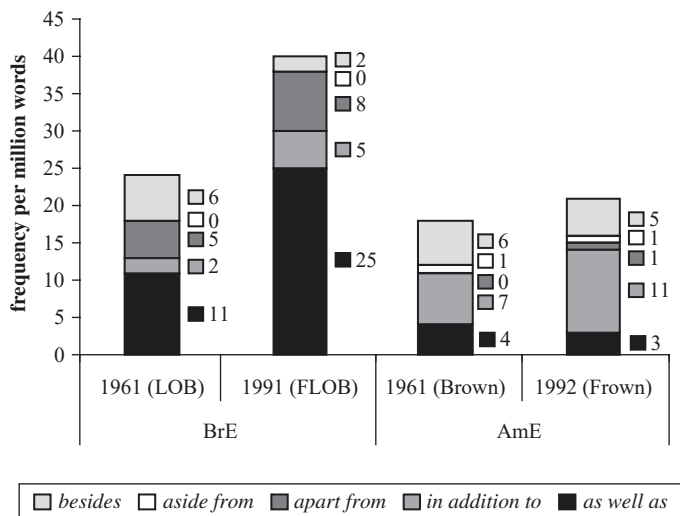
Figure 19.45b Subjectless gerunds associated with *apart from/as well as/besides/aside from/in addition to* in four matching corpora

extremely rarely in these prominent positions in AmE compared to BrE, while *in addition to* is not placed there quite as often in BrE as in AmE.

There is a whole set of preposition-like expressions with similar semantics that can be used in the type of construction under consideration here. Further members are *apart from*, *aside from* and *besides*.[37] Figure 19.45b provides an overview of the set and compares their frequencies in BrE and AmE of the early 1960s and 1990s. The results suggest that the use of subjectless gerunds in this function is on the increase across both varieties and that BrE is generally further advanced in this respect.

46. The third contrast in the domain of non-finite clauses and the final one to be discussed in this chapter concerns the form of nominal and pronominal subjects associated with verbal gerunds. The choice of items using the genitive/possessive vs. the objective case pronouns is illustrated in example (24).

(24) There is no problem with you(r)/the children('s) (not) being Catholic.

The genitival/possessive version is the more traditional one and it has been noted that it is more characteristic of AmE (cf. Hudson 2003: 581; see furthermore the discussion in Mittins, Salu, Edmison and Coyne 1970: 64–7). Empirical evidence comes from the case study presented in Figure 19.46, which is restricted to pronominal subjects. The count focuses

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[37] Concerning *aside from* and *apart from*, consider also Chapter 6 by Berlage.
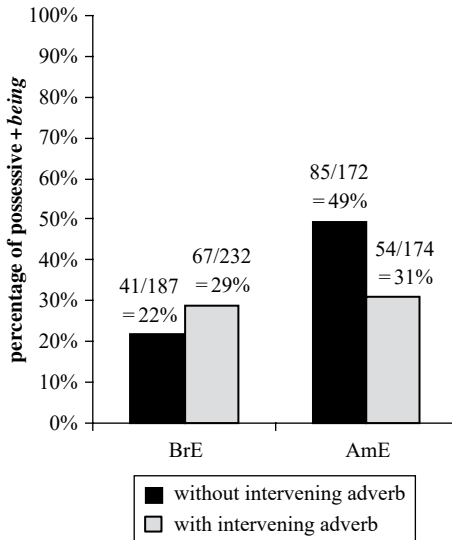
Figure 19.46   The rivalry between possessive and objective case pronouns as logical subjects of the gerund *being* (data supplied by Susanna Lyne) (database: t00, t02, t04, g00, g02, g04, d00, d02, d04, i02–04, L92–99, D92–95, W90–92; from all newspapers one randomly chosen hit out of twenty has been included; from the British newspapers only the months Jan–Mar and Aug–Oct have been analysed)

on the extremely frequent gerund *being* preceded by possessive and objective case pronouns. If the pronoun immediately precedes the gerund, AmE still uses possessive pronouns in every second example, while BrE does the same in approximately one in five instances. In AmE, the gerund thus preserves a more nominal character. However, an adverb inserted between the pronoun and gerund (in the count, only the items *not*, *ever* and *actually* have been considered) almost neutralizes the British–American difference by bringing the ratio of possessives in AmE down to about 1 in 3.[38] Aside from intervarietal contrasts, the percentage of possessive and objective case pronouns also depends on further system-internal factors (see Heyvaert, Rogiers and Vermeylen 2005, Lyne 2006).

  This brings us to our fifth and last synopsis of the phenomena treated under the heading 'sentential structures'. Table 19.5 again presents a very heterogeneous picture. Three of the innovations treated in this section have been promoted by BrE at different times (items 37 *given/on the basis (that)*, 39, 45); in two more cases BrE seems more advanced because it has given up

[38]   The difference between instances with and without intervening adverbs observable in BrE is not statistically significant and therefore negligible.

Table 19.5 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts in the domain of sentential structures*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
37. *given/on the basis (that)*	BrE	BrE		AmE
being/for fear (that)	BrE	AmE		BrE
38. *lest* + subj.	AmE	(AmE)		BrE
39. *no matter (that)*	BrE	(AmE)		AmE
40. *as far as X (is concerned/goes)*	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
41. *than which/whom*	AmE	BrE		
42. *how come*	AmE	BrE	BrE	AmE
43. *this/here is how*	AmE	(BrE)		AmE
44. *all* etc. *he can do is/was (to)* + inf.	AmE	BrE	BrE	BrE
45. *as well as/in addition to* V–*ing*	BrE	BrE		
46. *him/his being*	BrE	AmE		
sums BrE : AmE	5 : 6	7 : 4	3 : 0	4 : 4

older structures that AmE preserves (items 37 *being/for fear (that)*, 46). The other six present examples where AmE has initiated or accelerated a change and therefore has to be judged more progressive. It might be expected that the changes should endow the variety that is spearheading them with a more colloquial character, be it BrE or AmE (items 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44), but there are also some notable examples of changes that are conducive to more formality (items 37 *given/on the basis (that)*, 38, 45). In the cumulated figures (given in the bottom line), BrE reveals itself to have a more pronounced affinity with formal structures. Three of these formal structures (items 40, 42, 44) are obviously also more consistent, while AmE violates grammatical norms by dropping the verbal coda in 40, the operator and subject in 42 and the infinitive marker in 44. The other phenomena do not lend themselves to an interpretation in terms of consistency vs. irregularity. Concerning the criterion of explicitness vs. opacity, BrE and AmE score four times each. Generally, the variety that drops some function word can be argued to be less explicit. Some of the other judgements would deserve further comment, but limitations of space forbid us to enlarge on them.

3 Conclusion

Going beyond the topics discussed in detail in the foregoing chapters, the present chapter has formed an outlook sketching some areas where additional contrasts between the grammars of BrE and AmE can be unearthed. Some of these have so far simply not been noticed; others have been neglected, partly on account of their relatively low frequencies, which have

Table 19.6 *Synopsis of British–American contrasts across all domains surveyed in the present chapter (based on Tables 19.1 to 19.5)*

	+ progressive/ conservative	+ formal/ colloquial	+ consistent/ irregular	+ explicit/ opaque
1.–46. **total sums**				
BrE: AmE	13 : 35	32 : 11	15 : 11	21 : 18

until recently made them ineligible for quantitative study. While the observations included in this chapter have all been buttressed by more or less ample corpus data, they still await more detailed and systematic study. Even so, the considerable number of no less than 46 phenomena treated here afford an occasion to adopt a bird's eye view of frequently discussed topics such as the relative speeds of evolution in BrE and AmE and the directedness of intervarietal divergences. Table 19.6 tots up the evaluations given in Tables 19.1 to 19.5 of section 2. For what they are worth, they provide a quantitative measure of the relative degrees of progressiveness, formality, consistency and explicitness of the two varieties.

A juxtaposition at this level of abstraction must of course not be over-interpreted. Despite this caveat, the comparison shows that two of the four criteria produce more consistent results than the others. Very often (in thirty-five out of the forty-eight cases evaluated), AmE proves to be more progressive than BrE. Just as often (in thirty-two out of forty-three cases), BrE preserves or promotes more formal grammatical structures, while AmE exhibits a greater affinity with colloquial features. There are, however, exceptions as, for instance, in the formation of new predicates, where BrE happens to be more innovative. Generally, the hypothesis of the 'colonial lag' thus has to be refuted in favour of a tendency for AmE to assume the leading role in more recent and ongoing changes. BrE (as well as other varieties in the English-speaking world) can be shown to take over many of the innovations from AmE. In contrast, the predictive value of putative ascriptions such as the greater regularity or explicitness of AmE (and, conversely, the greater irregularity and opacity of BrE) is very limited. Within the datasets considered, it is actually BrE that has a narrow lead in these respects. Rather than indulging in preconceived generalizations, linguistic research should thus focus on individual phenomena or groups of phenomena where one variety is more regular (e.g. BrE in the preservation of grammatically complete sentential structures and AmE in the formation of past participles) or more explicit (e.g. BrE in the marking of adverbs and AmE in the quantification of noun phrases).

Coming back to the issues of progressiveness/leadership in grammatical change and affinity with colloquial means of expression, our survey suggests some novel insights into interconnections between these parameters. As has

been mentioned in section 1 of this chapter, most of the contrasts between BrE and AmE are obviously of a gradual nature only. Where one variety is moving ahead, the other frequently changes in the same direction, only with some delay or at a slower pace. In contrast, some of the differences are more absolute in that a change occurring in one variety remains endemic in that variety. For BrE, this is true of the phenomena studied under items 10 (*for longer* following other comparatives), 16 (*near to* used with abstract nouns), 29 (*to be to do with*), 30 (*X is down to Y*), 34 (*be sat/stood*) and 45 (*as well as* V-*ing* in initial position). Changes exclusive to AmE are provided by items 19 (*depends on if*), 23 (*the next* etc. *several* N), 25 (*how big* etc. *of a* N), 27 (*what/ who all*) and 40 (*as far as* without verbal coda). Some further examples can be found in the foregoing chapters of this book, e.g. the functionally motivated split between *spilt* and *spilled* (see Chapter 3 by Levin) and the *replace*-like usage of *substitute* (see Chapter 7 by David Denison) for BrE and the unexceptional use of *from* after the verbs *dismiss* and *excuse* for AmE (see Chapter 10 by Rohdenburg).

It can be observed that changes are likely to remain unilateral where they originate in informal or non-standard usage and are taken over into the national standard. The non-standard origin obviously lowers the chances of the novel structure being adopted on the other side of the Atlantic. This is especially true of BrE innovations (e.g. *X is down to Y*, *be to do with*, *be sat/ stood*), while many of the numerous new forms of expression emerging out of the AmE non-standard do find fertile ground in BrE as well. However, the structures *as/so/how/this/that/too* Adj *(of) a* N, *it depends on if* and *what/ who all* are still unknown in BrE. This suggests that there is a certain imbalance between the two major national varieties in that AmE is not only more rich in innovations, but also less prone to take over changes initiated by BrE. On the other hand, BrE (doubtless like many other varieties of English around the world) is very receptive of innovations emerging in America, which is a major source of new developments for the homeland variety, but it also has its own resources, particularly the non-standard.

Notice that the majority of the pilot studies drafted in the present chapter are based on written data (mainly journalistic prose). Even in the written standard, we have thus been able to single out areas of divergence between BrE and AmE. From what has just been said, it is more than likely that divergences in spoken, especially informal usage will be much more pronounced. We therefore do not agree unconditionally with Mair's (2007a: 98) conclusion according to which 'we have one common underlying system of options, "English", for which speakers in different communities or contexts have different statistical preferences'. It is of course true that language users on both sides of the Atlantic have different preferences, but some of the contrasts go beyond mere statistical divergences. Furthermore, it can be assumed that frequencies play an important part in the acquisition and use of a (mental) grammar, because an increasing number of statistical differences

at some point lead to a loss of intercomprehensibility. We rather subscribe to Tottie's view (Chapter 18), according to which 'the more delicate our analysis, the more differences we will find', and many small differences in fact add up to recognizably different standards.

Coming back to the title question of the present volume, are we thus justified in speaking of two different grammars for the language we call English? As long as linguists are still debating the question of what should count as variations of the 'same' grammatical system or as two 'different' grammatical systems, the decision can only be taken by each reader according to his or her personal convictions. Two things seem clear, however. For one, disconfirming the anticipations expressed by Noah Webster around the year 1800 (quoted in Marckwardt and Quirk 1964: 9), BrE and AmE are not about to diverge from each other to the extent that other modern Germanic languages like German, Dutch, Danish and Swedish have. That the split does not occur is ensured by the strong exchange between the two nations that is owed to the media, the many opportunities for travel and the general globalization of economic and cultural life. This insight is certainly not new. For another thing, however, these external conditions fail to put a stop to novel developments that remain restricted to one variety or the other. Both AmE and (maybe to a somewhat lesser extent) BrE testify to an internal dynamism that continues to drive them apart. This does not mean that an innovation may not at some point be taken over by the other variety and thereby turn into a mere statistical preference and become equally established in both varieties in the end.

In sum, the present book has shown that, contrary to general opinion, the widely accepted truism according to which 'accent divides, and syntax unites' (for a discussion, see Mair 2007a) is too simplistic. There is decidedly more to British–American contrasts than only differences in pronunciation (and the lexicon): the morphosyntax has turned out to provide fertile ground for further research, and the present chapter has pointed to some promising directions. What is more, it may be that BrE and AmE represent two extremes of a grammatical continuum, with BrE at the conservative pole and AmE at the progressive pole. Corpus-based studies including Indian, Australian and New Zealand English have shown that these national varieties are located between the two extremes in relevant respects (see, e.g., Sayder 1989, Hundt 1998a). It will therefore be a worthwhile enterprise to extend the angle to other varieties of English spoken around the world, which can be expected to exhibit their own characteristic grammatical divergences.