CHAPTER II

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE FORMING OF LEXICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH FOR SHARING CONCEPT

This chapter describes the factors that influence the forming of lexical constructions of British and American English for sharing concept. Analyzing the issue, a dialect takes an important role. It appears in depending on region and speakers. How they are speaking is contributed by history, preference and pronunciation of words; and region is implied in those factors. Importantly the following data show how those factors form different lexical constructions for sharing concept:

BRITISH (UK)	AMERICA (US)
A dollar	A buck
Colour	Color
Apologise	Apologize
Next to	Alongside of

Table 2.1. Data of Lexical Constructions with Sharing Concept

2.1. History

Data 1: **A dollar and A Buck**

The word ‘a dollar’ in UK has the same meaning with ‘a buck’ in US. However, there is a history behind it. Back before there ever was a United States dollar when the American Colonies were still under the flag of Great Britain, the main rate of currency of the trading posts at the frontier forts that catered to the Native American was the buckskin. Fur trading between the trading post owners and the Native American was the main form of commerce in the frontier. The various native tribes saw the superiority of the metal knives and cast iron cauldrons over their bone, antler, and wooden tools while the English craved the furs for their leather shoes and clothing. The transactions at the trading post were simple. The members of the various tribes as well as frontiersman brought in the furs that they hunted and trapped over the winter months. The furs were examined by the trading post owner to determine the quality of the fur. The trading post owners gave the furs a buck value. Genuine high quality buckskin was of course equal in value to one buckskin. It took a doe skin or inferior buckskin, two skins to equal a buck skin. Six high quality beaver pelts equaled one buckskin; twelve high quality rabbit pelts were equal to one buckskin and so on. In the same token, the goods available at the trading post were also given a buck value. A knife might be worth five buckskins and the buyer would be required to come up with furs that equaled five buckskins in order to complete the transaction. The transaction, of course, was always open to negotiation, but usually because the trading post owner had a limited supply and he could wait for the next

person with furs who was more willing to pay his price, the trading post owner could usually set whatever price he wanted.

As the United States grew a nation and the forts with trading posts grew into villages and towns, the dollar replaces the buckskin as the main currency. The word ‘buck’ continued to be used as a slang for the United States dollar bill long after the buckskin ceased be considered as currency.

Meanwhile, the history of the dollar is a story involving many countries in different continents. The word *dollar* is much older than the American unit of currency. It is an Anglicised form of "thaler", (pronounced *taler*, with a long "a"), the name given to coins first minted in 1519 from locally mined silver in Joachimsthal in Bohemia. (Today the town of Joachimsthal lies within the borders of the Czech Republic and its Czech name is Jáchymov). Thaler is a shortened form of the term by which the coin was originally known - Joachimsthaler.

Later on the English version of the name (dollar) was also applied to similar coins, not only ones minted in central Europe but also the Spanish peso and the Portuguese eight-real piece. Both these large silver coins were practically identical in weight and fineness. Today we are familiar with the phrase *pieces of eight* from tales of pirates in the Caribbean. Those coins, particularly the Spanish peso or dollar were circulated widely in Britain's North American colonies because of a shortage of official British coins. That is why, after the United States gained its independence the new nation chose "dollar" as the name of its currency instead of keeping the pound. During colonial times the official British coinage was in short supply and as a result

the a variety of substitutes was used in Britain's American colonies, including wampum, in some of the northern colonies, and tobacco, or more conveniently, certificates for tobacco deposited in public warehouses, in Virginia. The colonists also used whatever foreign coins they could obtain. At various times in different colonies paper money was issued and disputes with the British government over this were one of the causes of the American Revolution. The rebels financed their war of independence largely by printing paper money notes that were called *Continentals*. By the end of the war, these had been rendered practically worthless by hyperinflation but financial prudence is a luxury in wartime. The notes had served their purpose and, with the help of their French allies, the Americans won the war.

As Spanish pesos or dollars had long been in wide circulation in North America, some of the paper money issued in some of the colonies before the war had been denominated in dollars. Other notes used British monetary units. During the war too, some Continentals were denominated in British units, others in dollars. In 1792 the newly independent United States choses the dollar, subdivided into 100 cents, as the unit of American currency in preference to the British pound.

Foreign coins were supposed to lose their status as legal tender within 3 years of the US coins coming into circulation. A new mint was established in Philadelphia and started its operations in 1794. The mint was the first purpose-built structure authorized by the United States government. However, because of a shortage of both gold and silver, in 1797 the government extended legal tender status to Spanish dollars for an indefinite period. The discoveries in California, which sparked off the

Gold Rush in 1848, led to a massive increase in the production of gold coins by the mint, and in 1857 the United States finally removed legal tender status from all foreign coins. By then, although as necessary to the retail trade as ever, developments in banking meant that coins were just the small change of commerce.

In 1797, owing to a desperate shortage of silver coins, the Bank of England issues altered foreign coins from its reserves. Half a million pounds worth of Spanish dollars issued by King Charles IV was over-stamped with a small engraving of George III. The re-issued coins, with a value of 4 shillings and 9 pence, attracted ridicule. *"Two Kings' heads and not worth a crown"* was one witticism. (A 'crown' in this context meant 5 shillings, "half-a-crown", sometimes colloquially known as "half-a-dollar", being a common coin before decimalisation in 1971). A cruder, description was *"the head of a fool stamped on the neck of an ass".* The issue failed because over-stamping was also applied unofficially to the plentiful supplies of light or base Spanish dollars. A few years later a more successful issue of dollars was made by the Bank of England. In 1804 Matthew Boulton, the business partner of the steam engine pioneer James Watt, was employed to erase completely the existing design on full-weight Spanish coins and stamp them as *Bank of England Five Shilling Dollars.*

2.2. Phonological Items

Data 2 : **Colour and Color**

Data 3 : **Apologise and Apologize**

Phoneme that makes the differences between ‘colour’ and ‘color’ is ‘u’. People in UK commonly use **–ur** end in some words, and people in US use **–or** in their words. The phonem that makes difference is with ‘u’ and without ‘u’, the phonetics sound of ‘color’ is /o/ and ‘colour’ is /ou/, based on Sound Pattern of English (SPE). According to SPE, /ou/ is *Syllabic*, *Back*, *Low* and *Round*. It belongs to *Syllabic* because it shows the feature that assigns to phonemes that can function as the head or peak, and it belongs to *Back* because the phoneme makes with tongue body slightly retracted from the rest or quite breathing position. This phoneme also categorizes as *Low*, because it makes with the tongue body lowered and the root retracted, and *Round* because the articulation involves an extension and pursing the lips. Meanwhile the phonetic sound of /o/ has similarities with /ou/, the difference is *Tense*, that means there are length and muscle tension between the vowels.

The word ‘apologise’ has a phonetic /s/, and it belongs to *Consonantal*, *Continuant*, *Strident*, *Coronal* and *Anterior*. The reason why it is categorized as *Consonantal* is because the form in the vocal tract has an obstruction as narrow as that of affricative. It is *Continuant* because it is made with a complete blockage of the oral cavity, and *Strident* because it is characterized the high frequency turbulent noise that accompanies the production of some affricates. In addition, it is *Coronal* because this phoneme makes the blade of the tongue that raises toward or touches the teeth, the alveoral ridge, or an area along the back of the alveoral ridge, and it is called *Anterior* phoneme because the sound makes with the primary constriction in front of the alveopalatal position.

Furthemore, the word ‘apologize’ has a phonetic /Iz/, which has some similarity with /s/. The only difference between those two phonemes are called *Voiced,* which has a meaning as a phoneme that occurs when the articulation is accompanied by a periodic vibration of the vocal cords.

People in British use ‘colour’ with ‘u’ because in their mother language, the letter ‘o’ mostly paired with ‘u’, and they usually use /s/ if the phonetic sound is /Iz/. However, people in America like to make simple of their words, they eliminate the ‘u’ from ‘colour’ and change it into ‘color’, they also have different pronunciation in using the word with /s/, and that is why they use /Iz/ in ‘apologize’.

2.3. Preference

Data 4: **Alongside of** and **Next to**

People in British prefer to use ‘next to’ better than ‘alongside of’ in America. This happens because ‘alongside of’ can be preposition and adverb. It is preposition if the meaning is ‘beside’; and adverb if the meaning is ‘among others’. To reduce the ambiguity of the meaning, they prefer to use ‘next to’ than ‘alongside of’, if they want to use it as a preposition.