US English beats its bum rap:
the decline of British English as the language standard
Yle News

• The Finnish Broadcasting Company Yle has been providing news in English about Finland since 1999

• Nine employees, only two full-time, from all over the globe: preferably they are a native speaker of English

• News writing is a breed of its own. The main objective is to relay Who, What, When, Where and Why in a manner that is easy to understand and engaging

• We try to maintain a house style, and we attempt to use the UK English standard, but...
Congratulations to all Finland's school leavers graduating today:

Graduation day for Finland's school-leavers
Saturday marks the end of the educational year as around 160,000 youngsters begin graduating from Finland's schools and vocational colleges. Of these, around 28,000 students will formally graduate from high school, many of whom will attend...

Halley Pegan
Really!? Bad English.
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 2:04pm

Oyinlola Xavier Says who? What is the standard? British English, American English, South Africa English? Take the compliments or walk away....TAMA ON SUOMI!
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 2:24pm

Mirkka Vanhanen Well, 'school-leavers' is very odd. I wouldn't word it like that, as an English-speaking Canadian. And it's "ßääll", with ß, not A.
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 3:17pm

Susan Tunkkari as a Brit who is an English-English speaker I would word it as school leavers.
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 3:42pm · Edited

Steve El-Sherawy Yep school leavers is fine.
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 4:58pm

Mirkka Vanhanen Susan, that is the most bullshit comment I've ever read. And I am sure you mean 'as a Brit'. Do your country a favour and honour its grammar.
Like · Reply - May 31, 2014 at 5:14pm · Edited

Write a reply...
Police apprehend several drink drivers over weekend

The Eastern Uusimaa regional police cracked down on several DUI cases over the weekend. Drunks at the wheel were arrested in the satellite cities of Porvoo, Hyvinkää, Tuusula and Nurmijärvi. The worst offenders showed a blood alcohol...

YLE.FI

Be careful out there!

4 Comments 1 Share

Shane Henrik Allen: drunk drivers
Like · Reply · 2 · August 3, 2015 at 12:59am

Carmen Pokkarinen: Punish these IDIOTS to the fullest extent of the law.
Like · Reply · 1 · August 3, 2015 at 7:31am

Steve El-Sharawy: Amazingly inappropriate headline.
Like · Reply · 1 · August 3, 2015 at 10:46am

Vitali Gusarinsky: You mean be careful of being caught, or be careful not to be irresponsible and drive while under the influence? Sometimes these headlines from Yle English are confusing.
Like · Reply · 1 · August 3, 2015 at 11:04am

Martin-Eric Racine: YLE spikis inglits veri veri velt.
See Translation
Like · Reply · August 3, 2015 at 2:30pm

Write a reply...

Write a comment...

In Saturday’s news broadcast, Finnish municipalities have had to pay hundreds of millions of euros in fines because they haven't carried out their...
The snow which has been steadily falling for the past 24 hours has caused dozens of minor accidents on roads across the Uusimaa region in southern Finland, the...

Snow causes dozens of fender benders in Uusimaa region

Stephen Cole: "Fender benders"? Oh boy, the English language is being rewritten by the Finns now.

- Pamela Spokes: I don't get it? It is an English saying...
- Stephen Cole: Not something I would have used. Especially, for those who are learning how to speak English.
- Brian Mac Chibbe: It's a common term from popular culture. "Twerking" isn't taught in English either but I guess you would have understood right?
- Stephen Cole: But surely a newspaper should write English correctly and not use slang. I haven't found "fender benders" in the English Oxford Dictionary and therefore it is not correct. 1 out of 10, I'm afraid.
- Ivroyo Dzhediev: Ah, so no true Scotsman puts sugar on his porridge.
The Decline of British English, Visualized

While British English may rightfully claim the honor (honour?) of having anteceded its American cousin, there is no doubt that today American English is the defacto English in the world. Below are a few charts generated using Google Ngram Viewer that show the decline of the frequency of British English and the rise of American English in its stead.

Note: American spelling is in blue, while British is in red.

Gray vs. Grey

One of the early signs of the rise of American English can be seen in the prevalence of the American "gray" over the traditional "grey."
Flavor vs. Flavour

Further evidence of the ascent of American English after 1880 is visible in the increasing frequency of "flavor" in English-language publications.

Liter vs. Litre

Despite the metric system never having been accepted by the majority of Americans as a standard unit of measure at the turn of the 19th century, the American spelling of the units of volume gained wider popularity than did the British version.
Center vs. Centre

1913 marked a turning point in the usage of the British spelling, as the American alternative became more frequently used in literature. This was just a year before the beginning of World War I, which many view as a key period in America's rise to superpower status.

Defense vs. Defence

World War I also coincided with the growing usage of the American term as the nation's stature in the world increased.
Airplane vs. Aeroplane

After World War I drew to a close, the American term overtook its British counterpart in frequency of use in literature.

Fiber vs. Fibre

At around the same time, the world "fiber" was quickly becoming more popular than its predecessor.
Honor vs. Honour

Despite having lost their lead in most terms, the British can take pride in mounting an impressively long defense of "honour." The American spelling only managed to solidify its lead in the 70s. Interestingly, the word's frequency has dropped off significantly in the past two centuries.

Jail vs. Gaol

If there were ever a word that failed to make it across the Atlantic, it must be "gaol." Ever since the middle of the 19th century it has been fading into obscurity as even the British Isles slowly rejected the old spelling.
Brexit
American English rules, man!

- The Guardian: Commercial, political and military might and the impact of Hollywood, CNN and McDonald’s

- Sheer numbers - The US represents 319 million people and 8 million expats, the UK has a population of 64 million and a British diaspora of 5 million

- US English is the lingua franca of most multinational companies and international business negotiations - and money talks

- The top academic communities also are concentrated in the US.
The “English-ness” of English is being diluted. So, more surprisingly, is its American flavour. English’s centre of gravity is moving; in fact, in the twenty-first century the language has many centres. As this continues, native English-speakers may find themselves at a disadvantage. Native speakers freight their use of the language with all manner of cultural baggage.

The trouble is, often I and many others like me do not exercise much care at all. To non-native speakers, quirks and elaborations of this kind are confusing. Non-native speakers of English often comment that they find conversing with one another easier than sharing talk with native speakers.

There is a chance that a command of English will within twenty or thirty years be regarded as a basic skill for business, and native speakers of the language will no longer enjoy any competitive advantage.
Austin Powers English English
Bill Bryson
The Mother Tongue (1990)

- 330 million people speak English as a first language, more English students in China now than people in the US
- Brief history of language and English development
- Funny anecdotes and quirks
- Cautionary tales of past efforts to regulate and standardize English
- Great chapters on swearing and wordplay
Elizabethan English words in US English that fell out of use in the UK

- Mad for angry
- Fall for autumn
- Progress as a verb
- Gotten for got
- Platter for a large dish
- Assignment as a job or task
- Deck of cards instead of pack
- Slim, in the sense of small (slim chance)
- Mean, in the sense of unpleasant
- Trash for rubbish
- Hog as pig
- Mayhem, magnetic, chore, skillet, ragamuffin, homespun and the expression "I guess"
- Even maybe, quit in the sense of resign, leaf through, frame-up

Bryson, The Mother Tongue, pages 170-171
US words adapted in UK

commuter, bedrock, snag, striptease, cold spell, gimmick, baby-sitter, lengthy, sag, soggy, teenager, telephone, typewriter, radio, to butt in, to sidetrack, hangover, to make good (be successful), fudge, publicity, joyride, blizzard, stunt, law-abiding, department store, notify, advocate (as a verb), currency (for money), to park, to rattle (unnerve), hindsight, beeline, raincoat, scrawny, take a backseat, cloudburst, graveyard, know-how, to register (in a hotel), to shut down, to fill the bill, to hold down (keep), to hold up (rob), to stay put, stiff upper lip...

Byrson, The Mother Tongue, page 171
UK words adapted in the US since the colonial exodus

smog, weekend, gadget, miniskirt, radar, brain drain and gay, in the sense of homosexual

Bryson, The Mother Tongue, page 172
...there is no denying that the great bulk of words introduced into the English language over the last two centuries has travelled from west to east. And precious little thanks we get.

Almost from the beginning of the colonial experience, it has been a common assumption in Britain that a word or turn of phrase is inferior simply by dint of its being American-bred.”

Bill Bryson, The Mother Tongue, page 172
In the UK, the use of Americanisms is seen as a sign that culture is going to hell.

But Americans think all British people are posh, so - aside from things that are fairly pretentious - no-one would mind.

Cordelia Hebblethwaite BBC News, in Washington DC, 27 September 2012
Bill Maher - Brit for Brains
Made in America (1994)

- Solving the mystery of why American English developed in the way it did
- History of the country mirrored in the language
- Manifest destiny, economic growth, WWII, baby boom, space programme, Vietnam, hippies, computer revolution, melting pot
- Advertising and movies change everything
- Entire chapter on political correctness (coined in 1975 by Karen DeCrow, the president of NOW)
Being PC

- Inclusive Language is communication that does not stereotype or demean people based on personal characteristics including gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, economic background, ability/disability status, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Examples of PC language development

- chairperson, chair, moderator or discussion leader for chairman
- Southeast Asia for Far East
- supervisor for foreman, police officer for policeman, flight attendant for stewardess, homemaker for housewife, postal worker/mail carrier for mailman
- sexual orientation or sexual identity for sexual preference
- Native Americans or indigenous people or First Nation people (Canada) for Indians
- undocumented* immigrant, asylum seeker or refugee for illegal alien (when we call a person illegal, we imply that they are an object. *Although preferable to illegal, this term lacks recognition of the person’s humanity first.)
- U.S. citizen or Resident of the U.S. for American (Finnish resident for Finn)
- person “living with” a specific disability, as opposed to “afflicted with”, “stricken with”, “suffers from”, “victim of”, and “confined to” are terms that are based on the assumption that a person with a disability is suffering or living a reduced quality of life.
- wheelchair user or physically disabled for handicapped or invalid
- learning disabled or person with a learning or cognitive disability for mentally challenged*, mentally retarded, slow, brain-damaged, special education student
- Bipolar, autistic, sociopath, schizo, OCD and ADD are words that should not be thrown around in conversation, they are real psychiatric disabilities, not metaphors

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https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/nov/30/political-correctness-how-the-right-invented-phantom-enemy-donald-trump
Reasons why US English is taking over

• Commercial dominance
• Language of preference in top businesses
• Lion’s share of academic research
• The expanding influence of Hollywood
• Brexit
• English as a lingua franca is closer to US English
• Social media English is closer to US English
• Politically correct language
• UK English adapts US words, visa-versa not true
• And..