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UNIQUE FEATURES OF KIWI ENGLISH IN NEW ZEALAND

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Abstract: The uniqueness of the sociolinguistic situation in New Zealand lies in the joint influence of British, American, Australian, some local variants of the English language and the Māori language. All these factors marked the beginning of the formation of the New Zealand version of the English language.

Keywords: Kiwi English in New Zealand, dialects' classification, Māori, cross-cultural communication, sociolinguistic situation, Kiwi English uniqueness, characteristic features

1. Introduction

New Zealand's modern English, originally derived from the national language of the United Kingdom and developed over two hundred years in relative isolation, has established itself as a national language. Socially, culturally and functionally, New Zealand English (NZE) provides the full range of modern linguistic and communicative needs of the New Zealand nation. Nevertheless, the extent of knowledge of NZE is significantly inferior to the knowledge of the related variants of the language. The cause of this phenomenon is partly rooted in the colonial past when the problems of the language situation outside the capital were usually not included in the circle of scientific interests of representatives of Western linguistics; also we should take into considera-

tion the influence of the entrenched stereotyped ideas about "colonial English" being the degraded and rough language. The territorial distance of New Zealand from the existing areas of linguistic and scientific concentration has obviously affected its historical development.

2. Objectives/Purpose of the study

This research is targeted to identify distinctive features which determines the uniqueness of Kiwi English in New Zealand, to analyze and systematize the currently existing information about it.

3. Methodology

A language as one of the main features of the nation expresses the culture of the people who speak it, in other words – expresses the national culture (Oshchepkova, V.V., 2012: 87).

Recognizing the existence of the relation between the language and culture, both our Russian researchers (Vereshchagin E.M., Kostomarov V.G., etc.) and foreigners (Halliday M.A., Langacker R. W.) refer to lexical-semantic level of language, units which respond to changes in all spheres of human activity. Under all general conditions in the life of every nation there are realities inherent and typical only for this nation in culture, environment, and everyday routine that in different cultures correspond to some language gaps.

According to G. D. Tomakhin some language changes are manifested as a rule in the form of designations of specific cultural elements bearing the national imprint in verbal images (Tomakhin, G.D., 2009: 49).

The author V. V. Oshchepkova explains that all the features of the English language variants are closely connected with the national culture. In the vocabulary of any language or its national version, according to the researchers, the following layers of vocabulary are obviously seen (Oshchepkova, V.V., 2012: 85).

In the Russian linguistics at different levels of standard and substandard New Zealand version of English was studied by Turchenko L.V., Oshchepkova V.V., Vovk V.N. Foreign linguists such as S. J. Baker, Bauer L., Loser D., McAllister J., Oxman G., Bardsley D., McGill, Partridge C. devoted their researches to the social differentiation of NZE . The problem of this language origin was studied by Trudgill P., Bardsley D., Bell A., Gordon C. and others. (Trifanova, C.C., 2012: 3)

The lexical vernacular of the New Zealand area is the youngest of all the speech microsystems, it does not even exceed two hundred years as it appeared not later than 1912. Frank Arthur Swinnerton depicted it as a "carefully modeled whisper" (Swinnerton, F.A., 2007: 5).

Many researchers are attracted by the linguistic picture in New Zealand. It is meaningful in this context to analyze this situation.

Classification of New Zealand Languages

English, Māori and New Zealand sign languages are the official languages of the country.



- English, being predominantly used as the language of communication, counts 96 % of the population. Most of the books, newspapers and magazines are published on it; English also prevails in the broadcasting of radio and television.

- The second official language is the Māori language. It was reported in 2013 by the national census that about 149,000 people (3.7 per cent) of the New Zealand population are able to

hold a conversation in Māori about everyday things. In 2015 the report claimed that 55 per cent of Māori adults had some knowledge of the language; but of these speakers, only 64 per cent use Māori at home and only around 50,000 people can speak the language "very well" or "well".

- The status of the third state language was given to New Zealand Sign Language in 2006 with 20,235 people (0.5 %) reported to have the ability to speak this language (Ethnologue. URL: www.ethnologue.com/country/NZ).

The representatives of 171 language groups live in the country, creating quite strong influence with such diversity on the Kiwi English. The most used languages after English and Māori are Samoan, French, Hindi and Chinese. Russian and other Slavic languages are of little use due to the small population for which these languages are native.

Mostly used non-official languages (according to the date in the 2013 census):

- Samoan is the most widely spoken (2.2%)
- Hindi (1.7%)
- "Northern Chinese" (including Mandarin, 1.3%)
- French (1.2%) www.ethnologue.com/country/NZ [Accessed September 22 2018]

Unfortunately, statistic data has not been renewed for five years.

4. Result/Findings

4.1. Uniqueness of the New Zealand dialect

To represent the uniqueness of Kiwi English let us give consideration to the development of the language in various aspects (Orlov, G.A., 2013: 142).

Table 1. Historical milestones in development of the Kiwi English

Year	Historical facts
1642	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This was the first visit of Europeans with their leader Abel Tasman from the Netherlands, however all of them were killed during struggles with the Māori.
1769	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The spread of English in New Zealand began when James Cook mapped these Islands. At the same time, European merchants began to settle on these Islands.
1814	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christian missionaries began their activities among the local Māori population.
1801-1840	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Around 40 thousand Māori were killed as a result of tribal musket wars (more than 600 battles).
1840	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The country was declared a British colony and the influx of European immigrants began to grow rapidly.
The beginning of XX century was marked by the emergence of New Zealand English or Kiwi English.	

There are three principal factors throughout the history of the New Zealand's population of XX century that had a special influence on the formation of language:

- Firstly, compared to Australians, the people of New Zealand had closer historical ties with Britain and with much greater sympathy took the major principles of British society in its organization and moral values.

- Secondly, the New Zealand population had a special sense of identity and national self-consciousness. In this regard, local people in the field of language widely used local expressions and slang words.

- Thirdly, there was growing concern on the island about the rights of the indigenous Māori people. This historical process has led to a fascination in the New Zealand English version of the number of borrowed expressions from the language. 90% of Māori speak English and only about 50,000 (about 15% of them) speak Māori fluently, so multilingualism is not regarded as a significant feature of the country. A small part of its population speaks European languages. There is some revival of Māori language and culture through the "kotango peo" (katanga re) – lan-

guage nests, but only 15% of the Māori population speaks the Māori language, including a very small part of the younger generation. (Holmes J., 2005: 172). Nowadays 2 TV channels are created to broadcast only in this language. Nevertheless language policy in New Zealand is very slow to take measures in development. As the result, the promotion of the Māori language is still in gradual pace (Ethnologue. URL: www.ethnologue.com/country/NZ).

4.2. Causes of Kiwi English uniqueness

The New Zealand language is under fourfold pressure of cross-cultural communication: in addition to the problem faced by speakers of the original variant of English – how to deal with the competing influences of the British and American options – New Zealanders have to deal with the problems of interaction with the Australian English language and the Māori language (the Māori population is about 12% of the country's 3.5 million population) (Ethnologue. URL: www.ethnologue.com/country/NZ).

Until the mid-twentieth century, the New Zealand and Australian branches of the English language developed side by side and were almost identical. Though it is considered nowadays that the New Zealand dialect of English is close to Australian, but in fact it has retained a much greater influence of English from the southern regions of England. Moreover, it has acquired some characteristic features of the Scottish and Irish accents. In addition, there is an undeniable American influence on the pronunciation and vocabulary of New Zealanders. And last but not least, the Māori language had really significant impact on pronunciation and some words of the Kiwi English entered into the everyday communication of the multinational community of the country. Some linguists even believe that the Māori version of English (Māori English) is being formed in the country.

These reasons undoubtedly specify its originality and unique nature. Now the New Zealand dialect is quite independent, continues to develop and is a subject for various researches.

4.3. *Examples of Specific Features of Kiwi English*

In the New Zealand version of the English language, as well as in the Australian version of the English language, it is customary to allocate three varieties: "cultivated" (Cultivated), "common" (General) and "broad" (Broad New Zealand English). RP pronunciation is still perceived as more prestigious than "cultured" New Zealand version of the English language. It is stronger in the agricultural and conservative South Island than in the urbanized and modern Northern Island (Orlov, G.A., 2013: 146).

Vowel sounds /əə / (as in the word "near") and / eə / (as in the word "square") are increasingly fused; here rhymes with there; bear and beer, as well as rarely and really are homophones. This is the most obvious change happening in New Zealand English.

In New Zealand English there is a phenomenon of "historically determined division of pronunciation a" (eng. trap-bath split); in words type dance present vowel /ɑ:/, as and in South of England and on South Australia.

Like Australians, some New Zealanders pronounce the past participle of some verbs, such as grown, throw and mown as two – syllable, inserting an additional neutral vowel- /-oʊ.ən/. Words such as groan, throne, and moan are not affected, which means that such pairs of words are distinguishable by ear.

The letter H is usually called /eɪf/, as in the UK and North America, but can be pronounced with aspiration (breathing): /heɪf/, originating from the North English dialects; such pronunciation meets in Australian English, although often is considered wrong

The most striking differences between Kiwi English and other variants of the English language:

- ❖ the vowel sound [ɪ] is centralized (however this trait combines it with South African English) to [a] as in thick, thin;
- ❖ ascent [e] to [i] as in concession;
- ❖ narrowing [æ] to [e] as in cat;

❖ merging [EE] and [iə], e.g. fair/fear, air/ear (Marsden S., 2012: 55-59).

- Borrowings from Māori are called the most characteristic feature of New Zealand English. The Table 1 below demonstrates the examples of the words which were taken from the Māori language into Kiwi. (NZ English to US English Dictionary, URL: <http://www.nz.com/new-zealand/guide-book/language/dictionary.aspx>).

Table 1. Kiwi English borrowings from Māori

Aotearoa	the name of New Zealand in the Māori language; its meaning is "the Land of the long white cloud"
Bach	a country house on the coast
BYO	Bring Your Own, a type of restaurant where you can bring your own bottle of wine
Sarsim	red, yellow and orange pepper, we call it Bulgarian
Fish and chips	a very popular, you can even say the national dish of New Zealanders: fried fish with French fries
Haere Mai	"welcome!" in the Māori language
Hongi	a traditional Māori greeting where people greet each other with their noses
Kia Ora	"Hello!"- a traditional Māori informal greeting
Kiwi	the national symbol of New Zealand – kiwi bird, as well as the playful nickname of the New Zealanders and their language
Kiwiana-kiwiana	a collection of national and cultural details and features that reflect the specifics of New Zealand, i.e. everything that can be called "typical New Zealand"
Kumara	a Polynesian sweet potato
Pakeha	a white man, non-Māori; this word can have different meanings depending on the context (in some cases it can be an insult like "white pig", however, in most situations it still does not carry a negative connotation and means just any person with white skin, non-Māori)
Paua	the name of the New Zealand seashells with a very beautiful shimmering mother-of-pearl (in New Zealand it is possible to buy many souvenirs from pāua shell)
Waka	a traditional Māori canoe

4.4. *Why Kiwi*

The unofficial national symbol of the country is the flightless wingless kiwi bird. This amazing creature can be found only in New Zealand. The nickname Kiwi was received by New Zealand military and it firstly appeared on their insignia in the Second Anglo-Boer war (1899-1902), and then – during the First world war (1914-1919). As a result, wherever the soldiers of the New Zealand military forces fought in the battles, the nickname "kiwi" was firmly established for them. Gradually it passed to all the inhabitants of this country. Now they often call themselves Kiwi as well as their language – Kiwi English (except Māori).



**Modern identification mark of the
Royal New Zealand air force
(www.airforce.mil.nz)
[Accessed October 5 2018]**

5. Discussion

During the research specific and unique features of Kiwi English were distinguished and analyzed confirming the status of the New Zealand national version of the English language as of original and independently developing linguistic variant. Its distinctive characteristic appeared due to cultural values, geographical location, way of life, historical development, the influence of the languages of neighboring countries, as well as the language of the indigenous population.

It can be concluded after systematizing the major information that the lexical and morphological differences of the New

Zealand version are very diverse owing to numerous borrowings from British, Australian, and American English as well as Māori language.

This study was not aimed at scrupulous research of all sections of Kiwi English linguistics but the examples presented in this article made it possible to show the uniqueness of this language.

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