

TITLE: LINGUACULTURAL FEATURES OF ENGLISH IN NEW ZEALAND: MAORI INFLUENCE

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Annotation: This article explores the linguacultural features of New Zealand English, focusing on the influence of the Maori language and culture. The study highlights the incorporation of Maori vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural concepts into New Zealand English. It also examines the social and political contexts that have shaped this linguistic interaction, making New Zealand English unique among English varieties.

Keywords: New Zealand English, Maori influence, linguacultural features, language contact, indigenous language, sociolinguistics

New Zealand English (NZE) has developed as a distinct variety of English due to a range of historical, social, and cultural factors. One of the most significant influences on NZE is the Maori language (Te Reo Maori), the language of the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand. This article investigates how Maori has shaped NZE, not only at the lexical level but also through broader linguacultural dynamics. The arrival of British settlers in the 19th century marked the beginning of sustained contact between English and Maori speakers. Initially, English became the dominant language due to colonization, education policies, and social pressures. However, from the late 20th century onwards, there has been a growing recognition of Maori as a taonga (treasure) and efforts to revitalize the language have influenced public discourse and education. These efforts have contributed significantly to the visibility and use of Maori in everyday New Zealand English.

Lexical Borrowings from Maori

One of the most visible signs of Maori influence on NZE is the integration of Maori vocabulary. Common words include:

- Whanau (extended family)
- Kia ora (hello, thank you)
- Mana (authority, prestige)
- Tangata whenua (people of the land)
- Pakeha (non-Maori New Zealander)

These words are used frequently in both informal and formal settings. Government documents, news reports, and educational materials often incorporate Maori terms, reflecting their normalization in NZE.

Pronunciation and Phonology

While the phonological system of NZE is primarily derived from British English, there are subtle influences from Maori pronunciation. For example, place names of Maori origin are increasingly pronounced according to Maori phonetics rather than anglicized versions. Additionally, many New Zealanders, both Maori and non-Maori, strive to pronounce Maori words authentically. Though Maori has not significantly altered the grammatical structure of NZE, certain discourse patterns reflect Maori cultural values. For instance, speeches and formal events often begin with a *karakia* (prayer) or *mihi* (greeting speech), incorporating Maori discourse conventions into English-language contexts. Furthermore, the concept of *whakapapa* (genealogy) influences how identity and relationships are discussed.

Cultural Concepts and Worldview

Maori culture emphasizes communal values, connection to the land, and spiritual beliefs. These values are reflected in the use of certain Maori terms that convey complex cultural meanings not easily translated into English. Words like *manaakitanga* (hospitality) and *kaitiakitanga* (guardianship) are increasingly used in NZE to express these unique cultural concepts.

Language Policy and Education

Government support for Maori language revitalization has played a crucial role in the integration of Maori into NZE. Policies such as the Maori Language Act and the establishment of Maori Language Week promote awareness and usage of Maori. In schools, students learn basic Maori vocabulary and cultural practices, further embedding these elements into NZE.

Media and Popular Culture

The media has been instrumental in normalizing Maori-English code-switching and the use of Maori vocabulary. Television, radio, and online platforms often include Maori greetings and expressions. Popular music and film also showcase the blending of languages, contributing to a bilingual cultural identity.

Challenges and Controversies

Despite progress, challenges remain. Some people resist the inclusion of Maori in NZE, viewing it as political correctness rather than genuine integration. There are also concerns about superficial use or mispronunciation of Maori words. Ongoing education and cultural sensitivity are essential to address these issues.

Conclusion

The influence of Maori on New Zealand English illustrates a unique case of linguistic and cultural interaction. This relationship reflects New Zealand's evolving identity as a bicultural nation. The integration of Maori vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural concepts into NZE enriches the language and fosters greater cultural understanding. As efforts to revitalize Maori continue, its impact on NZE is likely to

grow, making this variety of English a dynamic example of language contact and cultural exchange.

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