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## Regional variants and dialects of english

**Naumenko L. P.<sup>1</sup>, Strelnikova L. G.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*The Institute of Philology Kyiv Taras Shevchenko National University*

<sup>2</sup>*National Academy of Statistics, Accounting and Audit*

*The paper is devoted to regional and dialectal variations of modern English in its British (Northern and Southern), American, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand variants on phonological, lexical semantic and grammatical levels.*

**Key words:** *variant, dialect, accent.*

*The actuality of the research.* Wide spreading of the English language in the world communication has been stimulated by rapid development of international, economic, scientific, and cultural relations which is called by the necessity to study the language-intermediary. For a long time English has been studied in its well-known form – BBC / RP which received the status of national standard in the UK. Under the modern circumstances when contacts have become more personal it appears to be not enough to know the refined version of the standardized English language. People become more interested in local, regional, and social variations of language which they hear every day in different parts of the world. The varieties of English attract attentions not only for practical purposes but scientific cognitive too.

In different English speaking countries there always been people who advocated the specifics of local talk or at least tried to differentiate regional variant from that which is spoken in metropoly. Among the first most prominent scholars who dedicated himself to this task was Noam Webster [9]. At present day philological studies one can observe the works dedicated both to regional variations of English [1; 3; 4; 6; 11] and local its representations [2; 5; 7; 8; 10].

*The objective of the article.* In our turn, we would like to pay our attention to three major differences in variation of English: phonological, lexical semantic, and structural grammatical as well as to consider the reasons of its origin.

Traditionally, British dialectologists divide all variants of English into: *English-based group* that comprises E-E, Welsh E, Scottish E, Northern Ireland E, Australian E, New Zealand E, and *American-based group* that comprises Am E and Canadian E. The main accents grouping within England are between Northern England and Southern England. *Northern England* includes the north east England dialects. Northern English shows Viking influence because the area was all north of the Danelaw. To the distinctive phonetic features of the Northern English belong the following: using of [u] and [u:] instead of [ ] and [u], e.g.: *luck* [luk], *look* [lu:k], [a] instead of [æ], e.g.: *cat* [cat], *trap* [trap], monophthongs [e:] and [o:] instead of diphthons [ei] and [ou], like in *face* and *goat*. Some dialect words used across the North are listed in extended editions of the Oxford Dictionary with a marker

## Regional variants and dialects of English

“North England”, e.g.: *ginnell* and *snicket* for “specific types of alleyways”, *to fettle* – “to organize”, or the use of *while* to mean “until”. The best-known Northern words are *nowt* “nothing”, *owt* “anything”, *summat* “something”. The “present historical” is named after the speech of the northern region. Instead of saying *I said to him*, users would say *I says to him*, or instead of *I went up there*, they would say *I goes up there*.

*Southern English* originated from the upper-class speech of the London – Oxford – Cambridge triangle and is particularly notable as the basis for RP. Southern English accents have three main historical influences: the London accent, in particular, Cockney; RP; southern rural accents, such as West Country, Kent, and East Anglian. Southern English accents are distinguished by using long [a:] instead of short [a] in such words as *cast* [ka:st], *bath* [ba:θ]; diphthongal realization of [i] and [u], e.g.: *beat* [biit], *paw* [po ], losing of ‘to’ from sentences related to places, e.g.: *Do you want to go West End?*.

Compared to English spoken in Britain, *North American English* is more homogeneous. North American English has undergone some sound changes not found in other varieties of English speech:

replacement of [o] by [ɔ], e.g.: *body, everybody, nobody*;

dropping of [j] in words like *duke, new, suit, resume*;

pronouncing [æ] instead of [a] in such words as *chance, dance, glass, last*;

vocalization of sound [r] in words and at the margins of words, e.g.: *morning, winter*.

There is a considerable number of words which differ in their phonetic shape comparing with RP in Great Britain, e.g.: *advertisement* [ædvɜ:ˈtaɪzm nt], *blouse* [blaʊs], *clerk* [klɜ:k], *either* [ˈiðə], *epoch* [ˈep k], *leisure* [ˈli:ʒə], *lieutenant* [luˈten nt], *neither* [ˈniðə], *process* [ˈprozəs], *progress* [ˈprogrəs], *schedule* [sˈkedʒul], *tomato* [təˈmeɪtoʊ], *vase* [veɪs].

The most significant spelling differences which can be detected in present-day American and British English can be revealed as follows: Am *-in* versus Br *-en* – *inclosure, inquiry*; Am *-er* versus Br *-re* – *center, fiber, liter, meter, theater*; Am *-or* versus Br *-our* – *behavior, color, harbor, honor, humor, labor, neighbor*; Am *-se* versus Br *-ce* – *defense, license, offense, practise*; Am *-z* versus Br *-s* – *analyze, criticize, emphasize, idealize, organize*; Am *-e* versus Br *-ae / -oe* – *anemia, anesthesia, medieval*; Am *-f* versus Br *-ph* – *sulfur, sulfate*; Am *-i* versus Br *-y* – *tire, siphon*, Am *-y* versus Br *-i* – *gayety, gypsy*, Am single consonant *-l* versus Br doubled one *-ll* before a suffix in unstressed syllables – *dialed, labeled, marvelous, traveler*. There are some isolated differences, e.g.:

American	British
ax	axe
cozy	cosy
curb	kerb
check	cheque
draft	draught
jail	goal
plow	plough
reflection	reflexion

Some compounds are spelled either with a hyphen or together in AmE comparing with their British counterparts, e.g.: *breakdown*, Am – *break-down*, Br; *weekend*, Am – *week-end*, Br; *grandcover*, Am – *grand cover*, Br.

North American lexicon has given English thousands of words, phrases, and new meanings. The process of coining new words started with borrowing names for unfamiliar flora, fauna, and topography from Native American languages. Examples are *chinook, hikory, moose, opossum, raccoon, sequoia, squash, Alabama, Appalachians, Chicago, Dakota, Hudson, Milwaukee, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, Niagara, Ohio, Oklahoma, Omaha, Ontario, Potomac, Wyoming*. North American vocabulary includes loanwords describing articles of everyday use of native Americans, e.g.: *kayak, moccasins, tamarac, toboggan, tomahawk, wigwam*, family relations, e.g.: *squaw, squaw-man*. The languages of other colonizing nations also added to the American vocabulary, e.g.: *cent, chute, dime, levee, prairie, portage, pumpkin* (from French), *barbecue, bonanza, canyon, coyote, lasso, mesa, mustang, ranch, rodeo, rumba, sombrero, stevedore, tornado* (from Spanish); *boodle, cookie, cruller, dope, kill, Santa Claus, skate, snoop, yankee* (from Dutch); *delicatessen, hamburger, noodle, seminar* (from German). Among the earliest and most notable additions to the American vocabulary there are terms describing features of the North American landscape, e.g.: *barrens, bluff, bottomland, branch, cutoff, fork, gulch, knob, notch, rapids, riffle, snag, timberline, trail, watergap*. Such words as *creek, slough, sleet, watershed* received new meanings unknown in England. Thus, the word *corn*, used in England to denote wheat (or any cereal), came to name the plant *Zea mays*, the most important crop in the USA, originally named *Indian corn*; wheat, rye, barley, oats, etc. came to be collectively referred to as *grain* (or *breadstuff*); the word *barn* assumed additional meaning a “housing livestock”, the word *team* – a “vehicle run by horses”, as well as *elevator* and *truck*. With development of the society’s new concepts came into life marking different domains and spheres such as: real estate – *land office, outlands, waterfront, to locate, to relocate*; types of property– *adobe, log cabin* (in the 18<sup>th</sup> c.), *frame house, tenement house, shack, shanty* (in the 19<sup>th</sup> c.), *condominium, townhouse, mobile home, multi-family* (in the 20<sup>th</sup> c.), and parts thereof – *driveway, breezeway, backyard, dooryard, family room, basement*; political institutions – *caucus, carpetbagger, exit poll, filibuster, gerrymander, gubernatorial*; business and finance – *blue chip, bottom dollar, breakeven, downsize, merger, raw deal*; sports and games – *bluff, cheap shot, off base, hit and run, quarterback*; automobile industry – *hatchback, motorhome, pickup truck, tailgate*, etc.

The vast corpus of vocabulary differences between Am and Br English came as a result of parallel development of two regional variants of language. These words and expressions refer to a large variety of areas such as politics, education, law, business, entertainment, cooking, etc. Here are some of them:

American	British
apartment	flat
attorney	solicitor, barrister
back of	behind
baggage	luggage
bar	pub
bill	banknote
billboard	hoarding
buddy	chap
cookie	biscuit
French fries	chips

Concerning morphological peculiarities, AmE has always shown a marked tendency to use nouns as verbs. Examples are *to corner*, *to interview*, *to feature*, *to profile*, *to pressure*, *to service*, *to vacuum*. Other essential feature is nouned phrasal verbs, e.g., *lose out*, *pick up*, *set up*, *trade in*. Productive is also back-formation, e.g.: *curation* → *to curate*, *donation* → *to donate*, *location* → *to locate*, and compounding, e.g.: *brainstorm*, *flatlands*, *fool-proof*, *hitchhike*, *overview* (juxtaposition); *down-and-out*, *free-for-all*, *non-profit*, *ready-to-wear* (hyphenated). Noun productive suffixes are -cian, -ee, -ery, -ster, e.g.: *beautician*, *retiree*, *bakery*, *gangster*. Americanisms are also formed by alteration of existing words, e.g.: *buddy*, *pesky*, *phony*, *skeeter*, *sashay*, *sundae*, etc.

AmE generally prefers the singular for collective nouns, e.g.: *the government is considering*, where British has *the government are considering*. Also where a verb has both regular and irregular forms, in AmE preference is given to a regular one, in British – to irregular, e.g.: *spell* – *spelled*, Am; *spell* – *spelt*, Br.

Among syntactical constructions that arose in the USA are: D + *of* (with dates and time) – *back of*, *outside of*; using of *gotten* (as PII of *get*), subjunctive without *should* or *ought to*, e.g.: *The City Attorney suggested that the case not be closed*.

Nevertheless the *Canadian English* has many similarities with the AmE and BrE, it forms its own regional variant. The term *Canadian English* is first attested in the speech by the Reverend A. Constable Geikie in 1857. Canadian English is the product of four waves of immigration over the period of two centuries. The first wave was the influx of Loyalists from the Mid-Atlantic States of America. The second wave from Britain and Ireland was encouraged to settle in Canada after the War of 1812 by the governors of Canada. Waves of immigration from around the globe peaking in 1910 and 1960 had a lesser influence, but they did make Canada a multicultural country. The languages of aboriginal people in Canada started to influence English used in this country since the first settlements, and the French of Lower Canada provided vocabulary to the English of Upper Canada.

There are approximately two thousand words and expressions that are native to Canada, or which have a meaning peculiar or characteristic. The latter are referred to as *Canadianisms*. A good deal of Canadianisms as well as Americanisms were founded out of necessity. They describe things, objects, phenomena, institutions, modern realities which are unknown to the British or American community. They are reminiscent of the early days of settlement of American Loyalists and British comers. Thus, many Canadianisms are words coined or borrowed to identify features of the new landscape: *chutes*, *saults* (of the rivers), *muskeg* (of the hitherland), *buttes*, *parklands* (of the prairies), *bluffs*, *islands* (of the trees); *cat spruce*, *Douglas fir*, *Labrador tea*, *kinnikinnick*, *Manitoba maple*, *Pembina berry*, *saskatoon*, *soopalallie*, *Sitka spruce*, *tamarack*; *cabri*, *caribou* (animals), *Canada goose*, *fool hen*, *siwash duck*, *turkey vulture*, *whiskey jack* (birds), *Massassauga rattler*, *pecan*, *siffleur*, (reptiles), *cisco*, *inconnu*, *kokanee*, *maskinonge*, *kokanee*, *oolichan*, *ouananiche*, *tuladi*, *wendigo* (fish); *acclamation*, *endorsation*, *M.P.P.* (political institutions); and also *blue line*, *bush pilot*, *cat train*, *chuck wagon*, *deke*, *faceoff*, *grid road*, *hydro*, *loonie*, *mountie*, *remittance man*, *suitcase farmer*, *timbits*, *toonie*.

There is some difference in nomination of the same things by different words or words combinations in Canadian and AmE. Among them there are:

Canadian	American
asphalt road	blacktop
blinds	shades
elastic band	rubber band
feather	(corn) silk
sheaf	bundle
tap	faucet
tea party	coffee party
veranda	porch

Canadians, unlike Americans, have a choice in matter of spelling and can choose to spell words either the American or British way: *analyze / analyse, center / centre, practice / practise, color / colour*. However, consistency must govern usage. Thus, if a Canadian in a formal paper chooses to use British spelling, he must take care to use all British suffixes. This advice is given by the *Canadian Oxford English Dictionary*.

A particular syntactic distinctive feature of CE is the post adjectival position of the word *Canada* after certain proper names, e.g.: *Air Canada, Parks Canada, Statistics Canada*. This practice has spread to other institutions and business firms – *Unity Canada, Bell Canada, Shell Canada*.

*Australian English* is relatively homogenous when compared to British E. There is, however, some regional variation between the states, particularly in regards to South Australia, Victoria, and Western Australia. One of the first publications on Australian English was issued in 1892 under the title *The Slang-English of Australia and Some Mixed Languages*. The first dictionary on historical principles was E.E. Morris' *Austral English: A Dictionary of Australian Words, Phrases and Usages* (1898). Widely regarded and authoritative *Macquarie Dictionary of Australian English* was published in 1981, after ten years of research and planning.

Australian English is non-rhotic, in other words, the sound [r] does not appear at the end of a syllable or before a consonant. However, a linking [r] can occur when a word that has a final "r" in spelling comes before another word that starts with a vowel. An intrusive [r] may be inserted before a vowel in words that do not have "r" in spelling.

Australian English incorporates many English-based words that are considered unique to this country, e.g.: *outback* – "a remote, sparsely-populated area", *jackaroo* – "a type of agricultural worker", *dinkum* – "true, the truth, authentic", *brumby* – "wild horse", *drover* – "cattle or sheep herder", *Sheila* – "woman", *gin* – "older aboriginal lady", *perjor.*, *bludger* – "lazy person", *bluey* – "person with red hair", *singlet* – "sleeveless T-shirt", *sunnies* – "sunglasses", *thongs* – "kind of footwear", *bikkies* – "biscuits", *capsicum* – "red or green bell peppers", *goon* – "cheap cask wine", also *goon bag*, *goon sack* or *goony* – "plastic cask", *Sultanas* – "small raisins", *flat white* – "espresso with milk", *short black* – "espresso", *long black* – "Americano", *Gibbo* for Gibson, *Macka's* or *Maccas* – for McDonald's (*Macka* being a nickname for any person with a "Mac" or "Mc" surname), *esky* – "portable cooler" (from the trademark *Esky*), *g'day* – a stereotypical Australian greeting. Some words which were transported by British and Irish convicts to Australia in 1788-1868 have certain variations in their meaning, e.g.: *creek* – "a stream or small river" (in BrE – "small watercourse flowing into the sea"), *paddock* – "field" (in BrE – "small enclosure for live-

stock”), *bush* and *scrub* – “wooded area” and “country areas” (in BrE are used only as a part of proper names such as *Shepherd’s Bush* and *Wormwood Scrub*), *mate* – “friend” (in BrE – “spouse”). Some words were incorporated into Australian English from aboriginal languages as names of flora and fauna, e.g.: *dingo*, *kangaroo*, *kaola*, *ostrich*, some other notions, e.g.: *boomerang*, *cooee* – “high-pitched call”, *yakka* – “hard work”, *wallaby*.

The *New Zealand* variation of English is called *New Zild* which is firmly based on BrE. One of the main things which separates New Zild from other types of English are the words borrowed from the language of the Maori, the Polynesian inhabitants of New Zealand. The evidence of them are Maori place names such as *Ngaruawahia*, *Paraparaumu*, *Rotorua*, *Takapuna*, *Timaru*, *Whangarei*, *Whanganui* (from Maori *whanga* – “harbor” and *nui* – “large”); names of local birds: *kākāpō*, *kea*, *kiwi*, *kōkako*, *moa*, *pūkeko*, *takahē*, *tūi*, *weka*; fish: *Tarakihi*, *Hapuku*; plants: *kahikatea*, *kānuka*, *kauri*, *kūmara*, *mānuka*, *mataī*, *matakoura*, *rimu*, *toetoe*, *tōtara*, *tutu*; some everyday words used in the New Zealand community: *Aotearoa* – “New Zealand”, “land of the long white cloud”, *aroa* – “love”, *haka* – “dance”, *hangi* – “food cooked in the earth oven”, *hui* – “meeting”, *iwi* – “tribe”, *kai* – “food”, *kiwifruit*, *kumara* – “sweet potato”, *marae* – “community gathering place with several buildings”, *mana* – “pride, ability”, *nui* – “big, great”, *pa* – “fortress”, *tangi* – “funeral”, *taniwha* – “water-dwelling monster”, *tapu* – “sacred”, *utu* – “revenge”, *waka* – “canoe”, *whanau* – “family”, *whare* – “house”, *wai* – “water”.

The research material leads us to the *conclusion* that origin of the English language variation is deeply motivated by historical processes and events which took place in English speaking countries. In the case of local differences on the territory of contemporary, they result from influence of Viking dominance in earlier times (in the North) and concern development of education and science (on the Southern territories). Regional varieties are much dependant on national realities of countries-receivers of colonists from England and Ireland. The above mentioned reasons brought the objective changes in diversification of English talk on all language levels: phonological, morphological, lexical, and grammatical.

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*Науменко Л.П., Стрельнікова Л.Г. Регіональні варіанти та діалекти англійської мови // Ученые записки Таврического национального университета им. В.И. Вернадского. Серия «Филология. Социальные коммуникации» – 2012. – Т.25 (64). – № 1. Часть 1. С.128-134.*

*Стаття присвячена вивченню регіональних та діалектних особливостей функціонування сучасної англійської мови в їх британському (північному та південному), американському, канадському, австралійському та новозеландському варіантах на фонологічному, лексико-семантичному та граматичному рівнях.*

**Ключові слова:** *варіант, діалект, акцент.*

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*Статья посвящена изучению региональных и диалектных особенностей функционирования современного английского языка в его британском (северном и южном), американском, канадском, австралийском и новозеландском вариантах на фонологическом, лексико-семантическом и грамматическом уровнях.*

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