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Linguistic and Cultural Adaptation in the Process of Variation

¹Emiliya A. Bocharova, ²Elena N. Shirlina, ¹Anastasia A. Mustafayeva

¹Belgorod State National Research University,
85 Pobeda St., Belgorod 308015, Russia

baghana@yandex.ru, anastasiya.pisareva95@mail.ru;

²Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy,
2 Listvennichnaia Alley, Moscow 127550, Russia

shirlina@yandex.ru

Abstract. The article deals with the peculiarities of linguistic and cultural adaptation of various variants of English which is the means of global communication in the modern world community. Functioning in a foreign territory, the English language is forced to adapt to the norms of local languages in the process of intercultural interaction, forming new variants. This article analyzes the specific adaptation features of such variants as Welsh and Scottish English variants in the course of historical and cultural interaction in order to identify key properties caused by interference processes at the level of phonetics, grammar and lexis. It is proved that the linguistic adaptation of the English language is dictated by its dominant influence on local languages and cultures, but the level of linguistic and cultural adaptation varies depending on the principle of contacting languages kinship and social differentiation of the society. Interference processes are the cause of linguistic and cultural adaptation and contribute to the emergence of such a linguistic phenomenon as code switching in a multilingual society. Caused by interference processes, language adaptation can be clearly traced at all levels: phonetic, grammatical, lexical. It is revealed that phonetic and lexical interference processes prevail in both variants - Welsh English and Scottish English. The Welsh English variant has the unique lexical structure which was formed as a result of separate historical and cultural development. The Scottish English variant has a slight resemblance to British English which is dictated by belonging to the same language family. The phonetic and lexical systems of the Scottish English variant are largely influenced by local languages which are represented in a variety of major and minor dialects.

Key words: language and culture cooperation, English variants, British English, Welsh English variant, Scottish English variant, code switching

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Лингвистическая и культурная адаптация в ходе языкового варьирования

¹Бочарова Э.А., ²Ширлина Е.Н., ¹Мустафаева А.А.

¹Белгородский государственный национальный исследовательский университет,
Россия, 3008015, г. Белгород, ул. Победы, 85

baghana@yandex.ru, anastasiya.pisareva95@mail.ru;

²Российский государственный аграрный университет – МСХА имени К.А. Тимирязева,
Россия, 127550, г. Москва, Лиственничная аллея, 2

shirlina@yandex.ru

Аннотация. Рассмотрены особенности языковой и культурной адаптации валлийского и шотландского вариантов английского языка с целью выявления ключевых свойств, обусловленных интерференционными процессами на уровне фонетики, грамматики и лексики. Доказано, что



языковая адаптация английского языка продиктована его доминирующим влиянием на местные языки и культуры, но уровень лингвистической и культурной адаптации варьируется в зависимости от принципа родства контактирующих языков и социальной дифференциации общества. Интерференционные процессы являются причиной языковой и культурной адаптации и способствуют появлению такого лингвистического явления как переключение кода в многоязычном обществе. Вызванная интерференционными процессами, языковая адаптация отчетливо прослеживается на всех уровнях: фонетическом, грамматическом, лексическом. Выявлено, что валлийский вариант английского языка обладает уникальным лексическим строем, который был сформирован в результате обособленного исторического и культурного развития. Шотландский вариант английского языка имеет незначительное сходство с британским английским, что продиктовано принадлежностью к одной языковой семье. Фонетическая и лексическая системы шотландского варианта английского языка подвержены в значительной степени влиянию местных языков, представляющих собой многообразие основных и второстепенных диалектов.

Ключевые слова: языковое и культурное взаимодействие, варианты английского языка; британский английский; валлийский вариант английского языка; шотландский вариант английского языка, переключение кода

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Introduction

Modern linguists are interested greatly in questions connected with the aspects of cross cultural communications and international relations. It is true to mention that English has become the mean of international communication, therefore, there is the actual need for the deep analysis of various English variants functioning worldwide. The basis theoretical aspects of English as global communication language has been discussed in works by D. Crystal [Crystal, 2003] who stresses the importance of all English variants functioning in the world due to their unique features based on local cultural heritage. T. Falola and N. Afolabi [African minorities..., 2007] give profound analysis of English influence to English variants and pays attention to the adaptation process of English phonology and lexical features of West African countries. Je. Baghana, Ya.A. Glebova, T.G. Voloshina, Yu.S. Blazhevich, J. Birova [Baghana et al., 2021a] stress the coherent interaction of local language and cultures and the state of English, functioning in West African countries as Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon. B. Kachru developed the theory of the so-called “New Englishes” developed in the historical period of colonisation period. Today there are many English variants: Irish English variant, Scottish English variant, American English variant, Canadian English variant, Australian English variant, Indian English variant, Nigerian English variant, South African English variant and others [The Handbook..., 2006].

The scientific problem lies in the problem for deep analysis of main English variants in the era of Globalisation, on the one hand, and the necessity to save cultural heritage of the minor local languages and cultures being influenced by the dominant English language, on the other hand. Therefore, there is an urgent need to investigate all actual English variants functioning worldwide to compare their similarities and dissimilarities stressing the importance of saving linguistic and cultural native features.

The article is aimed at systematizing main theoretical historical aspects of New Englishes development and providing peculiar linguistic features of such English variants as Welsh English and Scottish English being influenced by British English.

Methods

The research work is based on the mixture of general scientific methods and methods of linguistic research. The following methods are used as key measures: historical analysis which

gives the chance to trace historical aspects influencing the elements of the languages; descriptive method which helps to identify the units of language and the system relations, it provides the ground to describe main structural elements of words, their combinations and functioning in the sentence; comparative and contrastive analysis which gives the chance to trace similar and distinctive properties of languages in the process of cross cultural interaction.

Results and discussion

Our research work is based on the theory by B. Kachru which reveals historical circle periods of New Englishes development [The Handbook..., 2006]. Of great importance in our research work is the first circle of English development as it is connected with the language formation in Wales and Scotland. At the height of its domination (up to 400 BC), the influence of Celtic tribes was extended in that period from the territory of the British Isles to Eastern Europe and Turkey, from the border of Southern Denmark through Germany and France, to the territory of Italy and Greece. The history of the Celts has undergone all sorts of deviations and abbreviations since the beginning of its existence. On the continent, the Celts were defeated and were absorbed by their invaders: the Romans, Germans, Slavs, as well as tribes from Central Asia (Huns, Vandals). The Celts carried out their last campaign through the English Channel to the territory of the British Isles, where they found refuge for a while [Aki, 2018].

The existence of Celtic Britain on the French coast (the language of which is still spoken today) is a very controversial issue. The Bretons are British Celts who travelled through the English Channel to the continent and stayed there until the fifth century, which was much later than when the Celts arrived in Europe [Yosso, 2020].

After the Celts were expelled from Europe from the beginning of our era, we can distinguish two main language groups of the Celtic language: Q-Celtic and P-Celtic languages. The Romans, led by Julius Caesar, invaded England in 55 BC, but it took almost a century of hard struggle to consolidate their positions. They were unable to achieve firm control over Britain outside of their south-eastern base (the territory of modern London). In terms of language, the Romans did not insist on introducing their language into Britain, nor were they inclined to interfere in religious affairs as long as religion did not threaten the Roman state, and the religion of the Druids and Celts did not pose any danger. Contacts between the Welsh and the Romans were extensive, especially among the Welsh ruling classes, who had to accept the superiority of Roman rule [African minorities..., 2007].

From this point on, it is necessary to move on to the peculiarities of the Welsh and Irish languages. And although these languages have many common features, the stages of their chronological development do not coincide. English came to Wales earlier than to Ireland, which, due to its insular geographical position, resisted most English and continental changes.

Latin influenced the Welsh language in Roman times, especially in the area of lexical composition (after 800), but the linguistic influence became much stronger after England was converted to Christianity. By 300 AD, the Christian religion occupied a leading position in the world and in Rome in particular. The transition to Christianity as a quasi-official religion was very symbolic when Emperor Constantine received it on his deathbed in 337. Thus, by 400, Christianity finally became the state religion of Rome.

By the middle of the fourth century, England had fully adopted Christianity, at least its ruling classes, and along with Christianity, monasteries came to the territory of England. Abbots, bishops, priests and monks wrote manuscripts in Latin, the language of high purpose. Probably, the Welsh ruling classes were bilingual, Latin was used by the nature of their activities, and Welsh remained the language of the people. Although Ireland was never been under Roman rule, it adopted Christianity in the 5th century. At that time, the monasteries of Ireland were a refuge for cultural preservation and learning, where the learning process was conducted in Latin, while the Irish language could be heard from the common population.



Thus, by the time the Germanic tribes began their conquest of England the Welsh language and the Irish languages were firmly established on their territory as spoken languages in their lands – Wales and Ireland. Both languages had its history, before the British brought in their poems, stories and a wealth of creative writing. On the territory of Wales, the Welsh language was the official language of jurisprudence with a rich terminology. The social and managerial structures of Wales were very impressive and solid. Early Irish literature and music were rich and varied [Baghana, Voloshina, 2019].

Linguists usually talk about “Welsh dialect of English” or “Irish dialect”, while ordinary people talk about “Welsh accent” and “Irish accent”. It should be emphasized that there are quite large regional differences in both Irish and Welsh Englishes, especially in the field of phonology. Scotland has maintained its independence from Britain for many years, and yet it lacked socio-economic and political autonomy. For almost 300 years, Scotland was a country with limited powers until July 1, 1999. However, Scotland managed to maintain its religious, legal and educational independence, as well as its own sense of national identity and cultural identity.

In order to explain the development of the modern Scottish language, it is necessary to consider two key areas: the development of its own, original language, and the development of another Scottish language, which was the result of English dominant development in XVIII century.

One of the four Old English dialects was the Northumbrian dialect, common on the territory of the modern Scottish-English border, and was the forerunner not only of the indigenous Scottish language, but also of modern northern Anglo-English dialects. Consequently, there are a considerable number of common features that can be viewed in these languages that have survived to the present time. Today it is generally assumed that (British) Standard English developed in the south and was based mainly on dialects in the East Midlands area around London and East Anglia [Baghana et al., 2018].

Welsh English has unique features in its phonological, grammar and lexical levels. Phonetically it is called as a “sing-song” language as it has the effect of vowels lengthening, for example the short vowel /i/ is pronounced as long /e:/: *pit* /pe:t/; *sit* /se:t/; *film* /fe:lm/. The same process of vowel lengthening is typical for the pronunciation of the Past Simple form of the regular verbs: *watched* /watʃe:d/, *benefited* /benifite:d/, *brightened* /britene:d/. One of the typical phonetic feature of Welsh English is the pronunciation of the sound /r/ which is called “alveolar trill /r/” or “rolled /r/” and has its unique marker as /ɾ/, for example: *British* /b.ɪtɪʃ/, *cruel* /k.ɹuəl/, *cry* /k.ɹaɪ/.

Lexically Welsh English has many unique words borrowed from local cultures, such as:

- “*Cwtch*” or “*cwtsh*” /kɒtʃ/, which means «a gentle attitude towards a special person or a very small place where people usually store their things”(*He’s my cwtch* :

He’s the person who I love.

I need a cwtsh to keep my underwear – I need the chest of drawers for my under wear.

- “*Scram*” /skræm/ - *scratch with nails*. This verb is often used to indicate that a child or a kitten has scratched someone’s skin, for example:

Poly has scrambled me so mush – Poly has scratched me.

- *Drive* - /drev/- *Driver* is used when addressing the driver of any vehicle: bus, truck, taxi. This expression is a short form from “driver”. Getting out of a taxi, it is customary for the Welsh to say “*Thanx, drive*” which is considered a sign of politeness. Today many Welsh people live in London and use the lexeme “drive” instead of “driver”.

Characteristic grammar feature of Welsh English is the inversion and placing emphatic elements in sentences, for example:

“Furious, she was” – instead of British *“She was furious”*.

The usage of auxiliary verbs in positive sentences are common for Welsh English:

“He does often visit her” – instead of British *“He often visits her”*

“*I do do it*” – instead of British “*I do*”.

Misappropriation of Welsh verbs into English sentence makes specific misunderstanding among British and Welsh sometimes, for example the Welsh verb “*dysgu*” means “*to learn*” and “*to teach*”, therefore, it is often mistranslated in the common Welsh English:

“*He learned me to speak Chinese*” instead of British “*He taught me to speak Chinese*” [Donatus, 2022].

Analyzing the specifics of linguistic diversity in Scotland, it should be noted that there are three official languages in Scotland: English, Scottish and Gaelic. The Scot is used in mega policies and urban centres, on the territory of the low mountains and on the territory of the Northern Islands. Gaelic functions in the Highlands and in the Western Isles. All three official languages are in close cooperation and peacefully coexist.

As well as there are many New Englishes today there are some variants of Scottish English. In our research work we use the term Scottish English to stress all Scottish Englishes variants under one roof which is Scottish English. Scottish English is the mixture of all English variants (dialects, regionlects from Edinburgh to the Shetland Islands). While describing the structure of Standard Scottish English we analyse the language of the educated Scots.

Analysing Scottish English one must stress such linguistic phenomena as code switching which is the change of lexical units from one language to another within a sentence structure or a part of it. Scottish English code switching is connected with social group inequality. Traditionally, Glaswegians have been associated with the working classes people with low income, so Scottish English has stereotypical identity of the language of middle classes. Therefore, while communicating, the Scott can switch from British English to Scottish English in the form of some local words or even part of a sentence [Baghana et al., 2021c].

It should be noted that the Scottish language is related to English, both languages are descended from Anglican (aka Old English). The Scottish language, like English, has been significantly influenced by French, Latin, Gaelic and Dutch. Modern Scottish English can be analysed including main dialects:

- Insular Scottish dialect spoken by the inhabitants of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, which is strongly different from British English;
- Northern Scottish dialect, which is used in the north-east of Scotland, including the city of Aberdeen. A characteristic feature of this dialect is the use of the sound /f/ instead of the sound /w/;
- Central Scottish dialect, which is considered the most common among all Scottish dialects, since it operates in the area of the so-called «central belt» and includes applications in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. The Central Scottish dialect of Shottish English has gained impressive support from the local government. Currently, this dialect is largely close to the norm – British English;
- Southern Scottish dialect that is used in the southern part of the country. Often this dialect is called «language of the southern border of Scots” or “frontier language”, since geographically this dialect is assigned to the border area between England and Scotland. The Southern Scottish dialect has significant differences at the phonetic level, for example, it is characterized by the presence of unique vowel sounds: long sounds /v:./ which is pronounced more like /av:./ [Baghana et al., 2021b].

Lexically, Scottish English has many unique words which are associated with local culture and history, for example:

- *Sleekit* – like a chameleon. This polysemous word has a whole spectrum of meanings, such as “elegant”, “cunning”, “sneaky”. In the Scottish linguoculture, this word was originally used in the meaning of “*sleek*” – *the person with gelled hair* and was used in relation to a “flattering person”. Today this word is used to describe a person who is elegant, slippery and a little unreliable.



• *Gallus – brave*. This adjective is used relative to a brave person who is not only courageous, but in some sense even daring and reckless. This word comes from the Old Scottish word “gallows”, which means “fit for the gallows”. In modern Scottish English, this word has undergone a change in meaning and is used relative to a person who does everything perfectly, exemplary, saving the world.

• *Bairn - a child; son or daughter*. The word is also used in Northern England: *The wee bairn was asleep in her bed – The son was asleep in her bed.*

• *Withershins – unnatural, causing disaster*, for example:

You’d better not go withershins around this grave – If you don’t want bad luck you’d better not go around this grave.

Conclusions

To sum it all, English is considered to be the language of international communication, therefore, today there are many English variants functioning worldwide. The process of English influence on other languages was firstly connected with the colonization period and now is still actual due to the influence in such spheres as Economics, Politics, Education and Media and not only thanks to British English but thanks to American English variant.

New English variants are results of the British English transformation processes caused by interference of phonological, grammar and lexical levels structures of local languages. Welsh English variant and Scottish English variant are the result of historical and cultural occupation and expansion of British English to the nearby territories. Comparing Welsh English variant and Scottish English variant we must say that similarities lie in the dominant types of interference which are of phonetic and lexical levels and in the productive functioning of unique lexical units in every day speech which are the integral part of local cultures. Contrasting Welsh English variant and Scottish English variant we are sure to notice that due to different language roots Scottish and Welsh English variants have individual level of English influence: Welsh being from another language family group is more successful in saving linguistic heritage of local phonetics than Scottish English which is from the same language group as British English. Scottish English variant is a complicated mixture of many dialects which differ strongly in phonetics, grammar and lexical formation, therefore, this variant type tends to frequent code-switching processes which is dictated by the need of different social groups to be perfectly understood while communication.

Speaking about the prospects of future research, we would like to stress the importance of other English variants analysis, for example, in the countries of Western and Southern Africa for presenting contrastive features in comparison with British English and American English variant.

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ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРАХ

Бочарова Эмилия Александровна, кандидат филологических наук, доцент кафедры второго иностранного языка, Белгородский государственный национальный исследовательский университет, Белгород, Россия.

Ширлина Елена Николаевна кандидат филологических наук, доцент, доцент кафедры иностранных и русского языков, Российский государственный аграрный университет – МСХА имени К.А. Тимирязева, Москва, Россия.

Мустафаева Анастасия Алексеевна, аспирант кафедры романо-германской филологии и межкультурной коммуникации, Белгородский государственный национальный исследовательский университет, Белгород, Россия.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Emilia A. Bocharova, Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Second Foreign Language, Belgorod State National Research University, Belgorod, Russia.

Elena N. Shirlina, Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Foreign and Russian Languages, Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy, Moscow, Russia.

Anastasia A. Mustafayeva, postgraduate student of the Department of Romano-Germanic Philology and Cross cultural communication, Belgorod State National Research University, Belgorod, Russia.