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PECULIARITIES OF MODERN CANADIAN ENGLISH

We live in the period of globalization, when the world is becoming a global village. Human communication is different from what it used to be before. There is little question that English is the most widely taught, read, and spoken language. Nowadays Canadian English, one of its varieties, is a big concern. Thus, Ukraine and Canada collaborate in many spheres of social life: in science, education, tourism, culture. To know the peculiarities of Modern Canadian English and socialize with native speakers freely is important and crucial. That makes our research topical.

Such world known linguists as H. Agar, J. Algeo, L. Bergeron, Scargill M. conducted linguistic researches in this area. Nowadays W. Labov, S. Ash, Ch. Boberg, S. Hamilton, L.G. Verba, A.G. Nikolenko go on to elaborate the research in the field of English dialects and its varieties.

In this article our focus is peculiarities of Canadian English on different language levels and its etymology.

Canadian English (CaE) is the variety of English spoken in Canada. English is the first language, or "mother tongue", of approximately 24 million Canadians (77%), and more than 28 million (86%) are fluent in the language (2006 Census). [5]. 82% of Canadians outside Quebec speak English natively, but within Quebec the figure drops to just 11% [3, p. 68].

Canadian English contains elements of British English and American English in its vocabulary, as well as many distinctive "Canadianisms". In many areas, speech is influenced by French, and there are notable local variations. Canada has very little dialect diversity compared to the United States [2, p.38]. The phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon for most of Canada are similar to that of the Western and Midland regions of the United States. Canadian English and American English are sometimes classified together as North American English.

Canadian English is the product of four waves of immigration over a period of almost two centuries. The first large wave of permanent settlement in Canada, and linguistically the most important, was the influx of British Loyalists fleeing the American Revolution, chiefly from the Middle Atlantic States. The second wave from Britain and Ireland was encouraged to settle in Canada after the War of 1812 by a government worried about anti-English sentiment among its citizens. Waves of immigration from around the globe peaking in 1910 and 1960 had a lesser influence, but they did make Canada a multicultural country, ready to accept linguistic change from around the world during the current period of globalization [2, p.430].

The term "Canadian English" has a pedigree dating back to 1857, at which time Rev. A. Constable Geikie referred to it as "a corrupt dialect growing up amongst our population" in an address to the Canadian Institute. Geikie's preference was obviously for the British English spoken 'at home'. In 1962 Gage Publishing of Canada began its Dictionary of Canadian English series with *The Beginning Dictionary* in 1962, followed by *The Intermediate Dictionary*, and *The Senior Dictionary* in 1967. *The Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles (DCHP)* appeared in the same year.

The pronunciation of certain words has both American and British influence; some pronunciations are more distinctively Canadian. Perhaps the most recognizable feature of CanE is **Canadian raising** [1, p.20]. It is a phonetic phenomenon. Certain diphthongs are "raised" before voiceless consonants (e.g., /p/, /t/, /k/, /s/, /f/). The /a/-component of the diphthong changes from a low vowel to a mid-low vowel ([ʌ] or [ɛ]). Perhaps the most common example of Canadian raising in everyday speech is that to non-Canadians "out" is heard pronounced the same as "oat" while to Canadians the two are heard pronounced differently. This means that to a non-Canadian listener, the vowels spoken by a person with Canadian raising in the phrase "out and about in a boat" have all the same sound, rendering them as "oat and aboat in a boat". Canadian raising is not limited; thus, it may represent a sort of merging of the Scots Vowel Length Rule with the general English rule lengthening vowels before voiced consonants of any sort.

The most common understanding of the **Great Vowel Shift** is that the Middle English vowels [i:, u:] passed through a stage [ɔi, əʊ] on the way to their modern pronunciations [ai, au]. Thus it is difficult to say whether Canadian raising reflects an innovation or the preservation of an older vowel quality in a restricted environment.

Most Canadians have two principal allophones of /aɪ/ (raised to lower-mid position before voiceless consonants and low-central or low-back elsewhere) and three of /aʊ/ (raised before voiceless consonants, fronted to [aʊ] or [æʊ] before nasals, and low-central elsewhere). Unlike in many American English dialects, /æ/ remains a low-front vowel in most environments in Canadian English. Ontario and Maritime Canadian English commonly show some raising before nasals, though not as extreme as in many American varieties.

In terms of **vocabulary** we emphasize the following peculiarities. Canadian English shares **vocabulary** with other English dialects, it tends to share most with **American English**. Many terms are shared with **Britain**. In some cases British and the American terms coexist in Canadian English to various extents; a classic example is *holiday*, often used interchangeably with *vacation*, distinguishing the two between a trip elsewhere and general time off work respectively. In addition, the vocabulary of Canadian English also features words that are seldom (if ever) found elsewhere. As Walter Avis states in his introductory essay to *The Senior Dictionary* (1967), "That part of Canadian English which is neither British nor American is best illustrated by the vocabulary, for there are hundreds of words which are native to Canada or which have meanings peculiar to Canada." He goes on to elaborate that much of this new vocabulary is the result of the unique Canadian landscape, flora, fauna, weather, a way of life. A good resource for these and other words is the *Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles (DCHP)*. The search for a standard is precisely what dictionary making is about, but this arbitrary cross-section of Canadian Dictionaries yields no consensus.

As a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, Canada shares many items of institutional terminology and professional designations with the countries of the former British Empire – e.g., *constable*, for a police officer of the lowest rank, and *chartered accountant*. Education semantic field is also interesting for analysis. The term *college*, which refers to post-secondary education in general in the U.S., refers in Canada to either a post-secondary technical or vocational institution, or to one of the colleges that exist as federated schools within some Canadian universities. Most often, a *college* is a community college, not a university. In Canada, *college student* might denote someone obtaining a diploma in business management while *university student* is the term for someone earning a bachelor's degree. For that reason, *going to college* does not have the same meaning as *going to university*. Within the public school system the chief administrator of a school is generally "the principal", as in the United States, but the term is not used preceding his or her name, i.e. "Principal Smith". The assistant to the principal is not titled as "assistant principal", but rather as "vice-principal". Canadian universities publish *calendars* or *schedules*, not *catalogs* as in the U.S. Canadian students *write* or *take* exams (in the U.S., students generally "take" exams while teachers "write" them); they rarely *sit* them (standard British usage). *Canadian slang* as a variation of standard speech is obvious nowadays. The lexical constituent of Anglo-Canadian slang is very dissimilar. There can be singled out the following units.

Units those are common for American and Canadian Languages, North-Americanisms. For example: *jitney* (a cheap taxi); *beanie* (a freshman's cloth cap); *dump* (a pub, a bar); *lightning* (cheap whisky); *weeno* (wine); *bull* (idle talk); *guff* (nonsense, lies).

Units, those appeared and used in the USA, but gradually get into the Canadian language. For example: *eager-beaver* (boarder); *fink* (unpleasant person); *doodad* (a thing for reminding about sth.).

Units, those appeared and are used in Canada, but can be met in American English. For example: *noodle*, *nut* (head); *fink* (strike-breaker, blackleg).

Units those are appeared and used exceptionally in Canada [4, p.96-102]. For

example: - railway men's slang: *pig* (locomotive), *plug* (a small train);

- musicians' slang: *canary* (a female singer), to *blow* (to play);

- military slang: *Joe boy* (a recruit), *moldy* (torpedo);

- sport slang: *rink-rat* (a boy, cleaning the rink), *arena rat* (fan, supporter).

So, we can say that Canadian slang is a very complicated system that unites chronologically different layers of the American and Canadian slang.

Having analysed some peculiarities of Canadian English diachronically and synchronically on different language levels we may conclude the following.

Canadian English is the product of four ways of immigration over a period of almost two centuries. This term is first attested by Rev. A. Constable Geikie in 1857. The pronunciation of English in most of Canada is very similar to the pronunciation of English found in the Western United States. Canadian English grammar and spelling combines British and American rules. It shares vocabulary with other English dialects, most with American English. Canadian slang is a new and quite original system that doesn't copy either American or British system.

References

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