

### EDITORIAL

This issue of *NZWords* is a departure from all previous issues in that it contains excerpts from a range of undergraduate student research projects in New Zealand English lexis. Selecting their own areas of research, students have presented a wide variety of terms, perspectives, treatments, rationale for study, and evidence of scholarly approach. (Due to space restraints, we can print only truncated studies, devoid of bibliographies and references.) A new arrival from France, Mathilde Ekel, is able to look at New Zealand English from an outsider's perspective, from the view of one who has learned to use English formally. In dealing with the domain of food, she isolates preoccupations conveyed in names created for eating down under, including **Kiwi hot**, and suggests that Kiwis are able to laugh at themselves with the coining of terms like **marmageddon** and the **Marmapocalypse**. These terms were generated for the state of deprivation felt by many New Zealanders when the usual national supply of Marmite became unavailable due to the Sanitarium factory's damage during the Canterbury earthquakes. (The most serious February 2011 earthquake, known as **the big one**, and **old Bucky**, has been further dubbed **the grand mal**, a name that has gone national. In keeping with the enthusiastic approach to the city's reconstruction, Christchurch residents have also developed a Ministry of Awesome with the website [ministryofawesome.com](http://ministryofawesome.com) to foster the positive spirit among residents.)

We hope you enjoy reading about student research into our own variety of English, and find their respective conclusions of interest.

# Undergraduate research in New Zealand English

This year, thirty third-year students in Linguistics (Linguistics 322) at Victoria University of Wellington selected a domain of New Zealand life from which to research aspects of New Zealand English usage. Their task was to examine the background of the domain; to select at least ten words from it, with the earliest possible citations and the most recent citations; to assess the usage of these terms; to analyse them according to word formation, etymology, definition, and presence of heteronyms; and to apply a typology of New Zealand English to them. The domains selected were wide – ranging from orcharding to social welfare, Pasifika, the criminal world, sports, education, food, New Zealand fiction, children's literature, the environment, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer community, place names, and the domestic domain. It was the variety that students in this class presented this year that prompted me to seek their permission to publish excerpts from the research assignments. With word limits of 2500 words, it is only possible to publish sections from some of the work of thirty students for *NZWords*.

## A study of New Zealand English vocabulary in the orcharding domain

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The orcharding industry has long been a significant part of New Zealand's agricultural sector, originating in the late 19th century with the Apple and Pear Marketing Board (Richardson 2005: 40). The industry currently exports large volumes of apples, kiwifruit, pears and other fruit to over 50 countries from the Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty, and Tasman regions. A significant body of domain-specific vocabulary has emerged that provides insight into not only New Zealand vocabulary change, but also its impact from a global market perspective.

Hunt (2010) investigated the relationship between the way New Zealand orchardists spoke about their orchards and their management practices. However, this study was concerned more with attitudes than language itself. The current study aims to investigate the linguistic side of the orcharding domain using methodology similar to Bardsley (2006). In this way, it will bring an even greater level of understanding to the nature of NZE in the rural sector.

This study aims to investigate the extent to which the orcharding industry has introduced new terms and meanings to the New Zealand English lexicon. It includes a detailed analysis of ten different NZE terms and phrases which are specific to the orcharding industry and originated in New Zealand.

### Methodology

The current study is diachronic, investigating usage of terms from 1896 through to 2012. Terms were selected from various sources, including publications such as *Orchardist* magazine, news websites, promotional websites, and also from personal experience of orcharding terms. The terms include company names, apple brand names, and technical terms. Terms were chosen to reflect vocabulary from several different areas of the orcharding industry. It was required that each term either originated in New Zealand, or came from elsewhere but took on a new meaning in New Zealand English.

In order to determine if the words were New Zealand English, words were checked against the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *New Zealand Oxford Dictionary* and the *Dictionary of New Zealand English*. The citations collected came from a range of sources, such as *Papers Past*, agricultural periodicals, and news websites as well as promotional websites, and other internet sources. Because many of the words originated quite recently, sources were limited in number and the desired level of diversity was difficult to achieve. However, there is a sufficient range of sources to provide adequate contextual examples for each term.

Identification of heteronyms proved challenging as most of the terms had a NZ-specific referent, so an equivalent would not be found in other varieties of English.

## Technical orcharding terms

This group encompasses terms that are used on the orchard at a primary industry level. They describe different aspects of the initial production process before the fruit is moved off-site. It includes the terms **pipfruit**, **cool-store**, **bay**, **treble** and **T-bar**. Little information can be found on the coinage of these terms, for several reasons. First, a study has not been conducted in New Zealand that investigates orcharding vocabulary in detail. Terms like **bay**, **treble** and **T-bar** are very specific to the domain of kiwifruit growing and are unlikely to be widely known outside the industry. It is also possible that because they are supplementary senses of existing terms, they may have seemed a logical progression from existing meanings. Because of this, their current modified meaning may have gone undocumented. It is also important to note that the kiwifruit industry in New Zealand has greatly increased in size and influence only in the past 20–30 years, so the terms are likely to have developed quite recently. This view is supported by the citations found in the current study.

Older terms, however, have much more scope in documentation of their use. For example, the earliest citation of **cool-store** that was found dated back to 1896, and the term is still used widely today. With the term **pipfruit**, citations were found from 1918, 1944 and 2010, showing continued use right across almost a century of New Zealand history. The example clearly shows a coinage that originated directly from a need for a generalised term, and became rooted in the vocabulary of the domain. This example helps us to see the progression from initial to common use, and to understand the process behind it. In the same way, it is likely that some of the more recently introduced terms will follow the same pattern, although not to the same extent as they are less easily generalised.

The term **Hydralada** can also be considered as a technical term in the orcharding domain. The first part of the word, 'hydra', refers to the hydraulic lifting system used to elevate the operator. The second part, 'lada', refers to 'ladder', the item whose function is replaced by this machinery. This type of alternative orthography is common in the production of brand names (Vanden Bergh, Adler & Oliver 1987). While the term itself was coined as a brand name, **Hydralada** has also been adopted and extended by orchardists to refer to all farm machinery of the same type.

The clearest conclusion that can be drawn from examining the technical terms is that human language has a great capacity to adapt words to perform specific functions. The examples highlight the flexibility of the English language. In the case of the usage of **bay**, the word takes on a very different meaning, but still retains all of its common uses. In the same way, NZE as a whole is very successful at tailoring words to meet the needs of specific domains while still retaining its place as a variety of English. Future research into the subject of technical orcharding terms could investigate the origin of these terms, although the lack of documentation may make this a difficult task.

## Brand and product names

Included under brand and product names are **ENZA**, **Freshco**, **Jazz** and **Breeze**, and also **Hydralada** although it has already been discussed. The first two terms are the names of apple exporting companies, and the second two are apple variety names. With the term **ENZA**, there is some speculation over why the letters were chosen. It is commonly thought to be an acronym for 'Eat New Zealand Apples'. However, the company's rationale for name choice states that it doesn't stand for anything specific, but was chosen because it 'is culturally acceptable, has a strong association with New Zealand and is short and snappy'. This explanation includes an element of national identity, a main objective in the selection of New Zealand's internationally-focused brand names. With the choice of company names, the owners are attempting to project an image of

New Zealand to a global market. The international distribution of the knowledge of New Zealand apple brand names is another matter for consideration. The **Jazz** apple was first created in the 1980s, but the official name **Jazz™** was not made public until 2002 when international export began. Since then, the USA, France and the UK have also begun to produce **Jazz** for export, bringing the name further into the global vocabulary (*Orchardist* 1/5/2007: 22–4). Thus, while **Jazz** can still be seen as a term which originated in New Zealand, it is now an accepted and understood term in its current usage in many parts of the world. This is why an issue arose in classifying the term on Deverson's typology (2000). It was difficult to determine whether the referent was distinctive or non-distinctive to New Zealand.

The apple variety **Breeze** is at the earlier end of this continuum. It has only been marketed internationally since 2007 in low volumes to a predominantly Asian market. As a result, it is not well known either internationally or in New Zealand, and the suggestion of the word 'breeze' is unlikely to lead one to think of apples, leading to a selection of type 3 on Deverson's typology (2000). Leading on from this, an interesting avenue for further research into NZE terms could be a word association task to determine whether the original or supplementary sense of a word is more salient.

## Conclusion

From the analysis of ten New Zealand English terms in the orcharding domain, several observations have been clear. First, it has been demonstrated that New Zealand English has a vast capacity for adaptation, with gaps in the lexis quickly being filled with both new and borrowed terms. Second, New Zealand English has been shown to be influential on and influenced by the global platform of export marketing and branding. And finally, the importance of more analyses of this type has been highlighted, as well as possible avenues for related research.

Social welfare is a highly politicised topic in New Zealand. Unemployment remains one of the most stigmatised areas. This offers considerable opportunity for the domain of unemployment to contribute a number of vocabulary items to New Zealand English. Major newspapers and political blogs were consulted to establish an initial word list. Eleven vocabulary items were identified as New Zealandisms and categorised according to Deverson's typology. A minimum of three citations were sourced for each term to illustrate its use and the history. While words were selected from a variety of formation processes, compounding was especially frequent.

## Unemployment in New Zealand

Social welfare has a notable presence in New Zealand political history. Unlike other Western societies, welfare has historically been provided by the state rather than voluntary organisations (Te Ara 1966). The Social Security Act 1938 introduced a number of policies to provide for citizens facing economic difficulty. This Act also led to the creation of the Social Security Department to administer monetary benefits, including the Unemployment Benefit. Since this period, social welfare has undergone regular reform (Maloney 1997: 1). Welfare is a significant political issue in New Zealand and is often in the media, with unemployment among the most stigmatised (O'Brien 2008: 7). This presence provides a number of opportunities for innovative language use, particularly in the naming of policies and programmes.

## Data sources

To compile the initial word list a range of newspapers and political blogs were used. Of the mainstream media *The Dominion Post*, *The NZ Herald*, and the Political and National section of the Fairfax news website *Stuff.co.nz* were selected. These were accessed online where possible as many online news articles allow the public to publish comments. These comments are

often written in an informal style, which provides additional data on public discourse about welfare and unemployment.

For less conventional language use, the infamous blogs *Tumekel*, *Kiwiblog*, *Whale Oil Beef Hooked (Whale Oil)* and *The Standard* were selected as these provide a range of political opinions and writing styles. All of these blogs also allow comments from the public. Blogs allow writers to tag posts according to the themes and issues. The blogs were searched via tags that were considered relevant to this domain, such as Welfare, State Housing and Paula Bennett.

As the focus on this lexis was words in current use, relevant words were selected from articles and blog posts from January to April 2012. The welfare reform in progress at this time provided a plentiful supply of texts that covered the domain of unemployment. The National Library's database *Papers Past* and online newspaper database *Knowledge Basket* were used to source citations. Sources for citations were extended to include the *Evening Post*, a former Fairfax newspaper of Wellington, now part of the *Dominion Post*; *The Dominion*, a former guise of *The Dominion Post*; and the *National Business Review (NBR)* for its frequent comment on welfare related issues.

## New Zealand words

From the initial list of possible New Zealand English terms, eleven New Zealandisms were identified. A New Zealandism is defined by Deverson (2000) as 'the restricted set of words that are known and used by New Zealanders but rarely if at all by other (especially northern hemisphere) speakers, that is distinctive items.' To initially establish the origin of the selected words a number of dictionaries were consulted. Terms listed in the *Dictionary of New Zealand English* identified as New Zealand English terms. The *Australian National Dictionary* was also consulted to accommodate for the possibility that words from this variety were now being used in New Zealand. A number of the initially identified terms were found to be present in both

Australian and New Zealand English, for instance the term **bludger** to mean a person who relies on the work of others.

In instances where the selected terms were not found in dictionaries a more creative approach was required. Hurley (2000: 35) notes that whether a term appears on the Internet is a quick and useful way to see if a word is in use overseas. Items were searched for in exclusively Australian, UK and NZ pages to check for their use in non-New Zealand contexts. Many websites with non-New Zealand domain names provided information on New Zealand content. This was most common in Australian sites but there was also considerable NZ content on UK-hosted sites. This method is not without its difficulties and cannot provide a definite answer. Nevertheless, it remains a useful and easily accessible tool.

## Classification of terms

Words were categorised according to Deverson's (2000) typology of New Zealand English lexis. In this typology, words may or may not have a distinctive New Zealand referent. Furthermore, there are words that are themselves distinctive and those that are used elsewhere but have a distinctive meaning in New Zealand. Of the latter type, words may be supplementary, where they have an additional meaning in New Zealand English, or Substitute, in which case the word carries a different meaning than in other varieties of English. The classification of words as having distinct and non-distinct referents presented some difficulties in that many terms refer to the unique structure of the New Zealand welfare system and the specific services it provides. Equivalent systems, services, and departments exist elsewhere but these do not mirror the structure of the system in New Zealand. For instance, *Centrelink* in Australia has a much broader focus than **Winz** and is more easily comparable to the *Ministry of Social Development*. It was decided that terms related to the provision of services were culturally specific to New Zealand



and the New Zealand social welfare system. While equivalents exist in other social welfare systems of other countries, there is significant variation, particularly in eligibility, and there is significant overlap across forms of assistance in other countries. In some cases it was decided that there was sufficient similarity across systems to be considered non-distinctive. While a detailed study of comparative welfare policies would no doubt present a number of differences, the basic principles and mode of the service delivery in question are easily comparable.

To establish the presence of these services in other countries I consulted websites for equivalent government departments in Australia: *Centrelink*, the United States: *Department of Labor*, and the UK: *Department of Work and Pensions*. Additionally, a text on welfare by Robert Walker (2005) was consulted. While many terms were classified as having a distinctive NZ referent, for the purpose of comparison across varieties of English in the welfare domain, terms have been provided for equivalent entities in other varieties. This also provided a number of heteronyms for the New Zealand English words.

## Selection of citations

Where possible the earliest and most recent citations were found. However, in some cases these were discarded in favour of citations that better illustrated the use of the word. At least three citations were listed for each headword. In some cases more are listed if they were considered to provide additional information on the use of the word, particularly in cases where the word could be used in a variety of ways, or to demonstrate different orthography.

The use of blogs provided a range of registers for words in current use; however, their contemporary nature provided limited use for citations beyond the present. This limited citations to the selected newspapers, with the majority of citations taken from *The Dominion Post* and the *NZ Herald*. As a result there is a significant representation of these sources, and significant under-representation of blogs and informal language use. The disadvantage of this was encountered

in the difficulty in sourcing citations for **benny**, a familiar form for beneficiary and benefit. The earliest citation for **benny** in the *Dictionary of New Zealand English* is 1994. While the term is used regularly in blogs and comments on online news articles it has very limited use in newspapers.

## Results

The words identified as New Zealandisms are: **DPB**, **Paula Benefit**, **jobseeker support**, **WINZ**, **Community Services Card**, **payment card**, **beneficiary**, **benny**, **benny bashing**, **solo**, and **state house**.

Of the eleven words identified in this study, six are compounds with one acronym and one initialism of compound words. Furthermore, heteronyms and other equivalent terms from other varieties of English were also compounds.

It is also worth noting at this point that **bennie** was a common alternative spelling of **benny**. Initially the alternative spelling was considered to be reflective of the frequent innovative orthography found in comments on internet news articles and blog posts. However, this form occurred consistently and no citations could be sourced with the spelling of **benny** with the meaning 'beneficiary,' the only exception being when used in combination with **-bashing**.

Also of interest is the continued use of the word **Winz**. The Work and Income website states that this is an acronym from *Work and Income New Zealand*, the former name of what is now called Work and Income. Regardless of the change in branding, **Winz** is frequently used in the media, although not on the department's own website.

## Discussion

The majority of words in this study are compounds. Jackson (1988: 31) notes that compounds are readily accepted, as their meanings are transparent. In the case where these terms are politically charged, the meaning can more accurately reflect the meaning of government policy. This is clearly demonstrated in the proposed **Jobseeker Support** to replace the current **Unemployment Benefit**, **Domestic Purposes Benefit**

and **Sickness Benefit**. This is also demonstrated in heteronyms from other varieties of English, most notably Australia's *Newstart Allowance* which serves the same political purpose in its naming.

Also of note is that linguistic innovation is limited outside the formal written domain. With the exception of **Paula Benefit**, **benny** and the various forms of **beneficiary bashing**, all the items in the compiled vocabulary list are terms that are not out of place in mainstream media in New Zealand and that one could expect to find in official documents. The use of blogs and comments by the public on news articles did not yield any unique words that could not be found in the mainstream media, and very few that would be out of place in official documents. Where innovative terms were found, there was little, if any, evidence of these terms in currency elsewhere.

## Conclusion

The domain of unemployment has contributed a number of words to the New Zealand English lexis which are unique to New Zealand as well as additional senses to words already in use in both New Zealand and other varieties of English. Compound words were the most common type in this domain and many were standard or official terms for services and assistance to unemployed persons. In future studies it would be interesting to investigate whether social welfare reforms could be tracked over time through the language used to describe them, and whether certain types of words are more likely to survive. Particularly of interest is whether compound terms are more transitory given the political messages that they often portray.

The English language is well known for borrowing words from other languages. Tuleja (2009: ix) notes 'The language of England is rich in foreign infusions'. He puts this down to their many invasions, from being on both the receiving and giving end, as well as their important sea explorers such as Captain James Cook and his encounters with the outside world during colonial times. New Zealand English is considered as 'new English' because its development was due to the inclusion of dialects and accents among the early settlers as well as the language of the indigenous people, Maori (Jenkins, 2003).

This paper examines the loan words associated with the domain of Pacific Island immigration in New Zealand along with terms that have developed due to the Samoan presence in New Zealand in particular. My data suggests that lexical terms borrowed from the Pacific Island languages are not common in everyday society. It raises the question as to whether the use of borrowed terms is merely a form of code-switching to suit a Pacific Island audience. Macalister (2000) notes that 'loan words are generally obedient to English rules of phonology, morphology and syntax'; however, with most of my investigated terms from the Samoan language, data suggests otherwise.

## Methodology

This synchronic study examined the period of Samoan immigration to New Zealand. Data was collected in the form of a self-report questionnaire and a group discussion. Participants (twelve in total) varied in age, sex and ethnicity but were second- and third-generation New Zealanders. Included was a third-generation New Zealand-born Samoan with little oral fluency in the Samoan language but a fair understanding of it and the culture.

## The Pacific Island immigrants

In the 1950s and 1960s when New Zealand's industries and service sectors were booming, the New Zealand government and employers looked to the Pacific Islands to recruit unskilled and semi-skilled labourers to work in their urban factories to cover the labour shortages. Many

Pacific Islanders, especially Samoans, took up this opportunity for better-paying jobs and a better education for their children. '[M]any migrants saw migration to New Zealand as a means of supporting the family in Samoa' (Macpherson & Pitt, 1974: 13). And so the beginning of the Pacific Island migration period, on a larger scale, to New Zealand began. The majority of the Pacific Island immigrants arrived on temporary working visas, but with the economy thriving and jobs being so plentiful, immigration laws were not vigorously enforced. In 1964, the New Zealand government set annual quotas for immigrants; however, they were particularly aimed towards Pacific Island immigrants.

In the 1970s, as the economy and job market declined, the government targeted Pacific Islanders and blamed them for the strain on social services, which meant that the penalties for exceeding visa quotas were from here on enforced. Media coverage of Pacific Island immigrants raised concerns about the burden they were becoming on the economy, suggesting they contributed to the already increasing racial tension within the country. Lotu (2007: 1) noted 'the legacy of a domineering relationship between the Palagi majority group and the Pacific minorities that is captured by such derogatory terms is still evident in public forums such as the media.' From here on Pacific Islanders were portrayed in a negative image in the public eye and new terms were fashioned in reference to them.

In 1974, **dawn raids** were carried out on the homes of suspected Pacific Island immigrants (mainly Samoans, Tongans and Fijians) who had overstayed their work visas and 'in 1976...a new word [**overstayer**] had entered the lexicon' (Perrott, 2000).

The term **dawn raid** has a distinctive referent in New Zealand, associated only with Pacific Island immigrants, and becoming part of New Zealand's history. **Dawn raid** is also the name of an entertainment label in New Zealand and the name derives from this particular era. **Dawn raid** also refers to the financial market; it is the illegal act of buying up large amounts of a target firm's stock

when the sharemarket opens first thing in the morning.

The term **coconut** has been in circulation since before the **dawn raid** era. Macpherson and Pitt (1974: 90) interviewed a Samoan employee who recalls his manager scolding him, saying 'if he did not do what he was told he would be fired and that he didn't intend to have "smart coconuts" trying him out'.

What makes the term **coconut** unique to New Zealand is the contrast in use to that of other English-speaking countries, who relate **coconut** to the skin colour of a person who is dark/brown/black who acts as a white person. The characteristic of the coconut having a brown shell with a white flesh reflects the meaning behind the term. In other words, *brown on the outside, white on the inside*. However, in New Zealand the term purely reflects Pacific Islanders with their natural source of coconut trees and the foreign perception of natives climbing these trees. The term **coconut** features in the REED *Dictionary of New Zealand English* (2001), which illustrates its NZE usage.

**FOB**, an acronym for 'fresh off the boat', is another well-known term directly associated with Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. When the migrant Pacific Islanders arrived, there was always the image of Pacific Island people arriving on boats with their families. 'Many migrants came to New Zealand by boat. However this gradually changed from the 1960s with the rise of cheap international air travel...' (*Evening Post* 29.05.1962). Pacific Islanders were not the only immigrants to arrive by boat, but the term referred specifically to them. Many countries use this term to refer to people who come from a different country. America uses the term **FOB** - 'fresh off the Boeing' - in relation to Asian immigrants who arrive in America on a Boeing aircraft. Aside from its derogatory meanings, the term also relates to the shipping industry, for example 'Free on Board', described by the New Zealand Export Credit Office as a fee that one would pay for transportation of goods plus the extras such as freight, insurance, unloading, and the transportation from the port to destination.

All of these terms were easily recognised by the participants in



the group discussion, and were immediately linked to Pacific Islanders. The participants did not know that the acronym **FOB** was used in the shipping industry, nor had they heard of the meaning 'fresh off the Boeing'. This suggests that these terms have a definite New Zealand connection.

## Loan words from the Samoan language

**Fa'asamoa**, to my surprise, features in the REED *Dictionary of New Zealand English* (2001). This is in contrast to my questionnaire data, which does not show a high knowledge or usage among **Palagi** New Zealanders for this term. Bauer (1994: 406) points out that Pacific Island and Samoan words used in NZE 'are not at all common except in the discussions of things Pacific Island or Samoan'.

Data revealed that two participants knew of the word yet did not know the meaning. Eight participants had never actually heard of the word, but gathered that it was something to do with Samoa only because of the fact that 'Samoa' was included in the word. The final two participants knew the word and could use it in a sentence:

Vili: 'Samoans live life according to fa'asamoa.'

Scott: 'Fa'asamoa reflects Samoans' admiration for their culture.'

One of these participants did admit upon recollection that he rarely, if ever, used the term. However, if he did use the term it would only have been with other Samoan peers or in discussions about Samoan culture.

**Lavalava** and **Palagi** were terms the whole discussion group knew very well and admitted to using often. Ten out of the twelve participants confirmed they use the term **lavalava** more often than sarong. Two participants preferred the word sarong over **lavalava** because they felt that there was a distinct difference between the two meanings.

Fiona: 'A sarong you'd wear to the beach over your bathing suit, a lavalava is what Islanders wear.'

Stv.C: 'A lavalava is a traditional Samoan wrap, and

sarongs are what girls wear to the beach.'

Another interesting discovery was that the majority of the group preferred to use the term **Palagi** over **Pakeha**, when it came to referring to [white-skinned] New Zealanders. The consensus among the group was that there was a direct referent with the term **Palagi**, meaning that it just meant a 'white-skinned person', as opposed to the term **Pakeha** which had some negative connotations associated with it. Commonly, there are assumptions associated with the word: 'The term Pakeha is sometimes understood to mean long pig and white pig ...'. Two participants (the two oldest of the group) felt strongly against the term **Pakeha** being used in government and official documents.

Stv.C: 'I don't tick the box that says Pakeha when it asks for my ethnicity. I just cross it out and write New Zealander.'

Fiona: 'I hate that they use Pakeha in those official documents. I don't tick it; I tick the "other" box.'

This shows that the term **Palagi** has been accepted, to a certain degree, into NZE. However, when asked what they would use in everyday situations, 11 out of 12 said they would use either Kiwi, New Zealander, or Caucasian. But given the two options **Palagi** or **Pakeha**, **Palagi** was the preferred term. **Palagi** also features in the REED *Dictionary of New Zealand English* (2001).

The term **aiga**, which also features in the REED publication, was not as commonly used but there was a clear understanding of the term from the group. The group preferred to use the Maori term **whanau** over **aiga**:

Geo: 'I think I'm just so used to saying whanau, never really used the term aiga before. I think I use whanau more than family actually.'

Ema: 'You know you're a Kiwi when you use the term whanau. I loved using it when I was travelling overseas and people would be like, what did you just say? I guess it was a sense of marking my identity out there in foreign lands ...'

**White Sunday** is an English translation for what is known in Samoa as 'lotu tamaiti', which, when translated literally, means 'children's [church] service'. The term **white Sunday** is merely a reflection of Samoan churches wearing white on this particular day. There was not much familiarity with this term even though it was an English term for the Samoan tradition which Samoans have celebrated since they immigrated here.

Phil: 'I've heard of white Sunday actually, not sure where though. Is it like children's day?'

Tina: 'Interesting, is that where we [NZ] got children's day from?'

The initialism **PI** in New Zealand stands for Pacific Islander. It is not a borrowed term but it is a term that has been used widely in New Zealand to refer to a person of Pacific Island descent. Macpherson (1996: 127) comments that 'during the 1970s and early 1980s, the terms "Pacific Islanders" and "the Pacific Islands community" were in general and official use in New Zealand.' **PI** is a more colloquial term founded amongst the Pacific Island people living in New Zealand. Fairbairn-Dunlop (2003: 17) notes that 'Pacific peoples' is the official term for referring to Pacific Island people currently, and is used 'by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and the state sector to describe Pacific peoples and their communities'.

## Conclusion

New Zealand is a diverse and multicultural country. People from many countries have come to call it home, and because of this New Zealand has grown from a predominantly English-speaking country to a multilingual one.

A question that came to mind many times during the process of investigating these terms was, 'Are Samoan loan words really a part of the NZE lexicon, because the only relationship with such borrowed terms is merely in association with a Samoan or Pacific Island context?' According to the 2006 census, Samoan is the fourth most spoken language in New Zealand after English, Maori, and Chinese. It also notes that 63 per cent of Samoans

in New Zealand are able to hold everyday conversations in their own language. History, demography, and language maintenance are the major factors that contribute to

Samoa's presence in NZE. Gordon and Deverson (1998: 69) note that 'there is no well-defined line over which a word must pass before being counted as a permanent acquisition'

and future research will be needed in order to conclude that Samoan has passed the threshold of 'permanent acquisition'.

## Identity and the lexis of food in New Zealand

MATHILDE EKEL

As a foreigner who has only been in the country for ten months, my approach was influenced by my perception of New Zealand culture. Indeed, almost the entire vocabulary specific to New Zealand was unknown to me before I came, and the first months required adjusting to it, finding out the meanings of words, taking notes, and memorising each term for later use. Unsurprisingly, the language of food and drink was a necessity on arrival, as both an obvious expression of the cultural identity as well as what I first had to find to eat. I had an overall impression of New Zealand gastronomy, with its strong British influence, but above all a feeling that was completely new to me, that is, of being in the South Pacific, and unmistakably experienced in the food: Asian and Pacific Island influences, and a way of looking towards Europe that had never occurred to me.

My approach to this study was synchronic. I was looking for the most recent citations possible, from the 2000s to the present, because of a desire to examine contemporary New Zealand culture. New Zealand, being at first the Maori country that then became a British colony, bears the marks of biculturalism from its early history. The more recent changes to the socio-cultural landscape came with an increased immigration from the Pacific (in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s) and from Asia (in the 1990s and in the present).

The data collected contains compounds (**manuka honey**), borrowings from te reo Maori (**kai** and **hangi**), an example of semantic extension (**fluffy**), a toponym (**Lemon & Paeroa**), an acronym (**L&P**), and one blend, the most recent word of the selection: **marmaggedon**.

**Fluffy** is an interesting instance of semantic extension: the adjective

*fluffy* is attributed to the aspect and texture of frothed milk, and used as a noun to refer to a cup containing fluffy frothed milk that is advertised as a coffee for children. **Fluffy** could also be categorised as a diminutive, or hypocoristic. It has a childish connotation (which *babycino* in Australian English transmits in a different, more direct, way). The fluffy aspect of the milk reminds us of something warm and comfortable, like a teddy bear, for example. The term has a cuteness specific to baby talk that fits very well with referring to things related to childhood. The wide variety of coffee available here allows every individual to have their own favourite, without forgetting the children, making it something aimed at bringing together all New Zealanders.

**Marmaggedon** is an interesting example of the irony and self-derision that can be a feature of New Zealand culture, comparing the Marmite shortage to a serious end-of-world disaster. The particular type of Marmite produced in the South Island and its popularity across New Zealand (preferred over the British recipe of Marmite or the Australian version, Vegemite) along with the fact that the shortage is an aftermath of the 22 February Canterbury earthquakes, makes it culturally emblematic, regardless of the fact that its media coverage is considered excessive by many locals. When looking for citations, the most common source proved (unsurprisingly) to be social media. **Marmaggedon** has even been made a hashtag on Twitter (a symbol allowing research of other citations of that word, acknowledging a special status of a word by making it recognisable by many Twitter users). I found several instances of **Marmaggedon** in overseas sources, always referring to the New Zealand Marmite shortage. We can imagine that the fact that the shortage was

due to the 22 February Canterbury earthquakes caused international interest, or that the extensive coverage in New Zealand of a rather trivial event can provoke irony internationally as well as within the country.

**Hokey-pokey** is a term for which the origin could be a cheap block of ice cream that used to be sold on the streets in Britain.

**Hangi** is one among many instances of borrowing from te reo Maori and it adds to the bi/multicultural identity of New Zealand. This tradition is not restricted to Maori culture (it is also seen, for example, in Hawai'i).

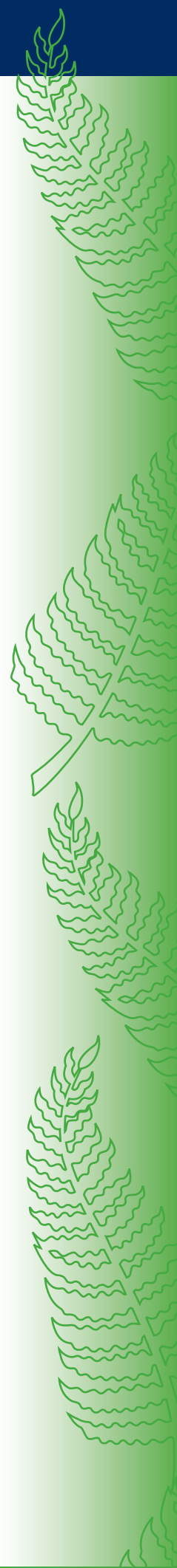
**Afghan** possibly has a synonym in *desert roses* in that they are both made with cornflakes and chocolate, but there is no exact equivalent of these biscuits outside of New Zealand, apart from in Australia.

**Manuka honey** is a product from the pollen of a New Zealand native tree and is certainly one of the most representative food products of the country. A successful export item, **manuka honey** is now known in other varieties of English, but it is always in the context of a New Zealand product.

**Lemon & Paeroa** is a trade name and a toponym. One could note a certain form of geographic pride in the naming of the drink after a specific place of origin. **Lemon & Paeroa** is also being exported overseas (e.g. to Australia), which leads to a use of the word by other varieties of English but still in reference to a New Zealand product.

**L&P**, the acronym for **Lemon & Paeroa**, is the term most used of the product. One of the characteristics of New Zealand English is to use shortened forms and acronyms, increasing the informal tone of the language.

**Kai**, the other borrowing from te reo Maori, is used frequently by a large



part of the population, is integrated into the NZE lexis, and is not always used in referring to Maori culture. **Kai** is now an informal, colloquial term to refer to food. It reflects the desire of New Zealanders to affirm their identity as a nation inclusive of people of Maori or European descent.

**Kiwi hot** says much about the relation between different ethnic groups. There is a strong Indian presence in New Zealand which has led to the establishment of many Indian restaurants and takeaway shops. These popular restaurants

are patronised by Indians and non-Indians alike and are an example of a successful integration of a migrant group. The differentiation of **kiwi hot** and Indian hot is an ironic way of acknowledging the relationship between the two cultures as well as the difference between them. These terms basically mean that the spiciest dish that a white person could bear can only be as hot as kiwi hot, not Indian hot.

## Conclusion

This study has helped me to better understand the specificity and

uniqueness of New Zealand English, along with the process of data collection in varied sources such as literature or the written press. Finding recent occurrences of the cultural terms in NZ literature and media made me realise the importance and frequency of those cultural references, that is they affirm and aid in the construction and reproduction of a culture distinct from its historical context – that of a British colony with a subordinate Maori population.

## New Zealand English usage in literature

JASMINE COOK-AUCKRAM

This assignment focuses on the lexis of short fiction by two New Zealand authors, Bernard Gadd and Patricia Grace. I chose this domain and these authors because many of their stories are set in New Zealand (NZ) particularly within Maori and Pacific Island cultures.

### Background

Patricia Grace is an award-winning writer living in New Zealand and one of the first Maori women writers to publish a collection of stories. Bernard Gadd was a New Zealand writer who was passionate about multiculturalism and history. Both Grace and Gadd also had careers in teaching. Both authors have made a considerable impression on and contribution to NZ literature, particularly in respect to multiculturalism, an important aspect of NZ identity.

### Methodology

To compile a word list for this study, I selected four compilations of short stories, two from each selected author, as sources for New Zealandisms. Maori words were easily identifiable, and in some stories were italicised. Often they were used for food of the land or sea, for example **kumara**, **kina**. Many of the stories were set in 'typical' New Zealand locations, with distinctive words describing food, for example **greasies**, **lollies**, and setting, for example **dairy**, **creek**.

Language choice in dialogue was also telling of New Zealand English, in particular words referring to people, for example **hard case**, **joker**, **wharfie**. Speech dialogue also proved generally casual and informal so slang and colloquialisms were evident in the context. Slightly more difficult to identify were standard English words which I suspected were being used in a distinctly New Zealand way, for example, **coin** (money), **gala** (fair), **sting** (fee).

After the initial word list was complete at 220 words, I searched each word in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. This eliminated many words of British and American origin. Some words were confirmed as New Zealand English, but many were not found or the usage was different. In order to narrow the list further, I used this opportunity to reconsider obscure Maori words that appeared infrequently, and phrases or words that I could not confidently define or use. This may have sacrificed potential NZE terms, but in order to compile a word list of ten, I felt it was important to understand the chosen words. Using a table I categorised the remaining 110 words into confirmed or potential NZE.

Bardsley's (2006: 53) focus on data selection and methodology in her study of rural NZE and justifications for the use of a questionnaire are relevant to this study. I developed a questionnaire in order to confirm familiarity and understanding, and

to eliminate personal bias in my list of 110. Having a large data set, I used a simple response survey of word recognition and understanding and explained the context of words if the respondents were unsure. I chose to survey Maori words separately using a yes/no questionnaire to determine familiarity with meaning and usage. I surveyed twelve people aged between 17 and 35 who grew up in New Zealand. Ideally, a greater number of people would have provided better results, however this was enough to establish a pattern.

With the results of the questionnaire, I chose words that proved to be commonly perceived as NZE and searched for citations to verify them. I primarily used *Knowledge Basket* and *Papers Past*, which provided citations from varying sources. For this study a minimum of three citations are used for each word, some more difficult to find than others. The main difficulty I encountered when finding citations was that some words had heteronyms or were used as names and appeared more frequently than the meaning I was searching for; for example, **billy**, **chunder**, **dairy**, **greasies**. I encountered frustrations with words that are distinct to both Australia and NZ. A number of times these words appeared to be NZ terms, and were commonly perceived this way, but further research would reveal Austral origins; for example, **chunder**, **skite**, **Weet-bix**. Many words were removed from the final word list because of their shared



usage with Australia in an effort to use exclusively NZE terms. However, as Bauer (1994: 411) states, 'there remains a high concentration of shared words' with Australia, and throughout the course of this research it became evident that some words can still be a part of the NZE lexicon though they may occur, or have fallen into disuse, in Australia.

In my final word list I chose to include three Maori words, as this is representative of the overall data selection, and a variety of other word formations in an attempt to have a diverse range of word types for my list.

## Results

Of the initial 220 words I selected from Gadd and Grace's books, an *Oxford English Dictionary* search reduced this to 110. Using these 110 words in a questionnaire, I eliminated a further 51 words based on common perception of these words as distinctively NZE. The remaining word list of 59, a variety of word types, I randomly entered into databases in order to find citations. The final list features words that proved to be commonly perceived as NZE as determined by the questionnaire, and that either appeared in the *Oxford English Dictionary* showing a different usage or meaning to that in NZ, did not appear at all, or appeared showing distinct NZ usage and origin. These words were then confirmed with a minimum of three citations. The final word list includes **billy**, **dairy**, **dole**, **greasies**, **haka**, **hard case**, **pohutukawa**, **skite**, **tapu** and **tarseal**.

## Discussion

Bauer (1994) and Macalister (2005) recognise the mutual influence and exchange between English and Maori in the early colonial period. This research exemplifies the familiarity and widespread use of Maori in NZE as shown in the domain of NZ literature (approximately 30%) (Macalister 2005: viii). Questionnaire results demonstrate familiarity with a number of Maori words; for example, **hangi**, **haka**, **kai**, **tui**. The way English has influenced Maori is also evident: for example, the use of the English plural 's' to modify Maori words such as **tuis**. There is an increasing trend in Maori word

usage, with particular emphasis on trees and plants, birds, fish and shellfish (Kennedy 2001: 64-6). Gadd and Grace's work reflects this interpretation, with a number of Maori words falling into these categories.

Bauer (1994: 403) suggests that flora and fauna, for example **pohutukawa**, Maori cultural institutions or events, for example **hui** and **tangi**, and words which lack a precise English translation, for example **tapu**, are the most obvious classes of Maori word adoption. Kennedy (2001: 77) suggests reasons for Maori word usage to mark identity, revive the language, and for cultural relevance. Both Gadd and Grace embrace multiculturalism in NZ. The observation that a number of Maori words used by both authors are not necessarily commonly understood, for example **hoha**, **kaumatua**, suggests a particularly pro-active approach in language choice. The absence of influences of other Pacific languages on NZE is reflected in this study, with only one word, **Palagi**, appearing from Samoan origin.

**Haka** was selected for the final word list as this describes a specific cultural practice, a ceremonial dance, which is not characteristic of any other culture or country. Earliest citations of **haka** typically show **Maori haka**, implying that the word was not common enough to be understood alone. Influences such as the increasing popularity and success of NZ rugby, which incorporates the **haka**, promote this word, and it may be seen to expand into other varieties of English.

**Pohutukawa** was selected as this represents the significant body of loan words from Maori used to describe flora and fauna. The **pohutukawa** tree is native to NZ, and does not commonly go by any other official name. NZE speakers are familiar with this term while other English speakers would rarely encounter it.

**Tapu** was also selected for the final word list as this cultural notion does occur in a limited number of other places, though it is known as **taboo**.

This study identifies many words that have adopted new meanings in NZE that are also discussed by Bauer (1994: 408), for example **dairy**,

**footpath**, **creek**, **paddock**, and **jug**. **Dairy** was selected in the final word list for this project, as words that have changed in meaning are an important feature of NZE. **Dairy** is heteronymous and also commonly refers to cow produce or the cow farming industry both in NZ and in other varieties of English.

Informal terms, slang and colloquialisms significantly contribute to NZE. For this reason I chose **hardcase**, which describes a person of 'character'. **Greasies** joined the list as hypocoristics are also widespread in NZE (Bardsley: 2010: 55). **Greasies** is an informal word for fish and chips, which can have different connotations. For example, fish and chips could be served on a plate, but **greasies** would typically come wrapped in paper.

The last four words contributing to the final word list were chosen because they have cultural interest and each represents a slightly unique style of word from NZE, and provides insight into a NZ way of life. **Tarseal** is unique to the word list as a compound word comprising of **tar** + **seal**, and is a non-distinctive NZ referent.

Abbreviations frequently occur in NZE. **Billy** is sometimes short for **billy pot** or **billycan**, though it is difficult to determine the exact origin and formation of the term. **Billy** refers to a vessel used to heat water or make tea over a fire and is most commonly understood in the context of camping or the outdoors. NZE terms are not exclusively nouns. The verb **skite**, to boast, was included. One prominent NZ domain that was notably obscure in Gadd and Grace's work was rural/farming terms, though usages such as **sheep run** were noted.

Self-assertion and cultural identity are portrayed in NZE (Deverson 2001: 28). This notion is a useful explanation for the attitudes towards and development of NZE in the colonial context of NZ history. The positive use of NZE is symbolic of NZ's independence from Britain, which is particularly exemplified by Grace and Gadd with a heavy emphasis on culture and indigenous NZ.



## Conclusion

The literature of Grace and Gadd uses an extensive lexicon of NZE that is representative of the diversity and wide range of influences on

vocabulary in this country, including Australia, Maori, the environment, industry and trade, and other factors. Portrayal of the 'typical' kiwi lifestyle in fictional short stories provided

terms from a variety of domains that are relevant and representative of NZ identity and culture.

## NZ English usage in the early childhood education domain

JESSICA SCOTT

**E**arly Childhood Education in New Zealand is a domain rich in distinctive vocabulary. While formal Early Childhood Education (ECE) has existed in New Zealand for over a century, its focus and purpose has changed significantly over this time. This study takes a synchronic examination of the language in current use in this field. Te reo Māori has had a particular influence on ECE in New Zealand, with Māori borrowings occurring not just in the names of different types of ECE facilities, but also in the areas of government funding and administration, as well as publicity and educational material used within different ECE organisations.

## Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is defined as the formal education and care of children in the time before they start formal schooling. In New Zealand this is usually before children reach the age of five, although attending school is not compulsory until the age of six. ECE is non-compulsory in New Zealand and it is relatively recently that such broad ranges of options are available to parents. In times when traditional family structures dictated that one parent would work, the education and care of young children was largely placed as the responsibility of mothers.

Stover (1998) writes that the Playcentre movement grew out of the dual concerns for relief of mothers whose husbands were away fighting in the Second World War, as well as growing interest in the social development of pre-school children (1998: 3). In 1981 the first Kohānga reo was established, in response to the concern that the Māori language was under threat ([www.kohanga.ac.nz](http://www.kohanga.ac.nz)). The role of ECE has seen many recent changes with

government funding recognition both through schemes such as 20 hours free/20 hours ECE, as well as the COI scheme which provided funding to ECE centres in order for them to undertake research.

## Methodology

Although many Maori borrowings are used in day-to-day practice, there is a paucity of written citations for their use beyond the *Playcentre Journal*. The word list was therefore expanded to include names for funding schemes, which are an interesting source of variety in word formation. However this was not without its own difficulties. The political motivations which drive funding schemes mean they are prone to name changes with changes of government, leading to confusion over whether a particular referent has changed in its nature, or just in name.

Parenting magazines were expected to be a fruitful source of citations for the selected word use, but this turned out not to be the case. Relying on advertising and product placement, they wish to remain, or appear to be, politically neutral and therefore avoid discussion of government funding. Recent newspapers and lifestyle magazines, however, were a more useful source of citations. The W.J. Scott Education Library and its collection of specialised education magazines and journals were also of use. In searching for synonyms and heteronyms from other varieties of English, I found overseas government department websites to be the most up-to-date and useful source of information and terms.

Deverson's typology (2000: 35) was used to categorise a list of ten words. **20 hours free** is the name of an ECE funding scheme, which is a distinctively New Zealand referent. Although similar schemes exist overseas, they are not considered to be the same referent. **COI** is an

initialism for **Centre of Innovation**. Although both the initialism **COI** and the phrase **Centre of Innovation** are used widely around the world for various referents (for example <http://www.electronics-coi.sg/>), nowhere else does it have the same meaning as here. **Kindy** is also used in Australia, although according to Ramson (1993: 23) it was first used in New Zealand. **Kohanga reo** is a distinctive term for a distinctively New Zealand referent. **Playcentre** is also a distinctive word for a distinctive referent. However, in 2000 some Playcentres were set up in Japan (<http://www.playcentre.jp/index.html>). **SPACE**, an acronym for *Supporting Parents Alongside Children's Education*, is a distinctive word for a distinctive referent. **Te Whariki** is the name for the New Zealand ECE curriculum. **Tamariki** and **Whānau** are both Type 2 words, New Zealandisms for non-distinctive referents: children and family, respectively.

The lexis of Early Childhood Education in New Zealand consists of many distinctive terms. Being filled with abstract concepts, such as funding schemes, there is both great leeway and challenge in how this distinctiveness is interpreted. Some of these challenges could only be resolved with a specialised investigation into international ECE funding and implementation. Yet, it has been particularly interesting to note the willingness of this domain to embrace te reo and incorporate Māori words and concepts into its praxis.

This study explores the language of children's fiction in New Zealand, focusing on types of New Zealand English terms that are present in picture books. The background of children's literature is investigated, and the morphology and origins of terms in New Zealand picture books researched. Many of the terms are colloquial and/or hypocoristic, which is a feature of New Zealand English. Stylistic motivation (national identity) is found to be a principal factor in lexical choice of children's authors. British in origin, NZE has become more and more 'kiwified' since our independence from the 'homeland'. Children's fiction is of particular interest because the vocabulary is likely to be more creative, hence it is probable that terms that are specifically 'kiwi' will be encountered.

There is a rich and fascinating history behind the existence of literature for children. It is unclear how the first children's stories emerged into being, but it is believed that children's stories started out in medieval times with cultural myths and legends, folk tales and fairytales which were typically orally passed on within communities (Hunt, 2005: 4). Soon, stories especially for children began to emerge in the realm of education and instruction, particularly associated with religion and politics. It was unlikely in this time for stories to be fictional in content; modern children's literature as we know it is described by Hunt (2005: 5) as largely a 'nineteenth century phenomenon'. This is due in part to controversy over the content of stories written for children. Should stories solely communicate important information to the youth of a community, such as education, religion, and politics, or should children be allowed to enter the realm of fantasy and imagination with events completely fabricated in the literature they read?

Modern children's literature covers a huge range of topics both real and fictitious and, in particular, fiction books for younger readers contain most imaginative illustrations. Fiction stories are full of terms specific to the country or community where they were written for the children of those communities as a way both of giving young readers an

identity and of teaching them that there are different ways of speaking around the world (Aiken, 1972: 8).

To source data for my study, I located several children's fiction picture books by New Zealand authors and read through them, noting down NZE terms including colloquial terms, Maori terms, something I remember saying as a child, and/or words that were childish or would most commonly be said by/to/in the presence of a child. After I had made a preliminary list of terms, I narrowed my extensive list to fewer high-frequency words including **fizzy drink**, **chippies**, **choice**, **kai**, and **kindy**.

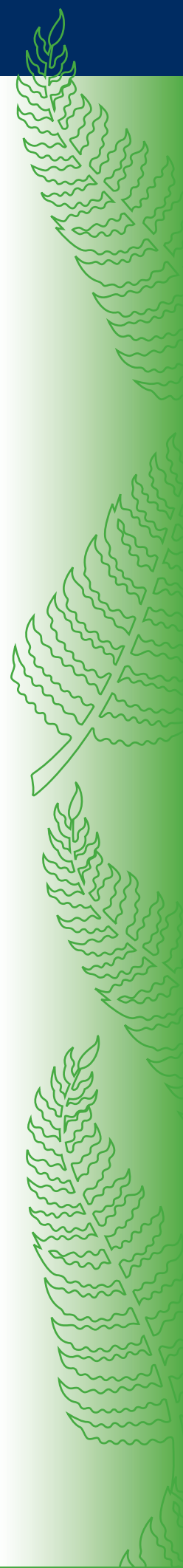
In order to learn more about the terms I confirmed their eligibility by consulting the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* and the *Dictionary of New Zealand English* (Orsman, 1997), and noted the morphology and word-type of each word.

Citations for each term were selected using *Knowledge Basket* and *Papers Past* in order to provide the New Zealand context for each term. This also meant that their usage in a context other than children's literature could be revealed: the citations found provided evidence of how each term is used in a more formal or specific context. To find synonyms and heteronyms for each term I made use of the *Oxford English Dictionary Online* and of my own knowledge of synonyms.

The words selected show a clear pattern of word types. The majority of the words are colloquial and/or hypocoristic, and include one borrowing from te reo Maori (**kai**). The presence of Maori terms in children's picture books has implications for the 'changing face of New Zealand English' (Daly, 2007: 21). This suggests that there is still an aspect of education in the writing of children's literature. Daly (2007) goes on to describe the usage of Maori terms in children's literature as 'encouraging increased use of borrowed Maori vocabulary by introducing this vocabulary to young New Zealand picture book readers' (Daly, 2007: 30). The high proportion of colloquial and hypocoristic New Zealand terms is significant in this study. Hypocoristic forms in children's literature may function to make the usage closer to that of

young readers. Munat (2007: 179) supports the idea that colloquial language in children's fiction is due to stylistic motivation, a way of creating general child-like speech. This 'stylistic motivation' refers to the way creative lexical formations function as style markers in children's fiction. This idea is explored by Aiken (1972: 7) who elaborates that authors may 'mark' their stories as being specifically New Zealand as a way of indirectly teaching the young reader about dialectal and international differences in English. A young reader who learns these New Zealand terms will be able to gain his/her own national identity. Similarly, a young reader who is not from New Zealand will learn about the existence of this culture (in case they didn't know about it already), and about its own way of speaking (Aiken, 1972: 10).

The presence of terms from a distinctive variety in the literature of young readers will promote the terms' survival. It would be interesting to investigate just how much of an influence the language in children's literature has on the vocabulary of young readers, and hence how influential these readers' lexical choices in their lives are upon the lexical shift of the entire community or country.



# From North Cape to the Bluff, things can still be crook, it seems

DIANNE BARDSLEY

‘**C**rikey, that cribbie looks crook!’ To a foreign visitor, such an exclamation might well be from another planet. But not to an Australian (who might just shy at cribbie).<sup>1</sup>

**She’s crook** – could be the wife, could be the motor, could be the new heifer, could be the weather, could be the beer. Could be the prequel. Even a **chook** can be **crook**. Take the Kiwi habit of combining the feminine singular third person pronoun (**she’s crook**) and ... anything could be **crook**. An exam result, a podcast, a hairstyle. Perhaps it’s even possible to have a **crook hair day**?

**Crook** might be vague and nebulous with a range of semantic feet in a range of contextual clay, but most Kiwis know exactly what is meant. In New Zealand, **crook** can mean bad as in rotting or rotten. It can mean bankrupt. When an object is **crook**, it’s broken, kaput, knackered, or puckerood. If a drum of petrol or a gold mine is **crook**, it’s empty or finished; a **crook** engine does not function, and anything that is weak or inadequate is definitely **crook**. When one is angry, one goes **crook**, while a **crook** cheque is one that bounces. Anything that has no use is **crook**. And qualitatively, being **crook** is worse than being poorly or off-colour.

Anybody can get **crook**, although Acland (1933) claimed that **crook** was a term used of men, dogs, and horses. From a wide range of citations, we can conclude that others certainly disagreed with him. In 1949, a character of Frank Sargeson’s (1949: 67) said:

I suppose you blokes get told a lot of yarns about a crook missus and a swag of kids.

Railway pies were rumoured to be a source of **crookness**:

People always reckoned those railway pies were crook but Rosie’s survived on them.<sup>2</sup>

Pregnancy was another cause:

She had come to town for a holiday, and first knew she was in the family way when she felt crook.<sup>3</sup>

But dogs obviously do get **crook**, as Acland claims. Figuratively, one is as **crook as a dog** when things are serious, and it appears that this is a really frequent event in Nelson, the town that was named **Sleepy Hollow** for generations:

I’m one of those poor sods who doesn’t pull sickies. Even when I’m crook as a dog, I turn up to work.<sup>4</sup>

Teenagers helped an 82-year-old school bus driver bring his swerving bus – loaded with children – to a stop after he suddenly became ‘crook as a dog’.<sup>5</sup>

I am good now but I was as crook as a dog for a week.<sup>6</sup>

If that wasn’t bad enough, she’d been crook as a dog all week. And she was looking after a pre-school nephew and niece as well as her three kids.<sup>7</sup>

Sportspeople seem to be particularly prone to that serious state of **crookness**, being **crook as a dog** ...

Hayden Roulston showed he really is world class in his silver medal-winning performance in the Commonwealth Games cycling road race in Delhi yesterday. He was ‘crook as a dog’, in 38 deg C, in a New Zealand team with no sprinter on a course suited perfectly for sprinters and he still won a medal.<sup>8</sup>

Ulmer has been ‘recharging’ in Cambridge since returning from the world champs. It’s a well-earned rest . . . and necessary. ‘I’m as crook as a dog actually,’ a coughing, spluttering, but still engaging Ulmer professes.<sup>9</sup>

Despite being as crook as a dog, the New Zealand [cricket] captain refused to yield to a mystery illness yesterday, bowling 22 demanding overs and leading his team with aplomb. The effort clearly took a toll on him but having him out

there also lifted a side badly in need of inspiration.<sup>10</sup>

More often these days with the trend to truncated figurative abbreviation, one is often simply **crook as**:

**Crook as**: Concerned team officials cluster around Hamblin, as wobbly and white-faced, she regains her composure. The red vomit bucket is bottom right.<sup>11</sup>

Two hours out from Port Chalmers I was crook as (seasick).<sup>12</sup>

One is never a **little crook or rather crook**, but just occasionally a **bit crook**. One is never **very crook**, but **plurry crook**, **pretty crook**, or **bloody crook**. According to an ACC website, New Zealand males make a typical understatement when ill:

‘I’m feeling a bit crook, doc’ can indicate a minor illness or a life-threatening event.

‘I’ve had the flu this week and was pretty crook the day of the Bay of Plenty game. I didn’t get out of bed till half past three that day.’<sup>13</sup>

Gordon Couling recalls delivering the first message on the relay progress to the Times, but the seasick reporter’s second pigeon message said baldly: ‘I’m that bloody crook I can’t write any more.’<sup>14</sup>

One can be **crook** in any part of the body:

A crook leg curtailed his fishing career, so he got into woodturning and is self-taught.<sup>15</sup>

‘A white guy with a crook arm’ was seen by a workman near the place where a stolen car was set on fire after being used in the drive-by shooting of Black Power member Max Shannon, the Christchurch District Court has been told.<sup>16</sup>

Richie McCaw’s world cup balanced on a knife edge, his crook foot always on All Blacks fans’ minds.<sup>17</sup>

A cigarette first thing in the morning, before a cup of tea, tastes **crook**.

# From North Cape to the Bluff, things can still be crook, it seems

CONTINUED ...

It saves you from getting the crook guts, boy.<sup>18</sup>

**Being crook** might mean cerebrally or psychologically unwell:

I didn't realise how fond I'd become of Phil ... and it made me feel really crook.<sup>19</sup>

'Mrs Nation must be real crook the way she carried on ... She's a bit crook in the head.'<sup>20</sup>

**Being crook** can be both an acute and a chronic state, for both animate and inanimate subjects:

If the New Zealand health sector were a hospital patient, it would probably be in the ward for the chronically crook.<sup>21</sup>

Farm-based exports are in booming good health, but forest products look as crook as a dog.<sup>22</sup>

**Crook**, as a Kiwi adjective, certainly has staying power. **Feeling crook** has a number of precursors, including Legionnaire's disease:

After her story appeared in *The Southland Times* five years ago, Mrs van den Arend received several calls from others who said they too had 'felt crook' after handling similar potting mixes and manures.<sup>23</sup>

Films made with hand-held cameras can evoke queasiness:

Many people have felt crook from the effects of the hand-held camera technique the film [*Dancer in the Dark*] uses.<sup>24</sup>

Roachy restaurants are common culprits:

It's the bacteria you can't see, like campylobacter and salmonella, that love protein-rich, moist places like custard squares, boiled eggs, cheese and chicken. Last year there were 190 salmonella and 1008 campylobacter cases ... if that seems a lot, consider that for every campylobacter case taken to a doctor, an estimated 19 aren't, says Hutchinson. 'That's 20,000 people who never went to the doctor but felt crook.'<sup>25</sup>

Mr Thew put his food poisoning down to a pork chop, which he said made him feel crook within a couple of hours.<sup>26</sup>

More serious than food poisoning is meningitis to make one **crook**:

'I've been crook all week but I felt crook before Christchurch so it's pretty hard to tell. What worries me is I've been to at the national surf life-saving championships (at Mt Maunganui) and if I do have the disease I could have spread to people there because we had a similar party. ... I rang Robert and he said he's been really crook all week, with fevers and stuff, so he'll be going to his doctor. I've taken antibiotics myself and I have to keep taking them ...'<sup>27</sup>

And as for car-sickness, it creates its own memorable form of **feeling crook**, with help from parents who smoke along with other smells:

I'd amuse myself by enlarging a hole in the [car] roof lining with my feet, drawing pictures on the misted-up back window, trying to undo the terminals on the battery under the back seat or plucking my sister's hair out strand by strand. This would always result in a massive scrap, somebody would end up howling and Dad would stop the car to give us all a hiding. But most of the time I just felt crook. It was the smells as much as anything. The petrol fumes, Mum's Spiritual Sky sandalwood perfume, the Grecian 2000 in Dad's hair and his Rothmans King Sizes ...<sup>28</sup>

While a rough crossing on the Cook Strait ferry can be torturous, this seven-hour session on the Arahura in 2005 took the cake:

I am very relieved to be in Picton and can't say much about the trip as I felt crook soon after we left Wellington harbour ... Lots of people were getting sick and more sick bags had to be put

out. The toilets were full of people getting sick.'<sup>29</sup>

Living near an industrial site proves too much for some:

'I've seen a Hiroshima mushroom above the place,' he says. He always felt crook like he had a constant hangover.<sup>30</sup>

With reference to hangovers, party pills seem to be exempt from negative effects:

Boots n All stocks five brands of party pills, including Hummer, which he [store owner] had himself tried. 'I didn't feel crook.'<sup>31</sup>

Rats are not normally thought of as fussy, but in the bush, they can be suspicious of 1080 toxic bait to make them feel **crook**:

Rats are suspicious. If they taste something odd, they stop eating to see if they feel crook. If they start to feel crook, they don't eat any more. If they have scoffed non-toxic bait and nothing has gone wrong, they'll eat more of it.<sup>32</sup>

It's not safe to be around when somebody is going crook. Crooks can be on the receiving end of somebody **going crook**:

Christchurch's oldest shoplifter Reginald Donovan is at it again and the courts are at a loss to know what to do with him. 'It's very embarrassing,' he told the Sunday Star-Times. 'And of course my lady isn't very happy about it. She went crook at me.'<sup>33</sup>

We find there's no honour among thieves and little consistency in the form of racehorses - in some circumstances they are just plain unreliable:

I could have proved three different alibis, but the witnesses went crook.<sup>34</sup>

But **crook** itself is unreliable. It's polysemous. Such witnesses, and others, can really lead you astray:

'I put you crook last week when I told you Dodgers had won the comp. There was another week remaining -



and just as well ... it was the game of the season ...<sup>35</sup>

I'm afraid, Mr Browne, that your friend has put you crook. I think. As yet, no decision has been made that might remove the use of rainwater tanks and force Auckland residents to use the reticulated water, at a cost, of course.<sup>36</sup>

There's also the sense of letting someone down, or of being a loser:

Initially set for the New Zealand Cup (3200m) at Riccarton last month, Justine Coup copped a minor setback which ruled her out of the contest. 'She had done the work but she went crook on us,' Williams said.<sup>37</sup>

The boss who owns the big flash Jaguar looks plurry crook because the production manager has just bought the Cadillac.<sup>38</sup>

And that of being very angry:

Apart from winning the cup, Newman said the other game that he remembered vividly was in 1962–63 when Nelson narrowly defeated Hutt Valley. Apparently the workers at Baigents stopped all the machines to listen, and the bosses went crook.<sup>39</sup>

Bonking was something you got on the head from the arithmetic teacher's ruler or from a loose noggin when helping your Dad build a chook-run or shed for his home brew because Mum went crook about the bottles going off in the wash-house.<sup>40</sup>

There are other variants. Novelist Barry Crump used the hypocoristic form:

These West Coast publicans are usually a pretty good team but there's a crookie in every bunch of blokes.<sup>41</sup>

This form is far from recent, being used during the First World War, in the rural domain for a sick animal, and in errors detected in the racehorse industry:

He [a trooper from Hastings at Gallipoli] states that a soldier was 'rotting' a rifle, saying that it would not fire true, and was a 'crookie'.<sup>42</sup>

So we let them through, gently pushed the crookie into the sheep pens and managed to grab him in the drafting race.<sup>43</sup>

To err is human, and telegraphists, scribblers, and linotypists are not infallible, as punters readily recognise when they do their 'coin' on a 'crookie', fondly imagining that they are on a champion.<sup>44</sup>

As recent newspaper citations from North Cape to the Bluff show, New Zealanders are still encountering the state of **crookness**. We all know what that means.

<sup>1</sup> Cribbie: an occupant or owner of a holiday house, bach, or crib.

<sup>2</sup> 1997 Sinclair, Roy. *Journeying with Railways in New Zealand*. Auckland: Random House: 179

<sup>3</sup> 1906 *Truth* 22 Dec: 5

<sup>4</sup> 2004 *Nelson Mail* 21 Aug: B16

<sup>5</sup> 2011 *Nelson Mail* 1 Sept: A2

<sup>6</sup> 2008 *Nelson Mail* 5 April: A1

<sup>7</sup> 2004 *Nelson Mail* 19 June: B14

<sup>8</sup> 2010 *Southland Times* 12 Oct: A22

<sup>9</sup> 2004 *Sunday Star Times* 6 June: A7

<sup>10</sup> 2011 *Sunday News* 9 Jan: A17

<sup>11</sup> 2010 *Sunday Star Times* 10 Oct: A2

<sup>12</sup> 2003 *Southland Times* 9 Oct: A25

<sup>13</sup> 2011 *Press* 29 Aug: A9

<sup>14</sup> 2003 *Southland Times* 12 Feb: A32

<sup>15</sup> 2012 *Daily News* 6 Jan: A12

<sup>16</sup> 2001 *Press* 28 April: B18

<sup>17</sup> 2012 *Sunday Star Times* 1 Jan: A5

<sup>18</sup> 1960 Crump, Barry. *A Good Keen Man*. Wellington: Reed: 45

<sup>19</sup> 1953 Hamilton, Ian. *Till Human Voices Wake Us* Auckland: self-pub: 80

<sup>20</sup> 1987 Virtue, Noel. *The Redemption of Elsdon Bird* (1988) Auckland: Century Hutchinson: 28

<sup>21</sup> 2002 *NZ Listener* 10 Aug: 16

<sup>22</sup> 2001 *Dom* 14 July: A16

<sup>23</sup> 2010 *Southland Times* 3 Feb: A9

<sup>24</sup> 2001 *Truth* 6 April: A8

<sup>25</sup> 2001 *Evening Post* 14 March: C19

<sup>26</sup> 2008 *Timaru Herald* 13 May: B1

<sup>27</sup> 1997 *Daily News* 19 March: A1

<sup>28</sup> 1996 *Waikato Times* 30 Dec: B13

<sup>29</sup> 2005 *NZ Herald* 5 April: A4

<sup>30</sup> 2003 *NZ Herald* 7 June: A4

<sup>31</sup> 2009 *Marlborough Express* 12 Jan: A4

<sup>32</sup> 2010 *DomPost* 3 March: B12

<sup>33</sup> 2005 *Sunday Star Times* 27 Nov: A4

<sup>34</sup> 1910 *NZ Truth* 3 Sept: 1

<sup>35</sup> 2010 *Hawke's Bay Today* 19 March: A11

<sup>36</sup> 2010 *NZ Herald* 24 Aug: A7

<sup>37</sup> 2004 *Waikato Times* 11 Dec: B10

<sup>38</sup> 1963 McCallum, WN [Hori]. *Half-Gallon Jar* Auckland: A D Organ: 53

<sup>39</sup> 2001 *Nelson Mail* 12 March: B14

<sup>40</sup> 1996 *Dom* 26 Sept: B6

<sup>41</sup> 1962 Crump, Barry. *One of Us* Wellington: Reed: 104

<sup>42</sup> 1915 *Wanganui Chronicle* 12 Nov: 4

<sup>43</sup> 2000 *Growing Today* Oct: 74

<sup>44</sup> 1919 *Horowhenua Chronicle* 23 Oct: 1

## NEW ZEALAND NEW POCKET 4e THE FUTURE OF NEW ZEALAND ENGLISH OXFORD DICTIONARY

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Since the publication of *NZWords* 15, we have been informed that the austerity measures aka budget restraints that have hit Greece and the other members of the porcine group in the Eurozone have also been applied to the New Zealand Dictionary Centre. Part of these restraints means that we are unable to employ research assistants, and it has been sad to farewell Jane Dudley, Cheryl McGettigan, and Amanda Holdaway. We have been able to employ Jan Bunting more or less on a day-to-day basis through Faculty and other funding, so that a minimal amount of work can be carried out on the antedating project.

We continue to enjoy seeing the progress that PhD Fellow Ruth Graham, who works as a parliamentary librarian, is making in her compiling and analysing of a database of unparliamentary

language in New Zealand since the 1850s.

In November Dianne Bardsley attended the Australlex conference in Canberra where an opportunity was also made to farewell Dr Bruce Moore, the second Director of the Australian National Dictionary Centre.

Work on a number of publications has continued to be a focus. Dianne Bardsley has put finishing touches to the Te Papa Word Book text and completed a fifth edition of the *New Zealand [Secondary] School Oxford Dictionary*. New features include lists of pictograms and text language, and new terms relating to electronic communication and technology, such as **avatar**, **bitmap**, **emoticon** and **wiki**, have been added. Tony Deverson in the Quaky City has worked on a new edition of the *New Zealand Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, and has similarly incorporated terms such as **netbook**, **sub-prime**,

**tablet**, **thread**, and **viral**. In August we celebrated the release of *Q and Eh: Questions and Answers on Language with a Kiwi Twist* with Dianne Bardsley, Professors Laurie Bauer, Janet Holmes, and Paul Warren, whose columns from the *DomPost* newspaper continue on a fortnightly basis. Dianne Bardsley has also worked on a chapter for *Slang Now*, an international text on modern slang, for which she has also prepared a presentation for a conference in Leicester in September.

It is always good to be associated with the National Spelling Bee which this year adopted some new features with the final held in a new venue, Circa Theatre, on the Wellington waterfront. We continue to be asked to speak to a range of groups outside the university, and there is no doubt that changes to the lexis continue to interest the general public.

Dianne Bardsley  
Director

## Miscellany in the Media and Mailbag

### From the death notices

Passed away suddenly, doing what he loved most (shearing) on February 19th 2012 ... Roger will be missed by his Whanau and all his shearing mates, cockies, rousys, gangers and all who knew him.

On Monday March 19th, 2012 ... 'A true Kiwi bloke, bikes and bush all the way.'

### Donko

I was pleased to read a citation for **donko** in a recent newspaper: 'He sits in the donko beside the rotary milking shed on the 235-hectare farm backing on the Feilding golf course and explains why [he buys in extra stock feed].' More commonly, a **donko** is a tea or smoko room at a factory site, but it has obviously 'gone rural'. It is possible that the term migrated from urban factories to woolstores, which were the location of a 1984 citation: 'Smoko was held in the donko, where we'd adjourn after working like billyo'. And now, from woolstore to cowshed.

### Blokes and blokeses

A five-strong steering committee is working to establish a men's shed

in Palmerston North, a communal workshop where blokes and blokeses can share tools and skills, work on personal and community projects, and enjoy laughs and camaraderie (2011 *Tribune* 2 March: 1).

### Kete-case

used in lieu of **basket case**, as in the headline: Te Reo: a taonga with a future or a kete-case?

### Seismic remediation

is now the name of the game not just in Christchurch but in Wellington, where earthquake strengthening is being taken seriously in all quarters. Jane Bowron, the journalist par excellence of the reports of earthquake effects, now refers to the most devastating February quake as the **grand mal**, and the semi-levelled cathedral as **Old Stumpy**. **Levelling** is the current euphemism for building demolition.

### Bluff Act

Hi Dianne

Do you know the NZ origins of the phrase: To use the Bluff Act on someone?

Cheers Peter R

Ed: **Bluff Act** is similar to **Bluff stakes**, as used in Australia, and is not confined to New Zealand English. The term has its origin in the game of poker, when a player deceives his/her opponent by overemphasising his or her strength in valuable cards and the opponent concedes. So it is used in the sense to deter by a show of confidence, or bluffing. Two recent citations of its use in NZE are:

Does that standing order actually exist? 'It exists in the 1882 Bluff Act,' Bennett says smiling. Which would explain why a newly elected councillor wasn't able to find it when she read up on standing orders at home that night. He doesn't recall ever having occasion to use it again, and says the intention was to move the meeting on, as the matter was getting nowhere. But he hasn't always had it his way when it comes to using that Bluff Act. 'Another time I raised something that the mayor caught me out on. I tried to get something through on natural justice. The mayor challenged me to

# Miscellany in the Media and Mailbag

CONTINUED...

find the clause . . . I had some difficulty locating it . . .'

*Timaru Herald* 23 Oct 2010:  
A21

Tauranga City Council senior traffic engineer Wayne Thompson said truck drivers could ignore the signs because the council's restrictions were only intended as a courtesy. 'They are only advisory, they have no enforcement capabilities whatsoever - they are a bluff act.'

*Bay of Plenty Times* 11 June 2011: A7

## Number One

Hullo Ed

... the home side will take the field without Beuden Barrett in the No 10 jersey for the first time this season and Faafile Leveave watching on in his **No 1s**.

*Taranaki Daily News* 17 May 2012: 20

I have not heard this one for a few decades. I *think* it is an army term meaning dress uniform, as opposed to fatigues or battledress. In this context it would mean ordinary dress as opposed to the playing strip. Surprised to not find a listing in NZOD, ODNZ or NODE. More research required?

Regards Peter

Ed: The OED has several uses for **Number 1**, and for this usage, the origin lies in the military domain. We find that the use of **Number 1** in the area of hair cuture also has origins from the military. The first OED citation is from 1925, which reads 'At an inspection, for instance, an officer would tell a man, whose hair seemed too long, to "get a Number One before next Parade"'.

## The media

A collective noun for journalists?

It is always good to deal with professionals, and the communications team at Mystery Creek could hardly have done it better. About 40 to 50 **media** were well catered for, with internet access, a quiet place to work and hot tea and decent coffee, water and snacks provided.

*Taranaki Daily News* 30 June 2011: 12

## Cake and apron fair

I was wondering about the origin of the term 'cake and apron fair'. All the Google examples seem to be from NZ and Australian newspapers - but UK and US 19<sup>th</sup> cent. newspapers appear there less often as they are not usually free, so don't get scanned by Google, which can distort the picture. I checked 19<sup>th</sup> cent. UK papers and funnily enough, the earliest example 1889, has a small piece about the origin of the term:

### CAKE AND APRON FAIR IN WORCESTER

The Rev. B ARTHUR expressed the cordial thanks of the promoters of the fair to the Mayor for his kindness in attending to open the fair, of which he explained the object. He said he had with Pickwickian zeal and diligence searched in numerous books of reference with the view of discovering the origin of the term 'cake and apron', but without success. However, it was a term certainly used in southern parts of the country, where 'cake and apron' fairs met with great success. He would beg to remind them that there were many persons of distinction around them who wore aprons - the Bishop, the Dean, the Archdeacon, Freemasons, and also the harmonious blacksmith. (*Berrow's Worcester Journal* Saturday January 26 1889: 4 Issue 10189)

Rowan G

Ed: I am interested in the number of New Zealand citations in *Papers Past* for **cake and apron fair**, and found an 1888 one which told us that the fair is cake and aprons only 'as the name implies' and they have had a great run in Melbourne. So an 1880s precursor of the modern-day sausage sizzle fundraiser!

## MAILBAG

The editor of *NZWords* welcomes readers' comments and observations on New Zealand English in letters and other contributions.

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**Deadline for next issue:**  
**01 February 2013**

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## NZWORDS

*NZWords* is published by  
**Oxford University Press**  
253 Normanby Road  
South Melbourne VIC 3205  
Web: [www.oup.com.au](http://www.oup.com.au)  
Email: [cs.au@oup.com](mailto:cs.au@oup.com)  
Free-phone: 0800 442 502

*Publisher: Richard Harms*  
in partnership with

**The New Zealand Dictionary Centre**  
Victoria University of Wellington  
Phone: (04) 463 5644  
Fax: (04) 463 5604  
Email: [nzdc@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:nzdc@vuw.ac.nz)

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