

Immigrants' original brushstrokes to a picture of local language

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



Welsh English is going into a new stage of language transformation being shaped under the influence of a new wave of immigrants from Eastern Europe. These are the observations of leading British linguists. According to a professor from Anglesey, David Crystal, people with foreign accents have a significant impact on the way the local young Welsh speak. The new wave of immigrants to Wales followed the expansion of EU when in May 2004 ten countries joined it. Being attracted by considerably better wage conditions in comparison to those offered in home country the Polish started to move to Wales.

Though the number of newcomers is not critical they tend to settle by communities not evenly distributed throughout the country. Thus they form a kind of source areas wherefrom the new accent mushrooms up. Some locations, with the relatively large number of East Europeans living there, even acquire new joking names like Llanellski with a typical Polish ending added to the original name Llanelli. Rural areas undergo the strongest influence on local accents as they can provide employment for newly arrived Slavic people.

So these places are likely to introduce new accent to the Welsh dialect. Different is the situation in Mid and West Wales where the population is relatively settled so this change in language could appear somewhat shocking to these parts. Prof Crystal believes it won't take much time and only one community of a relatively big size will determine the emergence of a distinctive local accent. Immigrants' English is not flawless but it is distinctive and impels those around to imitate it.

The most susceptible to the new accent are the young people, while they freely get mixed up with each other regardless their origin. They share the same music interests and have similar topics for discussion. Thus they are the most active communicators of a new accent. This is not the first time when Wales faced an inflow of fresh language traits. For example, Yemenis ethnic groups have already left their traces in language. The local people liked the way they spoke and so imitated them a bit.