

What is a 'biscuit ball'? And an 'ear plane'? Ask a Kiwi! 🤪

Not all native English speakers understand each other one hundred percent of the time. In part one of a series of articles, ECP coach Darren chats to a Kiwi (a New Zealander).

Before you read the complete article, look at this vocabulary and find it in the text:

lose your marbles: to become crazy, irrational, insane, mad.

to mutter: to say something in a quiet voice that others cannot hear

nightmare: an event or experience that is intensely distressing

to struggle: to have difficulty

bemused: confused and a little amused at the same time

quirks: a peculiarity of action, behaviour or personality, strange things

Recently I was having a conversation with a Kiwi. Not the fruit of course, I haven't **lost my marbles** just yet. However, something came up about pronunciation which got me interested and made me look into the New Zealand accent a little more.

Now of course, if you are into rugby, you are going to hear the New Zealand accent quite a lot. It is an accent that I am used to hearing. I listen to a lot of rugby podcasts, so I am exposed to the accent which I rather like but can sometimes be left missing a word here and there.

One reason would be that New Zealanders have their own words for common every day English ones. For example they are likely to refer to the refrigerator as the "chilly bin". Excuse me! The what? A New Zealander looking for their flip flops at the beach will be heard **muttering**, "Where are my jandles". No, it isn't a typing error. I didn't mean to type "sandals". They actually call them "jandles".

For Spanish speakers learning English, the vowel sounds can be a **nightmare**. Spanish speakers are often frustrated that English doesn't have the five basic vowel sounds like in Spanish where the vowel sound never changes. It's always the same. In English, as we know, there are many different sounds, but the Kiwis bring this to a whole new level and even leave other native English

speakers **struggling** to understand. For instance, the famous "Fish and Chips" are pronounced "Fush and Chups". The "i" is pronounced like the "u" in "cup".

The Kiwis tend to shorten the "i" to the point of no existence. So an example of that would be the number "six". If you take out the "i", it will sound like "sex". Therefore, if you visit New Zealand and you want to order fish and chips for six people, try asking for "sex fush 'n chups".

But the Kiwis obviously have a great sense of humour and is home to one of my favourite comedy series "Flight of the Conchords". It's about two musicians from New Zealand who go to New York to pursue a music career and part of the comedy effect is the **bemused** reaction of New Yorkers to their pronunciation and choice of vocabulary.

A New Zealand airline also embraces the accent in a Christmas ad, playing on **quirks** and quite literally takes the piss out of its own accent. The ad shows Santa Claus taking direct calls from children around the world, managing linguistic switching with finesse, until the children from New Zealand start calling. Santa Clause is left wondering what kind of kid asks for a new beard, a biscuit ball or an ear plane? Do you know what the kids were asking for?

Written by ECP coach *Darren Lynch* [Watch the video here :-\)](#)

Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- Is there an accent in your own language that you find a little difficult to understand? What is it about the accent that causes you trouble?
- Are you surprised that the New Zealanders pronounce the vowel sounds so differently to other native English speakers or does this also occur in your own language? Please give examples.
- Knowing these differences exist, would you still be happy to learn English in New Zealand? Why/why not?
- If it's alright for New Zealanders to "break the rules", do you feel your pronunciation is good enough to communicate well?

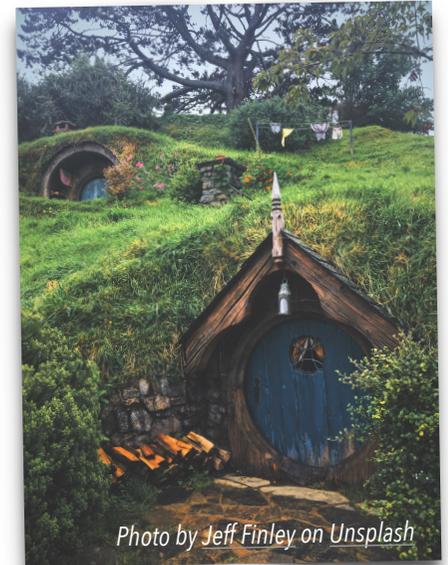


Photo by Jeff Finley on Unsplash

Above: The Lord Of The Rings was filmed in NZ
Below: ECP coach Kez on his trip to NZ. The country is famous for its adventure sports



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CINEMA NIGHTS!

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Come and socialise in English!

The last Friday of every* month from October to June, come to ECP to watch a film in English (with English subtitles) and talk about it afterwards.

Our next Cinema Nights are:

November 30th - January 25th February 22nd - March 29th - May 31st June 28th

WhatsApp John for more details on: **657 73 13 54**

Time: 19:30 to 21:30

Place: ECP Hub (C/San Ignacio de Loyola 15)

Price: Free!

Friends welcome

**Please note: there will be no Cinema Nights in December or April.*

The first* Saturday of every month from October to June, come to Panadería Bertiz, C/Francia for a coffee and a chat in English.

Our next meetings are: November 10th - December 1st - January 12th - February 2nd March 2nd - April 6th - May 4th - June 1st

WhatsApp Alison for more details on: **608 42 64 92**

Time: 11:00 to 12:30

Place: Panadería Bertiz, C/Francia

Price: Just bring enough for a cup of coffee!

Friends welcome

**Please note: Coffee Saturdays will take place on the second Saturday in November and January.*



A "Mirry Christmas" video by Air New Zealand

Click/tap on this link https://youtu.be/M3Q_3a7HfA0 and watch the video. What did the kids **really** ask Santa for?

Santa understood: "A new beard for Edem"

Kid actually asked for: "_____"

"A puggy bank" / "_____"

"A biscuit ball for Bin" / "_____"

"An ear plane for Windy" / "_____"

"A magic book of trucks" / "_____"

"A bug screen TV" / "_____"

Answers: Adam asked for a new bed / A piggy bank / A basketball Ben / An airplane for Wendy / A magic book of tricks / A big screen TV