



**Assistance with University Projects? Research Reports? Writing Skills?**

**We've got you covered!**

**[www.assignmentstudio.net](http://www.assignmentstudio.net)**

**WhatsApp: +61-424-295050**

**Toll Free: 1-800-794-425**

**Email: [contact@assignmentstudio.net](mailto:contact@assignmentstudio.net)**

### **Follow us on Social Media**

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/AssignmentStudio>

**Twitter:**

<https://twitter.com/AssignmentStudi>

**LinkedIn:**

<https://au.linkedin.com/company/assignment-studio>

**Pinterest:**

<http://pinterest.com/assignmentstudi>

Assignment Studio © Copyright

# Australian English

Analysis of articles and collection of primary  
data from respondents

5/13/2015

Student Name

## Contents

Part 1:.....	3
Background .....	3
Article 1 .....	3
Article 2 .....	4
Part 2:.....	5
Attitudes towards Australian English.....	6
Conclusion.....	6
Bibliography .....	7
Appendix A.....	10
Appendix B .....	11

## Chosen variety of English: Australian English

### Part 1:

#### Background

Australian English is a colonial variety of English and is therefore related to Englishes of settlers from England and other parts of the UK (reference). Kachru classified English as a World Language according to a system of three circles, primarily: inner circle, outer or extended circle and the expanding circle (White, 1997). The inner circle includes countries in which English is the first or primary language. The inner circle countries are: the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (White, 1997).

The primary difference between world Englishes and Australian English arises due to accent and vocabulary (Moore, 2013). During the development of Australian English there was a stage where the language underwent a significant shift from the British standard of pronunciation (Moore, 2013). The move is signified by an added “emphasis on nasality, flatness of intonation and elision of syllables” (Moore, 2013). Australian pronunciation is renowned for eliminating many sounds in the middle of words and therefore shortening them (Nutt, 2008). For example, ‘Good day’ is shortened to G’day which in turn has a significant impact on pronunciation.

There are three types of Englishes in Australia, primarily: Broad, General and Cultivated (Narvik High School College, 2012). The Broad variety is often spoken by residents of rural areas whereas cultivated variety can most popularly be found in urban areas where middle and upper class residents use more cultivated language. The General accent on the other hand represents the most common form of English spoken in Australia (Trawick-Smith, The 3 Types of Australian Accents, 2011). Australian slang or rather General variety is most often referred to as ‘strine’. Cambridge Dictionary defines ‘strine’ as “Australian English, or the way that Australians pronounce English words” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online, 2015).

We will take into consideration two articles, one from an Australian news website, [weeklytimesnow.com.au](http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au) and another from Time magazine. An in-depth analysis will be carried out on these two articles to gain a better understanding of Australian English and its lexical, grammatical and discursal features. Ironically, the article written in Time magazine has greater references to Australian English than does the article in the Australian weekly.

#### Article 1

##### ***Federal Budget 2015: What we know so far by Ellen Whinnett***

As the 2015 Australian Budget comes to light, Treasurer Joe Hockey has mandated that parents will not be allowed to cash in on the Government’s paid parental leave scheme if their employer was offering a more generous package (Whinnett, 2015).

The article uses the word ‘mum’s to describe parents who will continue to have access to government parental leave programs: “The 90,000 new mums a year who have no employer-paid leave will access

the Government's scheme" (Whinnett, 2015). Australian English is widely variant based on its vocabulary and one of the words that is spelled and pronounced differently is 'mum'. British English also uses 'mum' to describe mother whereas American English refers to mothers as 'mom'. (Trawick-Smith, 2011).

Another difference in spelling arises in way the word 'Labor' is spelled in the article. Normally, 'labor' is the American spelling of the word, whereas the rest of the English-speaking world including Australia, spells it as 'labour'. However, the American spelling is used when referring to the Australian Labor Party which may have been influenced by the "American labor movement on the founders of the Australian Labor Party" (Labor vs. labour, 2014).

We can see from the article that although it is published in an Australian weekly, the discorsal features and lexical are similar to those used in American English. As it is a news article, the author uses Ellipsis to make the article poignant and gets her point across with limited words that are easy to understand. Australians are prone to using American spellings as opposed to British spellings and this is evident in the manner in which this article is written. For example, accessing in 'would be stopped from accessing the Government's paid parental leave' is spelled in accordance to American English.

## Article 2

### *Australia's McDonald's Gets a New Name by Regina Wang*

This article explores the name change of the world's leading fast-food brand, McDonald's, to specially cater to Australian consumers (Wang, 2013). In 2013, McDonald's took an unprecedented step and underwent a name change to honor Australian consumer loyalty to the brand (Wang, 2013). A survey revealed, that Australians popularly referred to the fast food chain as "Macca's" and the term of endearment is the "second-most-popular Australian slang term" (Wang, 2013). The article, although written for an American magazine is laden with words that are a generic part of Australian English. For example, the author refers to Australians as 'Aussies' (Wang, 2013). "...McDonald's Australian outlets will bear a new name for the first time anywhere: Macca's, the indisputably Aussie nickname for the global food chain" (Wang, 2013). It is well known that Australians use more short-forms and diminutives than any other English speakers (Young, 2010). Psychologist Nenagh Kemp believes that there may be a particular reason why Australians tend to shorten words. "Australians who use these diminutives might be trying to sound less pretentious, more casual and more friendly than they would by using full words" (Young, 2010). 'Down Under' is also another slang term that is used to refer to Australia in particular. The name comes from the simple fact that Australia is located below the equator thereby below many other countries around the world (Placeholder1).

Similar to the first article, the spellings and discorsal features of this article resemble those of American English. It must not come as a surprise, however, because this article was published in the Time magazine, a periodical which is primarily based in American English. The spellings used in this article are the same as those used in American English as well.

## Part 2:

The author of this report interviewed two individuals who speak Australian English and recorded their viewpoints (Appendix A). Person A was a shopkeeper at a small stall in the farmer's market whereas Person B was a university student working towards her graduate degree. The transcripts of interviews are included in this report as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

There were stark differences between the responses from the interviewees. While Person A seemed to be content with his variety of spoken English, Person B admitted to changing around her accent to fit in better with her group of friends who spoke British English. The differences in opinion may stem from the respondents' age. Person A is middle aged and may be more set in his ways so that he doesn't feel the need to imitate other varieties of English from around the world. Person B on the other hand is a student at the university and has a lot of interaction with different nationalities and backgrounds and is therefore pressured into imitating other accents.

Both respondents felt that they could communicate comfortably with other individuals from English-speaking countries. They did not feel that communication is a hurdle because many words are the same, and only the accent makes it a little difficult to understand people coming from different backgrounds.

Moreover, both respondents agreed that the differences which are visible in spoken English in Australia do not translate to written English. Written English in Australia is pretty much similar to English from other regions except for certain spellings. Both respondents also go on to agree that English plays a pivotal role in their lives. They both understand the universality of the language despite distinct accents and regional influences. Both Person A and Person B are aware that English is the most widely understood language spoken throughout the world and therefore take pride in being able to speak the language.

Person A feels that when he speaks in front of other people from different backgrounds, he stands out because of his heavy Australian accent. He doesn't necessarily believe that he is looked down upon for speaking Australian English but states that it makes it harder to blend in when he's traveling abroad. Person B feels somewhat similar. She stated that although she doesn't feel awkward while speaking Australian English, she can understand how individuals from other English-speaking countries can find the slang used in Australian English, slightly bizarre.

Both respondents feel that English speakers who visit Australia will not have too much trouble in understanding the variety of Australian accents. This is because many handbooks are available to travelers and these should be perused before coming to the land Down Under. Both respondents realize that the primary differences in language stem from a select few vocabulary words and these can be learned prior to traveling to Australia.

It is evident from the above conversations with the two respondents that they take pride in their language. Both respondents come from different backgrounds, yet hold the same beliefs about their language and how it represents them in the greater scheme of English speaking countries around the world. Both Person A and Person B are not ashamed of their Australian English roots and are confident

that individuals visiting from other English-speaking countries would fit right in, without much trouble at all.

## Attitudes towards Australian English

There has been widespread belief that there were negative attitudes towards Australian English as late as the 1990 and these were broadcast by popular media channels. A *Los Angeles Times* in the same year, read as: “the other native varieties, whether regional (...) or national (Australian English...) are not fully institutionalized...make it beyond question that newsreaders and presenters speak with a clearly identifiable Australian ...voice... But the fact remains that in general the language of the media and officialdom follows the institutionalized form of British English” (Leitner, 2004).

Moreover, there is a social affinity among English speakers towards those who speak in similar accents as opposed to those with different accented English (Eisenclas & Tsurutani). A study conducted by Seggie, Fulmizi and Stewart (1982) also linked accents and negative influences on employment opportunities (Eisenclas & Tsurutani). For example, speakers of the Cultivated accent are more susceptible to being hired for white collar jobs whereas speakers of Broad accent will be given blue collar jobs (Eisenclas & Tsurutani). Therefore, “speakers of less prestigious varieties of English can be disadvantaged in highly competitive job markets” as employers prefer particular accents over others (Eisenclas & Tsurutani).

The tendency of Australian English to use diminutives and other short forms may at times “impossible to understand and quite offensive to speakers accustomed to formality” (Convict Creations, 2015). There are nearly 5,000 identifiable diminutives in Australian English and critics believe that the proclivity for such short-forms stems from the “Australian love of egalitarianism” (Convict Creations, 2015). Others believe that the use of diminutives in Australian English may be a means of bringing together “sharper English words with the smoother Aboriginal words” to create sentences which sound more harmonious (Convict Creations, 2015).

Australian English is also one which proposes a classless society. In British English, for example, titles such as Mr., Mrs., Lord, etc. assert a social class structure (Convict Creations, 2015). Such titles are relatively rare in Australian society where senior members, i.e. teachers and bosses are referred to by their first names (Convict Creations, 2015).

## Conclusion

This report aims to collect data from two distinct media articles as well as interviews with respondents to gauge the similarities and differences between Australian English and other World Englishes. The world Englishes are very similar to each other, however, Australian English has become slightly distinct based on the widespread use of diminutions as well as pronunciations of words. These divisions are further impressed as one travels across the continent and encounters Broad, General and Cultivated accents prevalent in the country.



## Bibliography

- Labor vs. labour*. (2014). Retrieved May 12, 2015, from Grammarist:  
<http://grammarist.com/spelling/labor-labour/>
- Cambridge Dictionaries Online. (2015). *Strine*. Retrieved May 12, 2015, from Cambridge Dictionaries Online: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/strine>
- Convict Creations. (2015). *Strine (Australian English); How it Differs from British and American English*. Retrieved May 13, 2015, from Convict Creations:  
<http://www.convictcreations.com/culture/strine.htm>
- Eisenclas, S. A., & Tsurutani, C. (n.d.). *YOU SOUND ATTRACTIVE! PERCEPTIONS OF ACCENTED ENGLISH IN MULTI-LINGUAL ENVIRONMENT*. National Library of Australia.
- Leitner, G. (2004). *Australia's Many Voices: Australian English--the National Language*. Walter de Gruyter.
- Moore, B. (2013). *Australian English in the twentieth century*. Retrieved May 11, 2015, from OED: Oxford English Dictionary: <http://public.oed.com/aspects-of-english/english-in-use/australian-english-in-the-twentieth-century/>
- Narvik High School College. (2012, January 9). Standard English Compared to Australian English. slideshare.
- Nutt, A. (2008, December 5). *The Differences Between American, British, and Australian English*. Retrieved May 13, 2015, from EWA: <http://englishwithoutaccent.com/learn-english-online/english-pronunciation/the-differences-between-american-british-and-australian-english/>
- Trawick-Smith, B. (2011, April 17). *Mom, Mum, Mam: Different words?* Retrieved May 12, 2015, from dialect blog: <http://dialectblog.com/2011/04/07/mom-mum-mam/>
- Trawick-Smith, B. (2011, July 10). *The 3 Types of Australian Accents*. Retrieved May 12, 2015, from dialect blog: <http://dialectblog.com/2011/07/10/types-of-australian-accents/>
- Wang, R. (2013, January 9). *WATCH: Australia's McDonald's Gets a New Name*. Retrieved May 12, 2015, from Time: <http://newsfeed.time.com/2013/01/09/watch-australias-mcdonalds-gets-a-new-name/>
- Whinnett, E. (2015, May 11). *Federal Budget 2015: What we know so far*. Retrieved May 11, 2015, from weeklytimesnow.com.au: <http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/news/politics/federal-budget-2015-what-we-know-so-far/story-fnkerdda-1227350016228>
- White, R. (1997). *Going round in circles: English as an International Language, and cross-cultural capability*. Retrieved May 13, 2015, from <http://host.uniroma3.it/docenti/boylan/text/white01.htm>

Young, E. (2010, August 2). *Why we shorten barbie, footy and arvo*. Retrieved May 12, 2015, from Australian Geographic: <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/news/2010/08/why-we-shorten-barbie,-footy-and-arvo/>

## Appendix A

### Interview Data:

#### Person A

***Do you try to imitate other varieties of English? If so, which one? Why?***

No

***Are you able to converse comfortably with people who speak other varieties of English, i.e. Americans or the British?***

Yes, sure why not. I have no problem communicating with other people as the majority of the words are the same.

***If not where do you have the most trouble? Accent? Vocabulary? Please elaborate.***

I do, however, have trouble understanding different accents because they can be very strong depending on where the person is from.

***Do these differences also translate into written English?***

No, not in written English. Because in written English, we are not directly conversing with anybody else and therefore there are not many visible differences. For example, we use slang terms like 'mate', 'arvo' etc. which are not really used in written English especially formally written papers, academic reports etc.

***What is the role of English in your life?***

English plays a very vital role as it is an international language. It gives you an edge while travelling through the world and communicating with people from different backgrounds and ethnicities. It is also easier to communicate with people with Australia because it is a common medium through which we can relate to each other. And it decreases differences amongst us.

***Are you content with your specific variety of English? Do you believe that people from other English-speaking countries look down upon Australian English?***

Yes, while traveling abroad, I feel that because of the heavy accent, I stand out and it makes it harder for people to understand exactly what I'm saying. For example, accent of American and British English is pretty similar to each other

***If someone from another English speaking country came to Australia, do you think they would have trouble understanding casual conversations among Australians?***

No, I think they can begin to understand the Australian English without much trouble. We do have a slightly different vocabulary but with a little practice anybody with an English-speaking background can communicate with Australians.

***If so, how would you help someone understand the variety of slang terms used in Australian English?***

Even if somebody comes to Australia and they have trouble understanding the slang terms, there are a lot of different handbooks and other tools to help learn the different terms. You can find these tools online. I would suggest that before travelling to Australia, foreigners should pick up one of these because it will give them a better idea of how to interact with Australians here and will allow the individual to carry on seamless conversations.

## **Appendix B**

**Interview Data:**

**Person B**

***Do you try to imitate other varieties of English? If so, which one? Why?***

Not particularly. However, I must admit that I do try to imitate British English when I am with a particular group of friends because they are all from England and I feel sort of odd saying 'mate' and 'I reckon' among a myriad of other things. I am not very good at imitating the British accent though because my accent is very strong and thick. In written English, I try to imitate American English because I just feel like that's the universal truth. Hey, MS Word only accepts American English, so it must be, right?

***Are you able to converse comfortably with people who speak other varieties of English, i.e. Americans or the British?***

Yes, I can have normal conversations with people from different linguistic backgrounds. I have a few Americans in my class as well and we can talk without much trouble. I think oral cues also help when conversing with people from different backgrounds.

***If not where do you have the most trouble? Accent? Vocabulary? Please elaborate.***

I do have trouble understanding the British accent. I thought our accent was heavy but it seems that I have to listen very carefully when talking to my friends from England. I don't really have issues with vocabulary because I think we are the only ones with a highly variant vocabulary among the other English speaking countries.

***Do these differences also translate into written English?***

Like I said before, I try to imitate American English in my writing but again that can also cause issues with professors who aren't very lenient and prefer Australian English. There aren't much differences in writing because we don't use many of the slang words in formal writing anyways. However, we tend to use different spellings when it comes to certain words. Like, labor is spelled with a 'u' (labour) here in Australia and England but without one in the United States.

***What is the role of English in your life?***

The English language plays a very important role in my life because it allows me to interact with people from very different backgrounds. For example, I can speak in English to my friends from Canada the same way I can speak it with acquaintances from the Subcontinent. It truly is a universal language even though there are multiple dialects and different branches of it based on the region. More and more people are beginning to understand and converse in English around the world so it's better to have a good grasp on the language.

***Are you content with your specific variety of English? Do you believe that people from other English-speaking countries look down upon Australian English?***

I do speak in British English when out with my friends from England, but again it's just in jest and I like to have fun with it. I don't think people look down upon our version of the language exactly but I do know that they find many of our slang terms very awkward.

***If someone from another speaking country came to Australia, do you think they would have trouble understanding casual conversations among Australians?***

Yes, they definitely might. Especially when they are trying to converse with younger generations because we are continuing to develop slang terms for technology and other things all the time. Words like 'tucker' and 'brekkie' might get really confusing because they aren't even close to the original word.

***If so, how would you help someone understand the variety of slang terms used in Australian English?***

I would suggest for people to look up Australian English slang before traveling to Australia because it can be quite challenging to follow a conversation that is primarily made up of slang terms. This is particularly true for people coming here for university and education programs where the use of slang is significant.