

Varieties of English around the World: Australian English

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ABSTRACT

Although English is the native language of the majority of the population in Australia, not many EFL learners have a comprehensive knowledge of the characteristics of Australian English, in comparison with other major varieties of English such as American or British English. This paper aims to describe Australian English (AusE) so as to shed some light on it. In order to do so, the sociohistorical context in which AusE emerged and developed is covered in the first section, followed by a large section which deals with a detailed description of the most salient linguistic features of the variety of English spoken in Australia. This section not only focuses on AusE phonetic and phonological features, but it also reviews the main characteristics of this variety relating to the linguistic levels of morphosyntax and lexis. Australian English is a mixture of British dialects, mainly from the southeast of England, from which three major accent types have developed, namely Broad, General and Cultivated. Australian English is rather homogeneous across regions; the use of an accent type over others depends on social factors. Broad accent, being the most marked accent, displays many salient phonetic realisations, whereas Cultivated pronunciation is close to RP. Certain AusE phonetic and phonological features, such as the fronting of monophthongs, contribute to the uniqueness of this variety, whereas the morphosyntactic structure of AusE is relatively similar to that of British English and American English. At the level of morphosyntax, AusE mostly differs from the northern hemisphere varieties in aspects related to the verb phrase, like tense and modality. AusE lexicon is distinct from the lexis of other English varieties in that it includes borrowings from Aboriginal languages, slang that British convicts used in the past, as well as hypocoristics or diminutives, the latter possibly being one of the most characteristic features associated with Australian English.

Keywords: varieties of English, Australian English, origins and development, linguistic features, phonology, morphosyntax, lexis.

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1. Introduction

Australian English (AusE) belongs to the inner circle in Kachru's model of World Englishes, together with British English (BrE) and American English (AmE). The inner circle comprises countries where English is spoken by the majority of speakers as their native language, and the Englishes in these countries are considered canonical, that is, models to follow (Kachru, 1988, as cited in Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). However, EFL students are more familiar with BrE and AmE than AusE; in fact, Australian English is the variety with the least amount of research among the three varieties (Butcher, 2006). AusE has not had much time to develop given that English arrived in Australia less than 300 years ago (Morgan, 2012), and perhaps therein lies the reason for the lack of extensive research on AusE.

Given its relatively short settlement history, AusE is generally considered to be 'a continuation of the norms of nineteenth-century first-language (...) working-class British English' (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, p.3). It is similar to British English to a large extent, but it has undergone independent linguistic changes; hence, AusE has some characteristics that are not found in Standard British English, one such example being the use of the progressive in stative verbs. This paper focuses on the description of the major characteristics of Australian English in the areas of phonology and phonetics, morphosyntax and lexis comparing them with the features of Southern British English and American English.

In terms of organisation, the first section covers the sociohistorical context in which AusE emerged and developed. Having established that, the second section, which is divided into three subsections, provides a linguistic description of AusE. The first subsection is dedicated to the phonetic and phonological features that make AusE different from Received Pronunciation (RP). It deals with the differences in pronunciation between RP and AusE monophthongs, diphthongs, weak vowels and consonants, followed by a brief description of the High Rising Tone, the prosodic pattern that is associated with AusE. The second subsection is concerned with relevant syntactic and morphological characteristics of AusE associated with the noun phrase, the verb phrase, the adjectival phrase and conjunctions. Lastly, the third subsection centres around lexicological aspects of AusE, such as the use of borrowings from the Aboriginal people, British convict slang and hypocoristics.

2. The English language in Australia

2.1. Sociohistorical context

From Ptolemy in the 2nd century AD to Alexander Dalrymple in the 18th century, early cartographers believed in the existence of Terra Australis Incognita or The Great South Land (Pearson, 2005). This belief was based on the idea that land areas were dense as opposed to the sea; they presumed that in order for the globe to be ‘balanced’, some land had to exist in what we now call Australia (Pearson, 2005, p. 3). Australia was the last habitable continent yet to be explored by the Europeans. However, it took them roughly two centuries, from the 16th century to the late 18th century, to investigate and map Australia (Morgan, 2012). Australia’s discovery was gradual and fragmentary, which stemmed from the fact that Europeans did not only lack insight into the Pacific Ocean’s and Australia’s geography, but they also lacked resources and national support to explore (Morgan, 2012).

As for who were the first Europeans to set foot in Australia, it is within the bounds of possibility that Portuguese navigators landed in Australia between 1521 and 1524, but this has not been proven (Morgan, 2012). The earliest undeniable evidence points to the fact that the Dutch had an essential part in the European discovery of Australia. The first European that is proven to have landed in Australia is Willem Janszoon, who sailed from the Netherlands and arrived in Australia in 1606 (Morgan, 2012). In addition, in 1642 and 1644, Abel Janszoon Tasman set out on two trips to check if Australia was part of a wider southern region and he discovered modern Tasmania and delineated the northwest Australian coast (Morgan, 2012). Finally, in the late 18th century, the British captain James Cook set out on three voyages and not only did he finish sketching the outline of the Australian continent, but he also claimed the eastern part for Britain and named it New South Wales (Morgan, 2012).

Incidentally, we must not forget that Australia was inhabited prior to the arrival of the Europeans. Until the end of the twentieth century, Europeans held the doctrine that Australia was *terra nullius*, that is, Australia was empty or did not belong to anybody before their settlement (Macintyre, 2016). However, based on archaeological evidence such as human bones and tools, it has been proven that Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for at least

60,000-70,000 years, and potentially for over 100,000 years. They had at least 350 languages and a sign language in the late 18th century (Morgan, 2012). Nevertheless, in view of the fact that British people settled in Australia, killed Aboriginal people (Morgan, 2012), and imposed English as the dominant language, it was imperative for indigenous people to 'become bilingual or even undergo language shift' (Buschfeld, 2014, p. 4).

In the mid-eighteenth century, Britain was undergoing drastic changes with the arrival of the Industrial Revolution. The industrialisation brought about the rise of poverty and crime rates, and there was hardly room for more convicts in British prisons. What is more, British authorities used to send convicts to North America, but the colonies became independent in 1783 and refused to take in more felons. Consequently, finding a new place for penal transportation became a pressing matter for Britain (Ballyn, 2011).

Eventually, the British government made the decision to settle in Australia in 1785 (Macintyre, 2016). However, it was not until 1788 that the First Fleet, composed of 11 vessels commanded by Captain Arthur Philip, arrived in Botany Bay (Morgan, 2012). The most remarkable aspect of that fleet is that out of approximately 1,400 people, 700 were convicts. The other half was composed of marines, wives, seamen, and a few civilians (Micalizio, 2021). The First Fleet was the first of many voyages that the British made to Australia, given that in the following eighty years, 1,024 journeys were made and 163,000 convicts were transported (Macintyre, 2016).

The 1828 census of New South Wales, given in Table 1, is indicative of the major role of the convicts in the foundation of Australia. In fact, out of 36,602 people, 23,198 were convicts or ex-convicts.

Table 1.

The 1828 census of New South Wales

Type	Number	Percent
Convicts	15,668	42%
Ex-convicts (pardoned or freed)	7,530	20%
Born in New South Wales (adults over 12)	3,503	10%
Arrived free (adults over 12)	4,121	11%
Children under 12	5,780	16%

Note. Reprinted from A.G. Mitchell and the development of Australian pronunciation.

(p. 133), by C.Yallop, 2003, Australian Journal of Linguistics. Copyright 2003 by Australian Journal of Linguistics.

As far as the origin of the convicts is concerned, it is often asserted that the majority of the early settlers and convicts came from England, primarily from the southeast (Kiesling, 2006). They also came from Scotland, Wales and Ireland (Horvath, 2008).

It should be taken into account that due to the Industrial Revolution, many British people moved away from rural areas to cities. Therefore, most of the convicts sent to Australia came from cities such as London or industrial towns like Lancashire (Shaw, 1966, as cited in Yallop, 2003). Nicholas and Shergold (1988, p. 46) scrutinised the birthplace records of approximately 20,000 convicts transported to New South Wales from 1817 to 1840 and concluded that the majority of the convicts came from ‘the heartland of England’¹ and eastern Ireland. They also found that about 45% of all convicts were born in urban areas.

2.2. Origins and development of Australian English

A problem that is often debated is that of the origins of Australian English (AusE). There are many theories and many of them differ on issues such as which variety had the biggest

¹Counties such as Middlesex and Warwick belong to the ‘heartland of England’. Southern or northern counties such as Devon or Yorkshire do not (Nicholas & Shergold, 1988).

influence on the shaping of AusE, how AusE was formed, whether it was a mixture of dialects or not, and the place where AusE began to form.

As it has been mentioned before, Australia's population was diverse in origin and predominantly urban. Therefore, settlers were exposed to a wide range of regional varieties. Many settlers spoke various rural dialects, each dialect being represented by few speakers; others spoke emergent urban dialects; some of the Irish convicts were bilingual in Irish and Irish English and between 10 and 20% of the convicts spoke London English, and thus, the latter could have been a major dialect (Yallop, 2003).

Hammarström (1980, as cited in Bauer, 2015b) compared AusE and Cockney from a phonetic perspective and concluded that AusE is a variety derived from eighteenth-century London English. He justifies this claim by stating that AusE and Cockney vowels are similar in quality. The fact that around one-third of the convicts in Australia came from London further supports his argument.

This conflicts with the view held by Collins (1975, as cited in Trudgill, 1986), who argues that AusE is a variety that derives from the mix of mainly southeastern and East Anglian dialects. He states that the mixing of those dialects took place in the south-east of England, mainly in London, and the mix then arrived in Australia. Yallop (2003) holds a similar view. He takes into account that there was considerable mobility of the population in Britain and suggests that there are grounds for believing that British people were already adjusting their speech before going to Australia.

Trudgill (1986) questioned the veracity of these theories and compared the phonetic features of AusE with those of many dialects spoken in England. He came to the conclusion that AusE was phonetically more similar to the English of Essex than to Cockney. Moreover, Trudgill (1986) provides phonetic evidence to support that the mixing of the dialects occurred in Australia rather than in British soil.

The preferred theory about the origin of AusE is that it emerged as a result of the contact and mixture of various dialects from Britain. This theory, known as the 'mixing bowl theory',

suggests that AusE arose via the process of koinéization (Bauer, 2015b). Koinéization is a slow process that consists on the blending and levelling of contact dialects, that is, the most marked features of each dialect are most likely to be avoided so that settlers with different dialects can understand each other by accommodating their speech (Trudgill, 1986).

Nevertheless, there are a few scholars that have their reservations about this theory. For instance, Yallop (2003) calls this theory into question by stating that the accommodation of dialects had limits. He claims that convicts in New South Wales did adapt their speech, but the dialect that had enough speakers to become a model was London English, consequently, there is a strong chance that settlers were inclined to accommodate their speech to that of the London area.

Even though these authors do not agree on how or where exactly AusE was formed, the general consensus among experts is that Australian pronunciation is closer to the pronunciation found in the southeast of England than the pronunciation of northern England, Scotland or Ireland (Yallop, 2003).

Regarding the development of Australian English, it is universally acknowledged that the first decades of the settlement were crucial for the development of AusE and that a characteristic Australian accent arose rather early in New South Wales. The first generation of native-born Australians had 'almost overwhelming power to determine what that dialect would be, even with later, large, migration' because they acquired AusE without having another language or English variety already established in their minds. They are the first true speakers of AusE (Kiesling, 2006, p. 75).

Dixon (1822) and Cunningham (1827) suggested that this new dialect arose at a rapid rate, basing on the fact that there is written evidence that shows that AusE was formed within the first 30 years of the settlement (as cited in Cox, 2006). Mitchell and Delbridge (1965, as cited in Bauer, 2015b) pointed out that there was clear accent variation among speakers of this prototypical form between the 1850s and the 1880s², so they proposed the term 'broadness

² During this period, Australia underwent significant population shifts since not only did an increased number of British people migrate to Australia, but also people from Europe and the Middle East arrived due to the gold rushes (Kiesling, 2006).

continuum" in order to describe socio-stylistic accent differences. This continuum, which is generally accepted and still present in modern-day Australian English, has three recognizable accent types, namely Broad, General and Cultivated. It must be mentioned that this division must not be understood as three rigid and isolated accent groups to which speakers of AusE belong, but rather as a gradual spectrum across which speakers are distributed (Bauer, 2015b).

At one end of the continuum is the Cultivated pronunciation, which is spoken by only about 10% of the population. Despite having a low number of speakers, it is the pronunciation with more prestige given that it approximates RP pronunciation. Cultivated Australian English is associated with speakers who have received education; in essence, this accent represents the language of the upper class (Horvath, 2008).

Broad Australian English, at the other end of the continuum, is the most marked pronunciation and is spoken by about a third of Australians. It is the least prestigious pronunciation and it is even stigmatised due to its markedness (Horvath, 2008).

General Australian English, which is spoken by the majority of Australians, lies in between the other two pronunciations. In fact, its use is increasing as speakers shift away from the extremities of the continuum (Horvath, 2008). That is, the continuum is contracting because young Australian speakers prefer General speech, which has 'an Australian flavour without some of the less desirable characteristics that had come to be associated with Broad and Cultivated' (Cox, 2006, p. 13).

The use of one accent over the others depends on social factors such as the type of education, gender identification and location –i.e. whether the speaker lives in an urban or rural area– (Burridge, 2010). For the simple reason that Australia is relatively big in geographic terms, it would be reasonable to assume that the English language in Australia varies greatly among regions as well. However, this is not the case. One of the most striking features of AusE is that it has little regional variation. In fact, researchers have believed for a long time that in Australia there is 'a greater uniformity of pronunciation extending over a wider expanse than

anywhere else in the world' (Bernard, 1981, as cited in Horvath, B. M. & Horvath, J. R., 2001, p. 343).

The earliest works on AusE presented it as a variety with little phonological variation across regions (Horvath, 2008). Yallop (2003) accounts for this homogeneity of AusE by claiming that the fundamental factor for this is the extensive population mobility in Australia. That is, cities such as Victoria grew rapidly, so even if in the 1880s a new local accent was formed, the large influx of people would have swamped it in the 1890s. Nevertheless, some studies provide another angle on this matter. Bradley (2008) defends that even though the phonological differences are relatively subtle, they exist and they are gradually developing.

The aforementioned theories account for the variation that derives from the dialects spoken by the British settlers in the past; nevertheless, different forms of English coexist in Australia nowadays. Accordingly, the term 'Australian English' encompasses various varieties such as Standard Australian English, varieties of Aboriginal English and some Ethnocultural Australian English varieties³ (Cox, 2006). This paper will centre around Standard Australian English because not only is it the variety spoken by most Australians, but also it is a prominent marker of national identity and is used in broadcasting and in public life (Cox & Palethorpe, 2007).

3. Linguistic features of Australian English

Having considered various sociohistorical factors that were at play in the formation and development of AusE, which is essential so as to comprehend why AusE differs from other varieties of English, this section provides an overview of the features of AusE at the level of phonology and phonetics, morphosyntax and lexis.

3.1. Phonetics and phonology

This subsection provides a general discussion of the phonetic and phonological characteristics of Australian English and compares them with RP. AusE vowels are different

³ An example of an Ethnocultural variety is 'wogspeak', a variety used by young Australians of second generation Greek, Italian, Turkish and 'Yugoslav' background (Clyne et al., 2001).

from the ones from RP and so are some prosodic features and some allophonic and reduction processes (Cox, 2006). The following table shows the vowel system of Australian English. The phonetic realisations of AusE vowels will be described below.

Table 2.

The vowel system of AusE and RP

PHONEMES	LEXICAL SETS	AusE	RP
Short monophthongs			
/e/	DRESS	[e]~[ɛ]~[æ]	[e]
/ɪ/	KIT	[i]	[ɪ]
/æ/	TRAP	[æ]~[æ:]~[æə]~[a:]~[ɛ]~[ɛ:]	[æ]
/ʌ/	STRUT	[ɐ]	[ʌ]
/ʊ/	FOOT	[ʊ]	[ʊ]
/ɒ/	LOT	[ɔ]~[ɔ ^ə]~[ɔə]	[ɒ]
Long monophthongs			
/i:/	FLEECE	[i:]~[ɛɪ]	[i:]
/u:/	GOOSE	[u:]~[əu]~[y:]	[u:]
/ɑ:/	START	[ɑ:]	[ɑ:]
/ɑ:/	PALM	[ɑ:]	[ɑ:]
/ɑ:/	BATH	[ɑ:]~[æ]	[ɑ:]
/ɜ:/	NURSE	[ɪ:]	[ɜ:]
/ɔ:/	THOUGHT	[o:]	[ɔ:]

Table 2. (continued)

The vowel system of AusE and RP

Closing diphthongs			
/eɪ/	FACE	[æɪ]~[ɛɛ]~[æe]	[eɪ]
/əʊ/	GOAT	[əu]~[əʊ]	[əʊ]
/ɔɪ/	CHOICE	[oɪ]	[ɔɪ]
/aɪ/	PRICE	[pɪ]~[p:ɪ]~[p:e]~[aɪ]	[aɪ]
/aʊ/	MOUTH	[ɛ:o]~[ɛ:r]~[æo]~[aʊ]	[aʊ]
Centring diphthongs			
/eə/	SQUARE	[eə]~[e:]	[eə]
/ʊə/	CURE	[ʊə]~[ɔ:]	[ʊə]
/ɪə/	NEAR	[ɪə]~[i:ə]~[ɪ:]	[ɪə]
Weak vowels			
/ə/	lettER	[ə]	[ə]
/ə/	commA	[ə]	[ə]
/ɪ/	happY	[ɪ:]	[ɪ]

Note. Adapted from An acoustic phonetic study of Broad, General and Cultivated Australian English vowels (p. 178), by J. Harrington, J. Cox & Z. Evans, 1997, Australian Journal of Linguistics. Copyright 1997 by Australian Journal of Linguistics, and from Accents of English 1: an introduction (p. 22), by J. C. Wells, 1982a, Cambridge University Press. Copyright 1982 by Cambridge University Press.

3.1.1. Monophthongs

Australian English is characterised by the raising of the short front monophthongs and the fronting of the GOOSE, BATH and NURSE vowels.

- Short monophthongs

One of the most characteristic features of AusE is the raising of the front vowels in the DRESS, KIT and TRAP lexical sets. In Broad accent they may be more raised than in General and Cultivated, and even pharyngealised (Wells, 1982b).

The DRESS vowel is 'strikingly different from that heard in most other accents' (Wells, 1982b, p. 598). It is usually realised as the high-mid vowel [e], but some female speakers of Broad accent may pronounce a more raised variant [e̞]. However, some speakers in Melbourne deviate from this rising trend and have been found to realise the DRESS vowel with [æ] (Burridge, 2010).

AusE speakers, especially Broad speaking women, realise a more fronted variant of the short high front KIT vowel than in RP (Horvath, 2008). Thus, [ɪ] is more similar to [i], so *bid* sounds more like [bid] rather than [bɪd] (Trudgill, 1986, p.133).

The target of the TRAP vowel /æ/ is typically pronounced [æ] in Cultivated and General Australian, but in Broad Australian, this vowel is lengthened to [æ:] or [æə] (Horvath, 2008), so while speakers of General and Cultivated Australian pronounce *bad* as [bæd], speakers of Broad Australian realise it as [bæ:d] and [bæəd] (Trudgill, 1986, p.133). In addition, the realisation of the TRAP vowel might be closer in Broad Australian, moving away from cardinal /a/, that is, [æ] and [æ:] might rise to [ɛ] and [ɛ:] (Wells, 1982b). Therefore, the realisation of AusE /æ/ may sound as RP [e] to British ears, so AusE *flash* might sound like *flesh* and *pan* like *pen* to British speakers (Wells, 1982b, p. 595).

As a matter of fact, a phonological process has been accounted for in Melbourne and Brisbane. This consists on the merging or neutralisation of /ɛ/ and /æ/ when they occur before

the lateral /l/, hence, many younger speakers cannot distinguish *shell* and *shall* (Burridge, 2010, p. 138).

Collins (1975, as cited in Wells, 1982b, p.598) refers to this development of /e, ɪ, æ/ as 'pancake vocalism', due to the fact that these short vowels are 'squashed up' in the upper part of the vowel area. As a result of the raising of the TRAP vowel, the /ʌ/ vowel of STRUT is fronted towards cardinal /a/ as a drag-chain consequence (Wells, 1982b), so *strut* is realised as [strət] (Horvath, 2008, p. 94).

The AusE pronunciation of the FOOT vowel /ʊ/ is not very different from the RP realisation, but it does receive much more lip-rounding than in RP, namely [ʊ̹] (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). The vowel of LOT tends to be [ɔ], i.e. a higher vowel than RP [ɒ], and AusE has three variants for this phoneme: [ɔ], [ɔ̹] and [ɔə]. The first two realisations are the most common (Horvath, 2008).

- Long monophthongs

The target vowel of FLEECE is often diphthongised in AusE with a short lower onglide (Bauer, 2015a), e.g. *leaf* AusE: [lɛɪf], RP: [li:f] (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p. 24).

A characteristic feature of AusE long monophthongs is the fronting of the GOOSE, START, and NURSE vowels. The GOOSE vowel is fronted to [u:] in AusE and it may be diphthongised with a lower onglide, albeit less frequently than the FLEECE vowel, e.g. *boo* AusE: [bu:] or [bəu], RP: [bu:] (Bauer, 2015a, p. 274). In some extreme cases, some AusE speakers may even front the vowel to a greater degree than [u:] and realise it as [y:] (Horvath, 2008).

The START vowel is significantly fronted to [a:] in comparison with RP [ɑ:]. The quality of this vowel is actually a differentiator of southern-hemisphere accents: it is a front vowel in Australian and New Zealand English, whereas it is a back vowel in South African English (Wells, 1982b). In AusE, [a:] is not only used in the START set, but also in PALM words.

Thus, *car park* is realised as ['ka: ,pa:k] and *father's calm* as ['fa:ðəz 'ka:m] (Wells, 1982b, p. 599).

BATH words are generally realised with [a:] as well, e.g. *laugh* [la:f]. However, this vowel is realised with the TRAP vowel in environments where it is followed by a nasal plus another consonant. Therefore, words like *chance* or *plant* are pronounced [tʃæns] and [plænt] (Wells, 1982b, p. 599). Trudgill and Hannah (2008) further comment that the usage of [a:] or [æ] in some words depends on regional factors, and that [a:] forms have more prestige than [æ] forms.

The NURSE vowel is also affected by the tendency towards fronting since it is a close-mid front-of-central vowel. This vowel is raised to the same level of cardinal /e/, sometimes even higher. Therefore, the realisation of this vowel sometimes approximates to that of a lowered [ɪ:]. This means that the realisations of the GOOSE and the NURSE vowels are not that far from each other in the vowel space. That is to say, there is no great acoustic distance between words like *shoot* [ʃu:t] and *shirt* [ʃɪ:t] (Wells, 1982b, p. 599).

Since the GOOSE vowel /ɜ:/ and the START vowel /a:/ are fronted, the THOUGHT vowel is actually the only back long vowel in Australian English. It also follows the tendency of AusE vowel raising since it shifts from [ɔ:] to [o:] (Wells, 1982b, p. 599).

3.1.2. Diphthongs

Some of the diphthongs are wider than in RP, that is, there is a bigger difference between the first target of the diphthong and the second target. In addition, they tend to be 'slower' because the first element of the diphthong is longer (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p. 23).

- Closing diphthongs

The closing diphthongs are often cited as a feature of AusE that distinguishes this variety from many other dialects of English. These diphthongs have undergone what Wells (1982b, p. 594) calls 'Diphthong Shift' and are now different in quality in comparison to those of RP (Horvath, 2008).

Compared to RP, FACE has a lower first target, that is, [eɪ] shifts towards [æɪ] as in *hay* [hæɪ] (Harrington et al., 1997, p. 178). This diphthong may also be realised with an open-mid or a near-open vowel with a closing glide: [ɛe] and [æe] (Horvath, 2008, p. 92).

The CHOICE and GOAT vowels are rather similar to those of RP. The first element of the CHOICE vowel is raised from [ɔ] to [o] in AusE but still remains relatively similar to the RP realisation [ɔɪ]. The second element of the GOAT diphthong might or might not be fronted to /ʉ/, that is, *goat* can be pronounced either [gəʉt] or, like in RP, [gəʊt] (Horvath, 2008, p. 94).

The following diphthongs, MOUTH and PRICE, are the main differentiators of the three accent types of AusE. The quality of MOUTH changes depending on the accent. Cultivated speakers use the open front unrounded vowel [a], like in RP, while General Australian speakers typically pronounce the onset as [æ]. The first target of Broad speakers is considerably different from the other accents since [a] is likely to be raised, fronted and lengthened to [ɛ:], and sometimes it is even nasalized [ɛ̃:]. Regarding the second target of the MOUTH diphthong, Cultivated speech uses the back near-close near-back rounded [ʊ] and General and Broad use the more open [o]. Broad speakers may even use the close-mid back unrounded vowel [ɤ] (Wells, 1982b). That is, the MOUTH diphthong is realised as [aʊ] in Cultivated accent, [æo] in General accent and [ɛ:o] or [ɛ̃:ɤ] in Broad accent (Wells, 1982b).

When it comes to the PRICE vowel, Cultivated speakers use the open front unrounded onset [a] and Broad and General speakers have a more backed and rounded onset [ɒ]. However, in Broad Australian this first target is longer [ɒ:] (Wells, 1982b). In addition, the second target of PRICE is sometimes lowered from near-close [ɪ] to close-mid [e], especially in Broad accent.

- Centring diphthongs

The most characteristic feature of the AusE centring diphthongs in the SQUARE, CURE and NEAR lexical sets is that speakers of Broad tend to pronounce long monophthongs. This phenomenon is called vowel monophthonging (Horvath, 2008).

The SQUARE diphthong is realised as diphthongal [eə], or as the long monophthong [e:] in Broad accent. Hence, *shared* is pronounced [ʃeəd] and [ʃe:d], which means that some speakers distinguish *shed* [ʃed] and *shared* [ʃe:d] by the length of the vowel (Wells, 1982b, p. 600).

The CURE vowel is realised as [ɔ:] in Broad Australian, particularly in the word *sure* [ʃɔ:] (Horvath, 2008, p. 97). Typically, Cultivated Australian speakers pronounce *poor* and *pure* as [pʊə] and [pjʊə], whereas speakers of General and Broad accent pronounce those words as [pɔ:] and [pjɔ:]. However, it has been noted that the Broad realisation of the CURE vowel is closer to the Cultivated pronunciation if it is followed by the alveolar approximant [ɹ] plus a vowel, as in *security* [sə'kjʊ.ɹəti:] (Wells, 1982b, p. 600).

All three accents of AusE use [ɪə] for the NEAR diphthong; however, this realisation is restricted to preconsonantal environments in Broad pronunciation, e.g. *beard* [bɪəd] (Wells, 1982b, 600). When this vowel is in final position of a word, Broad speakers realise it as [i:ə], as in *beer* [bi:ə] (Wells, 1982b, 600), while Cultivated speakers realise it as [bɪə]. In the environment of _rV, this diphthong may be monophthongised, i.e. *hero* [hɪ:ɹə] (Wells, 1982b, 600). Even though this monophthongal variant is characteristic of Broad Australian, its use is spreading to educated accents in Australia (Wells, 1982b, p. 600).

In addition, smoothing⁴ is not common in Australian English. In RP, the second target of the diphthongs /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ may be left out or weakened when they are followed by /ə/ in words like *fire* [fɪə] and *power* [paə]. However, in AusE these words are disyllabic: [fɪə] and [pæʊə] (Wells, 1982b, p. 600).

3.1.3. Weak vowels

In the lexical sets lettER and commA, the pronunciation of word-final /ə/ is very distinctive in AusE since a very open realisation [ɐ] occurs, e.g. *ever* [ɛvɐ] (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p. 23) and *sofa* [səʊfɐ] (Wells, 1982a, p. 167).

⁴ Smoothing is a process in which a diphthong is realised as a monophthong in a prevocalic environment (Wells, 1982a, p. 238).

In AusE, the weak vowel occurring word-finally in the lexical set happyY undergoes what Wells (1982a, p. 257) calls 'happy tensing'. This vowel is realised as [i:] instead of RP [ɪ], thus, *seedy* [si:di:] has the same vowel in both syllables but *city* [sɪti:] does not (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p.24). Because of this, some minimal pairs of RP do not exist in AusE. In RP, *studied* and *studded* are homophonous, ([stʌdɪd]), but the pronunciation of these words remains distinct in AusE: [stʌdi:d] and [stʌdəd] respectively (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p.33).

In non-final environments, /ə/ is the most common vowel as it frequently replaces /ɪ/. While the vowel of unstressed syllables in words such as *wanted* or *honest* is pronounced [ɪ] in RP, Australian English speakers use [ə] as a result of a phenomenon which Wells (1982a, p.167) calls 'weak vowel merger'. As a consequence, AusE has a significant amount of homophones while other varieties do not, e.g. *boxes* and *boxers* /bɒksəz/ or *founded* and *foundeder* /fəʊndəd/ (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p.33)

Wells (1982b) also points out that although /ə/ is the most frequent weak vowel in AusE, there is a preference for /ɪ/ in environments before a velar. For example, /ɪ/ is more frequent in the suffixes *-ing* and *-ic*, e.g. *panic* [pænik]; *putting* [pʊtɪŋ] (Wells, 1982b, p. 601).

3.1.4. Consonants

AusE consonants are not much different from those found in RP; in fact, they have been considered to be 'fairly unremarkable' (Wells, 1982b, p. 603). However, there are a few consonantal differences that will be addressed.

Like RP, AusE is a non-rhotic accent that has linking and intrusive /r/. In Australian English, /r/ is often more strongly retroflexed than in RP (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). In addition, /h/ is subject to omission in the weak form of the pronouns *his*, *her*, *him* or *hers*, which is common in RP as well. AusE speakers may also delete /h/ if it is in initial position in stressed syllables such as *Hudson's* (Horvath, 2008, p. 101).

There has been a long discussion about the pronunciation of /l/ in AusE. As far as the quality of /l/ is concerned, it is regarded to be darker in AusE than in RP, e.g. *leaf* [tʰeɪf] (Trudgill & Hannah, p. 24). Wells (1982b) and Trudgill (1986) agree that AusE has no *l*-vocalisation but there is evidence of South Australians vocalising /l/. A speaker from South Australia may pronounce a hesitant 'Well...' as [wɛʊ] (Turner, 1994, p. 324).

There are three pronunciations of /t/ that occur in Australian English. One is the flap or tap [ɾ] that occurs intervocalically, as in *city* [sɪɾi:] or *bitter* [bɪɾə], which can also be found in American English. The other pronunciation is the strongly fricated [tʰ] that mostly occurs before a pause. This can be exemplified with the expression 'And that's as far as it went', where *went* is pronounced [wɛntʰ] because it is at the end of the sentence (Horvath, 2008, p. 100). Additionally, like in RP, glottaling of /t/ occurs before a consonant: *fit them* [fɪʔ ðəm] (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p.35).

Both RP and AusE speakers usually insert the palatal approximant /j/ after the alveolar consonants /t,d,s,z/ when they precede the GOOSE vowel; thus, they use [tʰ, dʰ, sʰ, zʰ]. Like RP, Yod Coalescence is present in AusE. When the alveolar plosives /t,d/ and the alveolar fricatives /s,z/ form a cluster with /j/ (before the GOOSE vowel), the alveolars may undergo palatalisation and be realised as [tʃ, dʒ] and [ʃ, ʒ] respectively. As a result, words like *tune*, *due*, *assume* and *presume* have two variants: [tʃjʊ:n] vs. [tʰjʊ:n], [dʒjʊ:] vs. [dʒjʊ:], [əʃjʊ:m] vs. [əʃjʊ:m] and [prəʒjʊ:m] vs. [prəʒjʊ:m] (Horvath, 2008, p. 101).

3.1.5. Prosodics

AusE has a special intonation pattern that has received the attention of many researchers and even the media. AusE speakers raise their tone in simple statements in the same way a speaker of RP would do in *yes-no* questions (Wells, 1982b). This intonation pattern, which has been variously called 'High Rise Terminal' (Bauer, 2015a), 'High Rising Tone' (HRT) (Horvath, 2008), or the 'Australian Questioning Intonation' (Burrige, 2010), is also present in North America and Britain, but is mainly associated with AusE (Burrige, 2010). HRT is common in descriptions and narratives and it is most likely to appear in utterances that contain multiple clauses. This tone might be used to check the listener's comprehension or to

request the listener to be more engaged in the conversation (Horvath, 2008). The following example taken from Horvath's (2008) study illustrates this intonation pattern; the arrows show where the rising tone occurs:

The juniors was composed of the old Marrickville High building↗, and a few portables↗, old fashioned portables, not the modern ones, the, you know, not the uh, aluminium ones, just the wooden ones↗, and it had a big, big area for playground, it's all green grass↗, two areas really, big. (p.103).

Horvath's (2008) study, which was conducted in a primary school, showed that the High Rising Tone is used by speakers of different ages and backgrounds, but it is more prevalent in teenage girls.

Lastly, there is a popular belief that Australian speech is generally nasal, but evidence shows that this is not accurate. Mitchell and Delbridge (1965b, as cited in Turner, 1994) carried out a study regarding this issue and found that only a few Broad AusE speakers nasalised vowels. Therefore, they concluded that nasality is not a noticeable characteristic of AusE.

3.2. Morphology and syntax

AusE is relatively similar to BrE at the level of morphosyntax, Collins (2012, p. 79) points out that 'in grammar and discourse there are rarely usages that are restricted to AusE'. Although AusE is not very distinct from BrE and AmE, there are some differences worth mentioning.

3.2.1. The noun phrase

- Pronouns

Unconventional as it might seem to non-Australians, it has been noted that Australians produce instances of possessive pronouns followed by *same*, for instance, *Can I keep **my same** phone number?* (Newbrook, 2001, p.121).

In addition, in informal speech, the feminine pronoun *she* is used to denote inanimate nouns and impersonal constructions, such as *She'll be right* ('Everything will be all right') or *She's a stinker today* ('The weather is excessively hot today') (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p. 25).

The case selection of a personal pronoun that precedes a gerund-participle has been thoroughly discussed for centuries, and AusE differs from BrE and AmE in this aspect. When it comes to assigning case to a personal pronoun followed by an *-ing* form of a verb, AusE has a preference to assign the accusative case to the pronoun, while BrE and AmE opt for the genitive case. Thus, AusE speakers will produce sentences like ... *mad as she was at him going away* rather than ...*mad as she was at his going away* (Collins & Peters, 2008, p. 355).

3.2.2. The verb phrase

- Aspect

The progressive aspect is more frequent in AusE than it is in BrE or in AmE, and its use is expanding. While the two northern hemisphere varieties use the simple aspect with stative verbs such as *think*, *hear*, *feel*, and *assume*, Australian speakers may use the progressive (Collins & Peters, 2008). Therefore, the following sentences given by Collins (2008, p. 235) can be heard in AusE:

- (1) (...) *it sweeps you nearly straight down and you're you're thinking.*
- (2) *Are you feeling any older Peter?*

- Mood

AusE and BrE differ in the use of the mandative subjunctive⁵ after expressions of demand, recommendation or intention. Both AusE and AmE prefer to use the mandative subjunctive in sentences like *I recommend that he talk to a specialist*. In contrast, BrE speakers are inclined to use the periphrastic construction with *should*, e.g. *I recommend that he should talk to a specialist* (Collins & Peters, 2008, p. 347).

⁵ 'The mandative subjunctive consists of the base form of the verb. It is distinctive only in the third-person singular of the present tense' (Nordquist, 2018, para. 2).

- Tense

AusE speakers favour the use of irregular past participles such as *beaten*, *gotten*, *proven*, *sawn* or *shorn*. *Proven* and *gotten* stand out among these participles due to the great contrast between ages, with a majority of younger speakers using the *-en* form rather than the *-ed* form (Collins & Peters, 2008).

What is more, the use of *gotten* diverges from that of AmE. AmE uses *gotten* to refer to something acquired or obtained and *got* when the reference is something possessed (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). Alternatively, AusE speakers prefer *gotten* in intransitive constructions and *got* in transitive constructions; as a result, they are more likely to produce (3) and (4) than (5) and (6) (Collins & Peters, 2008, p. 345).

(3) *She had never **gotten** so angry before.* (AusE)

(4) *I haven't **got** a hotel booking yet.* (AusE)

(5) *She had never **got** so angry before.* (AmE)

(6) *I haven't **gotten** a hotel booking yet.* (AmE)

The use of the present perfect is more common in AusE than it is in BrE or AmE. The present perfect tense is also used for past time contexts, especially in narratives (Collins & Peters, 2008). In AusE, the present perfect can occur with an adverb that refers to the past, in sequences indicating narrative progression, and in contrast with the past simple for stylistic reasons. Examples (7), (8) and (9) illustrate these uses (Engel & Ritz, 2000, p. 133)

(7) *In the morning he's **stuck** an 'I love Redman' sticker on her back...*

(8) *And then she's **left**. She's **gone** to Innaloo Shopping Centre.*

(9) *She finally **got** home to her husband and kids and they've just **pissed** themselves laughing.*

- Modality

A category of the verb system of Australian English that stands out is modality. AusE speakers avoid using *shall* and use *will* instead. *Shall* is obsolete not only in AusE, but also in BrE and AmE; however, it is avoided to a greater extent in AusE since it is only used a few times in formal genres. In addition to *shall*, *ought (to)* is avoided in questions and negative sentences, so the use of *should* is preferred (Collins & Peters, 2008).

Moreover, *may* can be used as an alternative to *might* and *could* to express not only past possibility, but also hypothetical possibility, as examples (10) and (11) show (Collins & Peters, 2008, p. 349).

(10) *He suggested that the driver **may/might/could** have fallen asleep.*

(11) *Criminals **may/might/could** be advantaged by such a law.*

Although it was believed that epistemic⁶ *must* does not have a negative counterpart, AusE does accept the use of epistemic *mustn't*, possibly influenced by Scottish English (Burrige, 2010). It has the same meaning as epistemic *can't* and both are used interchangeably. Therefore, to express 'I assume that he did not want the coupon', AusE speakers may say 'He *mustn't* have wanted the coupon' or 'He *can't* have wanted the coupon' (Collins & Peters, 2008, p. 350).

- Agreement

Whether collective nouns are treated as singular or plural varies between AusE and BrE. While it is more common to use plural verbs for collective nouns in BrE, AusE has a preference for verbs in the singular form. Trudgill and Hannah (2008, p. 25) offer examples (12) and (13).

(12) *The government **have** made a mistake.* (BrE)

(13) *The government **has** made a mistake.* (AusE)

⁶ Epistemic modals are used to express the speaker's confidence in the truth of a statement (Suhadi, 2001).

- The passive

Over the years, it has been claimed that it is more popular and frequent to construct passive sentences with the verb *get*, and that *get-passives* are usually related to AmE (Collins, 1996). In order to prove or refute such claims, Collins (1996) carried out a study and found that *get-passives* are more frequent in AusE than in BrE or AmE; in fact, the difference in frequency of *get-passives* was not significant between AmE and BrE. Although *get-passives* are considered more informal, they are more common in both writing and speech in AusE and the frequency of their use is increasing (Burridge, 2010). Examples (14) and (15) show instances of *get-passives* (Collins, 1996, p. 45).

(14) *He **got** hit in the face with the tip of a surfboard.*

(15) *Rosie **got** struck by lightning.*

3.2.3. The adjectival phrase

AusE and BrE differ in the usage of constructions involving a superlative adjective followed by *since*. A BrE speaker would use this construction to express that the item following *since* has the quality expressed by the superlative to a higher degree than the item preceding *since*. This concept can be exemplified with (16) (Newbrook, 2001, p. 124):

(16) *His score of 200 was his highest since he made 250 in 1995.*

BrE speakers consider 200 to be the closest approach to 250 since this old mark was achieved, but 200 is not an improvement upon it. What is more, 250 does not necessarily need to be his highest mark (Newbrook, 2001). By contrast, an Australian speaker would use this construction to report the improvement of an old mark that is the highest mark, thus, they would use this construction as shown in (17) (Newbrook, 2001, p. 124):

(17) *His score of 200 was his highest since he made 175 in 1995.*

In this case, since 175 is his personal best, he cannot have made a higher score in the past. In BrE this sentence could be expressed in a different way, e.g. *His score of 200 was a personal best, beating his previous record of 175 set in 1995* (Newbrook, 2001, p. 124).

3.2.4. Other function words

- Conjunctions

A salient syntactic feature of AusE is the clause-final *but*, shown in example (18) (Mulder et al., 2009). The sentence-final conjunction *but* most likely derives from Irish English, and it is usually defined as an equivalent term to Standard English *though* (Mulder et al., 2009).

(18) *If you ever go there, it's good like, you don't stay there for too long but.*

3.3. Lexis

The lexis of Australian English is quite similar to that of British English when compared to the differences between the vocabulary of BrE and AmE (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008). In fact, Blair and Collins (2001, p. 4) affirm that AusE and AmE are 'closer than ever before' given that many AmE words and expressions have been borrowed in recent decades, which results from the increasing influence of American culture and the creation of faster means of communication such as the Internet. For instance, younger Australians now use *cool* more frequently than *beaut*, which was the most common way of saying that something was good (Hagley, 2012, p. 52).

What is more, not only the spelling, but also the stress pattern of some words have shifted from BrE trends to the American English version. For instance, older Australians still use the <our> spelling while younger Australians use <or>, e.g. *colour* vs. *color* (Hagley, 2012, p. 52), and there is a tendency among youngsters to change the stress pattern from BrE *reSEARCH* to AmE *REsearch* (Blair & Collins, 2001, p. 5).

In addition, regional variation has been found in Australia's lexicon. For example, the container where waste goes (BrE *bin*) is called *rubbish bin* in Perth, *garbage bin* in Brisbane and Sydney, and *dust bin* in Melbourne and Adelaide (Blair & Collins, 2001, p. 9).

What makes AusE vocabulary unique is not only the great number of borrowings coming from Aboriginal languages such as the well-known *dingo*⁷, but also some words and expressions that have their roots in the English dialects spoken by convicts such as *new chum*⁸, as well as the use of diminutives or hypocoristics like *sandie*⁹. This section will discuss the factors that contributed to the shaping of the lexis of SAusE.

When the early settlers arrived in Australia in 1788, they found themselves in a new land with different flora, fauna and people. Those people, the Aboriginals, spoke at least 600 different dialects, and in the first years of the British settlement, about 400 words from 80 Aboriginal languages were borrowed into Australian English.

At first, the early settlers used British English in an attempt to describe new things. For instance, in order to compare an Australian animal or plant to its European counterpart, they used words preceded by the term *native*, e.g. *native bear* ('koala') or *native dog* ('dingo') (Turner, 1994, p. 306). The word *bush* was used for a similar purpose. It was used to refer to areas of wildland far away from large towns where very few people lived (Cambridge University Press, n.d.), and settlers created compounds with *bush* to reflect various aspects of Australian life, e.g. *bush tucker*¹⁰, *bush medicine*¹¹ (Moore, 1999, p. 8).

However, due to contact with Aboriginal people, the British settlers inevitably ended up borrowing some words such as *boobook*¹², *boomerang* and *dingo* (Turner, 1994, p. 306). These words were borrowed from the Dharuk language, and so were a large number of common words that are now present in AusE due to close contact between Aboriginal people that spoke Dharuk and the British settlers (Turner, 1994).

⁷ 'A wild dog' (Trudgill & Hannah, 2008, p. 26).

⁸ 'A novice' (Turner, 1994, p. 310).

⁹ An alternative form of sandwich (Simpson, 2008, p. 398).

¹⁰ 'Food from animals and plants in the Australian bush, often eaten raw' (Oxford University Press, n.d.).

¹¹ 'Traditional medical treatments, often made from plants, used in bush communities' (Oxford University Press, n.d.).

¹² 'A small spotted brown Australian owl' (Collins, n.d.).

The convicts that were taken to Australia also contributed to the distinctiveness of the lexis of AusE. They took their own slang language with them, which was not only used to evade and confuse authorities, but also to show solidarity among convicts. This slang language is known as flash language, and there are not many official records of it because authorities disallowed the use of it (Turner, 1994). However, around 740 words and phrases were recovered, e.g. *new chum*, which referred to ‘a new fellow prisoner in jail’ but means ‘a novice’ in present-day AusE and *old hand*, a word which being associated to ‘ex-convicts’ in the past, now means ‘experienced person’ (Turner, 1994, p. 310). As mentioned in section 2.2, convicts took Cockney to Australia, so rhyming slang, which is one of the main characteristics of the London dialect, became part of AusE too. Australians may use expressions such as *Septic Tanks* (‘Yanks’)¹³ or *porkies* (‘porkie pies’)¹⁴ (Taylor, 2001, p.336).

One of the most salient and well-known features of Australian lexis is the use of hypocoristics or diminutives. Hypocoristics act as alternatives for some words or names and are different in connotation and in level of formality. Typically, they are used to express familiarity, to make jokes and to be sarcastic (Simpson, 2001). Two common hypocoristics are *Aussie* (‘Australian’) or *arvo* (‘afternoon’) (Simpson, 2008, p. 402).

The most common way of creating a hypocoristic form is via suffixation, especially with the suffixes *-ie* and *-o*. Words that end with the suffix *-ie* are usually proper names for people, e.g. *Warnie* (‘Shane Warne’), for places, e.g. *Tassie* (‘Tasmania’), or for religions, e.g. *Prezzie/Presbyterian*. Words that end in *-o* are commonly male names, e.g. *Davo* (‘David’) and occupational terms, e.g. *journo* (‘journalist’) (Collins, 2012, p. 79). It is said that *-ie* forms denote affection, familiarity and solidarity, whereas *-o* forms are pejorative, expressing roughness and anti-intellectualism (McAndrew, 1992, as cited in Collins, 2012). In addition to suffixation with *-ie* and *-o*, hypocoristics can be created by adding the suffixes *-er*, e.g. *Macker* (‘Macquarie University’), *-ers*, e.g. *ackers* (‘acne’), and *-s*, e.g. *Jules* (‘Julie’) or by elliding syllables of the word, e.g. *Oz* (‘Australia’), *crim* (‘criminal’) (Simpson, 2008, pp. 405-406).

¹³ A word used pejoratively to refer to a person from the US (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

¹⁴ Lies (Taylor, 2001, p. 336).

It would be reasonable to assume that hypocoristic forms with different endings would differ in meaning, but that is not the case. For example, even though *journalist* appears as *journo* and *journie*, both forms have the same meaning; however, the *-o* suffix is the preferred form in this case (Simpson, 2008, p. 409). What is more, Simpson (2001) found that the *-o* ending was much more frequent in Sydney, Canberra and Western Australia than in South Australia.

There is great variation in the use of hypocoristics among different regions. Not all Australians use hypocoristics for place-names; South Australians are not as productive as citizens of New South Wales in this respect. Simpson (2001) showed that one family from Parkes, New South Wales, was able to think only of seven hypocoristics for towns. By contrast, five linguists from Sydneyside were able to come up with 40 hypocoristics of place-names. Therefore, regional variation affects the use or lack of use of hypocoristics and the distribution of certain hypocoristic forms (Simpson, 2001).

4. Conclusion

The English language was taken to Australia in 1788 with the arrival of the First Fleet, a fleet which was mostly composed of British convicts. These convicts coming from different places such as Scotland, Ireland or East Anglia and the population mobility in Britain in the late 18th century make it rather difficult to define the origins of AusE. In fact, there are various theories about how and where AusE was formed. However, most scholars agree that AusE was a mix of British dialects, and that the dialects spoken in the east and southeast of England had a significant influence on its formation.

In the early years of the settlement, a distinctive Australian accent arose, which subsequently developed into different accents. These accents are represented in a continuum where three accent types stand out: Broad, General and Cultivated accent. The use of them is determined by social factors rather than regional, and each one exhibits certain phonetic characteristics, being Broad the form that shows more distinct features from BrE and AmE and Cultivated the accent which is rather similar to RP. The morphosyntax of AusE is not very different from BrE, they mostly differ in features of the verb phrase such as aspect, tense and modality. Not only do AusE speakers use the progressive aspect with stative verbs, but also they use the

present perfect in more contexts than British speakers, i.e. with adverbs that refer to the past. AusE vocabulary is an aspect that makes it different from other English varieties. The uniqueness of AusE lexis comes not only from the different borrowings from Aboriginals, but also from the slang that British convicts used in the past and the use of hypocoristics.

Although AusE was formed through the mixture of a set of British dialects and the interaction with indigenous languages and other varieties of English, it eventually became an independent variety that embodied Australia's national identity (Collins, 2012). Butler (2001, p. 151) affirms that 'AusE is dear to the hearts of those of us who are Australian – we know each other by the sound of the language we speak, by the special words we use, (...). AusE therefore becomes one of the icons of our culture". While AusE speakers, being aware of the distinctiveness of their speech, have an unspoken bond with each other, non-Australian people might not be aware of the salient characteristics of AusE, failing to grasp the meaning or nuances of words that are part of the everyday speech of its speakers. Therefore, in order to have a better understanding of Australians, it is necessary that people become acquainted with a major part of their identity: their speech.

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