

## **Towards a unified and inclusive model of Australian English**

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Australia is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world yet our understanding of Australian English speech patterns is largely based on an Anglo-centric model that fails to represent the community in which we live. The complex relationship between speech production and ethnocultural diversity has been understudied in this country. The integration of two projects under the Australian Voices program of studies seeks to address this problem through meticulous phonetic analysis of young people's speech that will inform our understanding of the relationship between language, culture, ethnicity and identity. The overarching goal of Australian Voices is to develop a new unified and inclusive model of Australian English.

In this talk we will discuss the progress we've made in both the ARC Future Fellowship (FT180100462) project – Multicultural Australian English: The New Voice of Sydney (MAE) – and the ARC Discovery Project (DP190102164) – Children's Speech, Community Diversity and the Emergence of Sound Change (CSCD). These complementary projects allow us to provide a rich analysis of the relationship between speech patterns and ethnocultural background in teenagers and children from a range of communities across Sydney and NSW. Teenagers in year 10 from Sydney communities differing in their level of ethnolinguistic diversity participated in the MAE project engaging in a picture naming task and a guided conversation with a peer. The CSCD project traced the development of children (mainly from urban and regional areas of NSW) across three time points as they transitioned from preschool to school. In this talk we describe our COVID-flexible data collection methods and introduce the demographic and language background details of our cohort of over 300 participants. We will then present case studies of two sociolinguistic variables that illustrate the importance of community diversity in the structure of language variation in Australian English.