Can Scots and Australians understand each other?

English accents around the world

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Mała ankieta 1

Kto mówi „tyn kuń”?
- Rolnik
- Góral
- Babcia?
- Taksówkarz z Dębca

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Śmieszne? Dlaczego?
- Coraz rzadziej spotykany sposób mówienia
- Tylko wśród niektórych grup społecznych
- Wymowa większości Polaków – zwłaszcza młodszych – jest ‘standardowa’

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Mała ankieta 2

- W antrejce na rycze mam pyry stać w tytce
- ‘Gwara poznanska’

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Mała ankieta 3

- Przepraszam, dokąd jedzie ten tramwaj?
- O, pan z Poznania?
- Wymowa poznanska (tu: intonacja)

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Three different cases: 1

- Tyn kuń
  - Standard grammar
  - Pronunciation (different from your own)
  - ‘(Therefore ‘funny’)’

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Three different cases: 2

- W antrejce...
  - ‘Funny’ grammar and vocabulary
  - Any pronunciation will do

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Three different cases: 3

- Dokąd jedzie ten tramwaj...
  - ‘Normal’ grammar and vocabulary
  - Non-standard pronunciation but...
  - Not funny, because it’s similar to your own
Dialect vs. accent
- Wantrejce...
- Dialect: regional differences in
  - vocabulary
  - grammar
  - pronunciation
- Tyń kuri; Dokąd jedzie ten tramwaj?
- Accent: regional and social differences only in pronunciation

Standard accent?
- Take home message:
  - Everybody, in any language, speaks with an accent
  - Just that you don't notice if it's similar to your own
  - And some accents have been selected as 'standard' historically

English is different...
- Spoken around the world
- There are many standards of pronunciation
  - (Only ONE in Polish...)
- A native English speaker may see e.g. a university professor speaking standard English with an accent different from his/her own
  - This won't happen in modern Polish

Standard English?
- You may say that there is a 'standard English' but it's written
- Differences are small
- It can be pronounced in many ways
- Without differences in grammar and vocabulary

Standard pronunciations
- Two main standard pronunciations:
  - RP (Received Pronunciation): England
  - General American: USA

RP vs. General American
- Main differences in pronunciation:
  - RP is 'r-less', i.e. /r/ is pronounced only before a vowel:
    - red, carry, for Anna have /t/
    - start, near, square, car do not have /t/
  - GenAm is 'r-full': /r/ is pronounced wherever it's spelled

Who's speaking???
- There's no /a/ vowel in GenAm, so e.g.
  - lot, got, God, what have /a:/
  - An American on an English train hears...
    - This is your /ɡɑːd/ speaking...
    - Oh my God! Am I dead yet?
  - General American: /ɡɑːd/, /ɡɑːrd/;
  - RP: /ɡɑːd/, /ɡɑːd/

RP vs. General American
- Tomatoes, missiles, news etc.
- But generally, no major problems
- Because both are well-known...
  - General American from pop culture
    - (music, movies, TV etc.)
  - RP from the teaching of English abroad, especially in Europe

Other accents
- But many other accents around the world
- There is quite a lot of tolerance, especially towards 'educated' accents
  - E.g. 'educated' Scottish accents have some prestige in England...
  - ...but some accents are perceived negatively (e.g. 'Brummie' in England)
Other well-known accents

**Europe:**
- Northern English
- South-Western English
- Scottish
- Irish
- Welsh

**America:**
- New England (North-Eastern USA)
- New York
- Southern USA
- California
- Canada
- Jamaica and rest of the Caribbean

**Rest of the world**
- Australia
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- India
- Nigeria
- etc.

Scotland

I live in a place called Coupar, which is in Fife, on the northeast coast of Scotland. It's just above Edinburgh... but the accent is actually very different to Edinburgh. Fife isn't a city, nor is it a town: it's more of a district, with lots of little towns and villages all joined together. Lot of countryside there, but we do have some big towns as well. Fife itself could be split into two parts. I'm from the east coast of Fife, but we also have the west of Fife and, again, you would notice that the accent and dialect is totally different over there as well.

Scotland

I've lived in Fife all my life, apart from when I moved to university when I was eighteen. Since I've come to Newcastle to go to university my accent has changed slightly, and I find it difficult to speak in my natural accent down here because people just don't understand me... always people comment that – when I go home – that I talk differently... My parents have lived in Fife all of their lives as well. My dad is a chef and my mum is a nurse. And all my grandparents and all my family live in Fife, so I've got a real Scottish background.

Australia

When the sunlight strikes raindrops in the air, they act like a prism and form a rainbow. The rainbow is a division of white light into many beautiful colors. These take the shape of a long round arch, with its path high above, and its two ends apparently beyond the horizon. There is, according to legend, a boiling pot of gold at one end. People look, but no one ever finds it. When a man looks for something beyond his reach, his friends say he is looking for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. 
**Australia**

- /t/ in words like *division* almost like Polish /t/
- /e/ in words like *legend* almost like /t/
- /ae/ in words like *man* almost like /e/

- My first theatrical experience was in that same class. We were in grade one or two with the same group of people, and were doing an Australian Christmas story, and the role I had to play was a little kangaroo, Joey. I recall having to wear a friend’s little dancing leotard and stockings with a stocking tail stuffed with paper. So I looked like a kangaroo with little ears stuffed on my head.

- I don’t really recall what the production was about apart from a Christmas theme, but I remember having to hide under a table until Santa came out and then I was like the Rainbow or the Australian version – the kangaroo – escorting Santa around giving gifts out. So it was quite an enjoyable experience even though it was quite a few years ago.

- Australia

  - air
  - recall having to wear
  - ears
  - Australian English is ‘r-less’

- hide under a table
- paper
- tail
- people
- Santa came out and then...
- ‘Shifted’ diphthongs

- Problems?

  - To an Australian...
    - Scottish *bad* may sound like *Bud*
    - Scottish *bit* may sound like *bet*
    - Scottish *say* may sound like *see*...

- Problems?

  - Some people say that Scottish and Australian (or maybe London) are the two most distant accents of English...
  - Scottish patient at an Australian hospital:
    - I’ve only come here to die!!
    - No, no, today!

- Problems?

  - But in general people can ‘tune into’ another accent quite quickly
  - Especially if they know that other people can speak with different accents
  - Remember, *everybody* speaks with an accent!
  - But it’s ONE language, after all
  - Or is it?...
Born Lewisham hospital, 29th of December 1965, ten hour labour, mum's never let me forget it. Dad's a bricklayer, ran away to Wales when he was ten years old 'cause he was getting too many beatings off the old man. Became brought up with horses on a farm, became a brick 'cause the geez... the family he lived with were brickies... Been in the trade all his life... Still works at the age of 68 as hard as he did when he was 18... God hope I'll take after him.

Mum's housewife, always has been, had me brother 18, shotgun wedding. If you wanna know how long me Mum and Dad have been married, find out how old me brother is. He was born in August, they were married on April – the only parents in the goddamn world that were married on April the 1st, if you please...

Northern England: Newcastle
[redacted] is OK, but, like I said, I prefer [redacted]. And also, I don't really do a lot in [redacted]. I don't get to see a lot of it because I haven't got much money so only ever get to go on student nights and stuff like that. I don't experience much of the culture of [redacted], if there is any.

London
Mum's housewife, always has been, had me brother 18, shotgun wedding. If you wanna know how long me Mum and Dad have been married, find out how old me brother is. He was born in August, they were married on April – the only parents in the goddamn world that were married on April the 1st, if you please...

Northern England: Newcastle
'coz there's exams coming up strut, foot trap face, stay, goat

Northern England: Newcastle

London
18 88 Carter old
face, stay, price, prize, fire, mouth
bath, after, dance, start 'R-less'
Vowels quite like in Australia (some diffs.)
But 'glottal stops' like in Scotland

Vowels and 'glottal stops' like in Scotland
But 'r-less'
No separate vowel for words such as much, money, stuff etc. – these have the same sounds as foot, put etc. (different from Scotland – typical for the whole of Northern England)

But why?
Old or new?
GenAm 5-E England
dance after bath
Actually, an English innovation (18th cent.)

Why accents differ?
People innovate in some places, but not in others...
...and there is geographical separation
Innovations in pronunciation don't travel well...
...like Guinness

More information