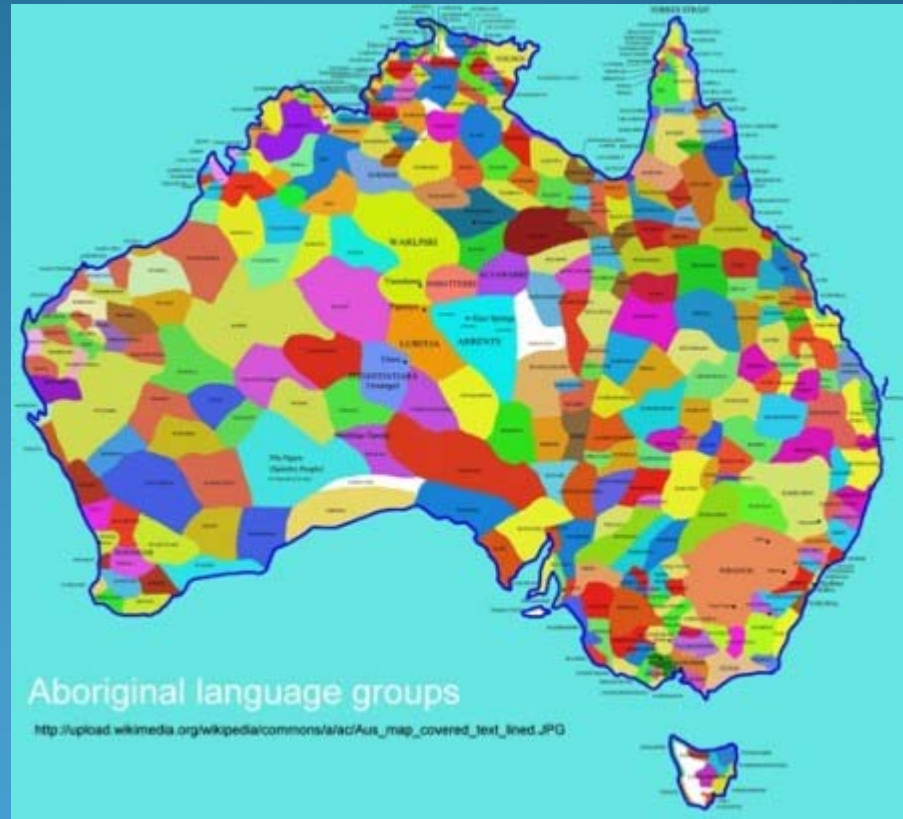


Varieties of English: Aboriginal English

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History

- Prior to 1788 about 300,000 people spoke an estimated 250 languages
- Indigenous people needed lingua franca



Phonology

- Aboriginal English has a strong tendency to monophthongize diphthongs.
- The neutral short vowel tends to be replaced by the mid central vowel .
- The low central vowel /a/, which is the most commonly occurring in Aboriginal languages, is widely distributed in Aboriginal English and often occurs in contexts where StE would use the neutral short vowel.

Phonology

- Most of the consonants of Australian English may be heard in Aboriginal English, with the exception of /h/
- “Henry’s hat” becomes “Enry’s at”.
- The labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/ are often replaced by stops, as in fall and have or “pall” and “hap” respectively.

Morphology and syntax

- Much less regular than standard English in marking agreement of the third person present tense verb with a singular subject. “He get wild” and “This goes on top”
- Past tense “He hook him”
- Double negatives are not uncommon “They didn’t have no shirt”

Morphology and syntax

- Aboriginal English does not mark the noun consistently for plural. “some plum over there”
- Some nouns which function as mass nouns in StE are count nouns in Aboriginal English. “woods” for bit of woods, “dusts” for clouds of dust.

Morphology and syntax

- Questions may be indicated by intonation or by the use of a final question tag.
- “You like banana?”
- “He can walk, eh?”

