



‘Uni’ study probes why ‘Aussies’ shorten words 澳洲學者研究當地縮語成因

An Aussie university is probing one of the most prominent features of Australian life: the national habit of shortening words.

From “barbie” (barbecue) to “arvo” (afternoon) and “rellies” (relatives), University of Tasmania (or Uni of Tassie) researchers are hoping to find out what lies behind the widespread **abbreviations**.

“What we’d like to find out is how people feel when they’re listening to someone using those kinds of shortenings, compared to someone who’s not,” doctor Nenagh Kemp told AFP from Hobart.

“It might tell us more about whether people think it makes you sound more friendly or more intelligent or more casual, and also differences.”

Kemp said while abbreviations were present in all forms of English, they were more common in Australia, where tradesmen are “tradies”, firemen are “fries”, ambulance workers are “ambos” and service stations are “servos”.

She believes that the shortenings are a way of conveying a sense of informality in a country known for its egalitarian **ethos**.

“I think it does set up a feeling of companionship or casualness and friendliness,” she said.

“You might use that to say, ‘Hey, I’m on the same level as you. I’m not being too **pretentious**.’”

Kemp said young people had their own set of abbreviations, while she has also observed gradual globalization of short forms.

“Young people are more likely to come up with abbreviations for the technology they’re using, such as ‘mobes’ for the mobile phone and ‘lappy’ for their laptop (computer),” said Kemp.

“Many of the (abbreviations) that older Australians use are not used so much by younger Australians, who might be adopting more American diminutives,” she added.

“I think that the more TV shows and the more movies, when everything’s becoming more globalized, the Australianness of many of them might diminish.”

Kemp and her colleague Jo Underwood will play recordings of people using abbreviations to volunteers and **gauge** their response, with their study due for completion in October.

(AFP)

澳洲一所大學正在研究澳洲人生活最主要的特色之一：全國上下都習慣簡化用字。

比如將烤肉的barbecue縮短成barbie、下午afternoon縮成arvo、親人relatives變成rellies，塔斯馬尼亞大學University of Tasmania改成Uni of Tassie。研究人員希望找出這普遍現象的原因。

來自荷伯特的妮納格·坎普博士告訴法新社：「我們想讓人們聽到那種簡略說法及正常用法時的感受。」

「這或許能讓我們更了解，是否有人認為這樣會讓人聽起來更友善、聰明、隨和，甚至了解當中的差異。」

坎普表示，雖然各式英文都有縮寫，但在澳洲卻更常見。如生意人tradesmen變成tradies，消防隊員firemen變fries，救護車ambulance是ambos，還有加油站service stations改成

servos等。

她認為這種縮短的用法，傳達一種非正式的語氣，而澳洲一向以平等精神著稱。

她說：「我想這種方式的確表達出某種友誼關係，或隨意、友善的氛圍。」

「用這種說法就代表你想表達：『嘿，我跟你一樣階層。我沒有裝腔作勢。』」

坎普說，年輕人有自己的一套縮語，但是她也發覺這些縮語漸漸有全球化的趨勢。

坎普表示：「年輕人比較會為他們在用的科技創造縮語，如行動電話mobile phone變成mobes，而筆記型電腦laptop computer成為lappy。」

她又說：「許多老一輩澳洲人所用的縮語現在年輕一輩已不使用，他們用的是比較美式的用法。」

「我想電視與電影愈是普遍，一切就愈全球化，其所包含的『澳洲成分』就會減少。」

坎普與同事喬·安德伍德將錄下來的這些縮語播放給志願者聽，並研究他們的反應。這項研究將於十月份完成。

(法新社／翻譯：吳岱璽)

In a file picture taken on May 28, 2009 people walk over the forecourt to the Sydney Opera House, with the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the background.

PHOTO: AFP

二〇〇九年五月二十八日拍攝的資料照片中，人們走過雪梨歌劇院前院，背景為雪梨海港大橋。

照片：法新社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **abbreviation** /əˌbrɪvɪˈeɪʃən/ n.

縮寫 (suō1 xiě3)

例: Students were warned not to use abbreviations in their assignments.
(學生被警告不得在作業裡使用縮寫。)

2. **ethos** /ˈiθəs/ n.

道德觀 (dào4 de2 guan1) · 氣質 (qì4 zhì2)

例: The coach has completely changed the ethos of the team.
(教練徹底改變了團隊風氣。)

3. **pretentious** /prɪˈtɛnʃəs/ adj.

炫耀的 (xuān4 yào4 de5)

例: The theater was full of pretentious people.
(整個劇院裡都是愛炫耀的人。)

4. **gauge** /ɡedʒ/ v.

判斷 (pàn4 duàn4)

例: The university is trying to gauge how much interest there'll be in a new IT center.
(那所大學正在估算一座新的資訊科技中心有多大效益。)