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## Rhythm Variation of English in Australia and New Zealand

### Abstract

The paper considers rhythmic patterns of Australian and New Zealand national varieties of English. The aim is to test the hypothesis of correlation between word stress, articulation rate (speech tempo) and speech rhythm. The material for the study was obtained from 12 young men and women from Australia (6) and New Zealand (6), total duration of spontaneous monologues was 24 minutes. The experiment was conducted in a new rhythm paradigm that takes into account phonological and phonotactic features. It included three stages: auditory analysis, analysis of vocalic and consonantal intervals in Correlatore and comparison of duration in syntagmas, rhythmic groups and syllables by means of statistical analysis. In addition, duration measurements of stressed and unstressed syllables in polysyllabic words with mismatched patterns of word stress were computed. The results prove the connection between stress, tempo and rhythm. The major discovery was the tendency of Australian spontaneous speech being closer to syllable-timing and slower tempo while New Zealand being more stress-timed and faster articulated. Syllable-timed rhythm correlated with longer average syllable duration (ASD), accent-timing was characterized by shorter ASD. New Zealand speech demonstrates higher CCI values showing a higher degree of both intra- and inter-syllabic compensation. Speaker-dependent variance of rhythmic patterns was also found.

**Keywords:** Australian English, New Zealand English, acoustic rhythmic correlates, average syllable duration (ASD), stress-timing, syllable-timing, word stress

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