



**6<sup>th</sup> SFB-Colloquium, Friday, 15 June 2018, 12.15 pm, Campus  
Golm, Building 14, Room 2.15/16**

At the invitation of projects C03 and C04

Prof. Catherine Best (University of West Sydney) will give a  
talk in the  
6<sup>th</sup> SFB-colloquium

**The Australian English accent and its effects on  
Australians' perception of vowels and words in other  
English accents**

English is spoken around the world ... which gives rise to a wide range of variations in how its words and vowels are pronounced in different countries, regions and towns. These geographical variations in spoken English are what we know as "regional accents" and listeners are quite sensitive to those pronunciation differences as markers of socially relevant information, specifically as evidence of whether a talker is from "our own neighbourhood" or hails from some other distant or not-so-distant location. However, given how sensitive we are to accent differences in speech, a core question about speech and word perception arises: How do listeners, including young language learners, manage to understand the words, vowels and consonants that are pronounced differently from the Australian accent by people from other English-speaking regions? How do those variations affect comprehension of English speakers from elsewhere across the globe? This talk will provide some background on the sources of the modern Australian accent, and then describe our findings on how Australians' lifetime experience and "ear-tuning" to the Australian accent affects their perception of vowels and words spoken by people from other English accent regions.

Everyone is cordially invited.