

Mr Tim Watling
Committee Secretary
Senate Legal & Constitutional Affairs committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Sub: Submission for Australian Citizenship Legislation amendments Bill 2017

Dear Mr Watling,

I tried to submit the submission online but was unable to do. As per my phone conversation with your office, I have attached my submission as following:

My experience of English language in Australia:

Living in Australia since last 3 decades, I had an opportunity to meet number of Australians in my job, business as well as in community events. I may have visited over 7000 houses of established Australians in Australia and had opportunities to sit and talk to them almost about 90 minutes about business.

I do not recall incidences when I was unable to communicate with other Australians. Though fact is that many of those (specially of the first & second generational older Australians, who migrated from Eastern Europe, Greece, Italy, Turkey, few Arabian and Asian countries), whom I visited, do not have a good accent of English. Few were even not able to speak well English. But they have contributed exceptionally good in development of Australia and Australian community. In my opinion these Australians should be respected ir-respective of their knowledge of English. These Australians have devoted their life to build Australia. I find that English language has very rare effect on my communication with these Australians.

As a writer, poet & community networker, I have practical experience on use of languages. I do believe that language should be as easy as possible so that a message can be communicated to large numbers rather than to restricted numbers. High standards (UNI standard) of English languages is only useful for UNI books and literature essays but not useful in day to day work and dealing with the public.

I also want to draw your attention on films, songs, stories, poetries and any sort of email communication. If communication is using hard-grammatical words, often may be rejected by the masses.

In jobs of politicians, senators, MPs Number of you try to say few words in other languages to establish the PR with the audiences? I am sure that they may not get the next invitation, if they attend a function and start addressing in "difficult Oxford English".

What about the most common word "Mate" used in Australia? Which dictionary is this word from? We need more of these simple words in Australia.

Proposed English test for citizenship

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Proposed English test for citizenship legislation amendment (Bill 2017), demands a higher UNI level knowledge of English. Many of the first as well as second generation Australians may never reach on this level.

“A good citizen should have the UNI level knowledge of English”, I am afraid it is not the right direction for the development of Australia.

Therefore, if we limit the citizenship to only those who have knowledge of English as of UNI standard:

- ✎ We are spreading the differences among the existing Australians.
- ✎ Huge population of permanent residents of Australia will only remain as PR. Majority will never be able to pass the UNI English test and will never be able to be part of the Australian community.
- ✎ We are creating class differences in Australian community.
- ✎ We shall be restricting our migration to limited numbers.
- ✎ Even if they pass, it is of no use. This is waste of money & time for them.
- ✎ We are making our line of communication more difficult with the community.

My Suggestion:

English standard test should remain simple and practicable.

Thanks & Regards
Abbas Raza Alvi
President
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