

STAND UP COMEDIAN IVAN ARISTEGUIETA STANDS UP TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN NEW SBS PODCAST

A letter of complaint on behalf of all English learners, SBS Audio's entertaining new podcast *Bad English* laughs and cries at the absurdity of the language that makes the rules and breaks them all.

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Bad English is a new SBS Audio podcast discussing the lows and rock bottoms of learning the most widely studied language and one of the most difficult for language learners.



Venezuelan-born comedian Ivan Aristeguieta is the host of the new seven-episode series available on SBS Audio and podcast platforms from **Wednesday 27 September**.

Aristeguieta sits down with an exciting line-up of guests to commiserate over one of life's hardest lessons – English – as well as look deeper into the laws of language with the help of English teacher and expert Ai-Lin Bhugan.



Brimming with wisecracks and witticisms, Aristeguieta also draws out candid and personal stories that will strike a chord with multicultural and multilingual Australians.

Criminal lawyer and 2017 NSW Australian of the Year, Deng Adut talks about learning English watching The Wiggles with his nephew and bringing a dictionary to his job at a petrol station; refugee and chef Niro Vithyasekar picked up English in an immigration detention centre after arriving by boat, and stand-up comedian He Huang talks about going viral for her stand-up routine audition on Australia's Got Talent using her experiences as an international student.



Host of *Bad English*, Ivan Aristeguieta

Guided by the philosophy that there is no such thing as 'proper' English, Aristeguieta says English is only partially teachable and the rest you must learn through practice.

"Twenty per cent of English is the teachable part, the part that makes sense. The other eighty per cent is the part that doesn't make any sense," he said.

"*Bad English* is a safe space to talk trash about the English language without the fear of losing your visa. English is not a language, it's an interpretive dance of what a language should be. If you say something in English and it doesn't make any sense to you, you are probably saying it in the right way.

"It's been a privilege to talk to people who have incredible life stories where they've been resilient and resourceful and have made learning English part of their success story."

In episode seven, lawyer, Deng Adut describes being conscripted as a child soldier before arriving in Australia as a refugee, settling in Blacktown, Sydney and starting to learn English at 15 with his nephew Joshua.

"Joshua, he was two years old, he was the one who introduced me to the English language because he used to watch Wiggles and I started watching Wiggles with him and pretty much started repeating what the Wiggles say," Adut said.



"Joshua was too young to tell me I was stupid in learning a new language, so I think Joshua was the best person that actually helped me to learn English."

Ethiopian-Norwegian Artist Olana Janfa who created the podcast artwork and is a guest on episode three, says he openly admits that he does not strive to have, 'good English'.

"I don't speak good English, but people told me I have a confidence to speak. I don't see language as a level of intelligence," says Janfa.

Aristeguieta takes listeners on a journey of success stories including stand-up comedian Takashi "Waka" Wakasugi, Afro-Brazilian author and poet Guido Melo, and refugee to award-winning Ethiopian-Australian comedian Joe White.

For those on English 'L' plates Aristeguieta advises not to take English too seriously,

"I used to be worried about people not being able to understand me, so I would practice by putting a pencil in my mouth and talking which forces you to move your other muscles and enunciate," he said.

"You should speak like yourself and enjoy yourself because language is the ingredient and accents are the way you cook it up."

From stacking adjectives to word stress points, ***Bad English*** dives deep into the contradictory and counter-intuitive world of learning English. Episodes will be available weekly on SBS Audio from **Wednesday 27 September**.

Bad English Made Better, an adaptation for English learners will be available as a video series resource from **Monday 23 October** with Ai-Lin Bhugan.

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SBS acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia.