

Luciano Canepari (2023)

Emphasis and syllable lengthening

When emphasis is added to tunes, [ɪ] → [i], the stressed syllables (either free or checked), in addition to having a stronger stress, lengthen their vocalic nuclei, producing mono-timbric or di-timbric diphthongs (respectively less or more marked to the ear, shown by the dotted lines, including intermediate realizations between the two extreme indicated), as fig 1 shows. Here are some examples (in neutral British English, although we show the vocograms of other widespread English accents, as seen, too): *There were only six!* ["sɪks, "sɪks], *The floor was all wet!* ["wɛt, "wɛt], *Madam, don't forget your map!* ["mæp, "mæp], *It fell right on my foot!* ["fɒt, "fɒt], *There's a stop!* ["stɒp, "stɒp].

Notice carefully that, in the English vocograms, we particularly insist on monophthongs, because short vocalic phonemes (which, in normal pronunciation, remain short also when followed by tune-final voiceless contoids), for emphasis, have to be lengthened, as shown, and necessarily so.

Additional examples: *A bit!* [ə"bɪt, ə"bɪt], *Yes!* ["jɛs, "jɛs], *And that!* [ən"ðæt, ən"ðæt], *It's hot!* [ɪts"hɒt, ɪts"hɒt], *Enough!* [ɪ"nʌf, ɪ"nʌf], *Look!* ["lʊk, "lʊk].

The phonemic long vowels, /æ:, ɔ:, a:/, become [V·V]: *My shirt!* ["ʃɜ:ʃt, "ʃɜ:ʃt], *Too short!* ["ʃɔ:ʃt, "ʃɔ:ʃt], *Most part!* ["phɑ:pt, "phɑ:pt].

We have the same with the phonemic diphthongs: *Sweet!* ["swi:t, "swi:t], *Wait!* ["weɪt, "weɪt], *Right!* ["raɪt, "raɪt], *Point!* ["pɔɪnt, "pɔɪnt], *Shoot!* ["ʃu:t, "ʃu:t], *Both!* ["bɔ:θ, "bɔ:θ], *Shout!* ["ʃaʊt, "ʃaʊt].

Also with no final voiceless consonants: *No!* ["nɔ:, "nɔ:], *Now!* ["naʊ, "naʊ], *Today!* ["tʰɔ:deɪ, "tʰɔ:deɪ], *Destroy!* [dɪ"stɔ:stɔ:], *It's bad!* [ɪts"bæd], *Indeed!* [ɪn"di:ɪd]; and: *There!* ["ðɛ:, "ðɛ:], *It's wrong!* [ɪts"ɪŋ], *Ten!* ["tɛn:], *Destroy it!* [dɪ"stɔ:stɔ:].

This emphasis fact seems to be shared by the world languages (including tonal ones, like Chinese) and dialects. In our (more economical) phonemic analysis of English, we use *diaphonemes*, whose symbols have a dot under them, which helps to easily identify the differences between British and American pronunciations (rather than show them in a more cumbersome and space-wasting way, as unfortunately current English pronunciation dictionaries still do).

In addition to the vocograms for English, we will also provide those (only of real short monophthongs occurring in any possible context) of the following languages:

Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German (fig 2), Russian, Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Japanese (fig 3). For these languages, we do not provide examples. Of course, the

fig 1. English.



