

Excerpts form Luciano Canepari  
(Phonetics & Phonology, University of Venice, Italy)

*English PronunciationS*  
*The Pronunciation of English around the World*  
*Geo-social Applications of the Natural Phonetics & Tonetics Method*

*2. Territorial Accents*

*Part 17. The British Isles: The Southeast of England*

- \* 387 129. A brief introduction to the British Isles (& maps)
- \* 393 130. London (or Cockney proper)
- \* 398 131. London & beyond (& maps)
- 400 132. Essex (Southend)
- 401 133. Kent (Dover)
- 402 134. Surrey (Guildford)
- 403 135. Sussex (Brighton)
- 404 136. Berkshire (Reading)
- 405 137. Hampshire (Southampton)
- 406 138. Oxfordshire (Oxford)
- 407 139. Buckinghamshire (Milton Keynes)
- 408 140. Bedfordshire (Luton)
- 409 141. Northamptonshire (Northampton)
- 410 142. Cambridgeshire 1 (Peterborough)
- 411 143. Cambridgeshire 2 (Cambridge)
- 412 144. Suffolk (Ipswich)
- \* 413 145. Norfolk (Norwich)
- 417 146. The Channel Islands

*Part 18. The British Isles: The Southwest of England (or 'West Country')*

- \* 418 147. Somerset & Gloucester (Bristol)
- 423 148. Dorset (Weymouth)
- 424 149. Devon (Plymouth)
- \* 425 150. Cornwall (Truro)

*Part 19. The British Isles: The Midlands (of England)*

- \* 428 151. West Midlands (Birmingham, 'Brummie')
- 432 152. Warwickshire (Stratford-on-Avon)
- 433 153. Leicestershire & Nottinghamshire (Leicester & Nottingham)
- 434 154. Lincolnshire (Lincoln)

*Part 20. The British Isles: The North of England (or 'Middle North')*

- 435 155. A brief introduction to the 'North'
- 437 156. West & South Yorkshire (Leeds & Sheffield)
- 439 157. Humberside (Hull)
- \* 440 158. North Yorkshire (York)
- 443 159. Greater Manchester (Manchester)
- 444 160. Staffordshire (Stoke-on-Trent)
- 445 161. Merseyside (Liverpool, 'Scouse')

448	162.	Lancashire (Blackpool)
449	163.	Cumbria (Carlisle)
451	164.	Isle of Man (in the Irish Sea)
<i>Part 21.</i>		<i>The British Isles: The Northeast of England (or 'Far North')</i>
* 452	165.	Tyne & Wear (Newcastle, 'Geordie')
455	166.	Northumberland (Alnwick)
456	167.	Durham (Durham)
457	168.	Cleveland (Middlesbrough)

# 129. A brief introduction to the British Isles

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129.1. The *British Isles* (cf fig 129.1-3) are a group of islands made up of *Great Britain, Ireland*, and the smaller islands around them, such as the *Channel Islands* and the *Isle of Man*.

Our maps in fig 129.1-3 show progressively greater details in the *pronunciation* subdivision of the British Isles.

129.2. The isle of *Ireland* is politically divided into the *Republic of Ireland* (or *Eire, Éire*, in Irish Gaelic) and *Northern Ireland* (or *Ulster*).

Thus, the *United Kingdom* (or *UK*) is made up of *Northern Ireland* (or *Ulster*, again) and *Great Britain*. In turn, *Great Britain* includes *England, Scotland*, and *Wales*.

129.3. In fig 129.1 we can see the five essential components: *England, Wales, Scotland, Ulster*, and *Eire* /'Eə.ɪə/.

In fig 129.2 the main internal subdivisions are introduced; while fig 129.3 shows the actual accents we will describe in the following parts (17-22) and chapters (130-177), adding the principal cities, to make it easier to understand the subdivisions.

129.4. The maps in fig 129.4-5 are a magnification of England proper, while that in fig 131.1 only shows the Southeast of England, where the 'new' mediatic pronunciation is to be found, in general (except, for the time being, in Norwich and Norfolk, in the easternmost region of England, ie northern East Anglia), though with some local differences, as we will see in ¶ 132-146 (for the whole of this Part 17). The map in fig 129.5 shows the linguistic borders and also the counties (dotted lines).

129.5. Of course, the differences we are going to illustrate are rather a matter of individual preferences than of exclusive usages.

But, on the whole, they are reliable and documented, even statistically, though not to the point of providing maniacal and phonanistic percentages (perhaps even together with phonetic and symbolic crude approximations).

Let us notice carefully, that unless stated differently, ie by showing /ɔː.ɪ/ in some of the vocograms, for the British Isles, we mean that there is a full merger of it with /ɔː.ɪ/.

fig 129.1. The British Isles: the five fundamental pronunciation regions.

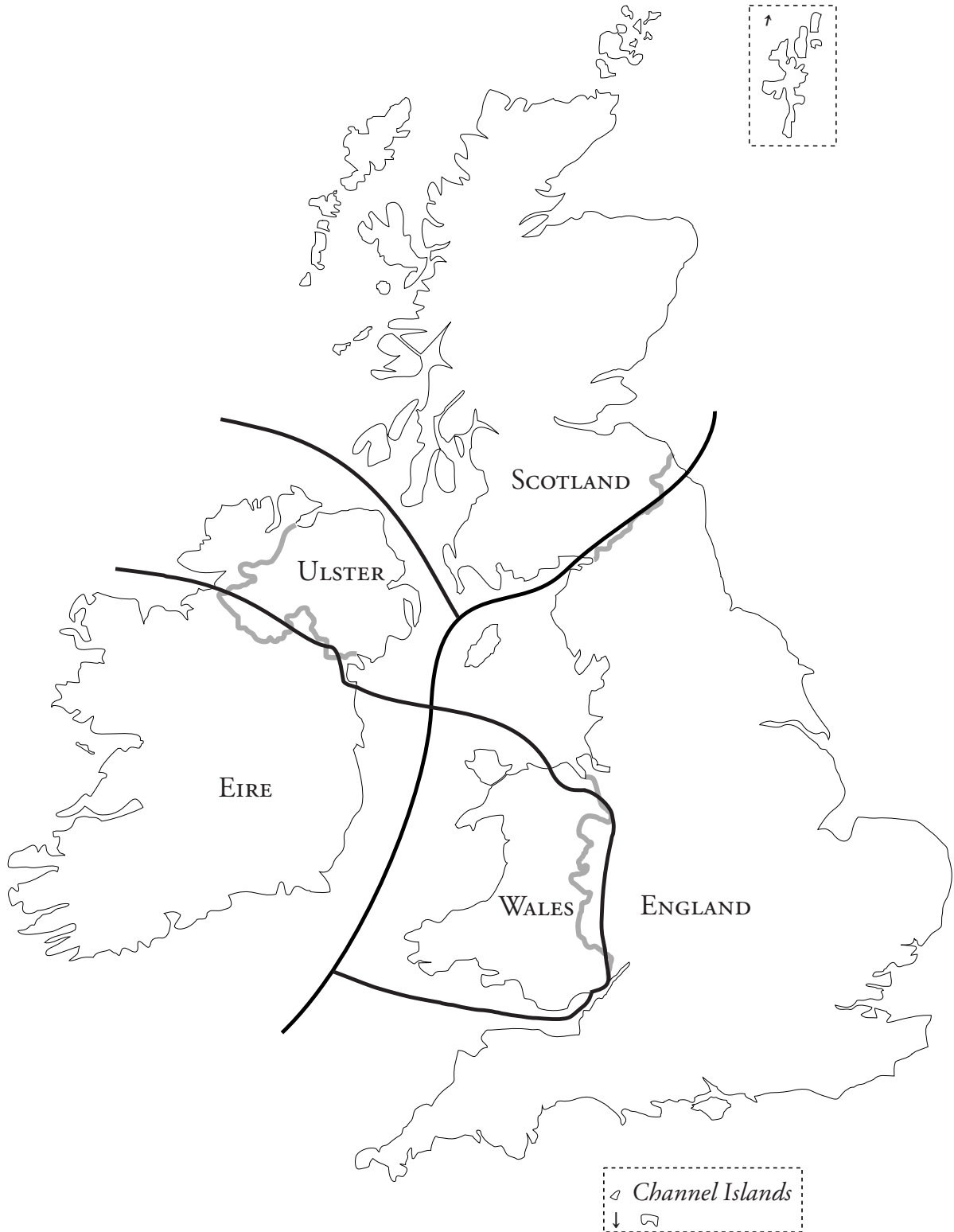


fig 129.2. The British Isles: principal pronunciation subdivisions.

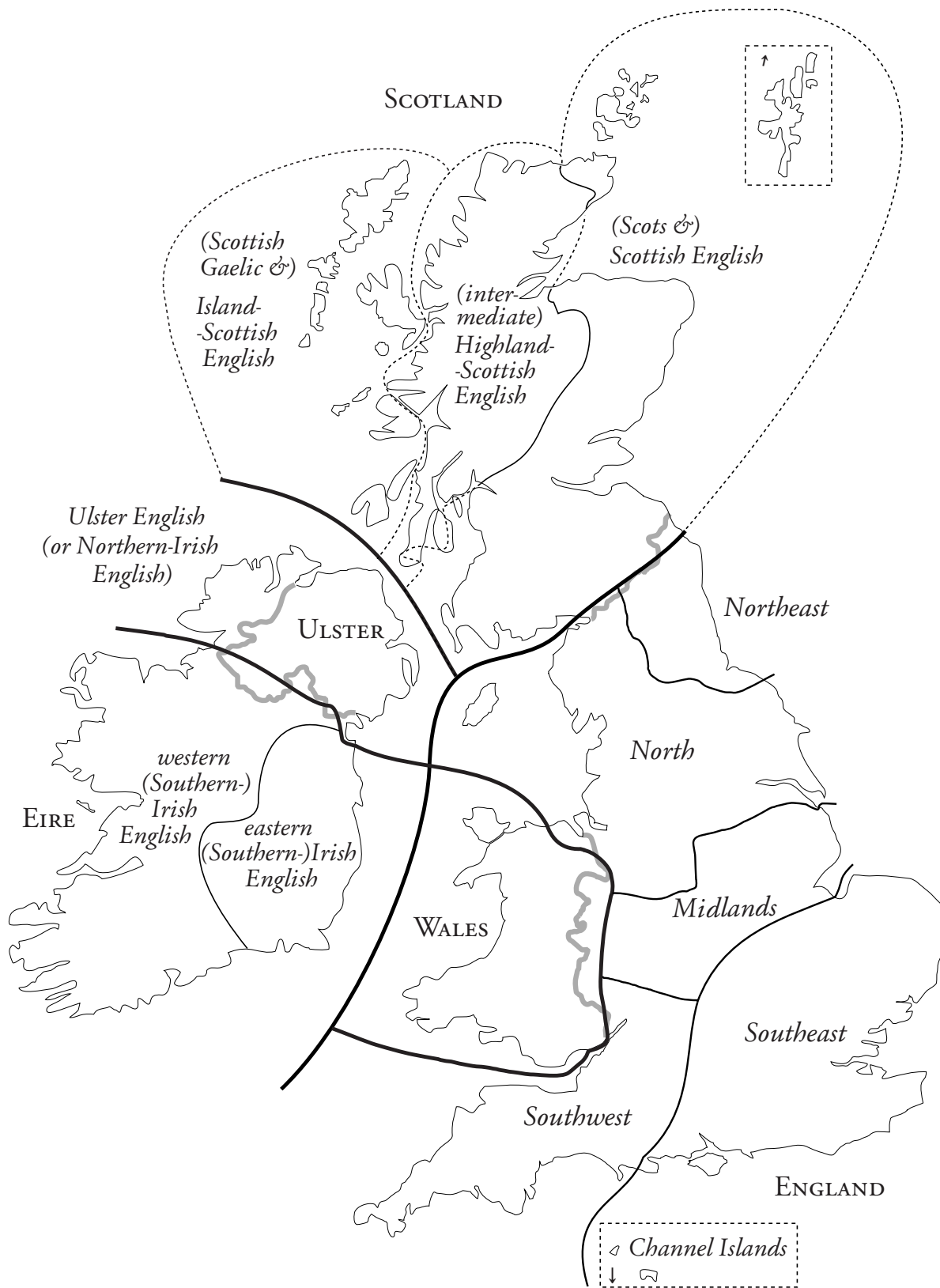


fig 129.3. The British Isles: complete accent areas.

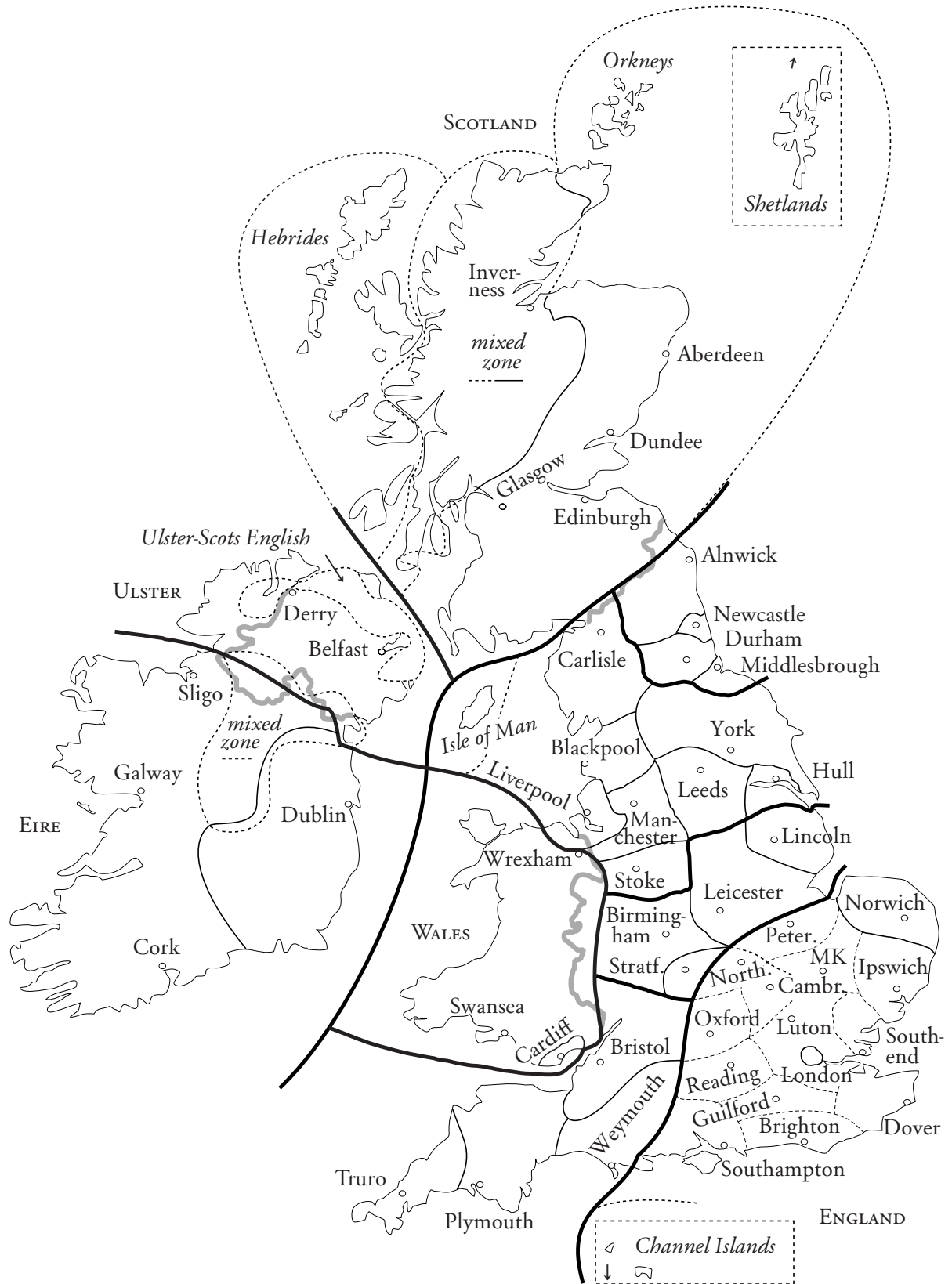


fig 129.4. England proper (& Wales).

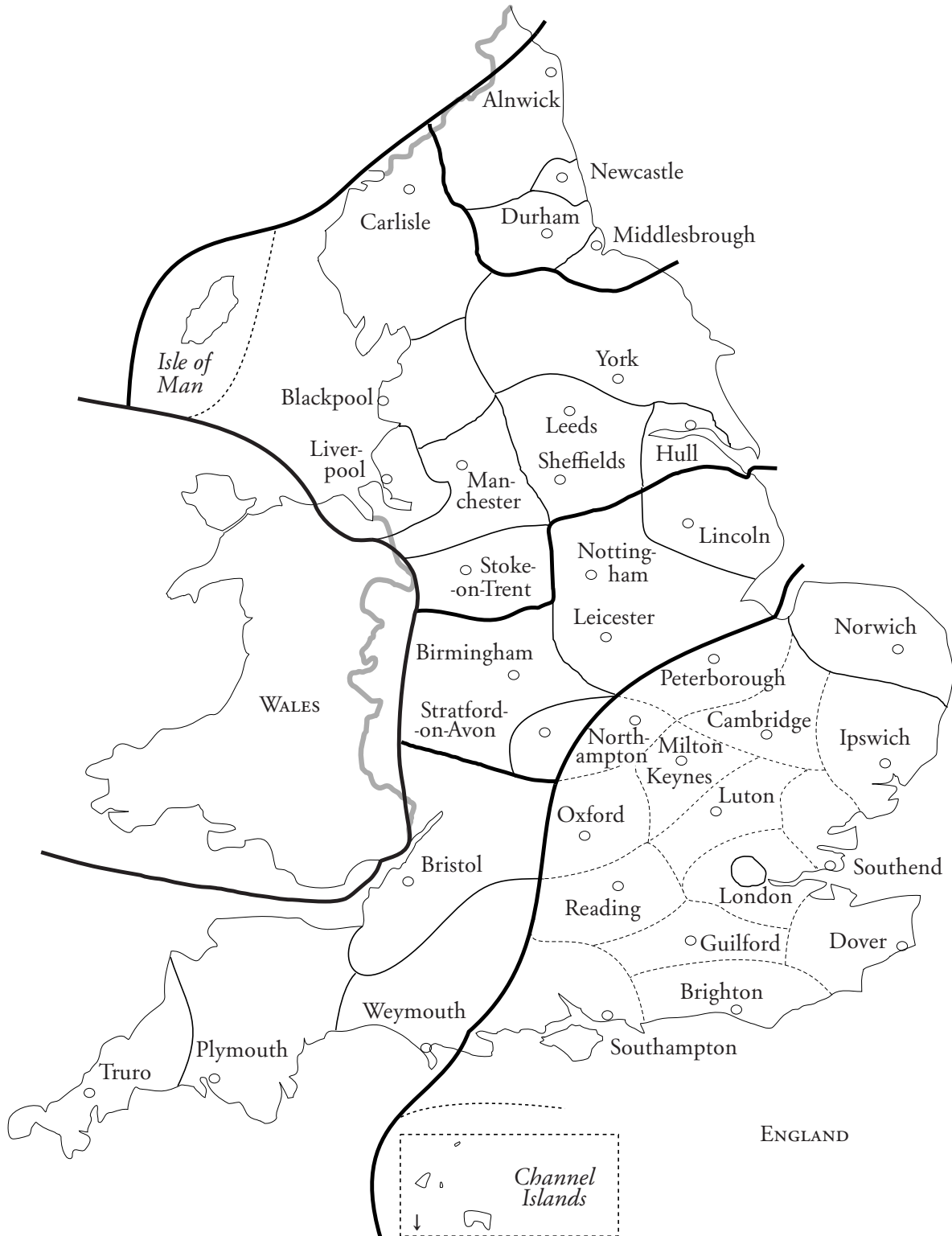
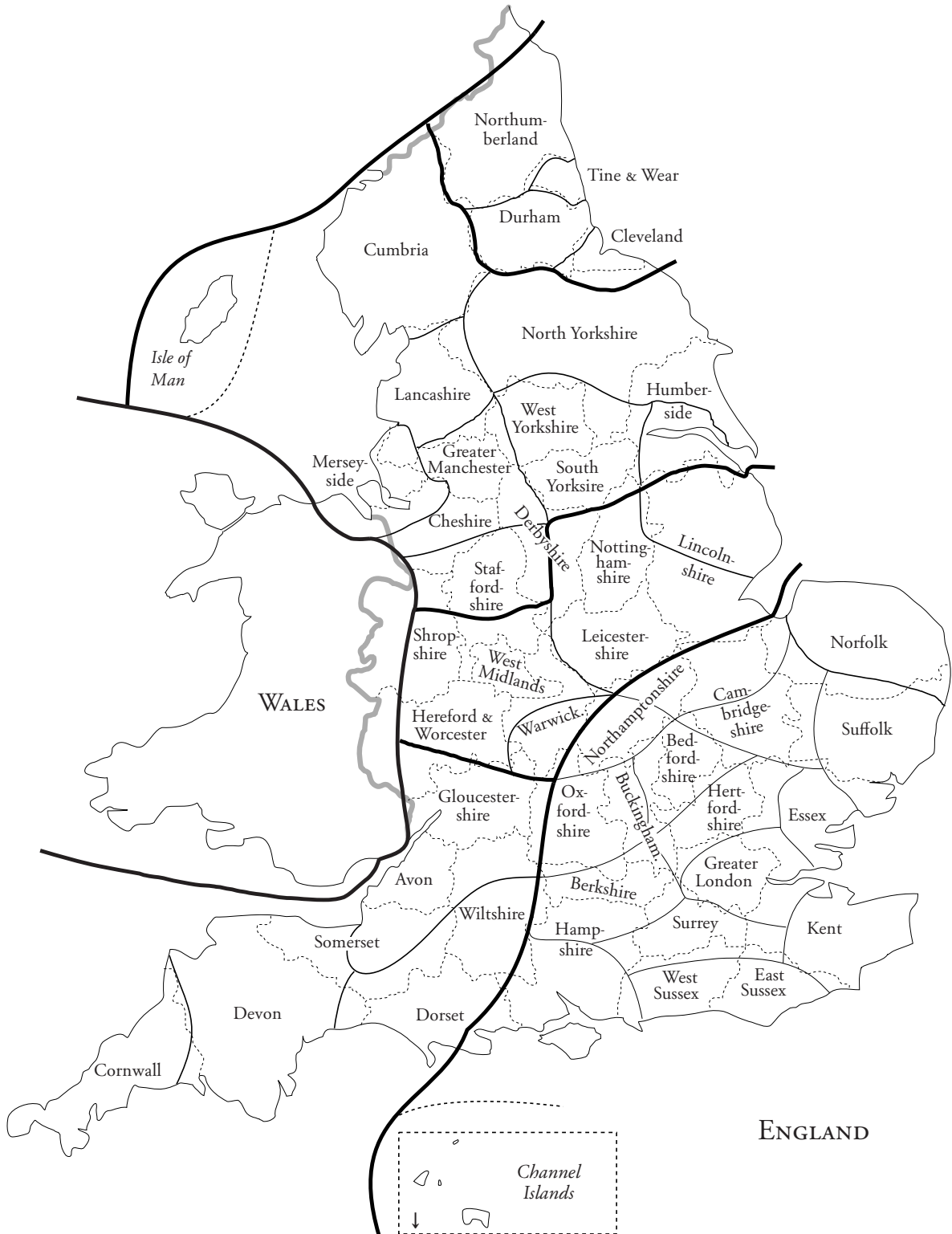


fig 129.5. England: accent borders and counties.





# 130. London (or Cockney proper)

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130.1. Let us start with London and Cockney proper. Most typically, it is the speech of the working-class of *the East End* of London, which includes the harbor.

The main vocalic characteristics reside in its diphthongs, which we present in the second vocogram of fig 130.1, while in the third vocogram we add both the *less* broad variants (°, seven) and the *broadest* ones (\*, two [with grey edges]).

Frequently, speakers can fluctuate between these three types: /ii/ [əɪ, ɦi°], /ɛɪ/ [Aə, ɦɪ°], /aɛ/ [ɔɪ, ɦɪ°], /aɔ/ [ɛɜ, ɦɜ°, ɦɜ\*] (the last variant, which is generally ‘described’ as [æɜ, ɦɜ], is the most narrow diphthong of all), /σɛ/ [oɪ, oə°], /σɔ/ [ɐɔ, əə°, ɐɜ\*], /uu/ [əɦ, ɦɦ°].

Usually, the diaphoneme /ə/ is /ɪ/ [ɪ]. For (n)either we generally find /ii/.

fig 130.1. London (Cockney accent): vowels & diphthongs (normally, its intonation corresponds to the neutral one).

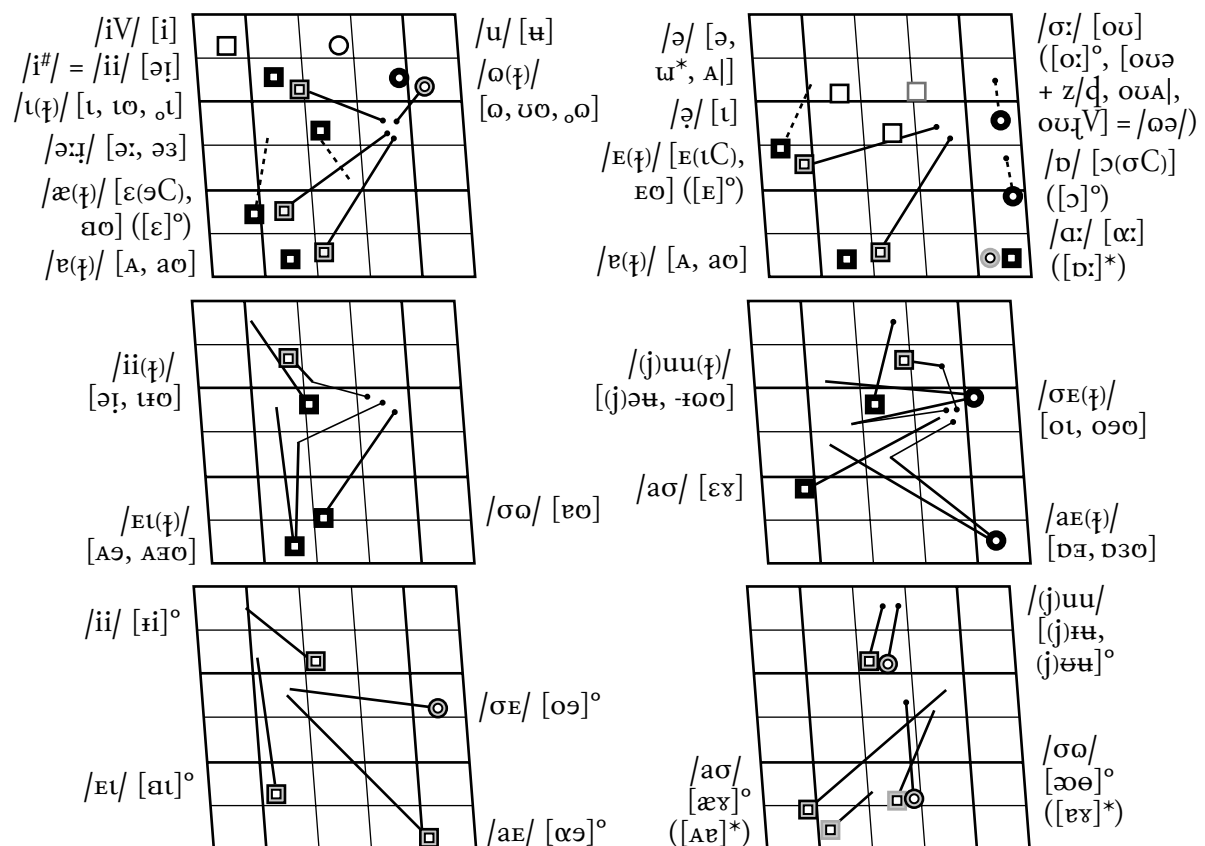
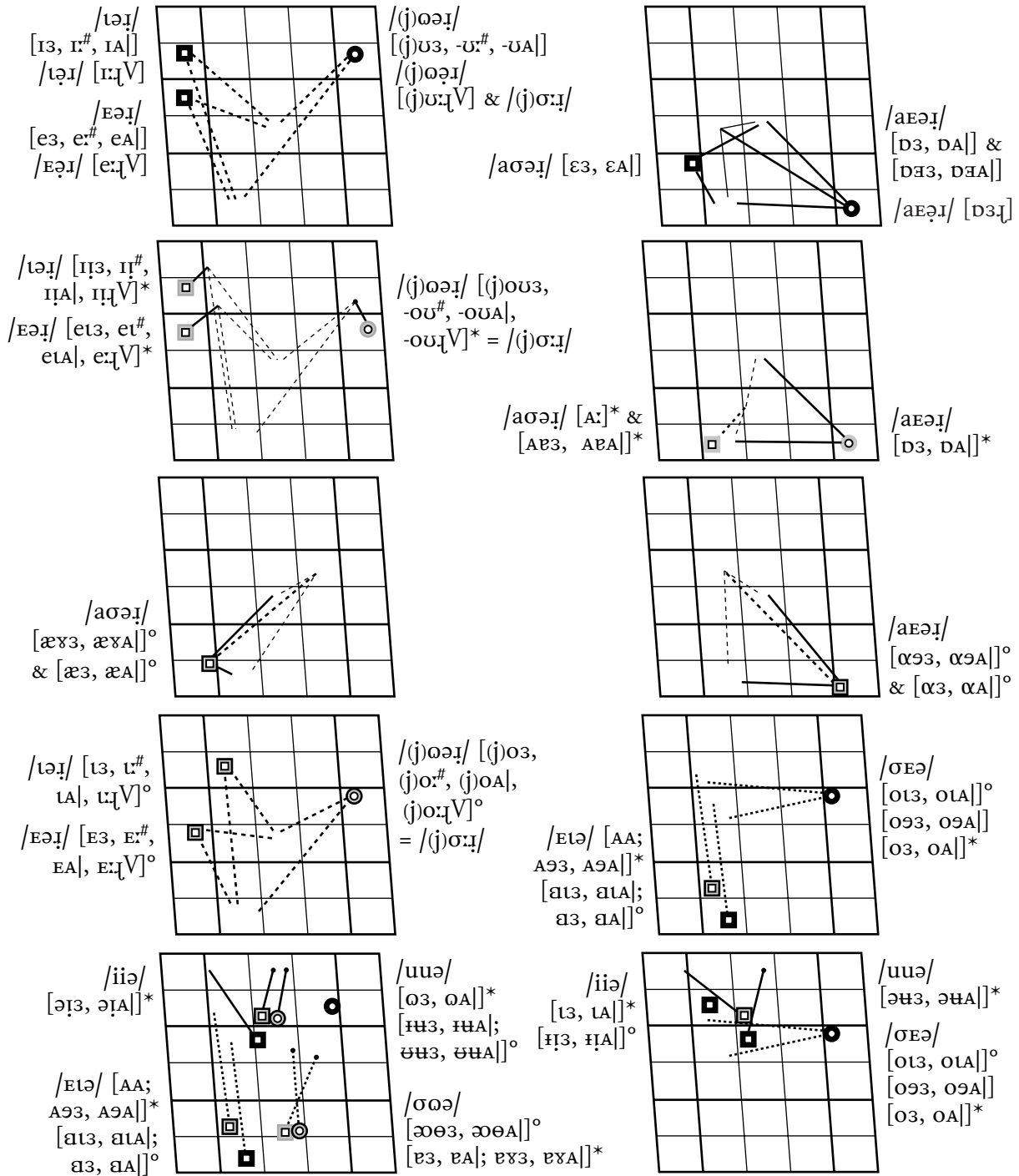


fig 130.2. London (Cockney accent): further vowels & diphthongs.



130.2. For the monophthongs, the most evident characteristics –in addition to some timbres– are contextual diphthongizations. In fact, in the most typical and broad accent, /ɛ, æ, ɔ/ occurring in stressed monosyllables in (bi)checked syllables –ie with /C<sup>#</sup>, CC<sup>#</sup>/– are pronounced [ɛɪ, ɛə, ɔɪ]. For the first two phonemes, this fact is particularly clear with /n, nɔ, ɪ, ɔ; ɲ, k, ks, g/ (although /ɪ/ = [ɪ]) and with other voiced C (but also with voiceless ones), as in: [ˈdʒɛəɔɪ] /ˈdʒæɪ/ *dad* (for [ˈdʌɪ]).

Something similar happens to /σ:(ɪ)/, which most typically is [ou] (although in a less broad pronunciation it is [o:]), as in [ˈlɔːn, ˈwɔːtə, ˈstɔːri] /ˈlɔːn, ˈwɔːtə, ˈstɔːri/ *lawn, water, story* (for [ˈlɔːn, ˈwɔːtə, ˈstɔːri]). In an intermediate accent, as in the less broad one, in all positions, we always find [o:, ou], respectively. Instead, in the most typical and broadest accent, we find [ouA], when in word-final position before pauses.

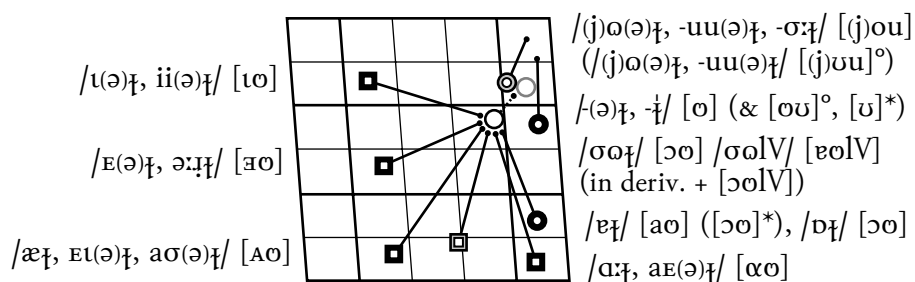
130.3. However, in final position, within sentences, or with the grammemes /z#, d#/, we have [ouɜ]: [ˈpɒhɔːA] *paw, pore, pour, poor* (for [ˈphɔː] /ˈpɔː, ˈpɔːɪ/, and [ˈphɔː, -ɔː] /ˈpɔːɪ, -ɔːɪ/ for the last one [following the most international phonemic order]); [ˈpɒhɔːɜ] *paws, pores, pours, poor's* (for [ˈphɔːɜ] /ˈpɔːɜ, ˈpɔːɪɜ/, and [ˈphɔːɜ, -ɔːɜ] /ˈpɔːɪɜ, -ɔːɪɜ/).

/σ:/ occurs more frequently (and the same is true of traditional and affected pronunciations) than in the neutral accent, especially for /ɒ/: [ˈouf, ˈkxhlouf, ˈkxhɔːus] /ˈɒf, ˈklɒθ, ˈkrɒs/ *off, cloth, cross*. Even /ə:ɪ/ can be diphthongized [ə:, ə:ɜ]; and also the timbres of /ɑ:, ɛ/ are quite remarkable (for /ə:(ɪ)#/, too): [ˈkxhɑ:, -ɔː\*] /ˈfəvɑ, ˈfəv-] /ˈkɑ:ɪ, ˈfə:ɪðəɪ/ *car, further*. The vowels which are followed by nasal consonants (and often those which are preceded by nasals, too) are nasalized (as is the diphthong /aɔ/, quite often independently from context). For the grammeme /ɪŋ/ we have [ɪ̃n, ŋ]; and, for *-thing*, [-fɪŋɪk] is frequent: [ˈmɔ̃ɪn, ˈsʌ̃mfɪŋɪk, ˈɛ̃nɔ̃ɪfɪŋɪk] /ˈmaɛn, ˈsəmθɪŋ, ˈɛnɪθɪŋ/ *mine, something, anything*.

130.4. The first and second vocograms in fig 130.2 show the realizations of /ɪəɪ, ɛəɪ, eəɪ, (j)əəɪ, -əɪ; æəɪ, æəɪ; aɔəɪ, aɔəɪ/ (often /-(j)ə-/ becomes /-(j)σ:-/); instead, the third and fourth vocograms show the broadest variants, whereas the fifth to seventh vocograms give the least broad variants, including monophthongal variants (in the seventh vocogram) of: /ɪəɪ, -əɪ/ [ɪɜ, ɪ#, ɪA, ɪɪV]°, /ɛəɪ, -əɪ/ [ɛɜ, ɛ#, ɛA, ɛɪV]°, /əəɪ, -əɪ/ [əɜ, ə#, əA, əɪV]° (thus, as /-(j)σ:ɪ, -ɪ/°).

In addition, the last three vocograms (eighth to tenth) show the beginning of the following triphthongs, including their diphthongal variants (but we do not show on the vocograms their final elements, [-ɜ, -A]), because it would be very difficult to draw them clearly enough, without avoiding disturbing overlapping of lines): /ɛɪəɪ, -əɪ/ [AA; Aəɜ, AəA]\* [ɛɪɜ, ɛɪA]; /σəəɪ, -əɪ/ [əɜ, əA]; [əɜɜ, əɜA]\* [əəɜ, əəA]°, /σɛəɪ, -əɪ/ [Oɜ, OA]\* [Oəɜ, OəA] [Oɪɜ, OɪA]°, /iɪəɪ, -əɪ/ [ɪɜ, ɪA]; [ɪɜ, ɪA]\* [ɪɜɜ, ɪɜA]°, /uəəɪ, -əɪ/ [Uɜ, UA]; [əɜɜ, əɜA]\* [ɪɜɜ, ɪɜA]; [əɜɜ, əɜA]°.

fig 130.3. London (Cockney accent): typical neutralizations before /ɪ/.



130.5. We will now consider, in the vocogram of fig 130.3, the many (and typical) neutralizations of /V(V)/ + /ɪ/, which is vocalized into [ɔ] (in broader pronunciations, we find [ʊ]; while, in less broad ones, we can have [oʊ]): /ʊ, ɪə, iɪ, iɪə/ [ɪə], /ɛɪ, eə, ə:ɪ/ [ɛə], /eɪ, æɪ, ə:ɪ/ [ɛə], /eɪ, æɪ, ə:ɪ/ [ɛə], /eɪ/ [əə, eə\*] (in the broadest accent, the diphthong may coincide with /σəV/ [eəV], when it is lexeme-internal), /ɑ:ɪ, æɪ, ə:ɪ/ [ɑə], /ɒɪ, ə:ɪ/ [ɒə] (in derivatives of /σəɪ/ we find [ɒəV], instead of [eəV], exactly as in mediatic pronunciation), /ʝə, -ə, -u, -uə, -ɔ:ɪ/ [ʝə] (for /ʝə, -ə, -u, -uə/, we also find a less broad realization, [(j)ʊ]°).

For /σə, σə:ɪ/, we have [əə] (even in less broad accents); for /-ə, -ɪ, -ɪ/ we have [ə] (and [ʊ]\*, [oʊ]°); -el, -al and 'll, after vowels, can be slightly lengthened [ɔ, ɔ:°] (and the same is true of /-ə, -ɪ/). For /-ə<sup>#</sup>V, -ɪ<sup>#</sup>V, -ɪ<sup>#</sup>V/, we find [əV, ʊV\*], *uncle Herbert* ('*Erbert*) [ˌʌŋkəl'ɜ:bəɪ(ɪ)].

In the first two vocograms of fig 130.1, we have marked, in grey, also five V and five VV, which before /ɪ/ may not undergo the typical neutralization shown in the last vocogram.

130.6. As far as the *consonants* are concerned, the most typical characteristic refers to /p, t, k, tʃ/, which are typically preglottalized, [p̤, t̤, k̤], also [p̤, t̤, k̤], in all cases where in the British accent synglottalization is possible (cf ̤ 21 & ̤ 23), or where in mediatic British English preglottalization occurs (cf § 55.12-15). Also for their phonetic realizations we find some differences. In fact, in the most typical and broadest pronunciations, /p, t, k/ are realized as the corresponding stopstrictives: [p̤, t̤, k̤], also 'aspirated' (in the normal contexts expected for neutral pronunciation, too): [p̤h, t̤h, k̤h] (which can give the impression of stronger 'aspiration'). However, the most typical and broad element is the substitution of /t, tʃ/ with [ʔ] in all the cases seen in ̤ 20, but with further typifying contexts (ie except before a tautosyllabic stressed nucleus, or after pauses, or after /s/, [t̤ʃh, |t̤ʃh, 'st̤, st̤]).

Examples: [ˈbʌɹʌ] /ˈbʌt̤ə/ *butter*, [ˈwɔ:ɹʌ] /ˈwɔ:t̤ə/ *water*, [ˈkɒt̤n] /ˈkɒt̤n/ *cotton*, [ˈsɪt̤n] /ˈsɪt̤n/ *sitting*, [ˈbɒt̤m] /ˈbɒt̤m/ *bottom*, [ˈbɜ:t̤n] /ˈbɜ:t̤n/ *Burton*, [ˈɛl̤tɒn] /ˈɛl̤tɒn/ *Elton*, [ˈklɪn̤tɒn] /ˈklɪn̤tɒn/ *Clinton*, [ˈlɪt̤l] /ˈlɪt̤l/ *little*, [ˈpɑ:ɹtn̤ə] /ˈpɑ:ɹtn̤ə/ *partner*, [ˈseɹp̤r̤t̤li] /ˈseɹp̤r̤t̤li/ *separately*, [ˈlɒts̤] /ˈlɒts̤/ *lots*.

130.7. More examples: [ˈpɛɪn̤t̤ə] /ˈpɛɪn̤t̤ə/ *painter*, [ˈpɛɪn̤t̤ɪt̤] /ˈpɛɪn̤t̤ɪt̤/ *paint it*, [ˈwɔ:ɹt̤ə] /ˈwɔ:t̤ə/ *Walter*, [ˈɔ:ɹt̤ə] /ˈɔ:t̤ə/ *halt it*, [ˈst̤ɑ:ɹt̤ɪt̤] /ˈst̤ɑ:ɹt̤ɪt̤/ *start it*, [ˈɪt̤ɪt̤] /ˈɪt̤ɪt̤/ *hit it*, [əˈlɪt̤l] /əˈlɪt̤l/ *a little bit of butter*, [ˈpʊt̤ ʌp̤] /ˈpʊt̤ ʌp̤/ *put up*, [ˈpʊt̤ ɪt̤ ʌp̤] /ˈpʊt̤ ɪt̤ ʌp̤/ *put it up*.

In less broad pronunciations, an incomplete, attenuated stop is possible: [ʔ], which is less 'invasive'; the vocoid preceding [ʔ] can also be laryngealized, whereas [ʔ] can become 'zero', especially before another vocoid (adding, however, the creaky phonation type), [VʔV → VʔV → VʔV → VʔV]: [əˈlɪt̤l] /əˈlɪt̤l/.

Generally, forms such as *lill* [ˈlɪl] /ˈlɪl/ and *little* [ˈlɪt̤l, ˈlɪt̤l, ˈlɪt̤l] /ˈlɪt̤l/ maintain some differences even if the latter is actually pronounced in this way; as a matter of fact, in addition to the creaky phonation type, /ɪ/ is often lengthened (at least in an intoneme).

130.8. Before a vocoid (even if derived from /t̪/, and even between words), also a less broad variant, [ɹ], is possible (or even [ɹʔ] in ‘elegant’ speech, which we do not indicate). It is also possible for [nɪ] to become [n]; here we will report the relevant examples, without spelling, following the order in which they are given above (§ 130.6-7, including *water* and *Walter*): [ˈbɑːɪə, ˈwɔːɪə, ˈsɪɪən, ˈbɔːɪm, ˈlɪɪt], [ˈpɒhɑːɪnɪə, -nɪə; ˈpɒhɑːɪnɪɹ, -nɪɹ], [ˈwɔːɪə, ˈoʊɪɹ, ˈʃtɔːɪɹ, ˈɪɪɹ, əˈlɪɪt ˈbɪ əˈbɑːɪə, ˈpɒhɔːɪ ˈAɹpɒ, ˈpɒhɔːɪɪ ˈAɹpɒ].

Other consonants can become [ɹ], especially /p, k/: [ˈʃtɔːɹɪŋ] /ˈstɔːpɪŋ/ *stopping*, [ˈfɪɪɹ ˈlɒɪɹtɪɹ] /ˈfɪlɪp ˈlaɪkɪt/ *Philip liked it*, [ˈkɔːhɔːɹnɪ] /ˈkɒkni/ *Cockney*. In a previous example, we have seen that typically /d/ becomes stopstrictive, [dʒ]; besides, commonly, /Vd/ is realized as [Vɹ], when it is word-final and followed by C or V, and in the grammeme sequence {-dn't} /-dɪŋt/, as well: [ˈbɪɹɪɹ ˈbɑːɹ] /ˈbrɪɪd ˈbeɪɹə/ *bread and butter*, [ˈgɔːɹ ˈboːɹ] /ˈgɔːd ˈboɪ/ *good boy*, [ˈdɪɹdɪɹn(ɹʔ)] /æˈdɪdɪŋt/ *I didn't*.

130.9. For /st, stɪ, stʃ/, broad pronunciations have [ʃʔ, ʃtɪ, ʃtʃ]: [ˈʃʔstɪ] /ˈstɪ/ *stay*, [ˈʃtɪɹŋ] /ˈstɹŋ/ *strong*, [ˈkɔːwɪɹʃtʃən, -tʃn] /ˈkwɛstʃ(ə)n/ *question*. In broad pronunciations, /θ, ð/ become /f, v/; however, there are many intermediate nuances, including the realizations of normal pronunciation: [f, v; ʰ, v; ʰ, δ; θ, ð; θ, ð].

More often, /#ð/ can be realized as [θ, ɹ, d, d]: [ˈɪsˌɛɹs ɪzˌmɔːɪn, ɹɪs-, dɪs-, dɪs-] /ðɪsˌhaʊs ɪzˌmaɪn/ *this house is mine*. As we have seen, the typical realization of /h/ is [θ], which is a stigmatized pronunciation, and therefore can lead many speakers to hypercorrecting: [ˈhɔːɹ(ʔ)] /ˈiːt/ *eat*.

For /nɪ, tʃ, dʒ/, the typical Cockney pronunciation has no /j/, but, in less broad pronunciations, mediatic-like types are also possible: [ˈnɔːɪ, ˈnɪɪ, ˈnɪɪ, ˈnɪɪ] /ˈnjuː/ *new*, [ˈtʃhɔːɪn, ˈtʃhɪɪn, ˈtʃhɪɪn, ˈtʃhɪɪn, ˈtʃhɪɪn, ˈtʃhɪɪn] /ˈtʃjuːn/ *tune*, [ˈdʒɔːɪk, ˈdʒɪɪk, ˈdʒɪɪk, ˈdʒɪɪk, ˈdʒɪɪk, ˈdʒɪɪk] /ˈdʒjuːk/ *duke*.

130.10. The attenuation of triphthong is extremely frequent, even between words, also for /VV<sup>#</sup>oɪ/: [ˈfɔːɪ, ˈfɔːɪ; dɪɹˈdʒɔɪ, ɔɪɹ-] /ˈfaɪə, æɪnˈdʒɔɪt/ *fire, I enjoy it*.

Substantially, the Cockney intonation patterns correspond to the neutral ones.

# 131. London & beyond (& maps)

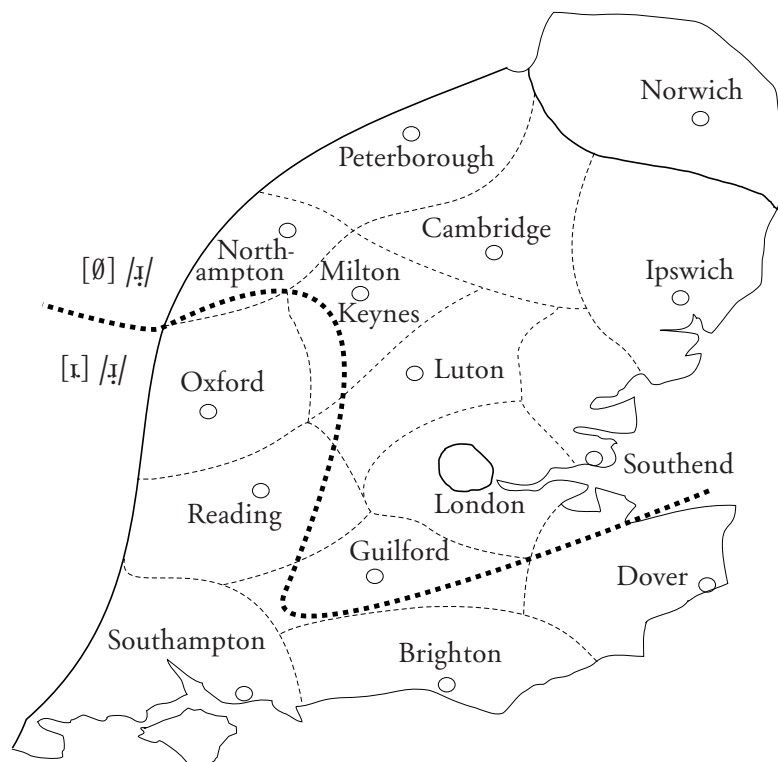
[© Luciano Canepari, 2010, Venice University, Italy]

131.1. The compromise between actual Cockney pronunciation and British neutral pronunciation is the in-between form that we call *Mediatic British* pronunciation, which journalists inappropriately call ‘Estuary English’. As the map in fig 131.1 shows, this accent is to be found in the whole Southeast of England (except the northeastern area, yet, which includes Norwich). Very many TV and radio speakers and journalists come from this region.

fig 131.1. The (linguistic) Southeast of England: Home Counties and beyond (cf fig 129.5).



fig 131.2. The Southeast of England: south and west of the thick dotted line, in rural speech, it is still possible to find [ɹ] /ɹ/.



131.2. We add the map of fig 131.2, where a thick dotted line shows the region where –in rural speech of the areas around Oxford, Reading, Southampton, Brighton, and Dover– we can still happen to hear the older –and original– ‘unvocalized-*r*’, [ɹ] /ɹ/. To be true, this type of pronunciation corresponds to International (and, in general, North-American) usage.

131.3. We have already dealt with Mediatic British pronunciation in Ⓖ 55. Thus, it is important to make constant reference to that chapter, and the variations indicated, when considering the present part (Ⓖ 132-146). Any indications about consonants in Ⓖ 55 are likely to apply to any accents of this part, as well. The same is true for prosodic features, such as secondary stress on *-ary*, *-ery*, *-ory*, &c. The readers are invited to take a very active part in searching for differences, even minor ones.

# 145. Norfolk (Norwich)

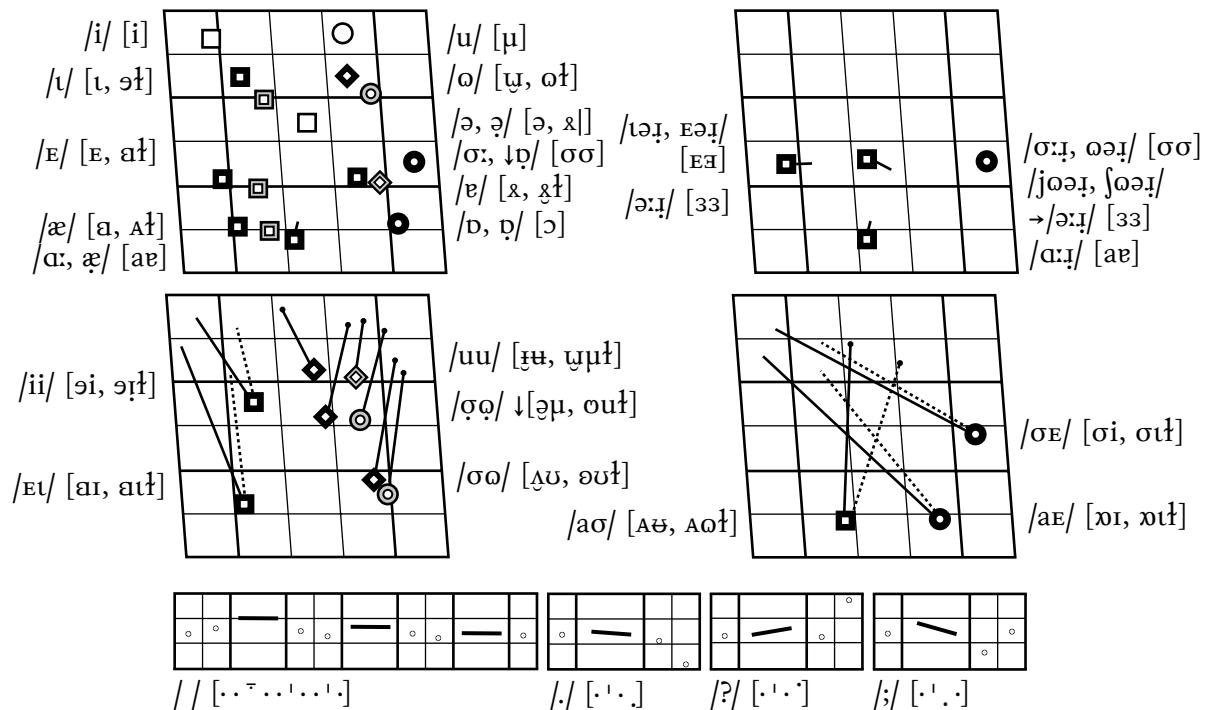
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145.1. The accent of Norwich (*/ˈnɔɹ.ɪdʒ, -tʃ/*, in Norfolk */ˈnɔɹ.ɪfək/*) has the typical peculiarities shown in fig 145.1, to be compared with those in the other areas of this part and with *Ø* 55 and fig 145.2-3 (for both broader and lighter variants).

In fig 145.1, the most peculiar timbre is that of [æ] /ɑ:, æ/ (in the first vocogram, and even [↓AA], in the first vocogram of fig 145.2): [*ˈkhaːv* ↓AA] /*ˈkɑ:ɪ/ car*, [*ˈlæstʃ*, ↓AAstʃ] /*ˈlæstʃ/ last*.

Further peculiarities of this accent are: the timbres of [ɔ, ↓ɑ, ↓↓ɑ] /ɒ/ (again in fig 145.1-2), as in [*ˈhɔtʃ*, ↓ɑtʃ, ↓↓ɑtʃ] /*ˈhɒtʃ/ hot*; more and more often, /ɒ/ becomes /ɔ/, rather than /σ:/, as before.

fig 145.1. Norwich: vowels, diphthongs & intonation.



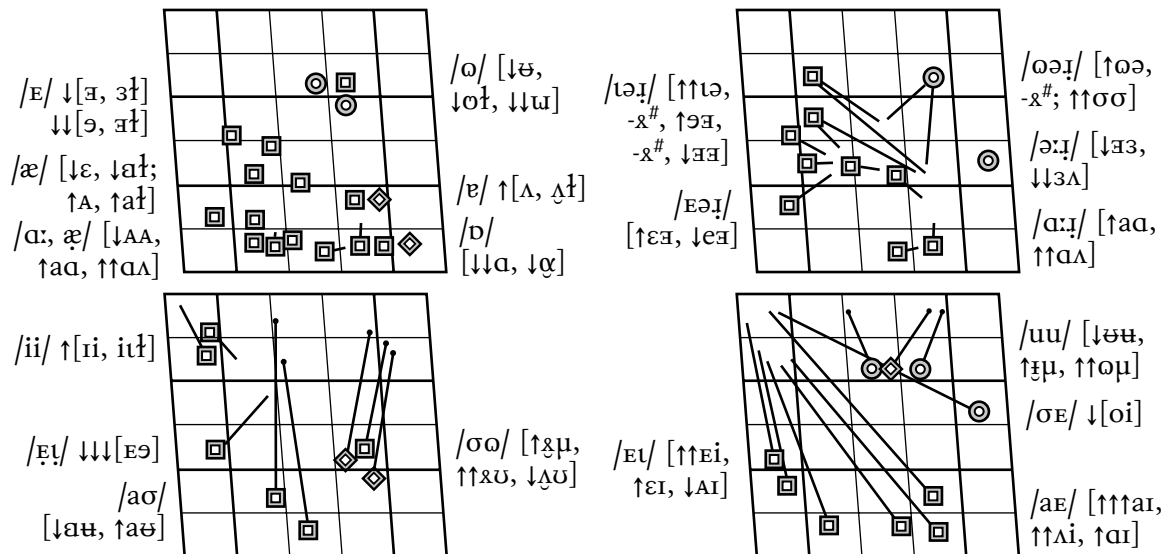
In addition, there is the tendency to generalize [ə] in unstressed syllables, not only for /ə, ə/: [*ˈhAɔzəz*] /*ˈhɑszəz/ houses*, [*ˈwɔntəd*] /*ˈwɔntəd/ wanted*, but also for /ɪ/, as in [ən] /*ɪŋ*: [*ˈfɔslən*] /*ˈfɔ:ɪŋ/ falling*, [*ðəsmɔnən*] /*ðɪsˈmɔ:ɪnɪ/ this morn-*



*ing*, [tʰeləm] /tʰelɪm/ *tell him*, [ətʰɪzənðə'kɪtʃɪn, ətsən-] /tʰɪzɪnðə'kɪtʃ(ə)n, tʰsɪn-/ *it is in the kitchen*. Once this happened even to /i/, which now has regular [i] (except in some broad rural accents). However, we do have final unstressed /σɔ/ → /ə/.

Then, we find the possible typical merger of [Eɜ] /tə, Eə/ (but with many unmerged variants, given in the second vocogram of fig 145.2): [↓bEɜ, ↓↓-Eɜ, ↑-əɜ, ↑↑-ɜɜ] /'bɛɪ/ *beer*, [↓bEɜ, ↑-Eɜ, ↓-eɜ] /'bEɪ/ *bear*.

fig 145.2. Norwich: broader or lighter variants.



145.2. All diphthongs, in fig 145.1-2, have more or less peculiar realizations and variants, and their second elements are fairly high, as can be seen in our vocograms. But the curious thing, for this accent, is that we have to introduce the diaphoneme /σɔ/ [əμ, oʊɪ] (third vocogram of fig 145.1, often unsatisfactorily rendered as /uu, u:/), in words derived from Middle English /ɔɔ/ (→ /oo/ in Early Modern English, → /σɔ/ in Present-day English), such as *moan*, *nose*, *sole*, *toe*, different from *mown*, *knows*, *soul*, *tow*, from Middle English /ou/ (→ /σɔ/ in Present-day English, again), with regular /σɔ/ [Λυ, oʊɪ].

They are also different from *moon*, *news*, *Sue'll*, *two*, as well, with regular /uu/. (That is why /uɜ, u:/ are not suitable, even if /uu/ should be rendered as /uɜ:/, again unsatisfactorily, because the phonemes must be kept stable, for a unique phonemic system, for the same and only language, while their realizations may vary a lot, indeed.) When needed, the appropriate diaphonemes have to be introduced, instead of positing too many partially different systems, which does not help at all, but does complicate things and ideas.

In addition, *go* and the adjective *no* may have /σɔ/, while *know* and the adverb *no* have regular /σɔ/.

145.3. The parallel (front) phenomenon, ie the introduction of the diaphoneme /Eɪ/ [Eə], is no longer needed, except for some rare very old rural speakers. Its realization is among the further variants, in the third vocogram of fig 145.2. This

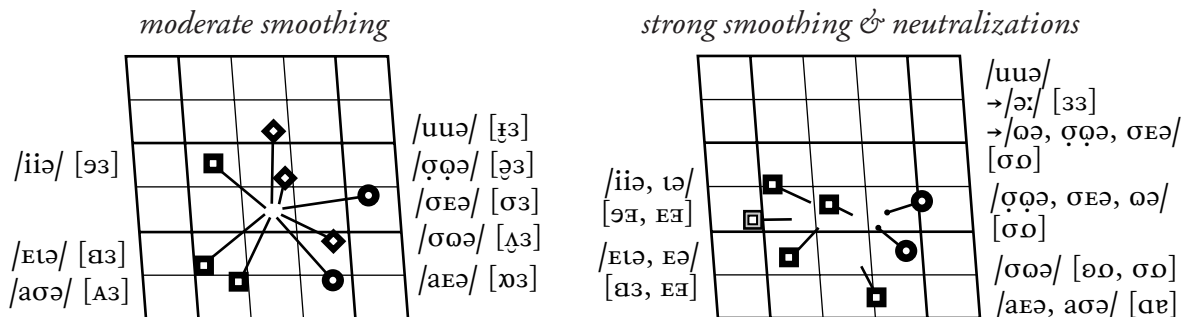
was current in words such as *mane*, *daze*, from Middle English /AA/ (→ /εε/ in Early Modern English, → /εɪ/ Present-day English), different from *main*, *days*, from Middle English /ai/ (→ Present-day English /εɪ/, again).

It seems quite likely that also /σɔ/ will soon change into regular /σo/, as will happen to a number of words (again with /σo/ in the common language), which are pronounced, instead, with the /o/ phoneme, in the broad accent: *boat*, *bone*, *comb*, *home*, *whole*, *froze*, *oats*, *road*. The same is true for some others, with different phonemes in common English, for instance, /o/ again both in *tooth* (/uu/) and *because* (/ɔ/). These highly stigmatized and rural features are very rare, now.

145.4. Another very peculiar feature of this Norfolk accent is the extreme spread of *smoothing*, as shown in fig 145.3, both for broad and mild accents. The first vocogram gives the result of the eighth diphthongs (including /σɔ/) followed by /ə/, where the eighth phonemic triphthongs change into diphthongs. Let us see some examples: [ˈphlɛɜ] /ˈplɛɪɪ/ *player*, [ˈfɔɜ] /ˈfɛɪɪ/ *fire*, [ˈtɰɛɜ] /ˈtɰɛɪɪ/ *tower*, [jəˈnɛɜɜ] /juˈnɔɪt/ *you know it*, [ðɛˈlɛɜɜ] /ðɛɪəˈlɛɪt/ *they allow it*, [ˈdɛɜɜ] /ˈdɛɪt/ *do it*.

The second vocogram, in fig 145.3, shows a further degree of smoothing, and a number of typical possible neutralizations: [ˈfɛɜ] /ˈfɛɪɪ/ *fire*, [ˈtɰɛɜ] /ˈtɰɛɪɪ/ *tower*, [ˈbɛɜɜ] /ˈbiɪt/ *being*, [ˈpɰɛɜ] /ˈpiɪt/ *pier*, [ˈphlɛɜ] /ˈplɛɪɪ/ *player*, [ˈkɰɛɜ] /ˈkɛɪɪ/ *care*, [ˈnɛɜɜ] /ˈnɔɪt/ *knowing*, [ˈdɛɜɜ] /ˈdɛɪt/ *doing*, [ˈgɛɜɜ] /ˈgɔɪt/ (/ˈgɔɜt/) *going*, [əˈmɰlɛɜɜ] /ʌmˈplɔɪt/ *employing*, [ˈkɰɛɜ] /ˈkɰɛɪɪ/ *cure*.

fig 145.3. Norwich: typical smoothing.



145.5. As for the *consonants*, in rural areas we can find [h] /h/, [ɪV] /IVɰ/, while in Norwich we have [h, ↓θ] /h/, [ɪVɰ] /IVɰ/; there is no trace of [ɰ, ɰ] or vocalization yet. However, [p̣, ɰ, ḳ; ɰ̣] /p, ɰ, k; ɰ̣/, [ɰ̣, ↑ɰ] /ɰ̣, Vɰ̣, Vɰ̣/, [ˈṾnɰ̣V] /Vnɰ̣V/ are widespread in the whole area, but not in sequences of two: [ˈpɰ̣ɰ̣] /pɰ̣ɰ̣/ *put it*; and [v] /ɰ̣ is spreading, as well.

But, the most peculiar Norfolk phenomenon is /juu, jɔ/ → /uu, o/, after any consonant, not only for /j/ (except in absolute initial position, where now we find /#j/; although, in a very broad accent, we can still have even /#juu, #jɔ/ → /θuu, θo/): [ˈnɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈnjuu/ *new*, [ˈtɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈtjuu/ *tune*, [ˈdɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈdjuu/ *due*, [ˈfɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈfjuu/ *few*, [ˈkɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈkjuu/ *queue*, [ˈhɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈhjuuɰ̣/ *huge*, [ˈkɰ̣σɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣, ˈkɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈkjɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣/ *curious*; [ˈjɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣, ↓ɰ̣ɰ̣ɰ̣] /ˈjuuɰ̣/ *use* (v).

145.6. *Paraphonically*, the broad accent is characterized by a *raised larynx* setting ⟨.:), *creaky voice* ⟨ʔ), and *faucalization* ⟨ʌ), in different proportions, which produces a kind of harsh and metallic voice.

A further typical, and noticeable, feature concerns the difference between stressed and unstressed syllables, which produces a peculiar and easily recognizable rhythm. In fact, the long vowels and diphthongs are not much reduced, when followed by voiceless consonants or unstressed syllables, in the same word or rhythm group; while, the unstressed vowels, besides tending to become /ə/, are further shortened or even dropped.

Examples: [ɔpə'zɪʃn, ɔp'z-] /ɔpə'siʃ(ə)n/ *opposition*, [khn̩'thɪɔvəsi, -ɔvəsi, 'khn̩tɪvəsi, -ɔvəsi] /kən'tɪɔnvəsi, 'khn̩tɪvə(ɔ)vəsi/ *controversy*, ['hɔlə'deɪz, 'hɔlə'deɪz] /'hɔlə'deɪz, -deɪz/ *holidays*, ['hæf pəs'thɪfɪ] /'hæf 'pæst 'tuu/ *half past two*, ['fɔːtɪ 'fɔːtɪ, -tɪ, -tɪ] /'fɔːtɪ 'faɪv/ *forty five*, ['æm] /'æmə/ *am I?*, [n̩'də'mɪd̩l̩v̩ðə'nʌɪt, n̩'dɪm-, -ðɪn-] /n̩'də'mɪd̩l̩v̩ðə'næɪt/ *in the middle of the night*, [z'fɑːv̩ z'ɔɪkən'səɪ, z'ækn̩-] /əz'fɑːv̩ əzækn̩'sii/ *as far as I can see*.

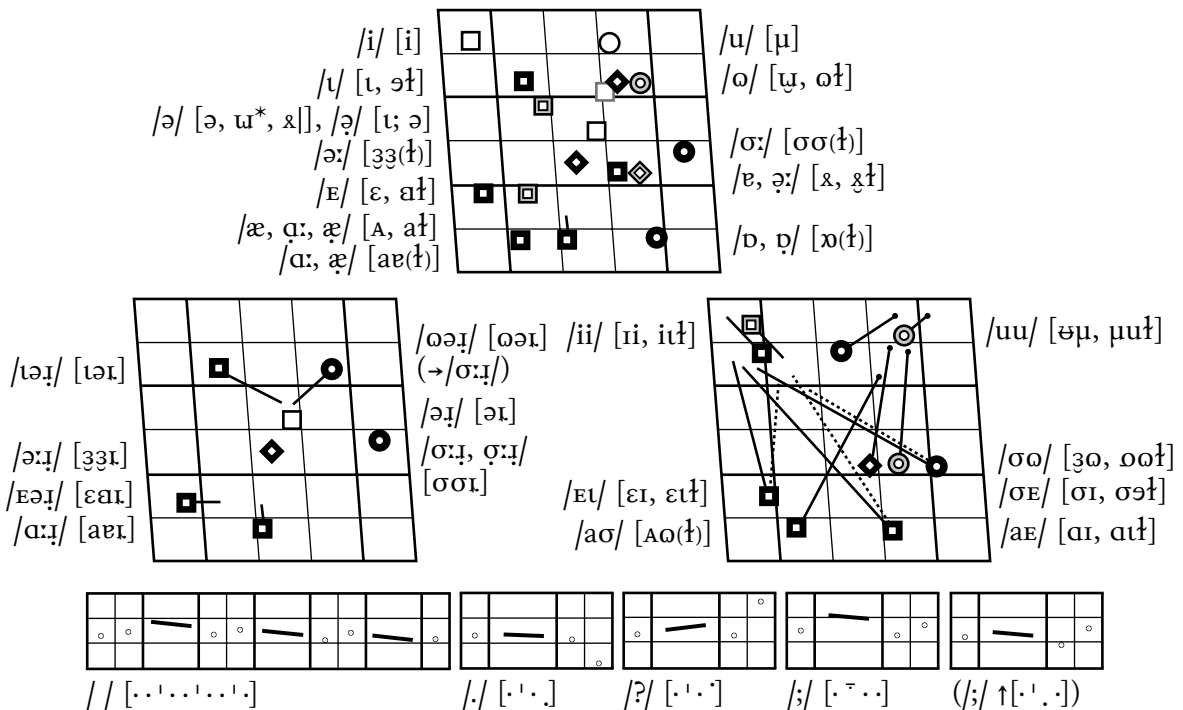
# 147. Avon &c (Bristol)

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147.1. For the *Southwest* of England, or ‘West Country’, we will start from its northernmost area, which includes Bristol (in Avon, and parts of Gloucestershire Wiltshire and Somerset), providing variants, as well. Then, we will consider three further areas (see the maps of England in fig 129.4-5).

Thus, fig 147.1 shows the typical present-day accent of the West Country, while fig 147.2 adds both broader and lighter variants of vowels and diphthongs. In addition, fig 147.4 will show further variants, more typical of younger speakers.

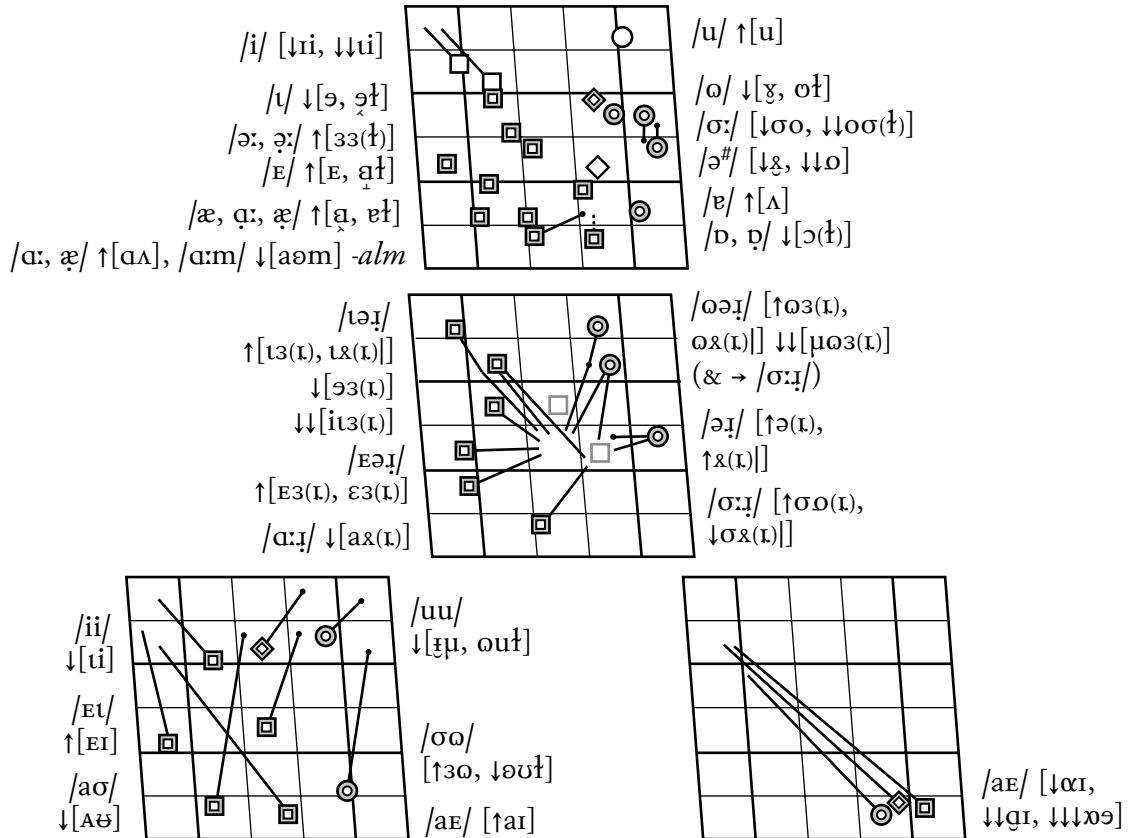
fig 147.1. Avon &c (Bristol): typical vowels, diphthongs & intonation.



147.2. Traditionally, the *West Country* is rhotic, although, nowadays, milder accents –especially urban ones– tend to be non-rhotic, since in England non-rhoticity is the prestige form (although the International accent *is* rhotic, but with [ɹ] /ɹ/, ie a semi-approximant, rather than a true approximant, [ɹ]). Also in the West Country we have [ɹ] /ɹ/, while [ɹ] /ɹ/ is more typical of rural accents.

In urban West-Country pronunciation, there are also ‘intermediate’ accents, which may be considered to be ‘rhotic’ even without actually sounding their *r*’s. This is achieved by means of a centering diphthongization of the relevant vowels (cf fig 147.2, second vocogram): [ɪɜ, ɪʌ, əɜ; ɛɜ, ɛɜ; aɜ; ɔɔ, ɔʌ; ɔɜ, ɔʌ]. A more typically rhotic, but milder variant pronunciation, may keep [ɪ] /ɪ/, after these diphthongs: [ɪɜɪ, ɪʌɪ, əɜɪ; ɛɜɪ, ɛɜɪ; aɪɪ; ɔɔɪ, ɔʌɪ; ɔɜɪ, ɔʌɪ].

fig 147.2. Avon &c (Bristol): broader or lighter variants.

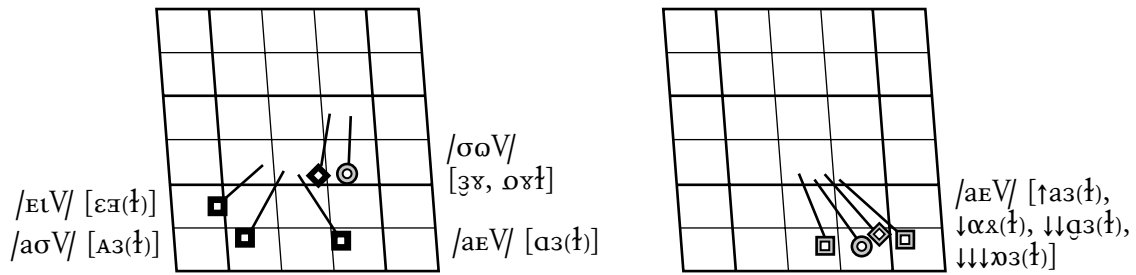


147.3. Therefore, in fig 147.1, let us notice the most peculiar features: [ʌ, aɪ] /æ, ɑ:, æ/, [aɛ] /ɑ:, æ/ (which can have lighter, more different timbre variants, as in fig 147.2). The diaphoneme /æ/, as in [ˈlʌvstʃ, ˈlʌstʃ] /ˈlæstʃ/ *last*, actually, belongs to both groups, as it oscillates between them, depending on accents, speakers, and words.

Apart from the exact timbres of [ɪ] /ɔ/, [ɜ] /ə:/, [ɛ] /ɛ:/, [ɔ] /ɔ:/ (and further variants), the beginning and ending points of a number of diphthongs (and variants, again) should be carefully checked in the vocograms.

147.4. The diphthongs /ɛɪ, aɛ, aσ, ɔω/ followed by an unstressed vowel and a sonant (consonant), in the broad accent, can become narrow diphthongs, instead of triphthongs (cf fig 147.3): [ˈphleɪɪŋ, ↓-ɛːɪŋ] /ˈpleɪɪŋ/ *playing*, [ˈveɪɪt, ↓veɪɪt] /ˈveɪɪt/ *vale*, [ˈfaɪɪɪ, ↓fɑːɪɪ] & [ˈfɑːɪɪ, ↓fɑːɪɪ] /ˈfaɛɪɪ/ *fire*, [ˈfaɪɪt, ↓fɑːɪɪ] & [ˈfɑːɪɪt, ↓fɑːɪɪ] /ˈfaɛɪ/ *file*, [ˈtʰaɔwɪ, ↓-Aːɪ] /ˈtʰaσəɪ/ *tower*, [ˈtʰaɔwɪt, ↓-Aːɪ] /ˈtʰaσəɪ/ *towel*, [ˈgɜɔwɪ, ↓gɜːwɪ], ↓gɜːwɪ, ↓-n] /ˈgσwɪ/ *going*, [ˈdʒɔwɪt, ↓dʒɔːwɪt, ↓dʒɔːwɪt] /ˈdʒσwəɪ/ *Joel*.

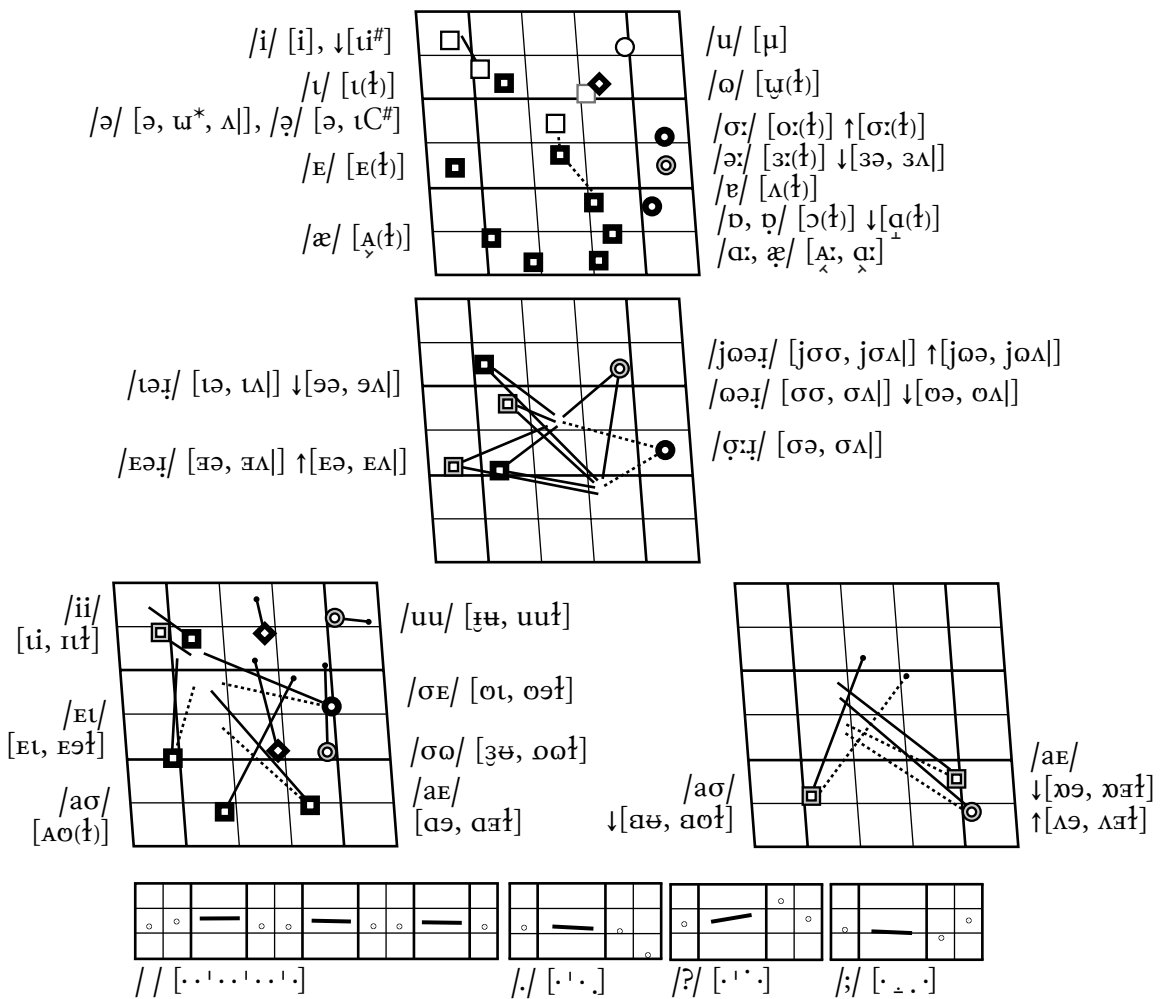
fig 147.3. Avon &c (Bristol): typical very broad narrow diphthongs for triphthongs.



Typically, in the broad accent, monosyllables in intonemes have longer vowel duration before voiceless consonants, than in common English: [ʔhɑ:p] /ʔæp/ *tap*, [ʔdʌʃ] /ʔdʌʃ/ *dish*, [ʔwɛ:ɪʔ] /ʔwɛɪʔ/ *wait*.

Instead of these typical features, ‘r-less’ and younger speakers show the accent given in fig 147.4.

fig 147.4. Avon &c (Bristol): milder & younger variants.



147.5. But we want to draw special attention to what is described as something of a ‘strange’ peculiarity. Words like *sofa* and *window* are often described as ending

in /əʔ, ɨ/, in the West Country. What native speakers can actually pronounce is [ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /əʔ/ (as shown in the first vocogram of fig 147.2, by means of ◊, because the tongue position corresponds, while the lips are half-rounded for [ɹ̥], and fully rounded for [ɹ̥̥]): [ˈsɔʔfɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈsɔʔfə/ *sofa*, [ˈwɪndʔɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈwɪndʔɔ/ *window*.

Now, hasty hearers may well be convinced that they hear the sound(s) corresponding to /əʔ, ɨ/; but, even real broad West-Country speakers say [ˈɔʊwɪɹ̥, -vɹ̥, -vɹ̥̥] /ˈɔʊwɨ/ *oval*, [ˈspɪndɹ̥ɪ, -dɹ̥ɪ, -dɹ̥̥ɪ] /ˈspɪndɨ/ *spindle*. Thus, with a difference: so, speakers do *not* confuse such words. On the contrary, it is hearers that *think* they are hearing something which is not as they believe it to be.

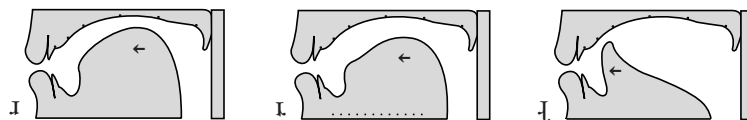
147.6. Even for /ɹ, ɹ̥/, we still read incorrect –and unchecked– descriptions, which keep on telling stories about a more ‘retroflexed’ *r* than in normal English, generally confusing the two kinds of *r*’s (as in the descriptions of American English, both by most American and non-American native-speaker ‘phoneticians’).

Of course (cf ʒ 26, on purpose called *The ‘whole truth’ on English r*), the truth is that, normally, rhotic accents have [ɹVɹ, ɹVɹ] /ɹVɹ/, while non-rhotic accents have [ɹV∅, ɹVə], &c.

But another very important thing has to be repeated, until people –at last– can really believe it. Those who can actually do real Natural Phonetics, of course, certainly know that the proper phonetic symbol for British, and British-like, /ɹ/ must be [ɹ̥], because it is a *postalveolar* approximant (as shown in fig 147.5).

While for the American, and American-like (as the West-Country /ɹ/ is), the proper symbols are [ɹ, ɹ̥], which are *provelar* approximant and semi-approximant, respectively (again, shown in fig 147.5).

fig 147.5. Avon &c (Bristol): comparisons between *r*-sounds.



147.7. When English or Australian actors try to put on an American or West-Country accent, if they are not well-trained and skillful enough, they will inevitably produce something that a native-speaker of that accent will instinctively perceive as somehow inappropriate, perhaps even without fully understanding why.

The reason is that such actors say [ˈkɦɑ:ɹ̥, -ɑ:ɹ̥; ˈɹ̥e:ɹ̥, ˈɹ̥e:ɹ̥; ˈɹ̥ɔ:ɹ̥, ˈɹ̥ɔ:ɹ̥; ˈɹ̥iə:ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥; ˈspɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥; ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥; ˈmɛə:ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈmɛ:ɹ̥ɹ̥], instead of (with some vocalic variants, as well) [ˈkɦɑ:ɹ̥, -ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈkɑ:ɹ̥/ *car* ([ɹ̥̥] is the American mediatic provelar uvularized approximant, cf fig 26.2), [ˈɹ̥e:ɹ̥, ˈɹ̥e:ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈɹ̥e:ɹ̥/ *rare*, [ˈɹ̥ɔ:ɹ̥, -ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈɹ̥ɔ:ɹ̥, ˈɹ̥ɔ:ɹ̥/ *roar*, [ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *rearrange*, [ˈspɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈspɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *spirit*, [ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *hearing*, [ˈmɛ:ɹ̥ɹ̥, ɹ̥̥] /ˈmɛə:ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *Mary*.

147.8. For /VəɹV/, the normal West-Country realization is [VɹV] (as in American or International pronunciation), although [Vɹ̥V, Vɹ̥ɹ̥V] are possible, too, in less and less typical accent, thus we can have [ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥] /ˈɦɹ̥ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *hearing*, [ˈmɛ:ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈmɛ:ɹ̥ɹ̥, ˈmɛw:ɹ̥ɹ̥] /ˈmɛə:ɹ̥ɹ̥/ *Mary*, &c.

Apart from normalized rhotic or non-rhotic accents, there is much uncertainty about the use or non-use of /ɹ/. For instance, we can find [ɹ], even within words, as in: *khaki*, *tomato*, *bath*, *nought*, *idea*. In rural speech, this is very frequent for words ending in *-ow*, *-o*, *-a*, *-ah*, such as *window*, *tomorrow*, *potato*, *sofa*, *Sarah*. Even intrusive-*r* is frequent, as linking-*r* is.

147.9. Another well-known West-Country peculiarity is the change of initial voiceless constrictives into voiced (or, sometimes, half-voiced) ones. But this feature is certainly a rural one (and mostly for homely and everyday words), which is more and more difficult to find systematically used, even by older farmers: [ˈvɑːɪv̥, v̥] /ˈfaɪv/ *five*, [ˈðɔːsɪn, ð̥] /ˈθɔːɪn/ *thorn*, [ˈzɔːsɪt̪, z̥] /ˈsɔːɪt̪/ *salt*, [ˈʒɑːt̪əɪ, z̥] /ˈʃeɪt̪əɪ/ *shelter*.

Also intervocalic /p, t, k; tʃ; f, θ, s, ʃ/, in a broad and rural accent, can become half-voiced [b̥, d̥, ɡ̥; tʃ̥; v̥, ð̥, z̥, ʒ̥], with [ɹ, ɹ̥, d̥] /t̪/: [ˈʌb̥t̪] /ˈʌp̪t̪/ *apple*, [ˈbeɪd̪i, -ɪ] /ˈbeɪt̪i/ *Betty*, [ˈbeɪd̪əɪ, -ɪəɪ] /ˈbeɪt̪əɪ/ *better*, [ˈphɒŋɡ̪ɪ] /ˈpɒkəɪ/ *pocket*, [ˈpɪiɪt̪ʃ̪əɪ] /ˈpɪiɪt̪ʃ̪əɪ/ *preacher*, [əˈv̪ɛːəɪ] /əˈf̪eɪəɪ/ *affair*, [ˈmæð̪jʊ] /ˈmæθ̪ju/ *Matthew*, [ˈpɪhæz̪ɪŋ, -ɪn] /ˈpɪhæz̪ɪŋ, -ɪn/ *passing*, [ˈpɪhʊz̪ɪŋ, -ɪn] /ˈpɪhʊz̪ɪŋ, -ɪn/ *pushing*.

In addition, especially in urban speech, for /t̪, t̪/, we often find [VɹV, VnɹV, VɪɹV, VɪɹV, Vt̪ɹV; Vɹən, Vnɹən, Vɪɹən, Vɪɹən, Vt̪ɹən] (typically with [Cən<sup>#</sup>] /Cɹ<sup>#</sup>/) and [Vɹ<sup>#</sup>(s)]: [ˈwɪnɹəɪ] /ˈwɪnɹəɪ/ *winter*, [ˈstɑːɪt̪əɪ] /ˈstɑːɪt̪əɪ/ *starter*, [ˈbɒt̪ɹ̩] /ˈbɒt̪ɹ̩/ *bottle*, [ˈwɔːsɹ̩t̪əɪ] /ˈwɔːsɹ̩t̪əɪ/ *Walter*, [ˈpɪhɔɪnɹən] /ˈpɪhɔɪnɹən/ *Pointon*, [ˈbɜːɹɪnɹən] /ˈbɜːɹɪnɹən/ *Burton*, [ˈpɪhɛɹ̩] /ˈpɪhɛɹ̩/ *pet*, [ˈhæɹ̩s, ˈʌɹ̩s] /ˈhæɹ̩s/ *hats*.

The last example shows that often /h/ → [h, Ø], in the West Country, too.

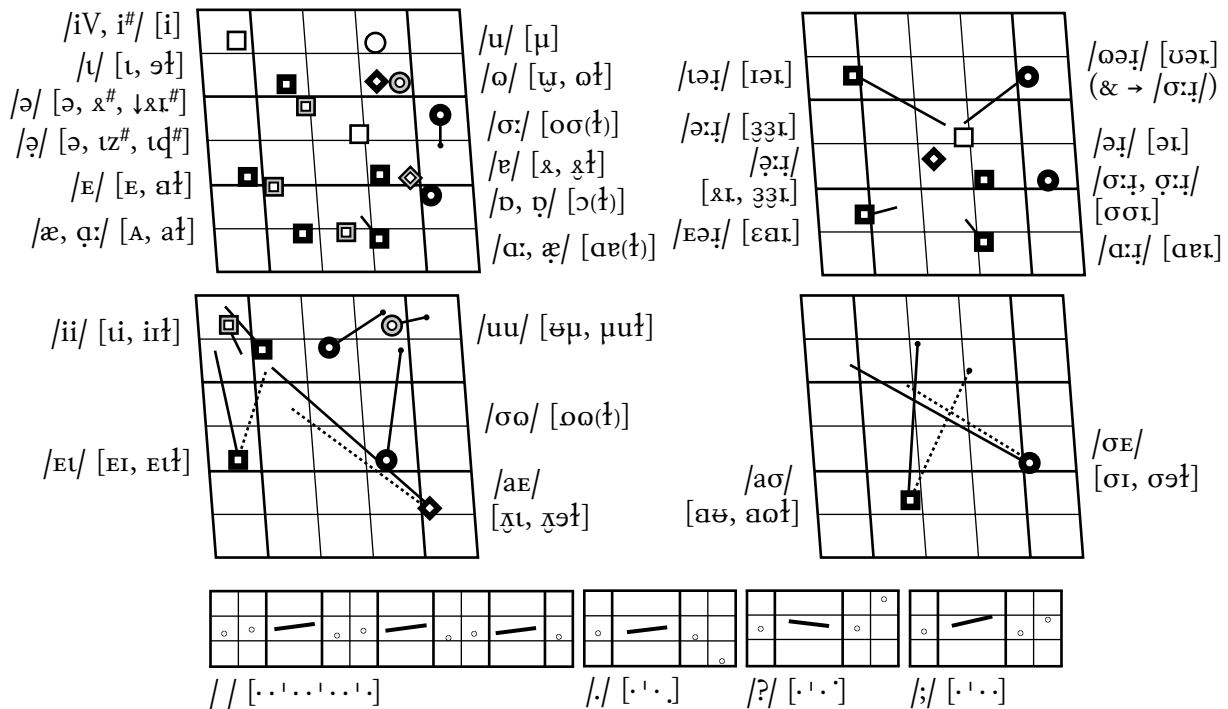


# 150. Cornwall (Truro)

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150.1. *Cornwall* is very peripheral and isolated, indeed, as Norfolk is (C 145). Thus the Cornwall accent has its own peculiarities, too. Let us start with fig 150.1, which has a familiar look, because we are still in the West Country. But the tonograms are quite peculiar: notice the protonic syllables and the conclusive and suspensive tonic ones, which immediately remind the Celtic modulation, with their rising movement (however slightly), that makes one think of the waves around the coasts of Cornwall (and let us end this poetic, not scientific, digression).

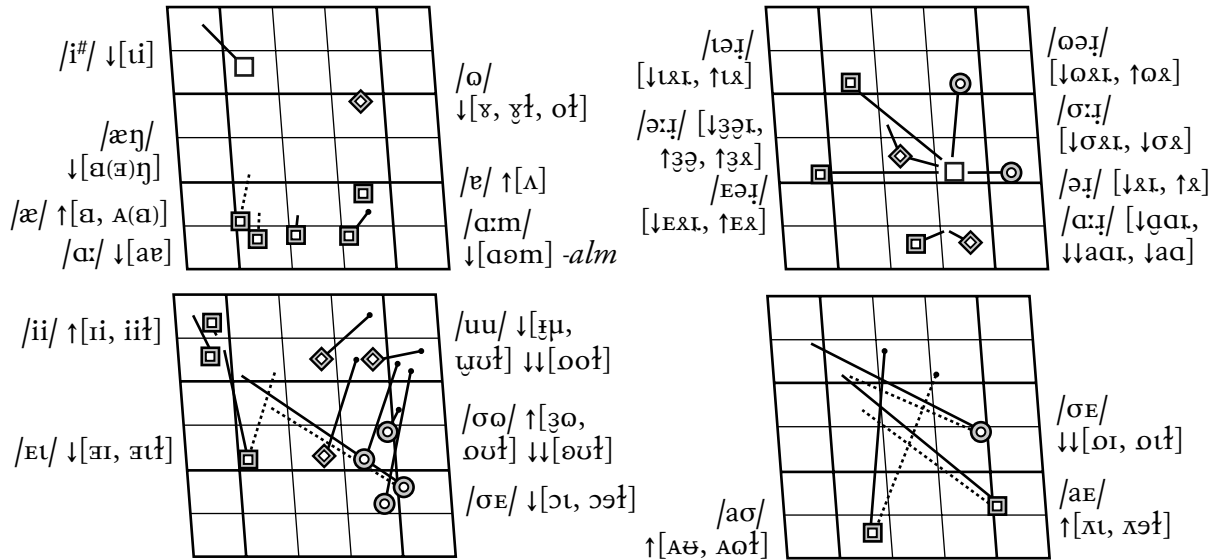
fig 150.1. Cornwall (Truro): vowels, diphthongs & intonation.



150.2. In the vocograms of fig 150.2, we might emphasize the qualities of the starting points of [↓ɛɪ] /ɛɪ/, [↑ɪɪ] /aɛ/ (however, less marked than 'normal' Cornwall [Δɪ], seen in fig 150.1), ↓[ɥu, ʊɔɪ] /uu(ɐ)/, and indeed the variant [↓σoɪ] /uuɪ/: [↓phɪʊɔɪ, ↓↓phoɔɪ] /'puuɪ/ *pool*, which is still different from [↓phoɔɪ, ↓↓phəɔɪ] /'pɔoɪ/ *pole*, especially because speakers who say [↓phoɔɪ] /'puuɪ/ *pool* will also use the broadest

variant for the other word, as well: [↓'phəʊt] /'pəʊt/ *pole*. Of course, the hearers may be in a state of uncertainty. And this is quite understandable, especially if we consider the actual and possible typical neutralizations that we will see in fig 150.4.

fig 150.2. Cornwall (Truro): broader and lighter variants.



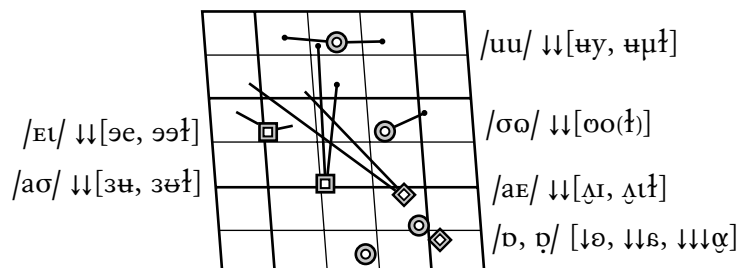
150.3. The interested readers should carefully examine all vocograms before we pass to fig 150.3, where we can find the typical *rural* realizations of the broadest accent: ↓↓[ʍy, ʍɪt] /uu/, ↓↓[əe, əət] /E/, ↓↓[ʊə(ɪ)] /σə/, ↓↓[ʌɪ, ʌɪt] /aE/, ↓↓[zɘ, zət] /aσ/, and [↓ə, ↓ʌ, ↓↓ɑ] /ɒ, ɒ/ ([ʌ] is a ‘rounded [a]’): [↓'thɘy] /'tuu/ *two*, [↓'nɜɘ] /'nəσ/ *now*, [↓'thəp, ↓↓'thəp, ↓↓'thəp] /'tɒp/ *top*.

The sequences /-(V)VəɪV/ generally have /ə/ → [∅] (especially with /aE, aσ/+/əɪV/): [fʌɪɪn] /'faEəɪn/ *firing*. In the broad accent, we find [uɪɔ, uɪ, iʃ, uɪ#] /əɪɔ, uɪ, iʃ, i/ *-age, -ing, -ish, -y*: [vɪlɪɪɔ] /'vɪləɪɔ/ *village*, [sɛɪɪn] /'sɛɪɪn/ *sailing*, [ɪŋɡɪɪʃ] /'ɪŋɡɪɪʃ/ *English*, [sɪɪɪ] /sɪɪ/ *city*.

In the broad accent, final /ə/ → [↓ɔ, ↓↓ə] (too often interpreted as if it were ‘/əɪ, ɪ/’): [ə'mɛɪɪkɪ, ↓ɔ, ↓↓ə] /ə'mɛɪɪkə/ *America*, [ʌɪ'dɪɪ, ↓ɪɔ, ↓↓ə] /aE'dɪə, -ɪɪə/ *idea*. In typical rural accents, we have ↓↓[ə'mɛɪɪkɪ, ʌɪ'dɪɪ].

Generally, the schwa is kept in the endings [Cən] /C(ə)n/: [ɪɛvə'lɪʊʃən] /ɪɛvə'lɪʊʃ(ə)n/ *revolution*. In rural speech, /E, æ/ → [Eə, aE], especially before /g, ʃ/ (variably before /k/): [Eəŋ] /Eg/ *egg*, [bʌEəŋ] /bæg/ *bag*. There is a reduced form for [əŋɪ, əŋɪ] /əŋɪ/ *got*.

fig 150.3. Cornwall (Truro): typical *rural* taxophones.



150.4. We now pass to fig 150.4, where we can see the *possible* and typical (and even multiple) neutralizations before /ɹ/: [fɪɹɪ] /fɪɹ/ *fill*, [fɪɹɪ, fɛɹɪ] /fiiɹ/ *feel*, [fɛɹɪ] /fɛɹɪ/ *fail*, [sɛɹɪ] /sɛɹɪ/ *sell*, [sɛɹɪ, sɑɹɪ] /sæɹɪ/ *sal*, [sɑɹɪ] /sɑɹɪ/ *sowl*, [gɹɹɪ] /gɹɹɪ/ *gull*, [gɹɹɪ] /gɹæɹɪ/ *guile*, [fɔɹɪ] /fuuɹɪ/ *fool*, [fɔɹɪ, fɔɹɪ] /fɔɹɪ/ *full*, [fɔɹɪ] /fɔɹɪ/ *foal*, [fɔɹɪ] /fɔɹɪ/ *fall*, [fɔɹɪ] /fɔɹɪ/ *foil*.

The assimilative taxophone [ɹ] /ə/, in contact with velar or velarized consonants, generally, only occurs in lighter accents: [ə'gɛɹɪ] /ə'gɛɹɪ/ *again* (neutral pronunciation [ɹ'gɛɹɪ]), [kɹɹɪn'tɹɛɹɪn] /kɹɹɪn'tɹɛɹɪn/ *contain* (neutral pronunciation [kɹɹɪn'tɹɛɹɪn]).

For the word *water*, we can have [wɔɹɪ], and in rural accents [ɹwə-, ɹwɛ-, ɹwɛɹ-] /wɔɹɪ/, all with short 'ɔ'.

fig 150.4. Cornwall (Truro): typical possible neutralizations.

/ɪɹ, iiɹ/ [uɹ]					/ɔɹ, uuɹ/ [oɹ]
/iiɹ, ɛɹ/ [ɛɹ]					/uuɹ, ɔɹ, ɔɹ, ɔɹ/ [ɔɹ]
/ɛɹ, æɹ/ [æɹ]					/ɛɹ, æɹ/ [æɹ]
/æɹ, ɑɹ/ [ɑɹ]					

150.5. There are instances of [ɹ] /θ/, but especially very frequent occurrences of [ɹ] /t, t/, in various contexts: [ɹ#, ɹC, Vɹɹ, Vɹɹ]: [kɹɹ] /kæɹ/ *cat*, [tɹɹnəkɹ] (let us notice that this accent has no /ə/ [ɹ] taxophone) /tɹɹnɪkɹ/ *technical*, [əgɹɹli, ɹ-ii, ɹ-ii] /əgɹɹli/ *exactly*, [bɹɹ] /bɹɹ/ *bottle*, [kɹɹn] /kɹɹn/ *cotton* (both, in rural accents, have: [ɹ-ə-, ɹ-ɛ-, ɹ-ɛɹ-]); and [VɹV, VɹV]: [bɹɹ, bɹɹ] /bɹɹ/ *better*.

Besides [ɹ] /ɹ/, we can occasionally find [ɹ, ɹ, ɹ], also for /ɹ/; whereas, in milder urban accents, we can have [θ] /ɹ/. For /lVɹ/ we find [lV, ɹlV, Vɹ], but not yet [Vɹ]; [VVɹ] /VVɹ/ is frequent: [snæɹ] /snæɹ/ *snarl*, [wɹɹɹ] /wɹɹɹ/ *world*.

For /sɹɹ/ we can have: [sɹɹɹ, ɹsɹɹ] /sɹɹɹ/ *street*; more often, we find [n, tɹ, dɹ] /nɹ, tɹ, dɹ/: [nɹɹ] /nɹɹ/ *new*, [tɹɹɹ] /tɹɹɹ/ *tune*, [dɹɹɹ] /dɹɹɹ/ *due*.

The typical West-Country voicing of initial voiceless constrictives is less widespread (and decidedly less in southern Cornwall); it occurs especially in rural speech, with [ɹC, ɹC] /Cɹ/: [sɹɹn, ɹɹ-, ɹɹ-] /sɹɹ(ə)n/ *seven*.

In intonemes, even monosyllables followed by /Cɹ/, generally, keep their length unreduced: [nɹɹ] /næɹ/ *night*, or are lengthened in non-lengthening contexts, as well: [sɹɹ] /sɹɹ/ *sick*.

# 151. West Midlands (Birmingham, ‘Brummie’)

[© Luciano Canepari, 2010, Venice University, Italy]

151.1. The linguistic *Midlands* include the *West Midlands*, with Birmingham (the second largest city in England – and, indeed, in the British Isles, cf fig 129.4) and Stratford-on-Avon (in Warwickshire, where William Shakespeare was born and buried), and the *East Midlands*, with Leicester (in Leicestershire, and Nottingham, in Nottinghamshire, famous for its associations with the Robin Hood legend), and Lincoln (in Lincolnshire, one of the main agricultural counties in England).

Arguably, even linguistically, the Midlands occupy an intermediate position between the South and the North of England.

151.2. Of course, we start from *Birmingham*, and the ‘Black Country’ (where, in the past, there were many factories that produced a lot of dirty smoke). In fig 151.1, we can see the typical accent of Birmingham, ‘Brummie’; in fig 151.2, there are many variants, both broad and mild, in various degrees.

Starting from fig 151.1, let us consider the two main peculiarities of the Midlands. The difference between /ɔ, ɐ/ and between /æ, ɑ:/ (and /æ, ɑ:/) may be entirely lost, in the broadest accent. In fact, both pairs may completely lack their second element: [ˈphɔʃ] /ˈpɔʃ/ (neutral English [ˈphɔʃ]) *put*, [ɹ̥ɹ̥ˈphɔʃ] /ˈpɛʃ/ (neutral English [ˈphɛʃ]) *putt*, [ˈʌnʃ] (neutral English [ˈænʃ]) /ˈænʃ/ *ant*, [ˈʌnʃ] (neutral British English [ˈɑnʃ]) /ˈænʃ/ *aunt*.

151.3. However, the exact variation can clearly show that this is only one possibility among many others (cf fig 151.1-2, for a complete survey).

As a matter of fact, for this accent, we do have:

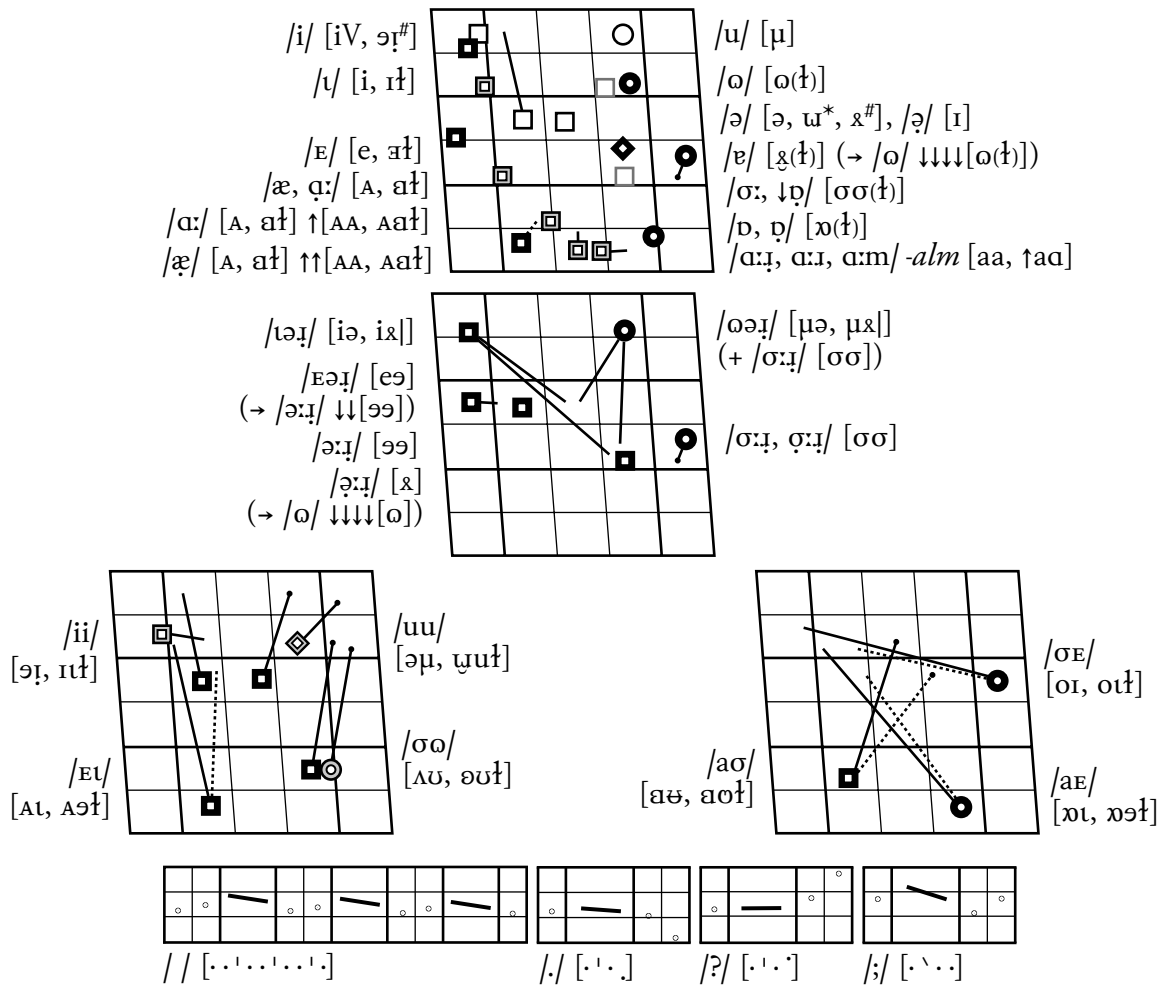
[ˈphɔʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ] /ˈpɔʃ/ *put*,  
[ɹ̥ɹ̥ˈphɔʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ, ɹ̥-ʊʃ] /ˈpɛʃ/ *putt*,  
[ɹ̥ɹ̥ˈʌnʃ, ɹ̥-ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ] /ˈænʃ/ *ant*,

[ɹ̥ɹ̥ˈʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ] /ˈænʃ/ *aunt* – according to International and American pronunciation; while, according to British pronunciation, we would have:

[ɹ̥ɹ̥ˈʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ, ʌnʃ].

(We include [æ], although it does not appear in the vocograms, because this neutral pronunciation is not completely impossible, at least for Black-Country speakers who exhibit a non-local accent, or a mild mixed accent – at least for some words, or in some occasions or situations.)

fig 151.1. West Midlands (Birmingham): vowels, diphthongs & intonation.



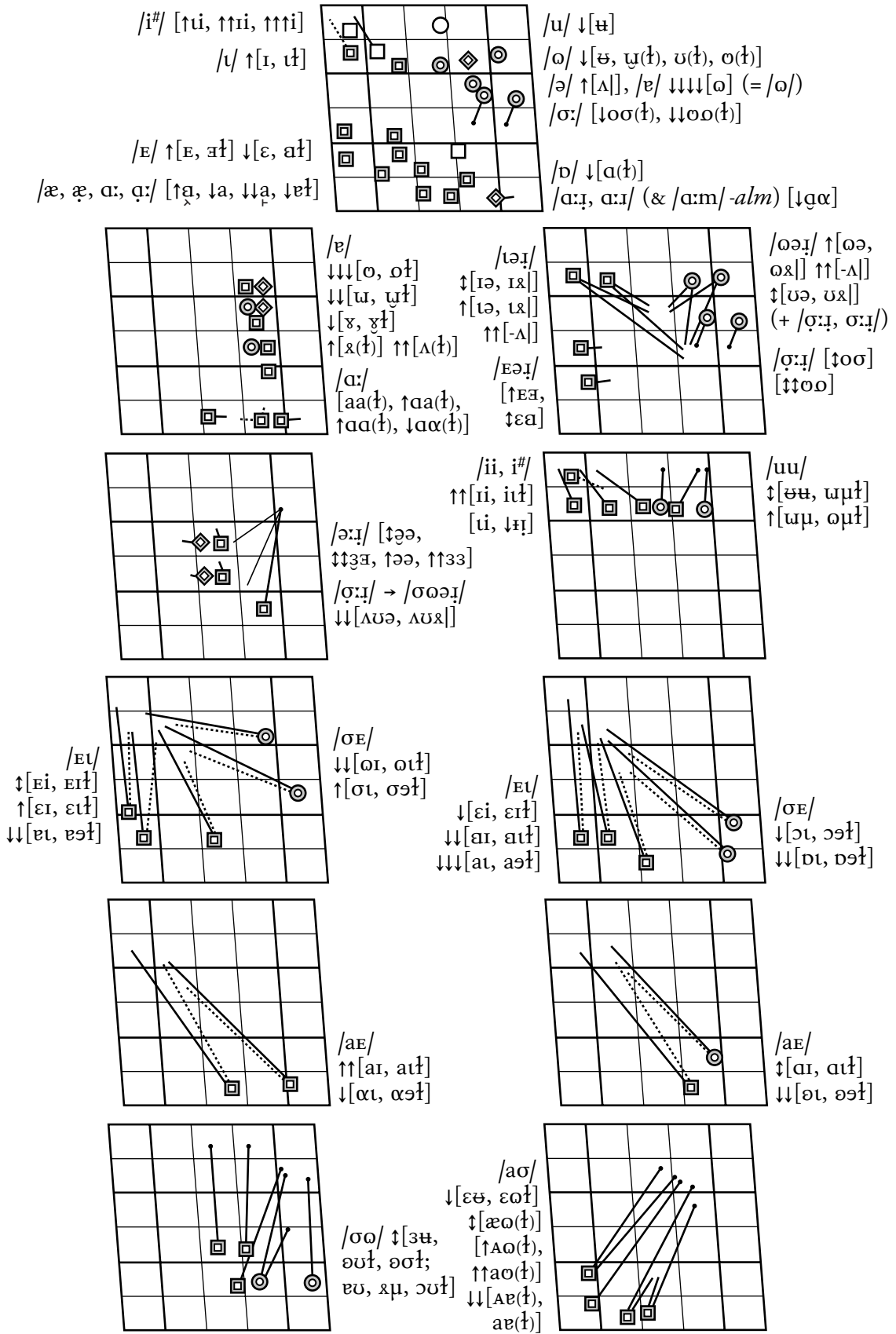
151.4. In the first case –*put* & *putt*– we can have two pronunciations in common: [ˈphɒʃ, ˈphɒʃ]; but, actually, they are [ˈphɒʃ, ↓↓ˈphɒʃ] for *put*, and [↓↓↓ˈphɒʃ, ↓↓ˈphɒʃ] for *putt*. In the second case –*ant* & *aunt*– we have three pronunciations in common: [ˈʌnʃ, ˈʌnʃ, ˈʌnʃ]; actually, [↑↑ˈʌnʃ, ↑ˈʌnʃ, ˈʌnʃ] for *ant*, and [↑↑ˈʌnʃ, ↑ˈʌnʃ, ˈʌnʃ] (but [↓ˈʌnʃ, ↓↓ˈʌnʃ, ↓↓↓ˈʌnʃ], considering British English) for *aunt*.

Indeed, things are a bit more complicated, because, in this Black-Country accent, /æ/ can be lengthened, while keeping its timbres. Indeed, from a modern –and International– point of view, it is better not to distinguish between /æ/ and /æ:/. However, the opposition between /o/ and /ɛ/ is absolutely necessary, today (especially outside England).

It is worth while examining closely the first vocogram of fig 151.1 and the first two of fig 151.2 to see the different realizations of the phonemes just seen. Of course, all the others must not be overlooked, as well.

151.5. In any case, all this means that the possibility of confusion, especially for /o, ɛ/, mostly depends on the hearers, because sociophonically our arrows are clear indicators of different levels of language usages, which very seldom occur simultaneously in one and the same speaker.

fig 151.2. West Midlands (Birmingham): broad and mild variants.



For the diaphoneme /ɒ/, we have two correspondences, according to speakers and words. While, in milder accents, we have [ɔ, ↓ɑ] /ɒ, ɒ/, [σσ, ↓σσ, ↓↓σσ] /σ:/; in broader accents, instead, we find [↓ɑ, ɔ] /ɒ/, [↓↓σσ, ↓σσ, σσ] /ɒ, σ:/ (although, with mixed usages): [ʌf, ↓af, ↓↓ɔf, ↓oof, 'σσf] /'ɒf/ *off*.

151.6. Further particularities are the peculiar timbres of [i, iʔ] ↑[i, iʔ] /i/, [e, ɛʔ] ↑[ɛ, ɛʔ] ↓[ɛ, ɛʔ] /e/, [ə, ɪ, ɪɪ, ɪɪɪ] /iʔ/ (but we will limit our exemplifications, here, to some taxophones of fig 151.1, leaving to the readers the task of comparing the realizations given in fig 151.2): [ˈsiʔə] /'sɪi/ *city*, [ˈwiʔ:] /'wɪi/ *will*, [ˈjes] /'jɛs/ *yes*, [ˈwɛʔ:] /'wɛi/ *well*.

The typical accent has peculiarly close vocoids (although with less strange variants, given in fig 151.2), also for [iə, ɪə; eə; mə, ɪə] /iə, eə, əə/: [ˈhiɪ] /'hiɪ/ *here*, [ˈðeə] /'ðeə/ *there*, [ˈtʰɪɪ] /'tʰɪɪ/ *tour*.

The typical broad accent can still distinguish between [σσ] [↓σσ, ↓↓σσ] /σ:/ and [σσ] [↑σσ, ↑↑σσ] /σ:/, in addition to ↓[Λσə, Λσɪ], which corresponds to /σə/ (given in the fourth vocogram of fig 151.2): [ˈwσσ] [↓-σσ, ↓↓-σσ] /'wσ:/ *war*, [ˈfσσ] [↑-σσ, ↑↑-σσ, ↓↓-Λσɪ] /'fσ:/ *four*. Characteristic are also [əə, ɪəə, ɪɪɪɪ, ɪəə, ɪɪɪɪ] /ə:/: [ˈfɪɪ] /'fɪi/ & [ˈfɪɪ] /'fɪi/ *furry*, & [ɪ] /ɪ:/: [ˈhɪɪ] /'hɪi/ ↓↓↓-ə-, -əə-, ɪ-əə-, ɪɪ-ɪɪ-, ɪ-əə-, ɪɪ-ɪɪ-] /'hɪi/ *hurry*.

151.7. But most peculiar are the typically 'southern' timbres of the seven diphthongs: [ˈbɛi] /'bi/ *bee*, [ˈdɛi] /'deɪ/ *day*, [ˈtʰɛi] /'tʰeɪ/ *time*, [ˈbɔi] /'boɪ/ *boy*, [ˈgɛə] /'geə/ *gown*, [ˈgɔi] /'goɪ/ *go*, [ˈtʰɛi] /'tʰu/ *two*. We just show examples without /ɪ/ (which are left, again, with the active readers, who will certainly examine their many variants, as well).

Let us draw particular attention, however, to the possible following narrow-diphthong variants (last vocogram of fig 151.2), ↓[Λə, ə] /ə/: [ˈnΛə] /'nə/ *now*. Currently, as in most areas of England, we have both /jɔ:/, /jə/ for /jə/: [ˈkɪjɔ:/, -ɪɪ] /'kjə/ *cure*.

151.8. As for the *consonants*, what strikes most is that /ŋ/ is typically realized as [ŋg] (even in milder accents), before vowels, or sonants, or pauses: [ˈsɪŋg] /'sɪŋ-ə/ *singer*, [ˈsɪŋgɪn, -ɪŋg] /'sɪŋɪ/ *singing*, [ˈmɛniŋgɪs] /'miɪnɪŋəs/ (/-ləs/) *meaningless*, [ˈwɪlɪŋgɪ] /'wɪlɪŋli/ *willingly*, [ˈlɔŋgmən] /'lɒŋmən/ *Longman*, [ˈsɔŋgɪtɪ] /'sɒŋgɪtɪ/ *songwriter*.

Except for older speakers, we often have glottalization of postvocalic [p, t, k; ʔ]: [ˈstɔp] /'stɒp/ *stop*, [ˈnɔʔ] /'nɒt/ *not*, [ˈrɔk] /'rɒk/ *rock*, [ˈwɔʔ] /'wɒtʃ/ *watch*. Commonly, we also have [ɔ] /ɔʔ, ɪC/: [ˈlɔʔ] /'lɒt/ *lot*, [ˈskɔʔlænd] /'skɒlænd/ *Scotland*; and [ɪ] /ɪ/: [ˈbɛɪ] /'bɛi/ *Betty*. Younger people can have [θ, ð] ↓[f, v] /θ, ð/.

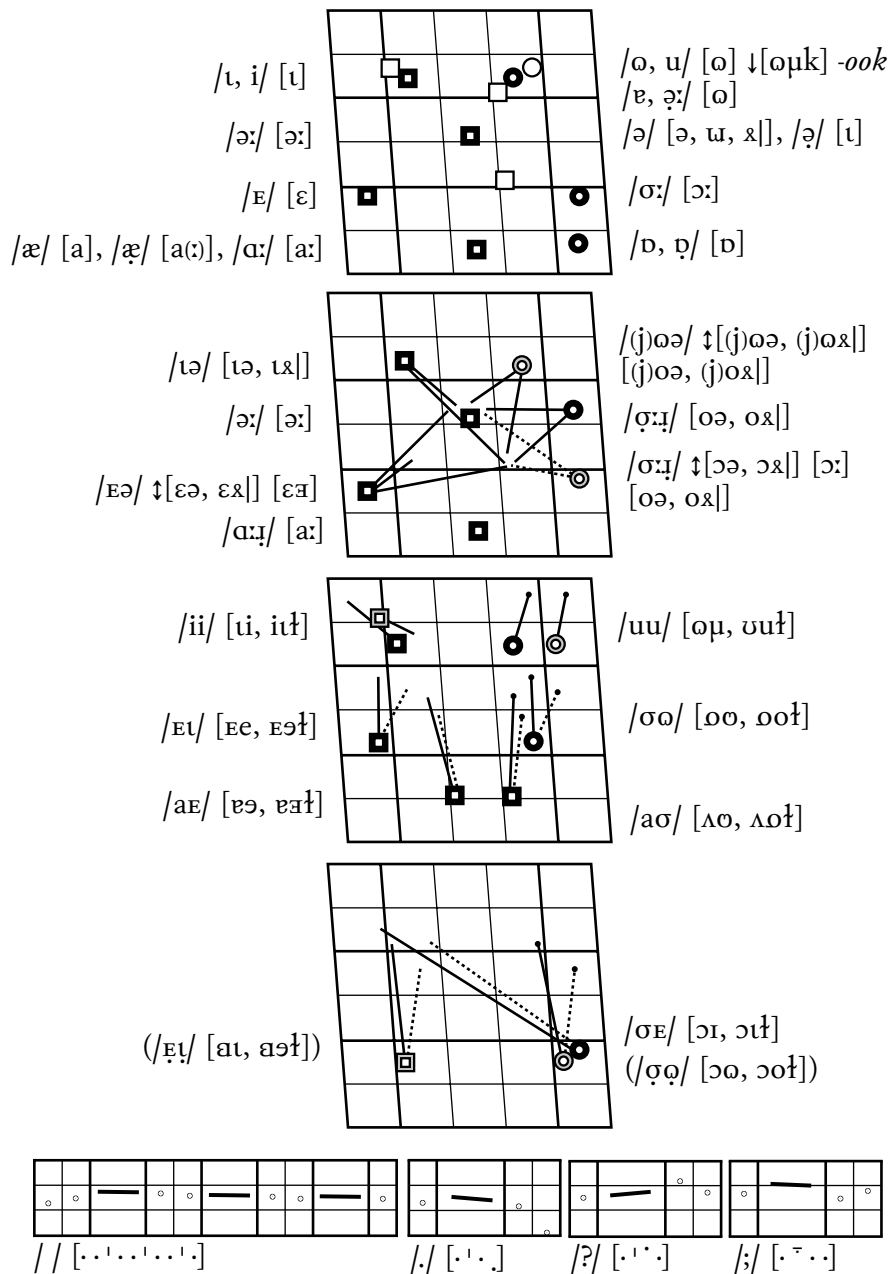
Frequently, we find [h, ↓θ] /h/, [n, tʃ, dʒ] ↑[nj, tj, dj] /nj, tj, dj/, [w] /w/. Besides normal [ɹ] /ɹ/, in the broad accent, we also find [r] /ɹ/, between vowels or between obstruents and vowels: [ˈsɔɹɪ] /'sɒri/ *sorry*, [ˈbrɛɹ] /'brɛd/ *bread*. Linking and intrusive *r* is quite common. Besides, we have [l, ↓l] /l/, and (especially with younger people) /ɹ/ [ɹ].

Paraphonically, we find a possible general nasalization throughout, (<~).

# 158. North Yorkshire (York)

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fig 158.1. York: vowels, diphthongs & intonation.





158.1. The accent of *York* (in southern North Yorkshire /jɔ:ɪkʃəɪ, -ʃɪəɪ/) is shown in fig 158.1. Here, we actually find [ɔ] /ɔ, e/.

Only in mixed or milder accents, mostly in urban usage, can we have [ɪə, ɪɜ, ɪɪə] /e/, cf fig 158.2 (although young educated people can certainly have more neutral-like pronunciations).

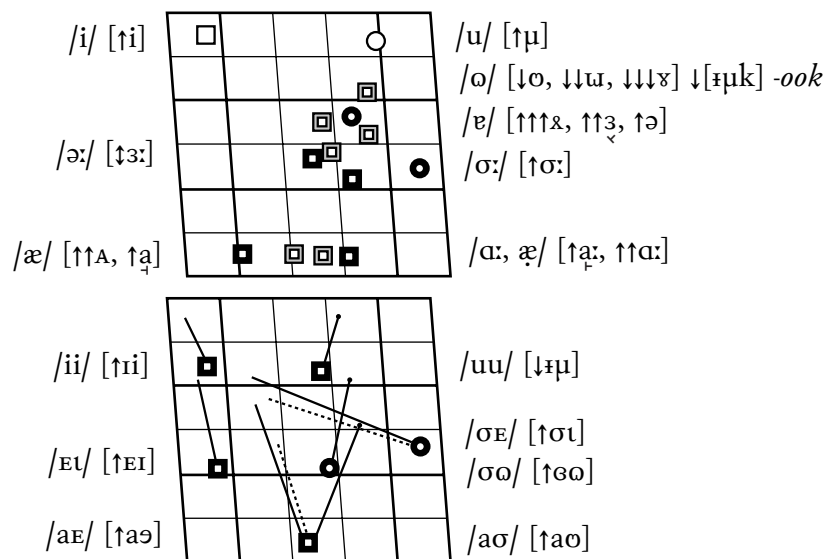
In addition, we have [oə, oɪ] for /oəɪ, ɔ:ɪ, ɔ:ɪ/, although more typically, but less frequently, now, they can be different, as shown in the vocogram of fig 158.1.

158.2. One further typical peculiarity, by now rarer and rarer, is the distinction between two different forms of /eɪ, oɪ/, which are now merged.

We have regular /eɪ, oɪ/ from Middle English /ai, ou/, as in *pain, raise, days, tow, soul, knows*, and /ɛɪ, ɔɪ/ from Middle English /AA, ɔɔ/ (which, in Early Modern English, became /εε, oo/), as in *pane, raze, daze, toe, sole, nose*.

The broad accents of *North Yorkshire* still keep this distinction, as shown in the last vocogram of fig 158.1, by means of /eɪ, oɪ/ [εε, oo] and /ɛɪ, ɔɪ/ [aɪ, ɔɔ]. Both pairs have raised their timbres, so that one must be very careful not to wrongly relate Middle-English /ai, ou/ to present-day North-Yorkshire [aɪ, ɔɔ], which –in official IPA notation– might be rendered as ‘[εɪ, ɔɔ]’.

fig 158.2. York: more or less frequent variants.



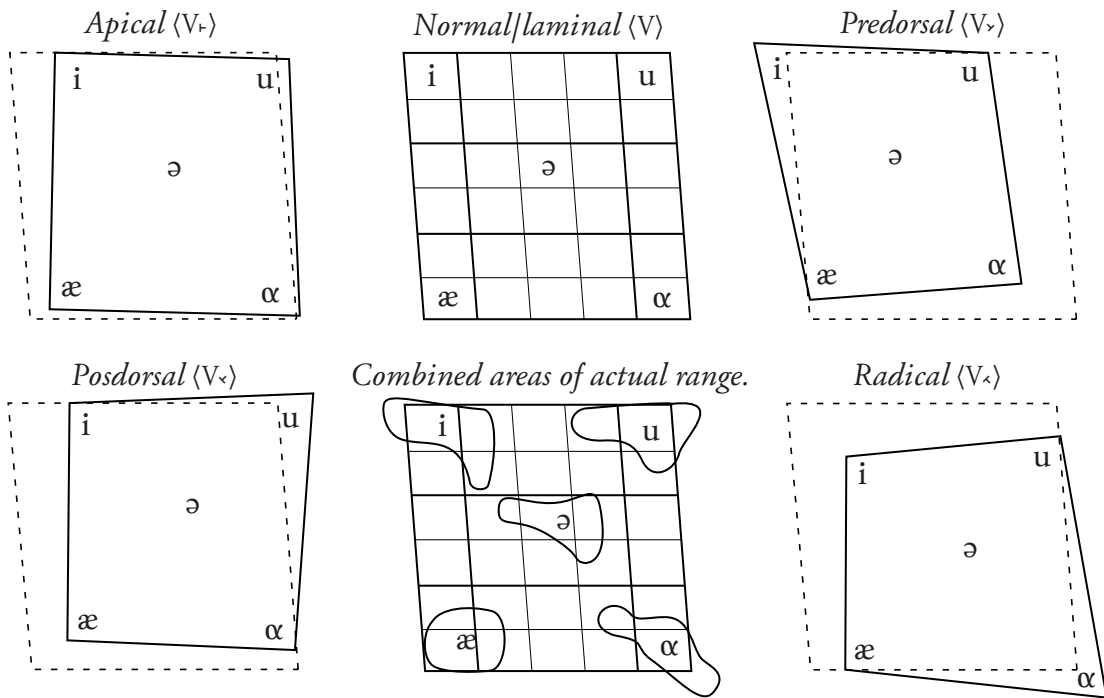
158.3. In addition, the typical accent can present a *predorsal tongue setting*, ⟨V>, that can change the overall effect on the speakers’ voice, because it modifies the articulation of the consonants, as well.

This paraphonic tongue setting is best shown as in fig 158.3, where we compare the *normal* space on the vocogram with that of the *predorsal* tongue setting ⟨V>.

In the same figure, we also show the *postdorsal* setting, which can be present in the typical ‘Scouse voice’ of Liverpool, ⟨V<⟩ (cf Ch 161).

In addition, for the sake of completeness and comparison, we also show the *apical*, ⟨V+⟩, and *radical*, ⟨V<⟩, tongue settings.

fig 158.3. Different paraphonic-tongue settings, compared with the normal one. The combined areas, in the central bottom vocogram, show their global effect on the space of vocoids.



# 165. Tyne & Wear (Newcastle, ‘Geordie’)

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165.1. The *Northeast* of England (or ‘Far North’) is a rather isolated and conservative area (subdivided into four subareas), with its own peculiarities: *Newcastle* (in Tyne & Wear), *Northumberland*, *Durham*, and *Middlesbrough* (in Cleveland).

Let us start from the accent of *Newcastle*, which is known as ‘Geordie’ /dʒo:ɹdi/, given in fig 165. Notice that we have [ɔ, ↓ɔ] /ɔ/, [↓ɔ, ɔ, ↑ɔ] /ɐ/: [pʰɔɹ, ↓-ɔɹ] /pɔɹ/ *put*, [↓pʰɔɹ, -ɔɹ, ↑ɔɹ] /pɐɹ/ *putt*. So, with the possible merger into [ɔ, ɔ], but also with actual, though small differences, at different sociophonetic levels.

165.2. Another peculiarity is the very back possible timbre of [αα, ↑αα, ↓αα] /ɑ:, æst/ (with variants), even in such words as: [ˈmɑɑsɹɪ, ↑-ɹ] /ˈmæstɹɪ/ *master*. Next, we find the characteristic [ɔɔ, ↓ɔɔ, ↓↓ɔɔ] /ɔ:/: [ˈwɔɔk, ↓-ɔɔk, ↓↓-ɔɔk] /ˈwɔ:ɹk/ *work*. Generally, these are shamefully rendered (according to the notorious limits of the official *IPA* and current phonetic ‘skillfulness’) as ‘[ø:, ɜ:, ɔ:]’!

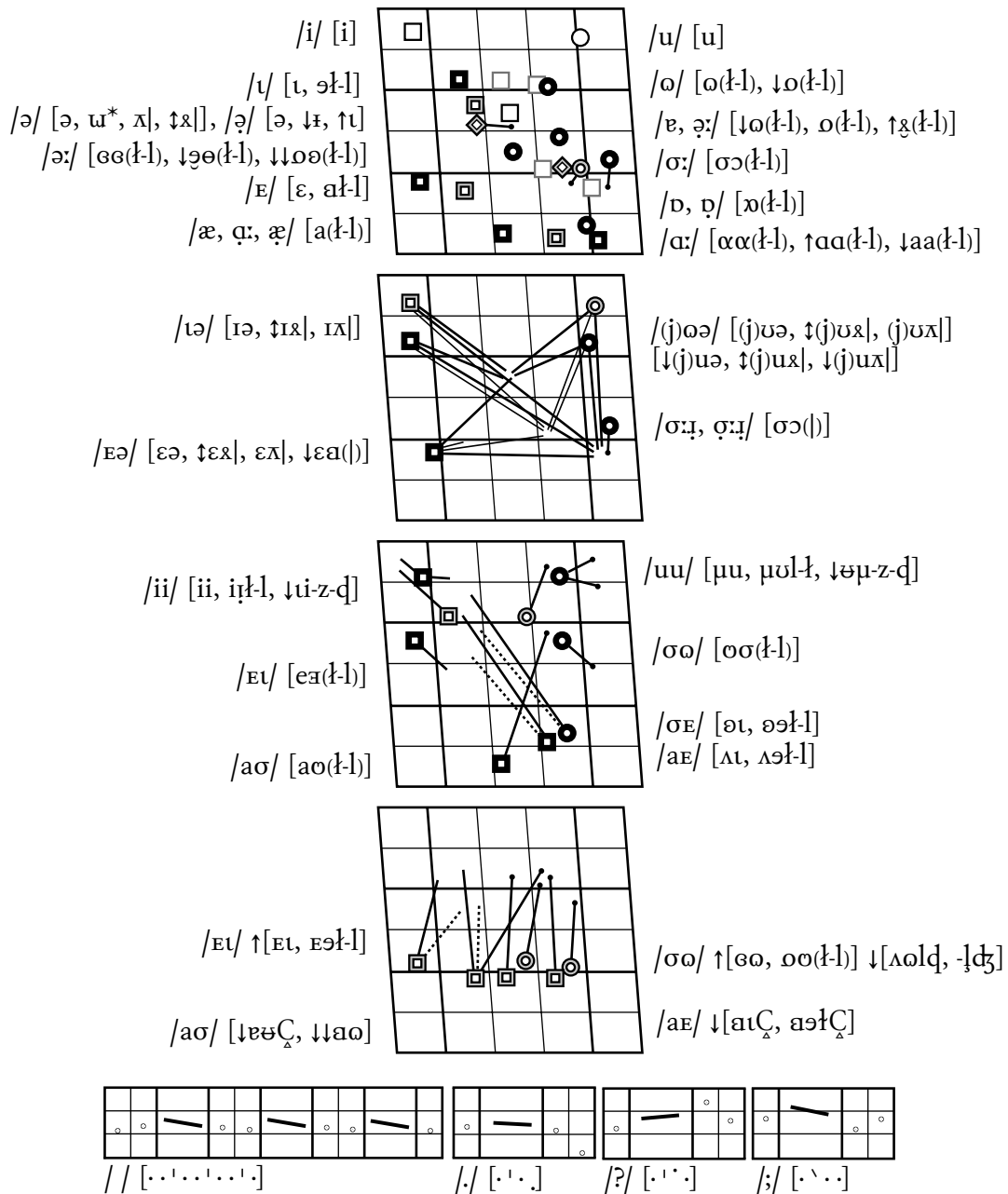
Let us carefully notice that we have [ɔɔ] /ɔ:/: [ˈwɔɔk] /ˈwɔ:k/ *walk*; so that, in reality (and in *Natural Phonetics*), even [↓↓ɔɔ] /ɔ:/ and [ɔɔ] /ɔ:/ do have a difference, also for the broadest accent, indeed. It is the hearer that may not be ready enough to sufficiently catch the difference.

165.3. Currently, in the broadest way of speaking, people may use the phonemes /ɑ:/ ↓↓↓[αα, αα, aa], /æ/ ↓↓↓[a], /ɛ/ ↓↓↓[ɛɛ], /u/ ↓↓↓[mu, ɐmu] in words that –in English proper– have, instead, the phonemes [ɔɔ] /ɔ:/:, [ɔ] /ɔ/, [ɔɔ] /σɔ/, [aɔ, ↓ɔɔ, ↑aɔ] /aσ/.

Of course, this is no phonic problem, but a lexical one. In fact, we do happen to hear ‘[ˈɑɑl, -ɑɑl, -ɑɑl]’ /ˈɔ:ɹ/ *all*, ‘[ˈwɑɑkɪŋ, -ɑɑ-, -ɑɑ-]’ /ˈwɔ:ɹkɪŋ/ *walking*; ‘[ˈsɑŋ:]’ /ˈsɔŋ/ *song*, ‘[ˈlɑŋɪŋ]’ /ˈlɔŋɪŋ/ *longing*; ‘[ˈnɛ-]’ /ˈnɔ- / *no*, ‘[ˈnɛɐbɔdi]’ /ˈnɔɐbɔdi/ *nobody*; ‘[ˈtʰɪrən]’ /ˈtʰaσn/ *town*, ‘[ˈmuɹ]’ /ˈaσt/ *out*. But, if such words coincide for their meaning, they actually are traditional dialect words, which should be written something like: *aal*, *waalkin’*, *sang*, *langin’*, *nay*, *naybody*, *toon*, *oot*.

And this is not just a systematic transposition of phonemes (and graphemes), because other ‘words’ can have the same phonemes, different from those of English proper, as: /ˈnɑz/ meaning *knows*, /ˈwɛɪ/ meaning *who*, /ˈdɛɪ/ meaning *do*, /ˈfæðɔɹ/ meaning *father*. They should be written as something like *naas*, *way*, *day*, *father* (with the ⟨a⟩ of *fat*), and considered actual loanwords, just as French /ʃiik, ʃik/ *chic* or Italian /ˈla:ɹɛɪ/ *latte*.

fig 165. Newcastle (Tyne & Wear): vowels, diphthongs & intonation.



In the North of England, words such as *book* and *looking* do not have the /ʊ/ phoneme, but /uu/ (in this way, *book* cannot be confused with *buck*). In this case, however, it is possible (and, indeed, better) to consider such feature as an actual phonic problem, since the spelling is not so strange as in the other cases just seen.

165.4. We have already introduced the typical timbre of [ʌ, ɪə] /ə(ɪ)#/: [ˈnɛvʌ, ɪə] /ˈnɛvəɪ/ *never*. The reader is invited to examine the other phonemes in the first vocogram, as well. In the second vocogram, let us look at the starting and ending vocoids of the centering diphthongs, again, with their sociophonic variants, for instance: [ˈkʰɛəɪz, ↓-ɛʔz] /ˈkɛəɪz/ *cares*, [ˈskwɛɪ, ↑-ɛɪ, ↓-ɛʔ] /ˈskwɛəɪ/ *square*.

In the third vocogram, among the closing diphthongs, we find the peculiarity of internal or word-final [ii, u<sup>#</sup>, μu, ɐμ<sup>#</sup>] /ii, uu/, even if followed by grammemes such as *-(e)s*, *-(e)d*: [tʰiɾiz̩] /tʰiiz/ *tease*, [tʰvi(z)] /tʰii(z)/ *tea(s)*, [l̩μuz̩] /l̩luuz/ *lose*, [l̩ɐμ(z)] /l̩luu(z)/ *loo(s)*. It should go without saying that the real and actual name of the city of Newcastle and its football team, [tʰμrun] /tʰuun/ *Toon*, belongs to this phoneme, in spite of its semantic and etymological link with proper English [tʰaʊn, ↓↓-aʊn] /tʰaʊn/ *Town*.

165.5. Another quite typical feature of this accent is the quality and direction of [eɪ, oɔ] ↑[eɪ, ɔɔ] /eɪ, oɔ/: [d̩eɪ] /d̩eɪ/ *day*, [g̩oɔ] /g̩oɔ/ *go*, in the third and fourth vocograms (again, irresponsibly rendered as ‘[e:, eɪ, eə, iə, iɛ; o:, uə, uɛ, əə, ɔ:]’). Let us also draw attention, in particular, to [oɔ] ↑[oɔ] ↓[ʌoɪd̩, -ɪd̩] /σoɪ/: [ʊoɪd̩, t̩oɪd̩, ↓ʌoɪd̩] /σoɪd̩/ *old*.

Remarkable are also [aɔ, ↓eɔ, ↓aɔ] /aɔ/, [ʌɪ, ↓aɪ] /aɪ/, [əɪ] /σeɪ/, which are typical (and their possible variants, too): [kʰaɔ] /kʰaɔ/ *cow*, [hʌɪ, ↓aɪ] /hʌeɪ/ *high*, [b̩əɪ] /b̩σeɪ/ *boy*, and [aɔt̩, ↓eɔt̩] /aɔt̩/ *out*, [fʌɪt̩, ↓aɪt̩] /fʌeɪt̩/ *fight*. The interested readers, perhaps, might want to waste time to check for themselves how much pure and poor ‘fantasy’ the different authors exhibit trying to ‘transcribe’ even these diphthongs (and monophthongs, as well) *within* the official IPA.

165.6. As for the *consonants*, we find a particular kind of ‘glottalization’ for /p, t, k; tʃ/. It is not just [p̚, t̚, k̚; tʃ̚], as in most of England nowadays, *ie* [VCV], but a more complex sequence of a laryngealized vocoid (which may be followed by a nasal or lateral consonant, too), plus an actual [ʔ] and a partially devoiced contoid, corresponding to the original one (with a possible approximant, as well, before the vowel, or an intense –or ‘syllabic’– sonant).

For /t, tʃ/, we can also lack the alveolar articulation, [VʔV], or have [VɪV] (or [ʔe<sup>#</sup>], in final position). In the following examples, we omit our sociophonetic arrows: [VʔCV]: [pʰɔp̚ɪ, -ɔ-, -ɛ-] /p̚ɛp̚ɪ/ *puppy*, [s̩t̚ɪ, -ɾi, -ɾi] /s̩t̚ɪ/ *city*, [l̩ɔk̚ɪ] /l̩ɔk̚ɪ/ *locker*, [b̩ɔt̚ɪ, -ɔ-] /b̩ɔt̚ɪ/ *butcher*, [tʰɛm̚p̚ɪ] /tʰɛm̚p̚ɪ/ *temper*, [ɔ̚ɪt̚ɪ] /σɔ̚ɪt̚ɪ/ *alter*, [æ̚k̚j̚ɪ, -ɾɪ] /æ̚k̚j̚ɪ/ *accurate*, [n̩æt̚ɪ] /n̩æt̚ɪ/ *natural*. Of course, in less typical accents, there may be some more ‘normal’ pronunciations, as well.

165.7. In addition, we generally have [tʃ, dʒ, nʃ] /tʃ, dʒ, nʃ/; [h] /h/ (although [θ] is more and more frequent among the young); [w] /w/; [l, ɹ] /l/, [l, ɹ] /ɹ/; [ɹ] /ɹ/ (and ↓[r, z, ɹ] in the contexts /VɹV, CɹV/), while, in rural usage, it is still possible to find the voiced uvular approximant or tap ↓↓[ʁ, ʀ], now more typical of rural Northumberland). Both linking and intrusive *r* are rarer than in other parts of England. In some rural accents, we can find [wɪ, wɛ, wɹ] /əɪ<sup>#</sup>/: [n̩ɛvɪ, -wɛ, -wɹ] /n̩ɛvəɪ/ *never*.

For /ə/ we have [ə, ɪ, ↑ɪ], and [w] in contact with velars, also in reduced forms. In the broad accent, there tends to be no reduced forms for words such as *but*, *could*, *would*, *from*, *that*. Instead, we often find [mi] /mae/ *my*.