

Beginner's English Dialectology

An introductory coursebook on the accents
and dialects of English



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BuPhoC 1 Apr (☺) 2009

"Historical" background

- **started out as reading material for a one-term elective dialectology seminar I started as an experiment at the Department of English, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, in spring 2006**
- **material was gradually piling up**
- **2007-2008: gradual construction, draught versions tested in subsequent classes (with immeasurable help from Kinga Földváry)**

Aims

- a coursebook on English dialectology
- introductory (supposing the average Hungarian university student's background knowledge of English linguistics only)
- a coherent text (vs. reading chapters from sources of varying scope and (theoretical) detail, written by various authors, in various (theoretical) traditions)
- for non-native audience!
- available in Hungary, for a reasonable price
- coverable in one term (cca. 12 weeks)

Aims -> Results

- suitable for its primary target audience, advanced (esp. BA) students of English, who have a pretty good command of (standard) English and some background knowledge of English pronunciation and grammatical terminology
- for Hungarian audience (e.g., occasional references to Hungarian(-like) sounds)
- available in Hungary, primarily in on-line bookstores (Ad Librum, Bookline)
- RRP: HUF 1990 (but: reduced prices!, e.g., HUF 1592 at bookline.hu; free delivery at shop.adlibrum.hu)
- 9 topics/chapters for 1 semester

Contents

two main parts:

- Chapters 2-5: major varieties, with focus on pronunciation, by region
- Chapters 6-9: standard British English vs. standard American English

Contents

- Foreword and acknowledgements
- Symbols used in the book

because the main focus is on pronunciation

Gimsonian IPA

use of brackets + basic terminology for vowels and consonants explained briefly, e.g.:

Contents

The consonants of English can be classified as labial (pronounced with the lips), coronal (pronounced with the tongue), velar (pronounced near the soft palate in the back of the oral cavity) or glottal (produced by the vocal cords only); as stops or fricatives (with or without the stopping of the airflow), affricates (with stops and fricatives combined), nasals (with the air coming out through the nose) or approximants (with just a slight approximating movement); as voiced or voiceless (with or without vocal cord vibration):

	Stop		Fricative		Affricate		Nas	Appr
	v-ed	v-less	v-ed	v-less	v-ed	v-less	voiced	
La	[b] <u>bit</u>	[p] <u>pit</u>	[v] <u>vine</u>	[f] <u>five</u>			[m] <u>me</u>	[w] <u>wet</u>
Co	[d] <u>did</u>	[t] <u>tip</u>	[ð] <u>this</u> [z] <u>zoo</u> [ʒ] <u>beige</u>	[θ] <u>thin</u> [s] <u>sea</u> [ʃ] <u>she</u>	[dʒ] <u>jet</u>	[tʃ] <u>chat</u>	[n] <u>nice</u>	[l] <u>let</u> [r] <u>run</u> [j] <u>yet</u>
Ve	[g] <u>get</u>	[k] <u>key</u>					[ŋ] <u>sing</u>	
Gl				[h] <u>hot</u>				

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- Foreword and acknowledgements
- Symbols used in the book
- Chapter 1: Background

theoretical background: standard/non-standard, accent/dialect, RP, GA, descriptivism

Contents



(the illustration which is NOT included in the final version :- ()

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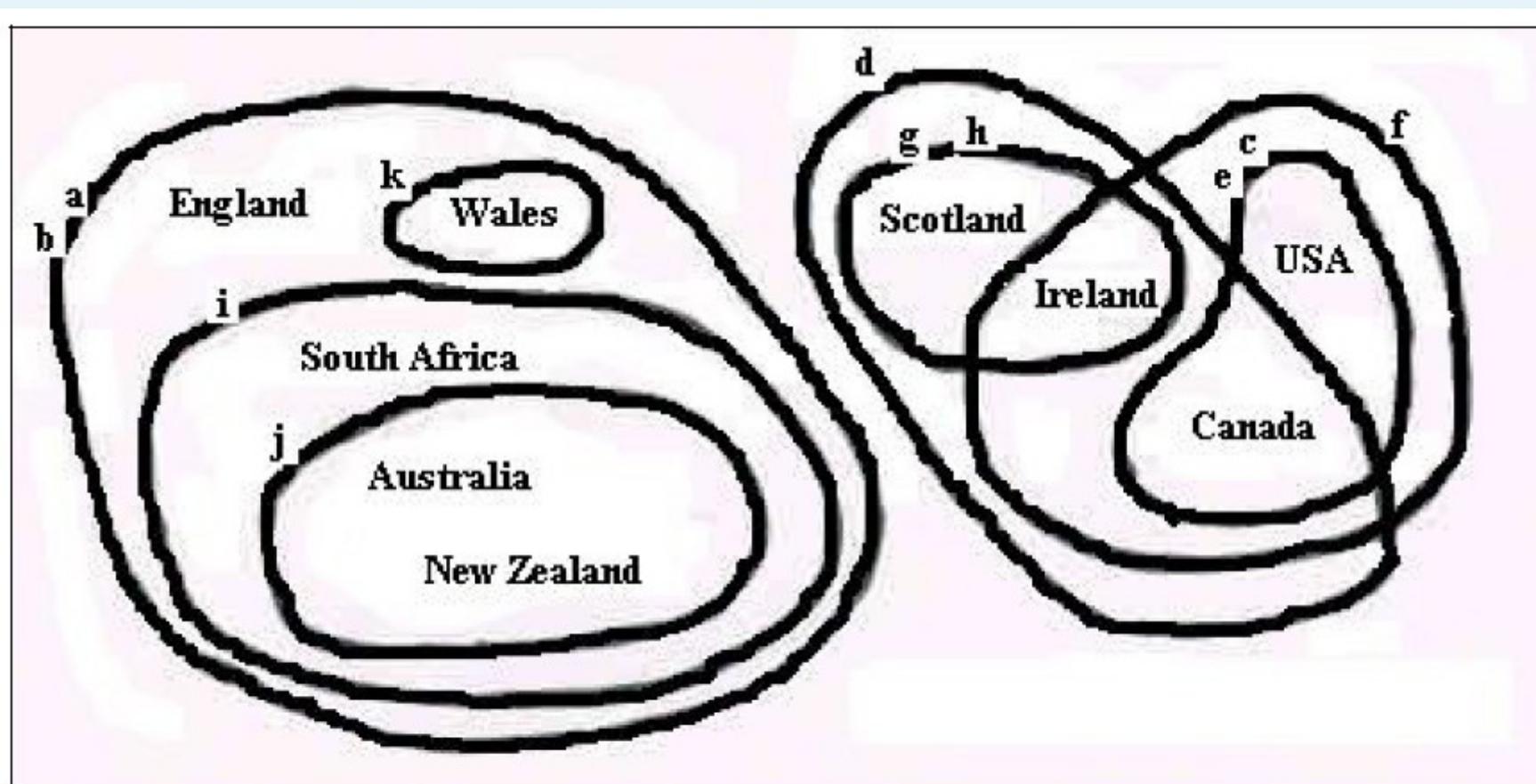
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historical background: the emergence of English dialects, spread of English, causal relation between language change and the emergence of varieties

accent typology: "English" type/ "American" type, rhotic/non-rhotic

Contents



a: R-dropping, *b*: BATH-broadening
c: LOT Unrounding, *e*: tapping/flapping
d: COT=CAUGHT
f: syllabic [r] in BIRD

g: PULL=POOL, *h*: WHICH≠WITCH
i: TRAP=DRESS
j: front [a] in BATH
k: THREW≠THROUGH

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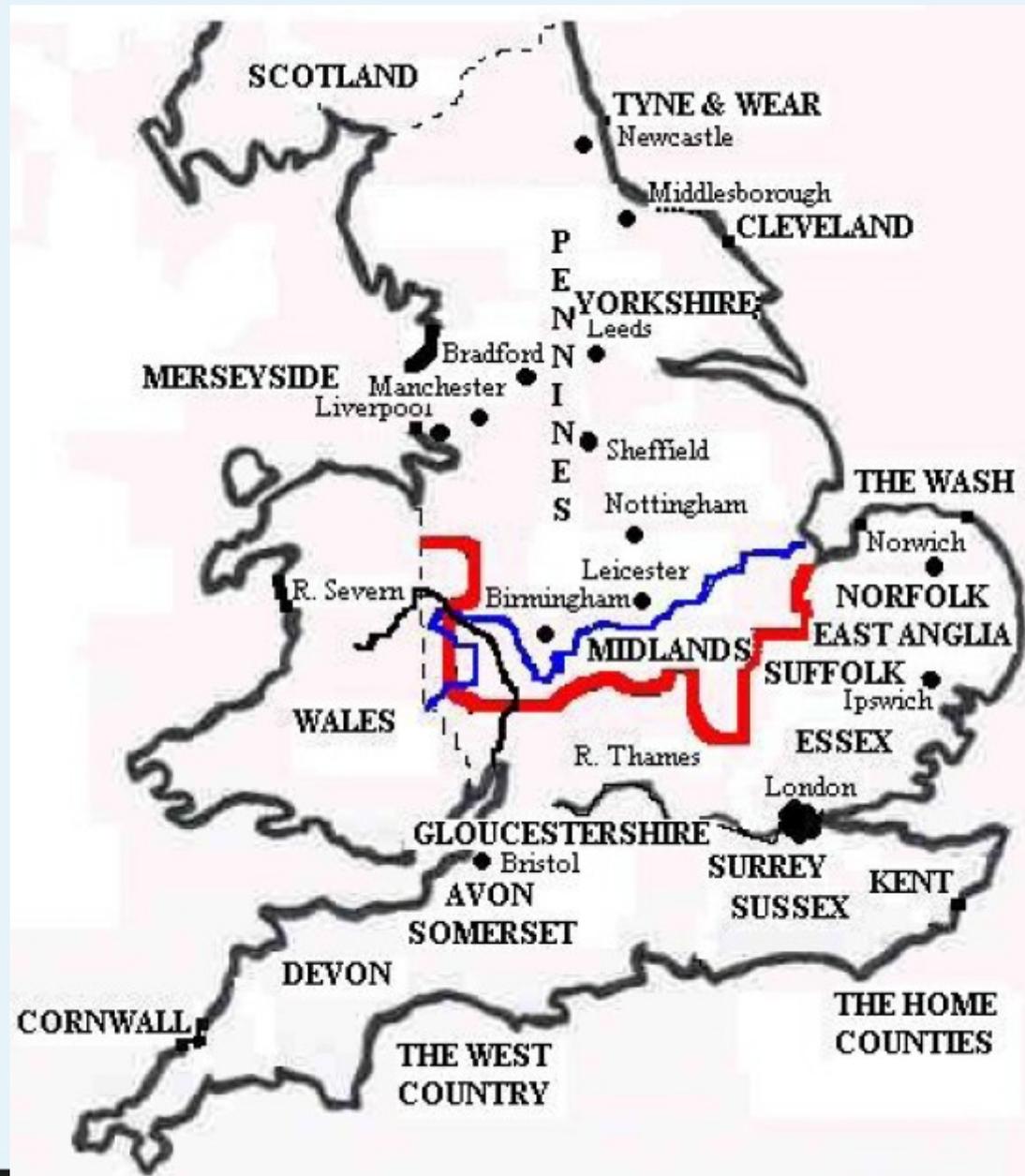
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historical background (sound changes)

Severn-Wash line in England



Contents



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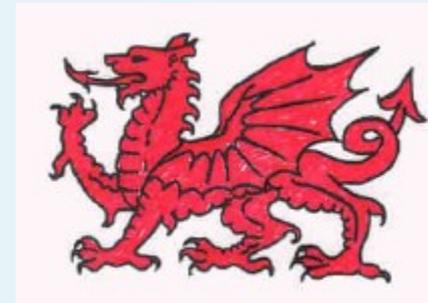
historical background (sound changes)

Severn-Wash line in England

why Wales?

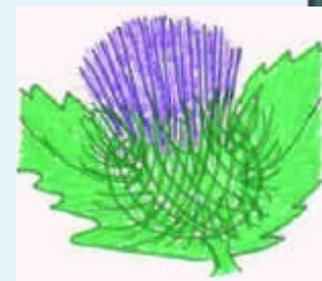
pronunciation +

a few grammatical/lexical features



Contents

- Foreword and acknowledgements
- Symbols used in the book
- Chapter 1: Background
- Chapter 2: The British Isles 1: England and Wales
- Chapter 3: The British Isles 2: Linguistic conservatism in the Celtic countries



conservatism?, Celtic countries?, dialect vs accent in Scotland, historical background to English in Scotland/Ireland, pronunciation + a few grammatical/lexical features



Contents



Contents

- Chapter 4: North America and/vs the southern hemisphere

history of former British colonies

USA: GA vs Eastern + Southern

Contents



Contents

- Chapter 4: North America and/vs the southern hemisphere

history of former British colonies

USA: GA vs Eastern + Southern

southern hemisphere: Australia+New Zealand+South Africa

"North American E" vs "southern hemisphere E": "American" type vs "English" type accents

pronunciation + a few grammatical/lexical features

Contents

- Chapter 4: North America and/vs the southern hemisphere
- Chapter 5: Pidgins, creoles, Black English and other ethnic varieties

pidgin vs creole, possible explanations of common features; linguistic situation in the Caribbean+West Africa+the Pacific, creole continuum (patois -> StE); typical pronunciation, grammatical and lexical features of English-based pidgins and creoles; Black English; ethnic varieties in the US (NAE, Latino English)

Contents

- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences

background (definitions, localizability, Estuary E only mentioned in fn)

systematic diff (vowel correspondences + consonants)

Contents

systematic diff (vowel correspondences)

	RP	GA		RP	GA		RP	GA
KIT	ɪ	ɪ	FLEECE	i:	i	NEAR	ɪə	ɪr
DRESS	e	e	FACE	eɪ	eɪ	SQUARE	eə	er
TRAP	æ	æ	PALM	ɑ:	ɑ	START	ɑ:	ɑr
LOT	ɒ	ɑ	THOUGHT	ɔ:	ɔ	NORTH	ɔ:	ɔr
STRUT	ʌ	ʌ	GOAT	əʊ	oʊ	FORCE	ɔ:	or
FOOT	ʊ	ʊ	GOOSE	u:	u	CURE	ʊə	ʊr
BATH	ɑ:	æ	PRICE	aɪ	aɪ	happY	ɪ	ɪ
CLOTH	ɒ	ɔ	CHOICE	ɔɪ	ɔɪ	lettER	ə	ər
NURSE	ɜ:	ɜr	MOUTH	aʊ	aʊ	commA	ə	ə

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non-systematic: list of words, stress placement

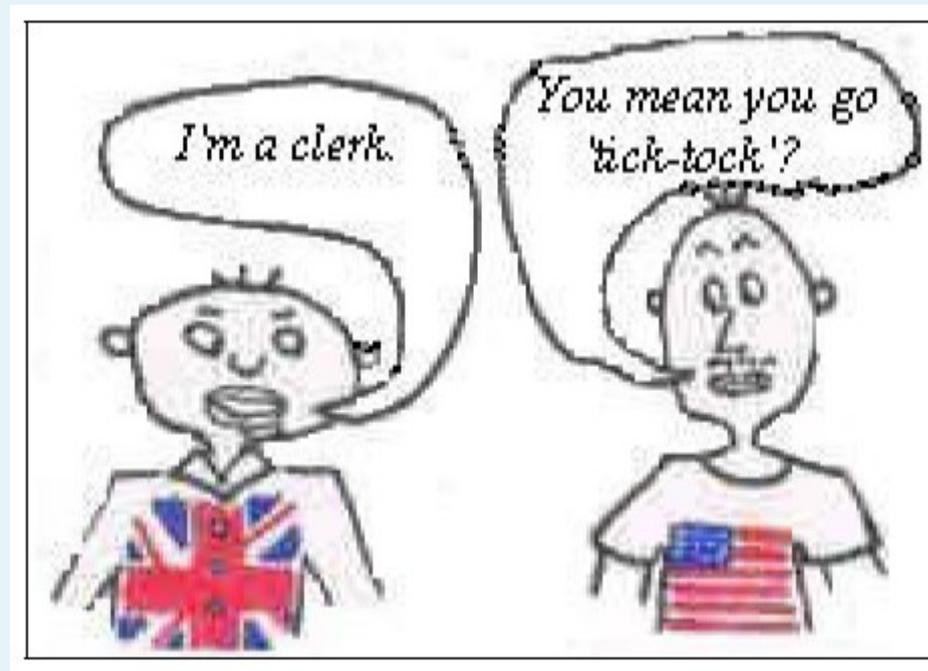
Contents

- Chapter 6: RP vs GA

	typical RP	typical GA
<i>address</i>	[ə'dres]	['ædres]
<i>advertisement</i>	[əd'vɜ:tismənt]	['ædvɜ:taɪzmənt]
<i>anti-</i>	['æntɪ]	['æntaɪ]
<i>apricot</i>	['eɪprɪkɒt]	['æprɪkət]
<i>ate</i>	[et]	[eɪt]
<i>beta</i>	['bi:tə]	['beɪtə]
<i>borough</i>	['bʌrə]	['bɜ:rɒ]
<i>clerk</i>	[klɑ:k]	[klɜ:k]
<i>depot</i>	['depəʊ]	['dɪpɒ]
<i>erase</i>	[ɪ'reɪz]	[ɪ'reɪs]
<i>figure</i>	['fɪgə]	['fɪgjər]
<i>garage</i>	['gærɑ:ʒ]	[gə'reɪʒ]
<i>herb</i>	[hɜ:b]	[ɜrb]

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- Chapter 6: RP vs GA



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- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English

background: how and why lexical differences arise

examples grouped acc. to (a) degree to which the word is shared; (b) semantic field

Contents

- clothing and accessories

AmE	BrE
<i>garter</i>	<i>suspender</i>
<i>suspenders</i>	<i>braces</i>
<i>pantyhose</i>	<i>tights</i>
<i>pants</i>	<i>trousers</i>
<i>underpants</i> (men's)	<i>pants</i>
<i>sweater</i> (pullover)	<i>jumper, jersey,</i> <i>woolly</i>
<i>jumper</i>	<i>pinafore dress</i>
<i>undershirt</i>	<i>vest</i>
<i>vest</i>	<i>waistcoat</i>
<i>a run</i> (in a stocking)	<i>a ladder</i>
<i>overalls</i>	<i>dungarees</i>

AmE	BrE
<i>barette</i>	<i>hairslide</i>
<i>change purse</i>	<i>purse</i>
<i>purse</i>	<i>handbag</i>
<i>smock</i>	<i>overall</i>
<i>sneakers</i>	<i>gym shoes,</i> <i>trainers</i>
<i>robe, bathrobe</i>	<i>dressing gown</i>
<i>diaper</i>	<i>nappy</i>
<i>rubber boots</i>	<i>gumboots</i>
<i>tuxedo</i>	<i>dinner jacket</i>
<i>backpack</i>	<i>rucksack</i>
<i>underpants</i> (women's)	<i>knickers</i>
<i>knickers</i>	<i>knickerbockers</i>

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idioms

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idioms

7.3 Idioms

In addition, there are a number of idiomatic expressions, full phrases, which are either characteristically British or American. Some of them originate from sport terminology. Sometimes they are so similar that it is easy to mix them up, e.g., BrE *to do sg off one's own bat* 'to do sg independently, without consulting others', AmE *to do sg off the bat* 'to do sg immediately, without waiting'. The BrE examples mostly come from cricket or soccer, e.g., *a sticky wicket* 'a difficult situation', *it is not cricket* 'it is not fair', *to queer sy's pitch* 'to spoil sy's plans', *a good innings* 'a long life'. Many AmE examples come from baseball, e.g., *to play hard ball* 'to be (ruthlessly) serious about sg', *to touch base* 'to get in contact', *take a rain check* 'postpone', *blooper* 'mistake, failure', *off base* 'wrong'.

Contents

- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 8: Grammar differences between British English and American English

background: AmE a bit more detailed because
(1) regularization and analogy in AmE; (2) Hu
students of E usu more familiar with BrE

typically BrE/AmE structures grouped acc. to
grammatical structure

Contents

- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 8: Grammar differences between British English and American English

- BrE uses no article with certain count nouns like *hospital* and *university*:

BrE: *He died in hospital*

AmE: *He died in the hospital*

- *Would* is also possible in conditional subclauses (after *I wish* or *if*):

AmE: *I wish I would have married
Steve Hufnagel*

both: *I wish I had married Steve
Hufnagel*

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- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 8: Grammar differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 9: Spelling differences between British English and American English

background: simplification and regularization (esp. in AmE), pronunciation spelling, sensational spellings, systematic and non-systematic diff, hyphenation, punctuation

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- Chapter 9: Spelling differences between British English and American English



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- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 8: Grammar differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 9: Spelling differences between British English and American English
- Pronunciation of names and technical terms

Contents

Maori ['maʊɹɪ]

Mearns [meənz]

Melanesia|*n* [ˌmelə'ni:ziə|n]

GA [ˌmelə'ni:zə|n]

Mercia|*n* ['mɜ:siə|n]

GA ['mɜrʃiə|n]

Mersey|*side* ['mɜ:zi|saɪd]

metathesis [me'tæθəsis]

Middlesborough ['mɪdlzbrə]

Monaghan ['mɒnəhən]

Namibia [nə'mɪbiə]

Newfoundland ['nju:fən(d)lənd]

Nigeria|*n* [naɪ'dʒiəriə|n]

non-rhotic [ˌnɒn'rəʊtɪk]

Norfolk ['nɔ:fək]

Polynesia|*n* [ˌpɒlɪ'ni:ziə|n]

GA [ˌpɑ:lə'ni:zə|n]

Quebec [kwɪ'bek]

rhotic ['rəʊtɪk]

Roanoke ['rəʊənəʊk]

Roxburgh ['rɒksbrə]

Scouse [skaʊs]

Selkirk ['selkɜ:k]

-shire (in place names) [ʃə]

Sierra Leone [si:erə li:'əʊn]

Somerset ['sʌməset]

Sranan ['srɑ:nən]

substratum ['sʌbstrɑ:təm]

GA ['sʌbstreɪtəm]

Suffolk ['sʌfək]

Contents

- Chapter 6: RP vs GA: Systematic and non-systematic differences
- Chapter 7: Lexical differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 8: Grammar differences between British English and American English
- Chapter 9: Spelling differences between British English and American English
- Pronunciation of names and technical terms
- Subject index

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Canadian English. *See* Canada

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!

The other antipode of the English-speaking world we are concerned with here is the *southern hemisphere*, whose English-speaking territories were settled from Britain at around the same time: Australia (from 1788), New Zealand (officially from 1840), and South Africa (from 1820). As in all of these former British colonies English was established at the beginning of the 19th century, they share not only much of their history, but many of their linguistic characteristics, too.

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn

Scottish English:

- rhotic*; the realization of the *r*: the popular stereotype is [r], i.e., the Scottish "roll their r's" (this is called an coronal **roll** or **trill**, and it is the same as Hungarian *r* when pronounced long or with emphasis). However, Scottish *r* is very often pronounced as a tap [ɾ] (and, depending on social class and style, the standard coronal approximant is also used)
- no NURSE Merger
- lack of WH-reduction
- no distinction between clear/dark-L (most commonly, all /l's are dark)
- no H-dropping

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)

London*/Cockney (Wells 1982: 314): someone from the East End called Walter has told Prof. Wells that until he learnt to read and write he always thought his name was *Water*. (And it even made more sense. ☺)

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
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Australia (Wells 1982: 601): an Australian newsreader working on British television was once complained about not only for his overseas accent but also for apparently reporting, due to his schwas in all unstressed syllables, that the Queen had *chattered* (=chatted) to factory workers, and an electricity breakdown in a hospital had forced the staff to continue working with the use of *tortures* (=torches).

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
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Tok Pisin (Gramley – Pätzold 2004: 345): once a member of the House of Assembly said *les long toktok long sit nating* 'tired of talking to empty seats', which was, due to the merger of sibilant consonants, mistranslated as 'tired of talking to a bunch of shits'.

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)

Structure of the chapters

- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)

1. Are the following statements true or false?

- The largest single English-speaking area in the world is Australia.
- The first English-speaking settlements in North America were established in Plymouth, Massachusetts.
- New York City English is not associated with any degree of (overt or covert) prestige.
- In Canada, for the 1/3 of the population the first language is English.
- Canadian English pronunciation is relatively homogeneous both geographically and socially.
- Southern hemisphere Englishes have a longer history than English in North America.

Structure of the chapters

- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)

9. Rewrite the following sentences:

(a) using the rules of AmE spelling:

*A coloured labour union leader was sent to gaol for uncivilised behaviour.
You can pay by cheque if you buy a new pair of pyjamas of any colour in our
three-storey shopping centre.*

(b) using the rules of BrE spelling:

*The gray-haired traveler with a long mustache stopped his wagon at the curb.
The skillful kidnaper sat daydreaming by the dry dock, drinking liters of
whiskey, after having hidden the jewelry in the aluminum flower pot.*

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)

9. Can you "translate" these Cockney utterances into RP?

'ɑ:f ə 'pæ:n

'mjʊzɪkəʊ

'wɔ:ʔəlʊ ən 'sɪ?ri 'lɑ:m

æ:r 'bʊd ə jəu

'sɔʊ ə 'bɪ? və 'dʒʌŋgəʊ

'wē? 'dæʊn

'næər ɪz 'dæn ɪ?

'bæ:ʔ 'æ:r ə'gʌʊ

'ɪ?ə 'bɔ?ɔz

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)

5. Match the synonyms. Which is the odd one out?

Eire, Erse, Hiberno-English, Irish English, Irish Gaelic, Republic of Ireland, Scotch-Irish, Ulster, Ulster Scots

Structure of the chapters

Ulster
vs
Northern Ireland



Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)
- Further reading and references

Structure of the chapters

3.5 Further reading and references

- Gramley, Stephan – Kurt-Michael Pätzold (2004) A survey of modern English, 2nd ed. London & New York: Routledge: 234ff.
- Hughes, Arthur – Peter Trudgill (1996) English accents and dialects: An introduction to social and regional varieties of English in the British Isles. Hodder Arnold, London & New York.
- Hughes, Arthur – Peter Trudgill – Dominic Watt (2005) English accents and dialects: An introduction to social and regional varieties of English in the British Isles. 4th ed. Hodder Arnold, London & New York.
- Pyles, Thomas – John Algeo (1993) The origins and development of the English language. 4th ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich: 234–6.
- Wells, John C. (1982) Accents of English. Cambridge: CUP. Vol.2: 393ff.

Structure of the chapters

- Historical background!
- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)
- Further reading and references
- Links

Structure of the chapters

Resources (corpora, databases) for the accents and dialects of English:

- The International Corpus of English (ICE):
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/ice>
- The Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English (NECTE):
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/necte>
- The Freiburg English Dialect Corpus (FRED):
<http://www2.anglistik.uni-freiburg.de/institut/lkortmann/FRED/index.htm>
- British Library:
<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/index.html>
<http://sounds.bl.uk/Browse.aspx?collection=AccentsAndDialects>
- The International Dialects of English Archive:
<http://web.ku.edu/idea>
- The Routes of English (BBC Radio4):
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/routesofenglish/index.shtml>

Structure of the chapters

- Films to watch (without dubbing, of course):
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0058385> (*My Fair Lady*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0064541> (*Kes*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0166175> (*East is East*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0112966> (*The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill But Came Down a Mountain*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0120735> (*Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0208092> (*Snatch*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0249462> (*Billy Elliot*)
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0088512> (*EastEnders* – still on since 1985!)

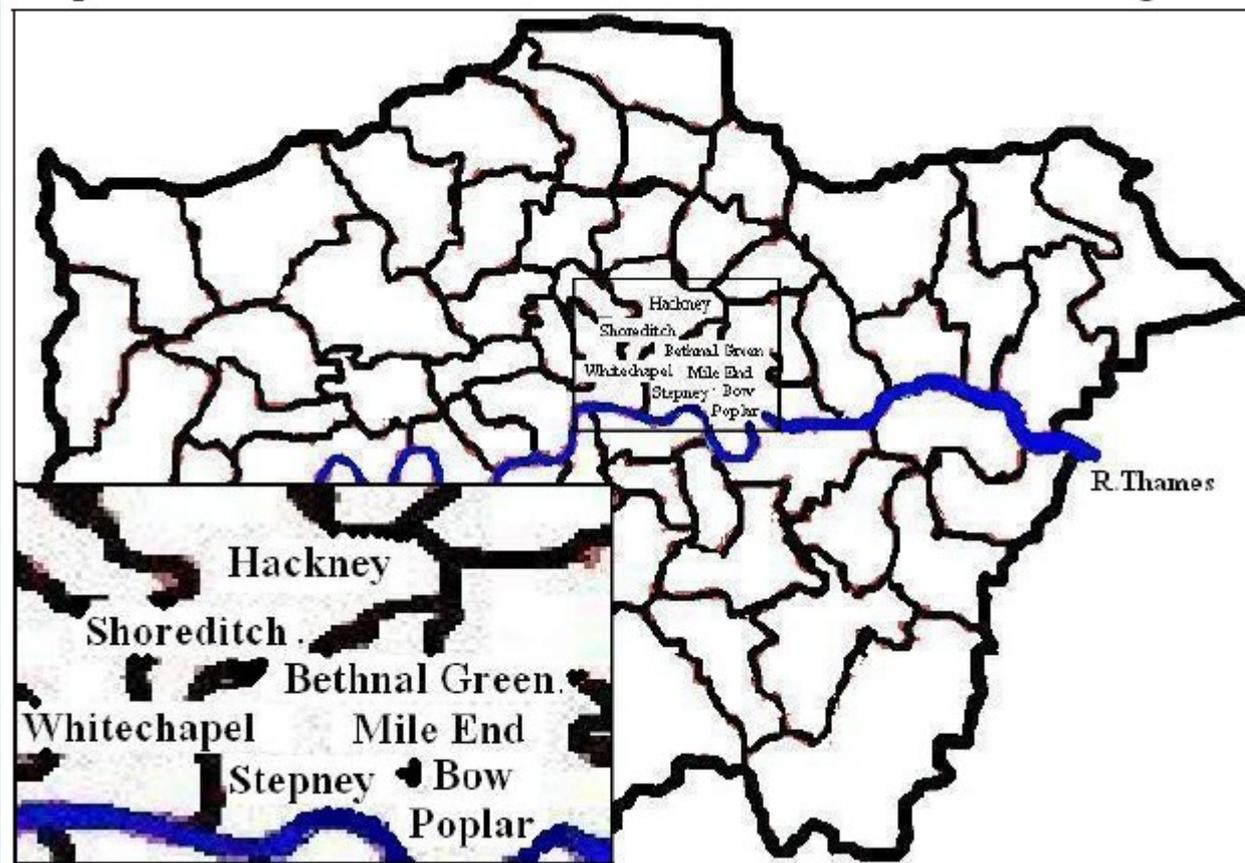
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- Discussions of the accents/dialects: lists (rather than running text) -> easier to learn
- Anecdotes :-) (when relevant)
- Questions and exercises for revision and practice (and extension)
- Further reading and references
- Links

Structure of the chapters

- expressions marked with an asterisk in the text -> pronunciation
- boldfaced expressions -> Subject index
- illustrations: maps, drawings, photos: in most cases: closely related to the topic; some: just there to interrupt the monotony of the text (alas, all in black and white) (+ see *Acknowledgements*)

Illustrations



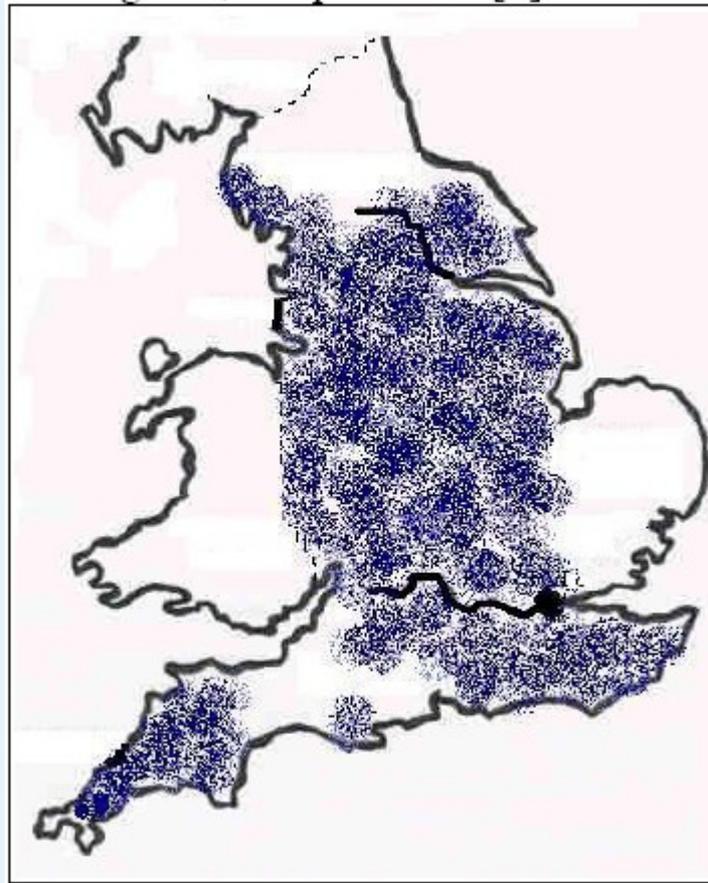
Illustrations



ST. MARY-LE-BOW CHURCH The Church of Bow Bells

This Church, built in 1680 by Sir Christopher Wren and restored after war damage in 1964, replaced the 11th century church which was burnt in the Great Fire. The Norman crypt, in which is found the Court of Arches, still survives. The tower and steeple are among Wren's finest achievements and house the famous Bow Bells within whose sound a true cockney is born.

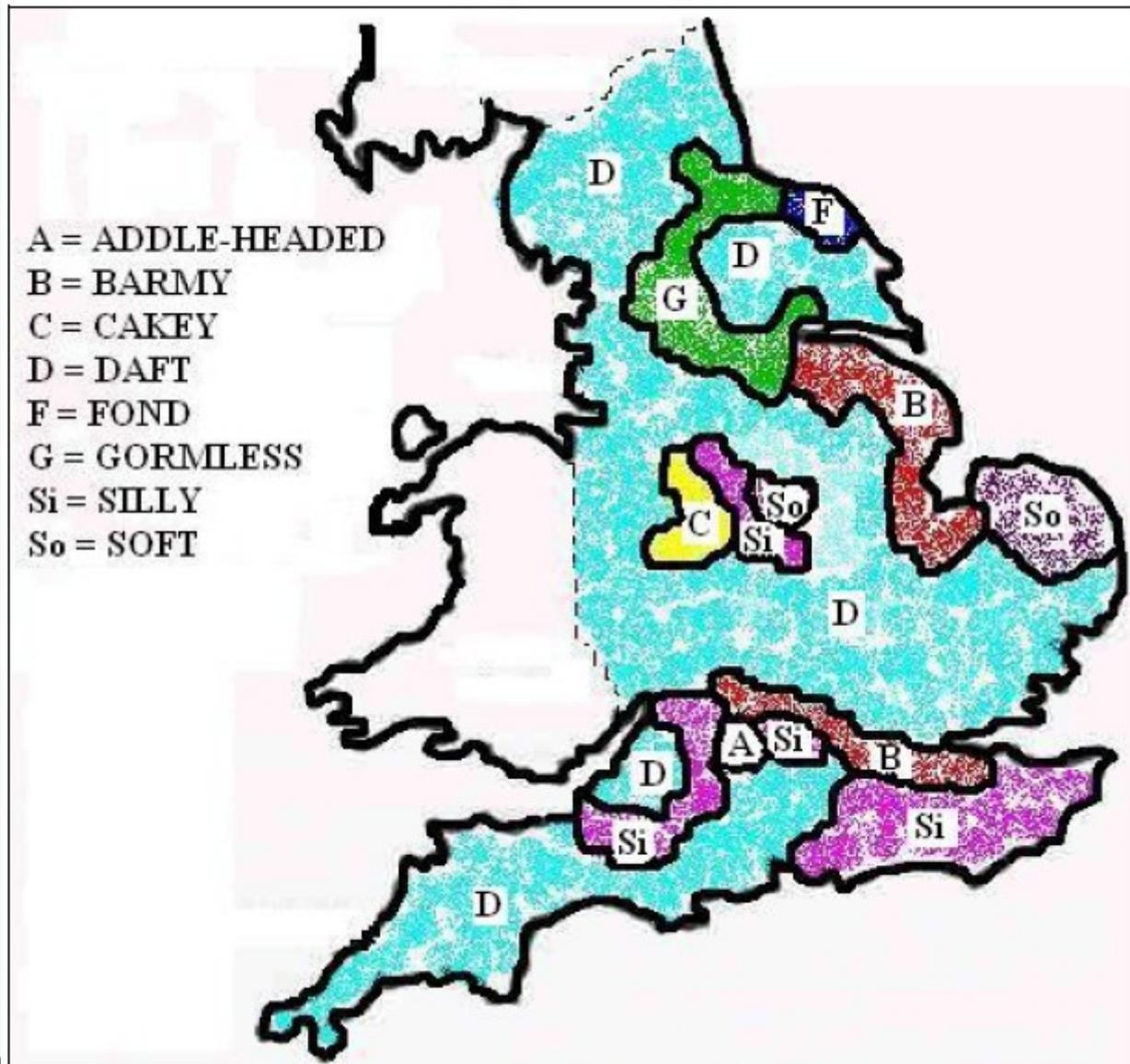
Illustrations



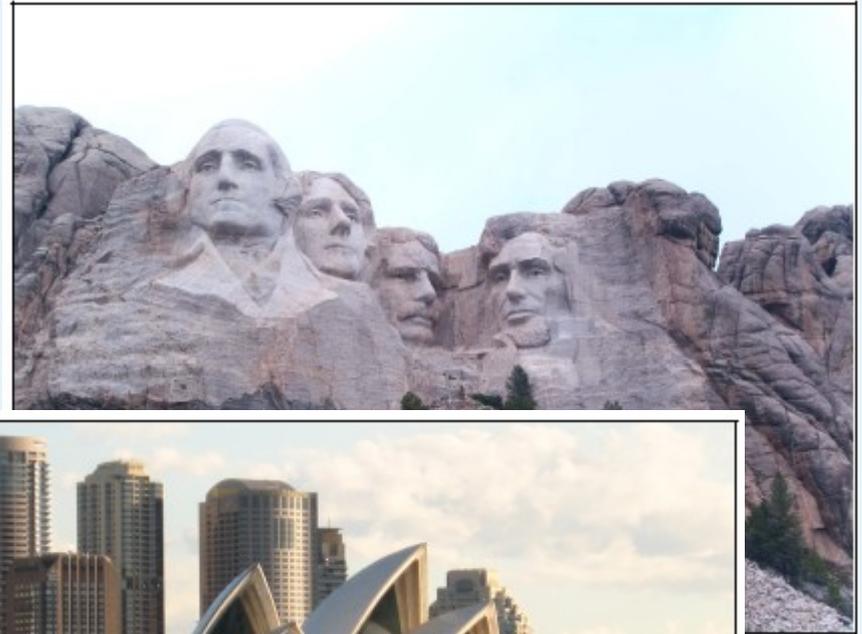
H-dropping in England

Illustrations

silly in England



Illustrations



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