

English Pronunciation & Accents

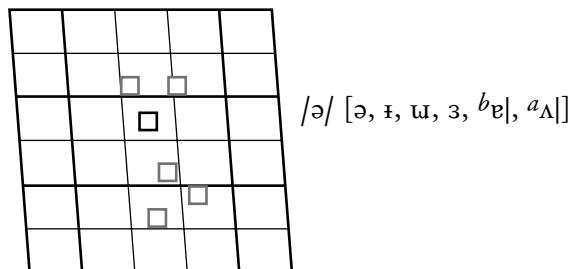
(2023³, integrations)

5.32. A more precise description of the phoneme /ə/, in both British and American neutral accents (including a native-like international one), has five taxophones (shown in fig 5.4). In addition to the ‘normal’ [ə] vocoid, we have [^bə], [^aʌ] (in word-final position, followed by a pause), as in *pizza* /'piɪtsə/ [phiiitsə, ^a-ʌ] (of course, in British English also, and more frequently, for /əɪ/, as in *father*), *pizzas* /'piɪtsəz/ [phiiitsəz], *Pizza Hut* /'piɪtsəz̩hʌt, ^a-hʌt/ [phiiitsəz̩hʌt, ^a-hʌt].

In contact with (and, certainly, if between, either in a word or in a phrase) velar consonants (/k, g, ŋ/), we have [w]: *a cook* /əkɒk/ [w'kɒk].

In contact with (and, certainly, if between) apical consonants (/t, d, s, z, n, l/ and [ɹ]), we have [ɪ]: *to do* /təd̪u/ [t̪əd̪u], [-u].

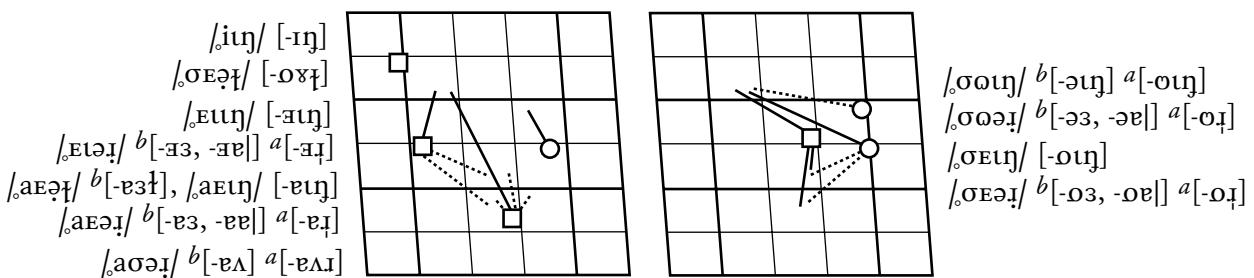
fig 5.4. Different taxophones of /ə/.



10.12. Let us add that, mainly in quicker (British and American) speech, unstressed *-owing*, *-ower* /'səʊɪŋ, 'səʊər/ become ^b[əɪŋ; -eɪŋ; ^a[-əʊɪŋ; -əʊər], as in *following* and *follower*: ^b[f'ɒləɪŋ, f'ɒlər; ^a[-ələɪŋ, -ələr] (ə[faʊ-əlɪŋ, -əlɪr]).

Rarer items like *foraying* and *forayer*, for /fəraɪŋ; /fəreɪər/, have ^b[əɪ-; -eɪ-; ^a[-ə-; -ə-] (less often stressed as: ^b[fərɪŋ, fə-; -ɪn-ɪŋ; -ɪn-ɪr; ^a[-ɪ-; -ɪ-; -ɪ-]).

fig 10.3. Typical triphthong reduction in quick speech (including the diphthong /iɪŋ/).

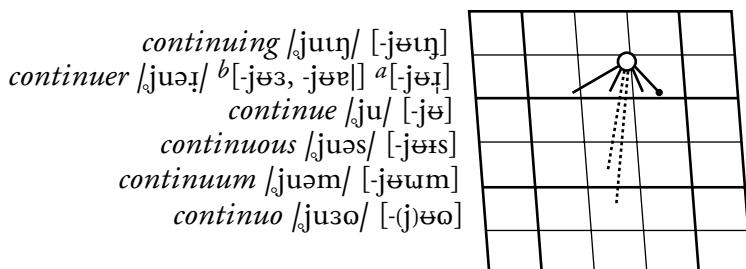


Besides, *convoying*, *convoyer*, for /*σεσά-*/, have ^b[*khamvouj*; *khamvouj*]_a /*σεσά-*/, [ao-
^a[*khamvouj*; *khamvouj*] (less often: ^b[*khamvouj*]_a /*σεσά-*; ^a[*khamvouj*]_a /*σεσά-*].

Satisfying and *satisfyer*, for /ɪə/; /iːə/, have [ɪəf-əs-ɪf-əs-ɪf-ər]; [iːəf-əs-ɪf-əs-ɪf-ər] (but also: [ɪsəf-əs-ɪf-əs-ɪf-ər]; [iːsəf-əs-ɪf-əs-ɪf-ər]). For *accompanying* and *hurrying* with /iŋ/, we often find [-ɪŋ].

Still in quicker speech, other simplifications occurring in unstressed syllables are certainly possible. As a practical demonstration, fig 10.4 shows what can certainly be heard using the lexical root *continu-* in the inflection of some words.

fig 10.4. Common realizations for different endings after /kən'tin-/.



14.7. Here is a concise summary of ‘aspiration’ for /p, t, k; tʃ/. We have to distinguish the (voiceless laryngeal) approximant [h] and the semi-approximant [h]; the latter is weaker, less energetic, than the former. We will show how they are used.

In *stressed* syllables, we find [Ch] (except for [sC]). In *half-stressed* syllables, we have [Ch] (and, of course, [sC]). Usually, we find [h] also in *unstressed* syllables, in word-initial position, *after silence* (as isolated words are, too): [[#]Ch]. Instead, we have a zero phone, in *unstressed* syllables, *after a heterosyllabic phone*, either a vowel or a consonant: [V[#]C, CC].

Here are some illustrative examples (in international pronunciation, for simplicity), and shown only for /p/: *people* /'piːpəl/ ['phiipəl], *anticipate* /æn'tɪsəpeɪt/ [æn'thi-sə-pheɪt], *potential* /pə'tenʃəl/ [phə'thefʃəl], (*an*) *impact* /'ɪmpækɪt/ ['impækɪt], (*to*) *separate* /'sepəreɪt/ ['sepə-reɪt].

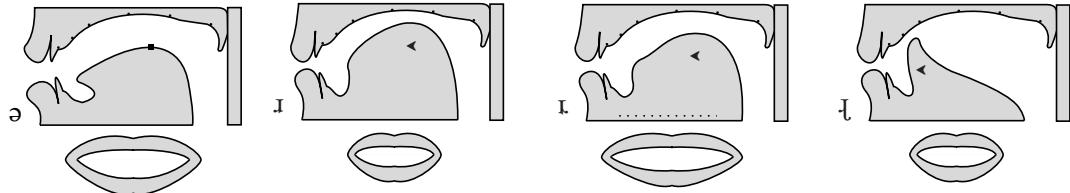
Notice that /p, t, k/ may be followed by /j, w, ɹ, l/. In addition, [h] might not necessarily be shown explicitly.

26.15. A brief remark concerning cases like *weary*, *vary*, *tourist* /'wɪərɪ, 'vɛərɪ, 'tʊrɪst/, in order to expand on what we already know about /ɛ/. fig 26.3 shows the orograms (and labiograms) of [ə] and [ɪ, i, ɿ].

In British English (and the other accents structurally similar to it, like Australian and New Zealander), we have [Və-ɫV], while in American English (and those similar to it, like Canadian and generally the Celtic ones), we have [Vɪ-ɫV, Vɪ-ɫV].

It is easy to see that, articulatorily [ɻ] is rather different from [ɹ, r̥] (although too many –even native– ‘experts’ still describe them as produced the other way round!). However, the important thing is that it is rather clear that [Vɹ-V, Vr̥-V] must have derived from [Vθ-ɻV], by strong assimilation and simplification.

fig 26.3. Orograms and labiograms of [ə, ɪ, ʊ, ʌ].



55.17. The *intonation* patterns of *mediatic* American English differ only slightly from the *neutral* American ones, mostly on the tonic syllables of the interrogative and suspensive tunes, where [-] is more appropriate than [', '], respectively (although a slight similar movement is still present), as shown in fig 55.8 (cf fig 41.2), which also shows a somewhat broader version of the mediatic American patterns.

fig 55.8. American English intonation patterns.

