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PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY OF STANDARD ENGLISHES

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I dedicate this dissertation to my parents whose patience, presence, and great moral support encouraged me to carry on and never to give up.

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Suprasegmentals and Diacritics used in this work:

Symbols	Examples
ˈPrimary stress	*amuse* /əˈ◆◆◆/
ˌSecondary stress	*Aberdeen* /◆◆◆◆◆/
ʳRhoticity	/◆ɪ/
ːLength	/◆◆/
ˑHalf-long	[◆◆]
̥Devoiced	[b̥◆◆◆]
ʰAspiration	[◆◆]
̝Friction	[◆]
̩Syllabic	[◆◆]
̪Dental	[◆◆
̺Apical	[◆
̈Centralised	[m◆
̝Raised	[m◆
̞Lowered	[m◆
̠Retracted	[m◆
̟Advanced	[m◆

CONTENTS

Introduction

In Algeria, the first contact with English is usually through English songs. When listening to them, most people take for granted that there is only one acknowledged English, the one we hear; and the sole mention of the language may remind us of England or the United States of America. In fact, even before realising that there are differences between the two, we discover very quickly that English is not only spoken in these countries but also in the British Isles, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, as well as by significant communities elsewhere.

During my own acquisition of English, a salient feature that attracted my attention was the difference in pronunciation from a teacher to another. I could not doubt the accuracy of these different pronunciations, yet it was still problematic as long as it seemed to me that all teachers had to pronounce in the same way. Which teacher's version was the most appropriate? Did all of them make use of an error-free variety? Is such error-free variety possible and attainable?

English, in Algeria, is taught as a foreign language, of which the teacher's proficiency and competence is revealed in oral expression. They are somehow 'marked' or 'judged' by their students primarily in relation to their pronunciation of the language. This statement is not the result of a mere impression; rather it is based on the answer given to a question put to First to Fourth year English students of Mostaganem university. Among 127 students, 92 (72.44%) responded that the first contact with a teacher of English was to determine *how well she/he speaks English*, the question being: what is the first thing you notice in your teacher of English? The majority of these students answered that what interested them initially was to know whether their teacher spoke like a native English.

As foreign English learners, we do not, initially, distinguish between British, American, or Australian English: English might resemble Arabic in having a variety set up as being the standard, along different dialects and accents. Arabic spread from one region with a clear-cut codification in grammar, morphology, spelling, vocabulary, and phonology; and up-to-now the language and pronunciation used in the news is similar in almost all Arab T.V. channels. English, similarly, migrated from one region then propagated and settled in the five continents of the world.

However, codified English books such as those of grammar, dictionaries or of classical literature, expose as many dialects, accents, and standards as we have hardly

suspected to be possible in a single language. Our intention is not to trace in detail the reasons of this variance, but to expose the idea that there is more than one Standard English in terms of phonology and phonetics.

When collecting data concerning English phonetics and phonology, we became acquainted with the term 'Englishes' that has been recently and increasingly used among linguists such as B. B. Kachru, Smith, Mc Arthur, Crystal, or Swiderski to refer to the differing existing English standards. They claim that English does no longer belong to English people but to those who use it in its standard or regional form.

What strikingly emerges about English is the number of its native speakers and the extent to which the language is used in so many continents and countries. This, inevitably, entails questions such as:

- To what extent is British English pronunciation different from the others?

- Does 'British English pronunciation' refer only to English English or is it an adopted phrase for the speech of Great Britain?

- What differentiates the various phonological systems if any?

- Is there a variety or a phonetic norm more 'correct' than another?

- To what extent is a different pronunciation 'wrong'/unacceptable?

- Can we speak of phonological innovation or of errors?

Throughout the whole process of English language acquisition, we become aware that the more acquainted we get with English the more conscious we become of its diversity. We do not find ourselves facing only one variety, but numerous and diverse subtypes. Actually, we begin to make out that Standard English cannot be merely in categorising what is right from what is wrong. In fact, the question should be asked in a different way, in the sense that it is no longer a matter of right or wrong but rather of norms applied in a given linguistic community and of uses adopted by this community.

The study is carried out in order to be more acquainted with these differences. The purpose is not to show that one variety is better or inferior than another, but to know which variety is the most practical in Algeria. We cannot ignore, as mentioned above, the co-existence of several varieties; we cannot ignore either that pronunciation is, by definition, constantly adapting to the evolution of language and society.

The present paper does not claim to find a solution to all the didactic problems raised by these distinctions, but only to analyse the phonological and phonetic nature of English, to deepen our knowledge in this domain, and to prepare us for teaching.

Identifying these divergences in pronunciation is directly related to the linguistic formation of teachers of English. Being acquainted with the criteria and conditions of use of each variety is very important as it allows avoiding educational errors. In fact, the possibility of explaining students these varieties and variations, allows the teacher to elucidate some ambiguities concerning different pronunciations, and the students to avoid questions related to the teacher's phonetic competence.

In this dissertation, the term *variety* is used to name a subdivision within a language. We do not mention all regional varieties of English. Special attention is, however, drawn to the spoken codified varieties of the English language.

A codified variety of language is the one used in formal, public, and has particular written functions, but what are exactly the contextual and social properties of a spoken standard variety? Indeed, there are more variations in speech than there are in written form. In reality, these variations are geographical, social, and situational. The spoken English language varies from one region to another, from one country to another, and from one continent to another. It varies also according to social groupings or social classes of the speakers, and according to the situational contexts in which they may find themselves.

The phrase *Standard English* in this work means *English English* and refers to the variety, we learn in Algeria and identify as being "the" English language. It is also the variety that spread all over the world and reached such a wide dimension. Our purpose in this dissertation is to compare it with other Standard Englishes, hence the justification of the title *The Phonetics and Phonology of Standard Englishes in the British Isles, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.*

Many linguists view language as a complex social phenomenon, we will see, however, that such a notion as *Standard English* is not less complex. The first chapter attempts to reveal the hardships and complexity in defining what Standard English means. Moreover, we will try to draw particular attention to the diverse social contexts in which English RP is used, to language change, and to the world language it has become.

In the second chapter, we discuss the phonetics and phonology of Standard Englishes and point out the relationships, the similarities, and differences. For reasons of simplicity and economic presentation, we have deliberately limited the study to only few Standard Englishes: those of British Isles English, American English, Canadian English, Australian English, New Zealand English, and South African English.

That chapter also tries to answer the question as to whether English is one language with all its geographical and social varieties or a bundle of multifarious Englishes deserving recognition as autonomous varieties of the language.

Watching English channels or consulting an English pronouncing dictionary reveals the presence of more than one English variety and enhances, therefore, the importance of explaining the use of any one particular accent.

The third chapter is concerned with the cultural attributes that subsist into the English phonological level and to the problems of the acquisition of Standard Englishes in Algeria. With the existence of different standards, we put forward few educational proposals to meet the English linguistic situation in Algeria.

All phonemic and phonetic transcriptions are taken from *Daniel Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2003) and are, therefore, not written according to the I.P.A. but according to Gimson's phonetic alphabet. Furthermore, all the statistics of population in the English-speaking countries are taken from *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2005).

Chapter I
On Terminology

This chapter traces the evolution of Standard English from early to modern times in view of some concepts regarding its development, place in the world, and its potential future. We shall be concentrating most closely on theoretical definitions that are to be used in the two following chapters and will conclude with the most relevant Standard English definition for our work.

1. Standard English

The description presented here is only a snapshot in time in the long history of Standard English development and, its discussion is still of up-to-date concern among linguists. Some speak of different subdivisions of Standard English others of Standard Englishes. It would be interesting, therefore, to investigate areas concerned with the very meaning of what "Standard English" is. We cannot speak of it without examining some of the various definitions given to this phrase.

If we want to come closer to the commonly acknowledged definition about Standard English, we learn that English, a language born in England, refers to a particular nation. More specifically, it refers to particular people whose language spread beyond the existing boundaries and that it is the only term for several existing varieties all over the world.

1.1. Defining Standard English

Definitions concerning Standard English are numerous; among those that are frequently quoted, we propose the following ones to which we assign a title in relation to the characteristics we consider the most relevant.

For example, the first definition stated by Quirk *et al*. (1964) is essentially based on writing since it describes Standard English in terms of orthography; if this definition has to be summarised by a title, we select, then, Standard English *A Written Language*. We proceed in the same way for all the following definitions:

1.1.1. Standard English *A Written Language*

The following quotation defines *Standard English* only in terms of its being a written form no matter how it sounds like. Standard English is identified only through the conventional spelling system it symbolises:

> "Standard English—a standard way of writing the language, which is accepted (with some slight variations) all over the world as the 'right way' to spell, no matter what the English it represents *sounds* like. Indeed, unless we have had special

training in phonetics so that we can recognise sounds and write them in phonetic script, we have *no other* means of writing English than in terms of the conventions of English orthography." (Quirk *et al.* 1964: 83).

1.1.2. Standard English *A Conventional Language*

Standard English is the official language of the English-speaking world and is used among educated people chiefly. It is the conventional language that everybody recognises when it is read or heard:

> "First let me make clear what I mean by Standard English. This phrase is used in a variety of senses. I shall use it, as many other people do, to mean that kind of English which is the official language of the entire English-speaking world and is also the language of all educated English-speaking people. What I mean by Standard English has nothing to do with the way people pronounce: Standard English is a language, not an accent, and it is as easily recognizable as Standard English when it is written down as when it is spoken. It is in fact, the only form of English to be at all widely written nowadays. There is, in Standard English, a certain amount of regional variation, perhaps, but not very much—it is spoken, and even more written, with remarkable uniformity considering the area which it covers… Standard English, then, is a world language." (Abercrombie, 1965: 10-11).

1.1.3. Standard English *A Sociolinguistic Reality*

According to Crystal, *Standard English* is a phrase that enfolds a bundle of socio-cultural values and functions:

> "Standard: is a term used in sociolinguistics to refer to a prestige variety of language used within a speech community. Standard languages cut across regional differences, providing a unified means of communication, and thus institutionalised norm which can be used in the mass-media, in teaching the language to foreigners, and do on." (1992: 325).

1.1.4. Standard English *A Model Of Uniformity*

In the following quotation, *Standard English* is a fixed and a specific valued model, used by English-speakers all over the world. It is also the most accepted and understood variety since it is free from any social distinction:

> "The phrase *Standard English* is taken to be the variety most widely accepted, understood, and perhaps valued either within an English-speaking country or throughout the entire English-speaking world (a state of affairs of which many people are only now taking note). The standard variety is usually considered to be more or less free of regional, class, and other shibboleths." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 442).

1.1.5. Standard English *A Superior Variety*

A speech community may regard its variety as a language if it is supported by a literary, religious, judiciary, economic, and social body. Thus, a given variety is considered as a "dialect" or as a "language" depending on the functions it fulfils. Indeed, such a variety becomes the most "correct" one even if the reasons of such consideration remain controversial:

> "The term English refers to both a major language with many varieties and that aspect which is regarded as above regionalism. This high variety is nowadays usually called *Standard English*, but it has also often been referred to as *good English* or even *the best English*." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 8).

1.1.6. Standard English The Official Definition

Sir John Kingman, a member of the English parliament, submitted a report to the UK government in 1988, defining Standard English. The latter is presented as a bank where everybody can withdraw, gather, or supply with linguistic data:

> "All of us can have partial access to Standard English: the language itself exists like a great social bank on which we all draw and to which we all contribute… It is the fact of being the written form which establishes it as the standard. And it is the fact of being the written form which means that it is used not only in Britain but by all writers of English throughout the world, with remarkably little variation." (in Mc Arthur, 2002: 443).

The above quotation indicates that writing should be highlighted: the reason of labelling a variety *a standard* is that it is written. Besides, a bank is a gigantic institution and the only connection with it is through financial operations. Similarly, Standard English is huge and the only link to it exists via writing and the relations it imposes.

1.1.7. Standard English *A Functional Language*

Standard English is the language that fulfils many functions; it is a medium of wide communication and is used in the mass media, in publications, and in national and international education too:

> "Standard English is the national variety of the language inasmuch as it is not restricted to any region within the country. It is taught throughout the education system, and is identified with educated English… It is pre-eminently the language of printed matter, indeed, only the standard language has an established orthography. It is the variety that is taught to foreign learners… National standard varieties in countries where English is a first language are remarkably homogeneous, particularly in written English. The homogeneity is explained

> by their common descent from the British English of the seventeenth century… The influence of print, and more recently of radio, television, and film have contributed to prevent the national standards of English-speaking countries from drifting far apart. If anything, under these influences   and the ease of international travel the national standards have tended to converge." (Greenbaum, 1996: 14).

1.1.8. Standard English *A Political and Social Support*

In the following quotation, *Standard English* is the variety that is maintained by political and social institutions:

> "Educated speech—by definition the language of education—naturally tends to be given the additional prestige of government agencies, the learned professions, the political parties, the press, the law court and the pulpit…By reason of the fact that educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as Standard English. (Quirk *et al.*, 1979: 16).

As we have already seen, there are different and varied definitions with a common core of three specific features:

1- Standard English can be detected without difficulty in printed publications.

2- Standard English is directly associated to certain social classes and levels of education.

3- Standard English is used with only slight variations in accent when presenting the news.

We can also add a fourth feature, which suggests that Standard English is often perceived as 'neutral' i.e. free from any regional identification. However, such claim remains polemical since it is not easy to delimit where neutrality begins and where it does end both for areas and for individuals. Thus, an RP speaker may sound neutral to another RP speaker but not to an American English speaker.

In spite of the several definitions of Standard English, it remains, nevertheless, a complex concept. Each definition on its own describes Standard English from a certain angle. And if we combine all these definitions, it will supply us with a more exhaustive definition, as if all these definitions made complementary fragments or pieces of the same jigsaw puzzle.

As we have seen, many linguists have attempted to define Standard English and probably, many more are yet to come. However, no two linguists completely agree on what is meant by Standard English; in the sense that although their definitions might be similar, it is not yet identical.

Why should such an issue keep on being imperative yet unresolved? Many other questions can arise: what does Standard English exactly mean? Does it really exist as a reality? Can we speak of a general concept? Does Standard English refer to a spoken or to a written form? Does it exist without any real (written/spoken) life? Does it exist geographically? Is it an international or world language which already exists or is it, rather, emerging? Is it one single homogeneous variety spoken all over the world?

1.2. The problem of Definition

It might appear that nothing should be easier to define Standard English. If defining Standard English is not that simple, to what extent is it really complex? Is the standard of a country necessarily the standard of another? Can we say that it is only a matter of terminology?

Usually, when we want to know more about a word or a pronunciation we look into a dictionary, which is regarded as the best reference for any standard language. Although the dictionary tends to provide us with a clear-cut meaning for *Standard English*, it remains, sometimes, general. Often dictionary definitions depend on other circular definitions, and the meaning of this phrase remains elusive.

Older dictionaries are based on the written standard; more recent ones include spoken idioms and a great part of oral use, sometimes classified as 'slang'[1]. Thus, can we say then that Standard English is the variety set on dictionaries and literary books?

We can find variation even within these publications. Not all printed books are free from non-standard vocabulary. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*[2], for instance, a famous novel about the sufferings and ironies of life in the 18th century, contains countless non-standard words transcribing regional grammar and pronunciation.

It is usually supposed that a standard language corresponds to a minority form used by few speakers in a number of contexts. In fact, only educated speakers, who know the rules and the criteria of a standard language, can make use of it and can recognise whether a variety is the actual standard: a speaker who is in touch with the standard can identify it perfectly.

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[1] Slang: a type of language that is considered as very informal and is more common in speech than in writing.

[2] Thomas Hardy (1840-1928): English writer and poet. Novels: *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891), and *Jude the Obscure* (1896).

Allowing for our personal experience, we could not initially discern American or Yorkshire English from RP English, until we studied and were aware of some of the characteristics of each variety. In other words, distinguishing Standard from what is non-Standard English can be another fruitful source to identifying Standard English.

In 1981, Peter Strevens[3] defined Standard English by what it was not:

1- Standard English must not be described in terms of its literary, linguistic, or any other ideological ascendancy. Referring to it as BBC English or Oxford English is unconvincing.

2- Establishing its nature by relating Standard English to social classes or a specified group of individuals is almost a weak approach.

3- Standard English is the less used form among many others; it is not used frequently in all circumstances.

4- Unlike French, Standard English is not a product of a conscious political design or a linguistic plan. By the mid-16th century, many French scholastic groups[4] emerged to evaluate French to the level of Classical Languages. English, alternatively, results from education in Public Schools. The scheme of its being planned came only subsequently.

By listing what cannot be assigned to Standard English, the foregoing criteria do only increase the degree of complexity. Indeed, it contradicts all the definitions we have seen so far. To shed some light on the problem, we must go backward in time.

1.3. Historical Background

Standard English remains a spacious area of investigation. In order to elucidate some of its vagueness and to state a definition clearly, we need to trace back some historical events. Some of these events were of considerable consequence to the making of what is now known as Standard English.

After the Norman Conquest (1066), French became the language of the ruling class in England and Latin of the Church. Together with French and Latin, there was English, another living vernacular that was largely disrespected. At the end of the 15th century, there was a renewed interest in classical civilisations such as the Roman and the Greek one.

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[3] A British applied linguist and language teacher. Peter Strevens (1981): "What is Standard English" in *RELC Journal*. Singapore.

[4] Scholastic groups such as La Pléiade and the Grands Rhétoriqueurs.

During this period of Renaissance[5], English writers and scholars were so fascinated by the expansion of knowledge and the unlimited boundaries of science that they wanted to deepen all that knowledge and to write it down. As they did not find enough vocabulary in the local vernacular to cope with their demands, new terms from French, Latin, and Greek were absorbed into English.

In the 16th century, all forms of knowledge and literature were recorded in the English vernacular; besides, the bible was translated into English (*The Great Bible* appeared in 1538). Educated speakers felt the need to improve the English language, which they compared with Latin and French and soon adopted measures on this behalf:

> "In particular, the history of European 'vernaculars' after 1500 is characterized by a dramatic increase of functions in tandem with the decline of international languages—Latin and French. As a consequence, the national languages were elaborated, refined and regularized in order to make them fit for standard functions in written and spoken forms and for use in all possible situations." (Görlach, 2004: 4).

Printing with Caxton[6] led to improve the already prevailing variety of the capital into a standard. The power of the press caused a general acceptance by authors and printers of a relatively stable spelling system which led to an interest in reforming and codifying an English orthography.

As printing developed, the use of non-London speech declined. The 19th century brought the decision that the upper-class accent should be taught to children at school in order to make them speak 'good' English:

> "London complicates the polarity of North and South: as the centre of 'power', of government, monarchy, and cultural prestige located in the South, it leads to discrimination in favour of the South of England and Britain. London acts as the deictic anchorage, the point of reference, by which everything else is judged inferior or insignificant." (Wales, 2000: 4).

By that time, Standard English acquired this meaning: Standard English is the one we write and read in books and the one we hear from educated speakers; "Standard

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[5] Renaissance (14th-16th century): is generally regarded as beginning in Florence, where there was a revival of interest in European art and literature under the influence of classical models. It is also a period known as the **Age of Humanism** a rationalist system of thought attaching importance mainly to human rather than divine or supernatural matters.

[6] William Caxton (c. 1422-91), the first English printer. He printed the first book in English in 1474 and carried on to produce about eighty other texts, among these editions *La Morte d'Arthur* and *Canterbury Tales.*

English is the dialect which is normally used in writing, and which is spoken by most educated and powerful members of the population." (Trudgill, 1990: 2).

The following graph (Görlach, 2004: 4) traces the functional development of Standard English through time:

Figure n° 1: The Evolution of Standard English Use through Time
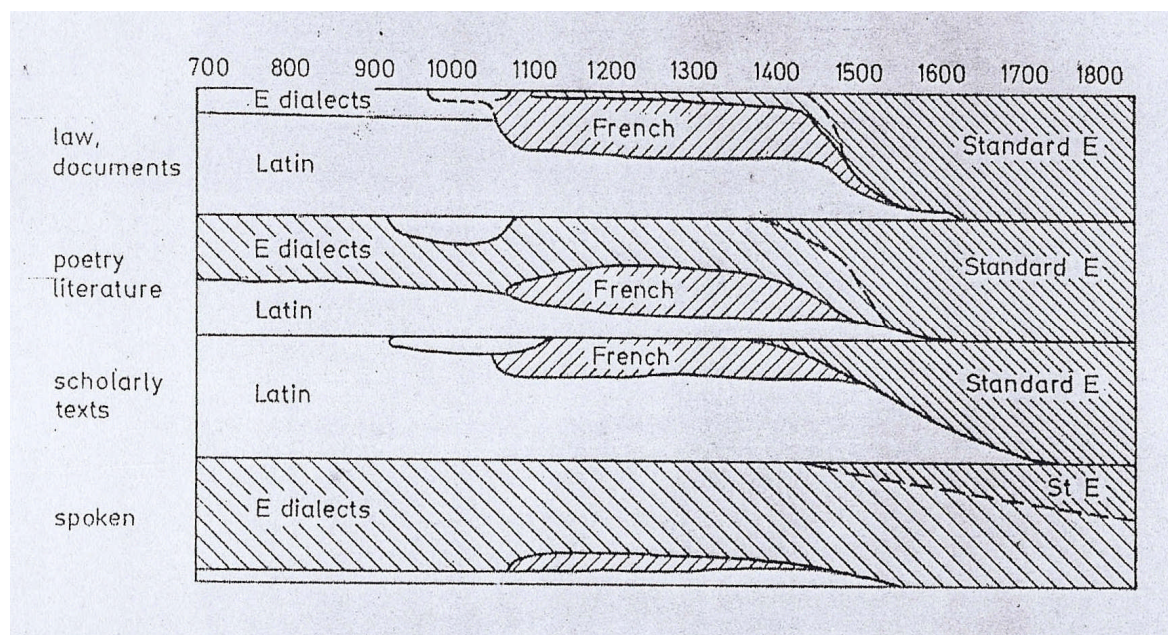
We can perceive in this figure:

- First, that Standard English was recognised as such and used by many institutions in the 15th century.

- Second, Standard English was more used for written functions (such as legal, literary, and academic documents) than for spoken purposes.

- Third, although spoken Standard English had to be reinforced in the 18th century, it did not attain a popular spreading out.

- Fourth, the existence and predomination of many English dialects from 700 AD up to now; which seems to be the only stable situation.

Even if the 18th century symbolises the expansion of one Standard English accent among educated people, many influential figures did not abandon their regional dialects. Indeed, some politicians[7], industrialists[8], and some members of the aristocracy who lived away from London continued to use their own vernaculars.

1.4. Spoken Standard English

The most common Spoken Standard English we are familiar with is called 'Received Pronunciation' (RP), usually connected to Oxford and to the BBC. Standard English represents the variety which is spoken by the most privileged classes of England—it is also called *the Queen's English*, *Oxford English*, *Public School English*, *English of the Church of England*, and *the BBC English*. It is a language of power and social status.

Indeed, considered as such, this pronunciation seems to be highly prestigious and thus the most suitable to be taught all over the world. Nevertheless, it has such a status almost only in England; other English speaking communities and countries have their own representation of Standard English. Even in England, sticking to one variety remains easier said than done. Like handwriting, standard pronunciation is so divergent that no two people sound alike when producing the same word:

> "Even given the will to adopt a single pronunciation, it would be difficult to achieve. The word *dance* may be pronounced in a dozen ways even by people who do not think themselves as dialect speakers: there is no sure way of any two people saying the same word with precisely the same sound. In respect, pronunciation much more closely resembles handwriting than spelling…Both two persons' handwriting and pronunciation may both be perfectly intelligible, yet have obvious differences without our being able to say which is 'better' or more 'standard'." (Quirk *et al.* 1964: 87).

Abercrombie distinguishes between standard and non-standard by referring to them as *spoken prose* and *conversation*. While conversation refers to spontaneous daily speech, spoken prose reveals an educated and formal address as if somebody was

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[7] Especially left-wing political activists who tended to bring about political and social changes. Besides, new class of ministers who ruled the country emerged as they had become richer with trade. They were considered as powerful, prestigious and having a high status.

[8] The 18th century witnessed the Industrial Revolution, while some people were getting wealthy; others lost their land and affluence.
For more details see: David Mc Dowall (1991): *An Illustrated History of Britain*. Essex: Longman.

reading a written text loudly (1965: 11). Yet, it is interesting to investigate whether spoken Standard English refers to a dialect or to a pronunciation.

1.4.1. Accent Vs Dialect

What is commonly acknowledged is that *dialect* differs from *language* in two ways:

▷ There is difference in size, a language is larger than a dialect—it is said to possess more items and words than a dialect.

▷ The difference between them also lies on the prestige a language happens to have.

According to this logic, Standard English is not a dialect but a language, whereas all the non-standard varieties (not used in formal writing) are dialects. If so, what is meant by spoken Standard English or RP?

Lyons (1968) explains that the term *dialect* does not only affect the speech habits that are considered old-fashioned, rural, or unsophisticated but also all languages. He claims that any speaker of a language is a dialect speaker:

> "From a strictly linguistic point of view, what are customarily regarded as languages (Standard Latin, English, French, etc.) are merely dialects which, by historical 'accident' have become politically or culturally important." (Lyons, 1968: 34-5).

According to this quotation, all standard languages are in fact dialects. In England, for instance, the language known as the 'standard' derives from the dialect spoken by the socially and politically influential classes. Standard English is the dialect used in the media, literature, codified books, and in a wide range of other institutions.

For Trudgill, we all speak a dialect that is distinguished by a particular accent. He distinguishes between the two concepts in terms of grammar:

> "*All* of us speak with an accent, and *all* of us speak a dialect. Your accent is the way in which you pronounce English, and since all of us pronounce when we speak, we all have an accents…Everybody also speaks a dialect. When we talk about **dialect** we are referring to something more than accent. We are referring not only to pronunciation but also to the words and grammar that people use." (Trudgill, 1990: 2)

Trudgill claims that everybody speaks a dialect, and the way we pronounce sounds is the accent. In the sense that dialect includes grammar, morphology, vocabulary and that accent is the way with which we speak. But does accent refer only to phonetics or both phonetics and phonology?

According to Petyt (1980), accent corresponds only to the phonological features that can be predicted otherwise it is a matter of dialect. *Pass her the coffee* pronounced by an American [π{:σ η3 ‾ ː Δ≅ κO:φI] is different from the way an RP British speaker can produce it [πA:σ η3: Δ≅ κΘφI]. In this situation, it is a question of accent since such differences can be predictable. There are no grammar or vocabulary differences, the difference resides only in pronunciation.

Accents are a system that reflect the native language or region of the speaker. It demonstrates a strict association with identity. They are identity markers. It indicates age for example "I no go there". The way we speak is an important component of our character since they are associated either with regions, professions, or with social classes: "Any one in the audience can tell when the character speaking is a doctor, an aristocrat, a worker, or an alcoholic." (Swiderski, 1996: 29).

According to Dekkak (2000), accent is part of the transmitted linguistic and sociolinguistic message since it embodies the speaker's sociocultural identity as well as their linguistic competence/performance. After all, we first recognise a speaker coming from a different region with the way they pronounce before realising that the vocabulary used is also distinct. At times, we even detect that somebody is concealing their regional origins by trying to sound as if they are coming from some other place.

An English speaker wanting to imitate a French speaker, she/he does not need to know any French at all, but only to emphasise on the sounds that are considered by English speakers as being idiosyncratically French. However, it is useless to try to enumerate all English accents. There can be an infinite number of accents depending on what details we want to comprise in our partition.

1.4.2. Pronunciation

In RP *road*, *rode*, and *rowed*; *sew*, *so*, and *sow* are homophones, they are produced /ρ≅Yδ/ and /σ≅Y/. RP has only one *phoneme* /≅Y/ for the three words. This is also the case in American English where the only vocalic phoneme in these words is /oY/. Some linguists, such as Petyt (1980), claim that pronunciation refers to phonetics or to both phonology and phonetics and that differences in pronunciation are not enough to speak of a dialect. These are differences in accent. In other words, pronunciation (standard or non-standard) is a matter of accent and not of dialect.

In spite of all the existing gradations in pronunciations, English speakers of the same region or country can hardly find in their language any reflection of other peoples'

imprint. A native speaker from England will always sound English regardless of their northern (Yorkshire) or southern (Sussex) origin. In other words, even if there are variations within one accent such as RP, the major specific features of that 'neutral' accent remain constant and recognisable. However, it is interesting to recall that unlike other accents, RP has remained constant by the influence of mass media, education, and language standardisation.

1.5.   Written Vs Spoken Standard

There is more agreement concerning standard spelling than standard pronunciation and more preservation of the written form via printing than of the spoken form. According to Quirk *et al.*, there is almost no possibility in defining standard pronunciation in the same way as we do define standard spelling:

> "While there can be said to orthography, a standard spelling, we can scarcely speak of an orthoepy—which would be corresponding word for a universally recognised 'right pronunciation'." (Quirk *et al.* 1964: 88).

Similarly, other linguists such as McArthur think that the term *standardisation* fits better orthography than pronunciation:

> "Standardness cannot easily apply to spoken English: there are too many variations. The only way to create a standard for the spoken language is to focus on a relatively small community of representative speakers (as has been done for a century with RP/BBC English), but the very fact of proposing and sustaining such a standard (in effect, a target model for 'non-standard' speakers, native or non-native) 'disenfranchises' most native speakers of English the moment they open their mouths and builds in sociolinguistic tensions." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 450).

He advocates that the idea of having one spoken standard cannot be appropriate for all native speakers, and certainly not for English speaking people all over the world. All speakers consciously or unconsciously carry with them sociolinguistic parameters. If so, it is therefore quite impossible for an American speaker, for example, to adopt only English RP.

The non-phonetic form is 'neutral'; but in pronunciation, the situation is no longer similar, given the fact that it carries with it the identification of a particular area or the classification of a distinct group: "It is 'neutral' to the vast differences that can be *heard* in the varieties of English, and so it can be understood wherever English is spoken—*however* English is spoken." (Quirk; *et al.* 1964: 85).

Many linguists describe Standard English in terms of vocabulary and grammar. They agree on the fact that written Standard English is neutral and that the most prestigious British dialect (what is written) is Standard English and the most prestigious accent is RP, which is a neutral regional accent. Nevertheless, we have to recollect that some illustrious authors used their own regional variety. Shakespeare, for instance, had a Warwickshire accent, and 'transcribed' it in all his writings, which are classified among the outstanding literary English classics.

1.5.1. The Difficulty in Having One Spoken Standard

There are many important obstacles to the use of one standard in pronunciation in comparison with spelling:

One criterion concerns the process of learning: unlike writing, pronunciation is acquired initially at an early age in an unconscious manner and is difficult to get rid of. A second is the social distinction between a familiar variety (usually appreciated) and a more prestigious one. If somebody's speech is referred to as 'wrong' or unwelcome in a particular context, it would probably widen the social gap between upper and middle classes. Moreover, a different pronunciation functions as an identity marker; rejecting it completely may cause a barrier between the learners and the target norm.

While the role of a standard pronunciation in a country is to unify its speakers and to be approved without controversy, many teachers and linguists such as Quirk (1995) question the prestigious position RP has held for a long time. For, people who were educated in Public Schools may have different 'correct' ways of pronouncing English. And using their own accents does not make them less educated.

According to Quirk, speakers know nothing about standard and non-standard until they are told so by some third parties. He explains that familiar speech maintains societal ties:

> "Large numbers of us, in fact, remain throughout our lives quite unconscious of what our speech *sounds* like when we speak… We begin the 'natural' learning of pronunciation long before we start learning to read or write. It is 'natural', therefore, that our speech-sounds should be those of our immediate circle; after all, speech operates as a means of holding a community— perhaps only a few miles away. And quite often, even if we don't habitually speak with our original local dialect, we may feel the need to retreat into it on occasion—as into our own home…these two degrees are marked by a local dialect and a speech form which may have an additional prestige." (Quirk *et al.* 1964: 85-86).

According to the different views we have examined, we deduce that a spoken standard can be either one different norm in each country or one single norm for all English speakers all over the world. If the first, every country must have its own norm of a standard; what makes, therefore, several standards depending on the number of the English-speaking countries. If the second, there is a unique norm and in this case, all English speaking communities must refer to it.

2. Received Pronunciation (RP)

RP is an accent, and it is commonly mentioned that it is the pronunciation of the educated people and of the court. Several adjectives such as 'correct', 'good', 'refined', 'graceful' are attributed to this variety; Wyld (1927), for instance, argues:

> "Both the sophisticated rustic and the town vulgarian speak a form of the standard language, yet one far removed from the most refined and most graceful type. It is proposed to use the term Received Pronunciation for that form which all would probably agree in considering the best, that form which has the widest currency and is heard with practically no variation among speakers of the better class all over the country. This type might be called Public School English." (cited in Macaulay, 1997: 37).

Received Pronunciation looks like an ideal norm since it is considered as the 'best' variety used by the 'best' social class all over the country, and whose speech variety is beyond disapproval. RP appears to be the kind of 'national institution'. In other words, RP has become an ideology or a system of ideas and ideals, based on the set of beliefs of its speakers.

This phenomenon is illustrated in some literary books such as Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*[9] where a flower girl wants to 'talk good English' in order to find a better position and to climb the social scale. Her professor of phonetics promises to "pass her off as a duchess in six months" (p 238) by teaching her how to pronounce 'good' English. RP appears as the means by which people are properly perceived. When the transformation is achieved, the transcription of her speech in the play becomes flawless. RP, thus, is a 'prestigious' accent and so are its speakers who share this prestige.

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[9] Bernard Shaw (1936): *Pygmalion*. London: Constable & Company Limited.

2.1. The Origins of RP

To trace RP development, we must refer to the pioneers who defined it first. According to Ellis[10] (1869), a 'received pronunciation' is the conventional English norm all over England. And those who are educated or who hold high social positions have the right to set up all the verbal usages to be complied with:

> "We may recognize a received pronunciation all over the country, not widely differing in any particular locality, and admitting a certain degree of variety…In fact that standard pronunciation already exists, and is the norm unconsciously followed by persons who, by rank or education, have most right to establish the custom of speech." (in Macaulay, 1997: 35).

However, Macaulay claims categorically that the term RP owes it origin to Daniel Jones, and that Ellis' definition is unlikely to convince that the social conditions of the Victorian period needed a term such as this one.

Daniel Jones, who paved the way to phonetics, defines RP as follows:

> "I do not consider it possible at the present time to regard any special type as "standard" or as intrinsically "better" than other types. Nevertheless, the type described in this book is certainly a useful one. It is based on my own (Southern) speech, and is, as far as I can ascertain, that generally used by those who have been educated at "preparatory" boarding schools and is independent of their locality. It has the advantage that it is easily understood in all parts of the English-speaking countries; it is perhaps more widely understood than any other type, … The term "Received Pronunciation" (abbreviation RP) is often used to designate this type of pronunciation. This term is adopted here for want of a better. I wish it, however, to be understood that other types of pronunciation exist which may be considered equally "good"." (1960: 12).

The definition he provides is based on the variety he uses. Indeed, he explains that the source of Standard pronunciation can be either social or regional, in other words it is determined by individuals who are either educated in Public Schools or residing in the Southern part of England.

The meaning of *Received Pronunciation* abbreviated RP is attributed to the elite of the nineteenth-century, it was, then, the most accepted **accent** in upper-class societies. Although the British society has changed, RP remains the accent of educated and upper-class people. It is through public schools that RP has been maintained.

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[10] Ellis, A. J. (1869): *On Early English Pronunciation*.

Although many phoneticians identify it as a 'neutral' or 'regionless' accent i.e. nobody can find out where its speakers come from[11], none of them can assert that it is 'classless'. In fact, many agree that RP classifies the speaker as belonging to upper middle class or to upper class.

2.2. Problem of Definition

There is a sort of complexity when trying to define RP. What is special or unusual about RP definition is the constant debate regarding social class recognition, difference of the criteria of the definition, the privilege attributed to it, and the different appellations it has.

Almost all definitions of English RP seem to highlight RP as representing a bundle of social differences. Sociolinguistics, in particular, targets to detect these differences (such as age, gender, region, and social class) in the speech of a specific community. The first three variants in this category are not that complex to demarcate. However, the fourth appears to be problematic in its definition and identification.

2.2.1. Social Class Demarcation

As RP is in general identified with upper class speech, it is therefore imperative to define what we mean by 'social class'. Studies to determine social classes may vary in methods and approaches. Labov (1966), for instance, uses a ten-point scale—zero for the lowest, nine for the highest. This scale is based on three characteristics: occupation, education, and income.

Trudgill (1974), on the other hand, proposes six variants: occupation, income, education, housing, locality, and father's occupation. This supplies a continuous scale from zero (for the lowest class) to thirty (for the highest one).

More studies are achieved for this purpose with some differences in the approach of gathering information. But, what is commonly observed is that occupation seems to be chosen as the first criterion in order to identify social classes:

> "Occupation [is] the criterion of social class membership in the belief that it is the best single indicator of social class and also because it is one of the easiest factors to obtain advance information." (Macaulay, 1997: 86).

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[11] Like Classical Arabic, RP is not the accent of a particular area even if it was long ago the speech of London.

Even if the authors agree on occupation as the means of demarcating social classes, occupation remains but one single factor of the survey. Therefore, many questions seem to arise:

- What can justify the exact cutting points on the scale?

- To what extent can different interpretations of the same results change the analysis?

- The linguistic behaviour is influenced by external factors (a change in the social status, for example), to what extent can they modify the results?

2.2.2. Difference in Defining RP

In spite of the numerous definitions, RP is still open to extensive debate. Some scholars propose that RP must be defined in terms of its function and use and others in terms of its sociolinguistic characteristics.

The functional definition of RP refers to the standard norm which is used at schools, employed in institutions (religious, educational, professional, or social purpose), and taught to EFL learners.

The sociolinguistic definition, on the other hand, considers sociolinguistic criteria since RP is the output of the speakers who use it. Even if it is an abstract means of communication, it used by people with/for other people of a given social nature:

> "RP might be eternal and unchanging. But my preference is for a sociolinguistic definition of RP, which entails recognizing the possibility of change. And some of the changes, it seems clear, can be reasonably be attributed to influence from Cockney— often overtly despised, but covertly imitated." (Wells, 1994: 205).

2.2.2.1. Reasons to Learn RP

Even if it is a minority accent, RP is taught to a large number of people around the world. The reasons that have made RP first among other accents are the following:

One reason is prestige: both learners and teachers want to devote attention to what has been labelled for a long time the 'best' accent. Although it is no longer fundamental for all occupations, it is still used when applying for a new profession— such as a lawyer or an accountant. According to Mc Arthur, most employers favour RP speakers.

As it is also an accent widely taught at schools and commonly used by educated people, it is perceived as a signal of general intelligence and competence. Two

experiments[12] were carried out to show the effect RP has on students. The result is that students rated highly the university lecturer who had used RP. It was considered as a sign of higher-than-average intelligence.

RP is the most used variety in radio and television (such as the BBC) which makes it more appealing and attractive. Consequently, not only does it allow an opportunity for learning to students, but it has become the most intelligible of all accents too. In other words, any one who manages to have an RP accent can be understood wherever they go.

It is also the most described of all the UK accents and it has become the most easily accessible accent. Almost all phonetics and phonology books available in our university describe English RP.

For many traditionalists RP is the variety to teach since it is the variety that spread all over the world. In other words, English needs no modifiers—*British* English, *American* English, or *Australian* English are not to be used. For the traditionalists, *English* of England should be kept as such and given more prestige as it is the starting point for all other pronunciations:

> "The English of England was manifestly for centuries the trunk of the tree, and the usage of upper-class England was (from at least the 18th until the mid-20th century) the best English, by general acknowledgement (whether enthusiastic, detached, or grudging). As a consequence, there are difficulties in treating the English of England as just another national English… Therefore, a case can be made that the English of England (warts and worries and all) is 'first among equals'." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 45).

As RP represents the upper-class variety, many people associate it with power, wealth, and high status of its speakers. And foreigners who master RP may be reacted to as pertaining to the upper-class. However, as we are going to see in the following section, it is not always as advantageous as it seems to be.

2.2.2.2. Reasons not to Overrate RP

Linguists such as Hughes claim that at the beginning of the 20th century, the diversity of social distances among accents diminished and RP does not have the social prestige it used to have once: "Its speakers are not necessarily always accorded greater respect than are speakers of other accents." (Hughes, 2005: 3).

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[12] Howard Giles carried out the first experiment in 1970s and Sarah Wood the second one in 2002.

However, even if they claim that it is not granted more respect than to other accents, RP is still said to be prestigious and highly esteemed; a fact non-free from stigmatisation. It is, therefore, a marker of social position and it may be misinterpreted if used in unsuitable social situations. The speakers may be considered as desiring to draw attention to their social advantage.

Adjectives such as 'educated', 'sophisticated', 'refined', or 'good' are often associated to the variety used by the elite. Such an esteemed variety, consequently, has developed into the standard to which third parties have to refer to. It has no rivals and it is in the leading position among all other English accents. However, with English language expansion, many other standards are emerging. No need, then, to adhere to one accent spoken only by a minority.

Only a small proportion in the British Isles uses RP. In fact, RP is no longer the variety of all the elite or high-ranking UK people; it characterises only 3% or 5% of the entire population[13]—nearly 1, 774, 909 or 2, 958, 182 people. From the 18th and the 19th century, many writers such as Thomas Hardy have used regional varieties to portray their characters authentically and to place their readers into the exact setting.

RP definition has changed; the previous definitions are no longer valid for today's needs and use. Peter Roach and James Hartman when editing *Jones' English Pronouncing Dictionary* in 1997 claimed:

> "For this edition a more broadly-based and accessible model accent for British English is represented, and pronunciations for one broadly-conceived accent of American English have been added. The time has come to abandon the archaic name *Received Pronunciation*. The model used for British English is what is referred to as *BBC English*… Of course, one finds differences among such speakers, but there is still a reasonable consensus on pronunciation in this group of professionals, and their speech does not carry for most people the connotations of high social class and privilege that RP has done in the past."

2.2.3. Questioning RP Social Status

RP is maintained in the highest ranks of the British society, in public schools, and in the officer classes of the military because it is perceived as a 'neutral' accent through which no regional identification is possible:

> "The higher a person is on the social scale, the less regionally marked will be his or her accent, and the less it is likely to differ from RP" (Hughes *et al.*, 2005: 9).

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[13] Population of the UK in 2003: 59, 163, 644.

The authors suppose that social status is directly related to accent, but not all people remain in the same social position their entire lives. Some people may climb the social scale others do not. Moreover, we do not have the exact number of upper class people to compare with the number of all RP speakers. Many speakers may use RP in some contexts even if it is not their native tongue.

2.2.4. Dividing RP

As there are many definitions of RP English, some phoneticians divide RP into subtypes:

1- Gimson (1988) divided RP into three types:

▷ Conservative: spoken by older generation and other social groups.

▷ General: the least marked variety as the one adopted by the BBC.

▷ Advanced: used by young people belonging mostly to the upper class.

2- Wells (1996) uses three labels to describe RP:

▷ U-RP (upper crust RP): spoken by upper class people.

▷ Adoptive: spoken by those who acquire RP after childhood.

▷ Near[14] RP: equivalent to Gimson's general RP:

> "U-RP is associated with, in the narrow sense, the upper-class, such as a duchess. Adoptive RP is spoken by adults who did not speak RP as children, and Near RP refers to any accent which, while not falling within the definition of RP, nevertheless includes very little in the way of regionalisms." (Wells, 1996: 280-97).

3- Cruttenden (2001) revised Gimson's and proposed three significant varieties:

▷ Refined: is equivalent to Gimson's conservative RP.

▷ Regional: the presence of slight regional features, which are undetectable by other RP speakers. /λ/-vocalisation[15], for instance, where word-final /λ/ is produced as a vowel [Y]; words such as *hill* /ηIλ/ or *ball* /βO:λ/ are realised as [ηIY] and [βOY].

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[14] What Wells calls near-RP accent is called both *modified regional accent* and *modified RP* by phoneticians.

[15] /l/-vocalisation is no longer considered as a regional feature, it has become part of modern RP. (Cruttenden, 2001: 80)

➢General: similar to Gimson's general (and general/near RP is the category we do analyse in Chapter two).

2.3. Concept Vs Norm

Standard English or RP does definitely mean the non-use of regional dialects. Yet, it remains a matter of choice made from all possible English sounds. As it is a sum of selected sounds, it is worth investigating whether RP corresponds to a **mental representation** we have of a system or to a **norm** that must be complied with or reached.

It is necessary to indicate that RP corresponds at the same time to an idea that one has of the 'correct' norm and to a concept of a standard, which is frequently displayed and recommended for adoption and reference.

Taken as a whole, Standard English seems to be a suitable model/reference of expression that some people try to approximate while realising perfectly that they may produce a different variety. In a sense, RP is an ideal norm to which many speakers aspire but no one perfectly knows how to attain.

3. World Vs International Language

English is a set of varieties and can constitute a family of its own. It is used by over one billion speakers and learned by many more all over the world. It is regarded as the language of commerce, science, technology, media, and popular culture.

English extended from the British Empire to the former colonies with the migration of English-speaking people from the British Isles. There is somewhat a demographic and a territorial spread of English. Such expansion is an authentic process and its worldwide distribution remains unlimited.

Such enlargement is of no surprise in the present phase as global trade and media become frequent and as international courts of justice and institutions are increasingly established.

A great interest among linguists and phoneticians has been generated by the English varieties spread around the world. Many are interested to know how and why English became a world language. Many distinctions are made between the observable phenomenon and the expression used to name it since it presents some difficulties of standardisation, codification, and a problematic choice for a teaching model.

Some linguists would say that English is an international language others a world language. In the following two sections, we differentiate between both concepts. It is also worth mentioning that the linguists cited below distinguish between International English and International Standard English and between World English and World Standard English/Englishes).

3.1. International Language

Generally speaking, an international language is a language used by many people or nations. Smith defines the term *international language*: "as a language other than one's mother tongue—that is a *second language*—which is used by people of different nations to communicate with one another." (in Brutt-Griffer, 2002: 5).

3.1.1. Characterising International English

Brutt-Griffer, Smith, and Crystal classify the characteristics of an international language in the following ways:

- For an effective use of the language, the speakers need not assimilate the language they use with its culture. Non-native speakers need not change nor imitate British or American people with the intention of speaking English correctly. In fact, they do not even have to appreciate its culture.

- It does not only belong to its native speakers. Language becomes international when it can be detached from its nation and culture.

- Teaching an international language concentrates on making it a means for communication and learning.

- The phrase *International English* covers English in general without any obligatory reference to Standard English:

> "It is difficult to predict the shape of international English in the twenty-first century. But it seems likely that more rather than less standardization will result… We may, in due course, all need to be in control of two standard Englishes—the one which gives us our national and local identity, and the other which puts us in touch with the rest of the human race. In effect, we may all need to become bilingual in our own language." (Crystal, 1988: 27).

3.1.2. International Standard English

It refers only to Standard English when used worldwide—the sum of British, American, and recently more Australian English either in education, law, media, or in

business or international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund *IMF* and the United Nations *UN*:

> "It is reasonable to speak of an international standard written English. It is also reasonable to speak of an international standard spoken English if we limit ourselves to the more formal levels and if we ignore pronunciation difficulties… We may hope that the new national standards will take their place as constituents of an International Standard English, preserving the essential unity of English as international language." (Greenbaum, 1996: 12-3).

French, for instance, is the official language of 25 countries which corresponds to over 200 million people[16] and is also an international language, used all over the world. Chinese is used by over 1, 288, 892, 200, Hindu-Urdu by over 1, 065, 462, 000, and Spanish by over 300 million speakers; however, they do not have the same status as that of English.

3.2. World Language

World English means English as the most international of all international languages. In *The Oxford Guide to World English*, Mc Arthur states that World English is the language that spread fast all over the world:

> "In 1500 Henry VII of England had barely 2 million subjects. Even 100 years later English-speaking inhabitant of the British Isles were a none too large majority. Yet before long two major English-speaking nations emerged in rapid succession to dominate by turns the 19th and 20th centuries." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 13).

What makes English a 'world language' is the rapidity with which it has spread in so many areas throughout the world. Nowadays, with the expansion and partition of English in Europe, in America, in Australia, in Africa, and in Asia, comparisons are made on the same ground with Latin —a former world language— and the Romance languages, which became gradually mutually unintelligible. Some linguists claim that such a situation is possible:

> "Today, with the development of fissiparous English varieties, it is hardly an exaggeration to claim that on the ground a state of mutual incomprehension is fast approaching." (Hughes, 2003: 317).

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[16] The estimation was made in 2001, *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2003).

They explain that modern English has expanded all over the world and acquired the status of a world language mainly because of imperialism and globalisation. Many nations of the Commonwealth[17] maintain English as the official[18] language, in preference to indigenous[19] languages. Besides, after WWII it acquired more prestige:

> "English is consequently used for many official purposes in Africa. In the former Communist countries of Eastern Europe, English has gained prestige as the language of liberation. Still less predictable has been the increasing growth of English in Western Europe, in post-communist Russia and in Japan. As a consequence of these developments, English, now the first language of over 300 million people, is used as a second language by over 1000 million people across the globe." (Hughes, 2003: 316-17).

Although some languages such as Latin, Arabic, or Spanish have similarly left their cradle to flourish on different lands where they imposed themselves, English remains unique. In fact, it develops extensively in space and in time and no earlier model exists to be compared with such expansion:

> "It is difficult to know what to expect, when a language develops a worldwide presence to the extent that English has. There are no precedents for such a geographical spread or for so many speakers. Moreover the speed at which it has all happened is unprecedented: although the history of world English can be traced back 400 years, the current growth spurt in the language has a history of less than forty years." (Crystal, 1995: 110).

The influence the British Empire had formerly and communication currently makes it appear that it is no longer the human invasion but the language one. In other words, English appears as the only dynamic that spread over the world. According to Crystal and to Mc Arthur, English spread now is beyond any influence and no one could prevent its future evolution:

> "English language has already grown to be independent of any form of social control… it proves impossible for any single group or alliance to stop its growth, or even influence its future." (Crystal, 1997: 139-40).

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[17] An international association consisting of the UK together with states that were previously part of the British Empire, and dependencies.

[18] Official language is a language that has the support and the authority of a public body or of the government.

[19] In 1947, an attempt to establish Hindi as the official language of India was disputed by non-Hindi speakers.

> "English will not necessarily be the English we know, just as today's English is not the one the Angles and Saxons knew."
> (Mc Arthur, 2002: 412).

3.2.1. World Standard English

According to Mc Arthur (2002), English dialects or dialect is not the satisfactory term to use when speaking of a world language because *dialect* is a term, which is more connected to lower status and to people in need of education. World English means the Standard English used globally with all its various altered forms over the world.

What does *a different form of language* or *variety* mean? Do they have different systems and structures? And above all, is speaking a different standard necessarily considered as a non-standard? It is not the purpose of this study to tackle regional varieties, the domain of research being too vast, we limit our work only to Standard English and its variations (and not its varieties) -if any- and therefore we put aside what is called 'dialect'[20].

World Standard English does not necessarily refer to one English variety with diverging variations. The existing varieties look as if they are under control and sharing a sort of uniformity; in other words, the title *World Standard English* enclose all Standard Englishes:

> "Although world English is varied, certain varieties and registers are fairly tightly controlled, often through standardized patterns of use, offering a kind of communicative security to all concerned. Thus, there is a marked uniformity in the following arenas: airports, newspapers, broadcast media, and computer use." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 416).

Undoubtedly, there are different forms of the same language; however, two problems emerge from this classification:

First, we can discover virtually an infinite number of 'different forms' of one World Standard, depending on the linguistics features, we want to highlight.

Second, French and Spanish are from one common origin—Latin, so are American and Australian English. The distinction between the former is quantitative, a reason they are so unintelligible. Do the Americans speak a different language from the

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[20] For a detailed approach of dialects, see:
- Trudgill, P. (1984): *On Dialect: Social and Geographical Perspectives*. New York: New York University Press.
- Trudgill, P.; Chambers, J. K. (eds.) (1991): *Dialects of English: Studies in Grammatical Variation*. London: Longman.

British? Can we speak of American **or** British English or American **and** British English? Many scholars hold the essential criterion to be that of *mutual intelligibility*[21]: a British and an American can understand each other. Accordingly, we say they are speaking the same language.

Nevertheless, there exist some difficulties with this criterion [*mutual intelligibility*] mainly in rapid speech; here is an example:

> "Comic films or television programs popular in one English-speaking country will not be amusing in another when the audience has to make spontaneous distinctions among accents or associative behaviors with the speakers." (Swiderski, 1996: 29).

Are they still dialects of the same language in that case? Likewise, we want to make out whether there exists one standard language or different standard languages of the same origin. The former is shared by most native English-speakers who regard themselves as speaking the same language. The second consists of speakers regarding themselves as speaking different languages (regardless of the degree of their mutual intelligibility) since they consider themselves as belonging to different cultural backgrounds and having dissimilar traditions.

Mutual intelligibility remains also questionable when it comes to term two varieties as belonging to the same language. The speakers of the Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish) can perfectly understand and communicate with one another (Trudgill, 1998). However, these languages are officially recognised as separate languages. German, likewise, is supposed to be one single language even if some varieties are absolutely unintelligible to speakers of other varieties (Trudgill, 1998).

Mutual intelligibility does not necessarily make Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish one common language, nor does the lack of it make the existing types of German different languages.

English as one global language with all its varieties and mixtures has frequently been a subject commented by linguists:

- In 1967, Mc Arthur used the phrase 'World English' in *Opinion* 28 February.

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[21] A speech can be comprehensible by both parties toward each other.

-"'World Standard English', the centrepiece of a circle diagram of English worldwide accompanying the article." (Mc Arthur, 1998: 97).

- *World English* is the title of a book by Mc Arthur(2002).

- In 1982, Eagleson states that:

> "We may definitely recognize Australian English and New Zealand English as separate entities, but still very much part of the family—forms of English making their own special contribution to world English." (Bailey; Görlach (eds.), 1982: 436).

- Quirk *et al.*, (1985):

> "The traditional spelling system generally ignores both the changes in pronunciation over time and the variations in pronunciation through space; despite its notorious vagaries, it is a unifying face in world English." (9).

- Crystal (1995):

> "If we read the newspapers or listen to the newscasters around the English-speaking world, we will quickly develop the impression that there is a World Standard English (WSE), acting as a strong unifying face among the vast range of variation which exists." (111).

- Crystal (1997):

> "Even if the new Englishes did become increasingly different, as years went by, the consequences for world English would not necessarily be fatal… A new form of English—let us think of it as 'World Standard Spoken English' (WSSE)—would almost certainly arise. Indeed, the foundation for such a development is already being laid out around us." (136-70).

Today's English, with all the set of names—world English, international English, or whatever—may alter in the future. We cannot precisely determine how it can evolve or by what name it is going to be called. According to Mc Arthur, English—the world's lingua franca is shifting: "It is impossible, however, to imagine at this time what script it might have, what media and technology might be available to it, or indeed where it might be used, either on or beyond the Earth." (2002: 417).

3.2.2. World Standard Englishes

World Standard Englishes has been proposed to name the sum of the different Standard Englishes all over the world. One consequence of English spread around the globe is the increase of English spoken varieties, the consequence of which is the appearance of a term 'Englishes' in a survey called *World Englishes*, published in 1985.

According to Widdowson (1997), Englishes are not subdivisions of English but they are languages in their own, a kind of paradox—they are self-regulating without being autonomous.

The phrase *Standard Englishes* seems to fit better the English linguistic situation than *varieties of English* or *English Standards* because of two reasons:

First, *varieties of English* is too general and vague, it can include variation in region, education, age, gender, style, context, subject matter, and social standing. It does not necessarily stand only for American, Canadian, New Zealand, South African, or British English.

Second, *English Standards* means a single language with many standards and a standard means something used as a measure, norm, reference, or model in comparative evaluations. If there were different standards of English, each native speaker will choose the one he likes most. However, each English-speaking country has its own codified English which carries all the cultural load and the social parameters of its speakers. An American will use his own educated speech and not that of South Africa. It is not any English standard they first learn; it is their country standard.

According to some linguists, such as Kachru and Smith, the phrase *World Englishes*: "Symbolizes the functional and formal variation in the language, and its international acculturation, for example, in the USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand." (1985: 210)

3.2.2.1. The Present Situation

Attention must be also paid for an important component of the sociolinguistic situation of these Englishes since they are learnt at all educational levels as distinct languages. Indeed, Englishes have developed their own standard and codified varieties, even if the idea of standardisation contradicts that of international language continuum.

Each English-speaking country has developed its own codified reference books (of English grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation); however, the latter (reference books) are increasingly published to encompass more than one English variety:

- *Daniel Jones Dictionary* includes British and American English.

- *The New Oxford Dictionary of English* includes English standards such as British, American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South African, and Indian.

- *The Encarta World English Dictionary* comprises British, American and Australian English.

- *The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* treats British and American grammars likewise.

- *A Grammar of Contemporary English* covers all English grammars.

Such an increase in publication reveals a kind of contradiction as to World English, in a sense, that these books enclose one single language (English). Yet and in the meantime, they constantly accentuate the distinction between the existing Englishes. Effectively, this paradox is and will probably remain as such provided that the problem of defining Standard English compared with other standards would be solved. Some linguists suggest a federation of standards so as to develop: "A 'super-standard' that is comfortable with both territorial and linguistic diversity." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 448).

However, English is not only spoken in the English-speaking countries, but many new Englishes are also emerging such as those spoken in India, Nigeria, or in the Philippines. The problem is very much the same but only bigger than it used to be before.

The more expansion English obtains the more diverse it becomes, and the more complicated its inventory would be. Besides, among the various and diverse definitions, what characterises English is that it is also spoken by non-native speakers. This seems to increase the complexity in developing a 'super-standard' which can suit all factions.

Englishes are regularly referred to as, for example, American, Australian, or British English, etc. It does not necessarily mean that they are totally contrasting, but speakers of one country say American speakers, for instance, have enough pronunciation features in common that are not perceptible in the speech of other people from other areas. Yet, American English is no more than a suitable label for a collection of local accents. No matter how small an area is, we can still find differences in pronunciation between the surrounding vicinities and between individuals themselves.

3.2.2.2. Standard Englishes Evolution

Usually, what indicates that *a language* or *a variety of a language* has its own standard is the issuing of grammar books, dictionaries together with important literary publications. By the end of the 17th century, French, for instance, was successful in establishing all the three. English, in the USA, attained this situation with the independence of the American colonies. During the 19th century, the United States of

America began to set up its own grammar, dictionaries[22], and literary character; it was not until the beginning of the 20th century that American English and literature were stable and firmly recognised.

According to the same three criteria, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa established their own Standard Englishes. The criteria upon which we support our argumentation are not enough to settle on standardisation of a particular variety. For, recent times have revealed the influence and the effect the language (of the news on TV, radio, or newspapers) has on the nature and the use of English worldwide. The variety used when presenting the news is generally referred to as the standard form in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

The mass media play a significant role as to standardisation spread and acceptance among people. Yet, the language produced can occur sometimes with a regional accent—a Scottish has recently presented the news on the BBC. It does not necessarily mean that Scottish English has replaced RP and become the new standard.

English is one single term to refer to the several existing varieties in English-speaking countries. Among this wide range, there are clear-cut standards; however, there are standard forms that are more apparent than others—especially British and American Englishes. World Standard Englishes, which may largely cover or embody these two Englishes, cannot be dealt with without asking whether the recent emerging standards (like Australian, Canadian, South African, and New Zealand Englishes) would combine, equal, or dispute the two traditional Englishes.

3.3. Linguistic Imperialism

English language spread can be justified by the fact that people migrated from one place to another. In other words, it was *the speaker migration*; however, things have changed by now. Because of mass media and international communication, it has become *the language migration* to other speech communities. English is said to spread extensively and rapidly over the world; consequently, many linguists discuss the language 'policy' as if English has become an invader:

According to Phillipson (1992) "English attained its current 'dominant' position through its active promotion as an instrument of the foreign policy of the major English-speaking states." (in Brutt-Griffer, 2002: 6).

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[22] Noah Webster (1758-1843): he established in 1828 *The American Dictionary of the English Language*, it the first dictionary to give comprehensive report of American usage.

Phillipson goes on further to say that English began to expand with the imperialist domination of England and the United States all over the world. One consequence of this domination is *a linguistic form of imperialism*, together with the oppression of certain people by others imposing political, economic, and cultural influence:

> "English is now entrenched world-wide, as a result, of British colonialism, international interdependence, 'revolutions' in technology, transport, communications and commerce, and because English is the language of the USA, a major economic, political and military force in the contemporary world." (cited in Brutt-Griffer, 2002: 7).

Price and Brutt-Griffer categorise English as *a colonial language*:

> "We began this chapter by referring to the role that English has played in killing off other languages with which it has shared these islands." (Price, 2000: 156).

> "Taken as a coherent explanatory framework for World English, the central premise of linguistic imperialism is that the spread of English represents a culturally imperialist project, which necessarily imparts English language to its second language learners." (Brutt-Griffer, 2002: 7).

Questions concerning the ethics of English spread are increasingly raised though they remain controversial as long as the language is imposed neither by military rule nor by a set of laws.

English has become a language that is increasingly learnt as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different. For many teachers, World Standard English is helpful but hostile. They consider English as a threatening weapon, which can be a source of serious damages to them:

> "English is no doubt a lingua franca, a global language of today, but the hegemony of English is also very threatening to those who are not speakers of English. While it may be convenient to have a common international language, we have to ask ourselves whether it will really contribute to a democratic global communication to use a language which is historically and culturally connected with particular nations… The existing hegemony of English is first of all anti-democratic because it is creating structure of linguistic hierarchy as well as social inequality and discrimination… The hegemony of English also gives the English-speaking countries enormous economic power. Because English sells well, English is now the one of the most important products of the English-speaking countries. So English is not merely a medium, but a propriety to be marketed across the world." (Tsuda, 2000: 32-3).

Tsuda teaches International Communication in Japan and he believes that English is no longer a language of communication but rather of imperialism. For those who share such idea, there exist reasons to observe closely the linguistic phenomenon.

3.3.1. Social Impact

The Western culture in general and English in particular are often associated with technology, modernity, and equal opportunity:

> "Standard English is recognized (gladly or ruefully) as a gateway or passport or avenue or ladder (there are many metaphors) to desirable kinds of knowledge, skill, and opportunity." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 440).

The value that English has acquired is rather appealing. English has attained a status of modernity and prestige beyond its boundaries. It has also become purely decorative since a number of people (such as teenagers) favour English words on their belongings (clothes). According to Brock, Chinese people would rather buy manufactured products labelled with English words than with Chinese. This, of course, means a powerful economic reality:

> "English, even when it is scarcely recognizable as such, serves as a status maker, a talisman of modernity. The fact that English words ornamented their possessions seemed satisfaction enough for most." (Brock, 1991: 51).

4. English Evolution

Whether people consider change as 'good' or as 'bad', languages always vary. Such a change can be slow or rapid; besides, social influences and education have their share in language evolution. The way children/students acquire/learn a language can affect their perception and their possible influence on it in the future.

4.1. Language Change Vs Language Maintenance

Some people, on the one hand, are in favour of maintaining Standard English/RP as such with all the identity dimensions it caries with it. Others, on the other hand, are less encouraging for all its social prejudices such as social inequity. In the following sections, we discuss language maintenance and language change.

4.1.1. Language Maintenance

The preservation of language stability is due to two major aspects *covert* and *overt* maintenance:

➢ *Covert* or *informal* maintenance is applied by individuals or social groups such as:

- Upper-class people to maintain *status*.

- Regional influence to maintain *solidarity*.

> "There are social mechanisms that encourage stability in the use of (e.g. prestige attached to certain pronunciations), and other social mechanisms that seek to stabilise a language, and in so doing impede or prevent linguistic change…resist change and maintain norms. We shall call this latter tendency *maintenance*, and begin by postulating that *maintenance* is the converse of change." (Milroy and Milroy, 2003: 57).

➢ *Overt* or *institutional* maintenance: standard norms are maintained and encouraged by the BBC, the mass media, educational systems, and by institutional authorities:

> "Standard English is the official language, used by government; it is codified in dictionaries and grammar-books; it is appealed to as the norm in the educational system. These facts give it *legitimacy* that other varieties do not usually have and make it *potentially* accessible to all citizens…[however] The ideology of standardization has been less successfully applied to spoken language, which continues to be subject to quite extensive variation and change." (Milroy and Milroy, 2003: 59).

4.1.2. Language Change

Many communities have tried to regulate and standardise their most prestigious variety; however, it remains hard to get such a variety fixed and homogenised all the time:

> "History's most successfully fixed languages have ended up being labelled 'dead', [and] they stopped being passed by word of mouth from parent to child." It is known in England that "English pronunciation is therefore more dynamic and up-to-date." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 9).

4.1.2.1. Changes

Like all life forms, language in general and English in particular experience constant change, development, and evolution. The idea of organic evolution[23] is a theory about organisms that mutate to respond to the demands of their environment. In other words, change is the 'sign' that a language is still alive:

> "Changes are the outcome of usage shifts with circumstance. The only guarantee is that as long as a language is 'alive' it will, like the biological organisms that use it, undergo various kinds of shift, large, small, and continual. The remarkable thing is that

[23] Charles R. Darwin (1809-82): English natural historian and geologist, supporter of the theory of evolution by natural selection.

> in such a vast and varied complex as present-day English there
> is so much that remains stable." (McArthur, 2002: 12).

Feminists, for instance, contribute to language change in finding new words or pronunciations to distinguish males from female speech. Women, in general, are said to privilege educated speech[24]:

> "Recent studies suggest that in many situations, women seem to
> be more concerned than men about using educated language as
> a means of social mobility" (Winer; Winters in Mc Arthur (ed.),
> 1992: 431).

4.1.3. Reasons of Language Change

We can understand that from a country to another pronunciation varies, but why do people in different parts of the same country speak differently? We can ask the question in a different way: why does not everybody in Great Britain reproduce the same Standard? The answer is that English, as all other languages over the world, is constantly changing. Alteration occurs in the different parts of the country, which in itself represents a variation in culture and behaviour. In Scotland, for instance, people are more conservative of their language (Mc Arthur).

Some phoneticians like J. C. Wells explain this phenomenon and argue that if we look backward in time, such change has led the growth of different languages. French, Spanish, and Italian have a common ancestor: Latin. However, the variation in one system does not obligatorily entail the same kind of variation in another system. Each system developed autonomously even if a language continuum exists between France and Italy, in the sense that the people in area N° A understands those in area N° B but not necessarily those in area N° F.

Is there any possibility of a comparison of English with Latin? It is very unlikely that English will be divided into a number of non-intelligible languages, as was the case for Latin. Unlike modern times when communication is at the first scene, French, Spanish, and Italian ancestors stayed with limited ways of communication from one another. Nowadays, televisions and radios, broadcast in English, effectively maintain intelligibility.

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[24] According to Trudgill, women prefer [IN] to [Iv] in words such as *singing* since it reflects a higher social status.

Some approaches consider that internal factors of the language itself cause some changes in pronunciation; the phonological system being independent of social influences. Yet, languages do not exist autonomously. Languages reflect speakers' evolution and alterations and it is the speaker who innovates not the languages.

Milroy and Milroy consider that external factors are the vehicle of any change in speech:

> "In recent years it has been repeatedly demonstrated that observed linguistic changes often correlate with social factors. The spread of post-vocalic [ρ] in New York City, for example, has been shown to be connected with what Labov has called hypercorrection by the lower middle class…Some changes such as the change in progress towards restoration of post-vocalic [ρ] (in *car*, *card*, etc.) in New York City, seem to be motivated by status or prestige factors. Research in Belfast has shown that at lower levels of society the pronunciation of /{/ (as in *bad*, *have*, *hat*, etc.) is moving away from 'front' values (as in RP *hat*), which we would normally associate with high prestige, towards 'back' values (as in RP *calm*); i.e. speakers prefer to pronounce *bad*, *have*, etc. with a vowel similar to that in RP *calm*." (Milroy and Milroy, 2003: 56-57).

As it is mentioned in the quotation, prestige is an important factor enhancing such a change; still, it seems to be not the only possible sociolinguistic explanation. Can we say that this pronunciation or shift from an RP vowel to another is still considered as standard? Both vowels belong to a 'prestigious' standard and yet the problem still persists.

4.2. RP Evolution

Hughes suggests that there exists a kind of division within RP, in other words RP does not mean necessarily one single variety and it cannot be predetermined and permanent:

> "Which variety of RP is taught will differ from country to country, even from classroom to classroom. It would be misleading to say there is only one, fixed form of the accent, since at any stage the accent will be a mixture of traditional and innovative features." (Hughes *et al.*, 2005: 4).

Hughes *et al.*, plainly explain that there are several existing varieties. However, these authors do not mention whether or not we can name or count them.

Like all living organisms, living languages change with time. In RP, for instance, there has been what linguists call *smoothing*. *House* and *mouse*, for instance,

were pronounced [ηυ:σ] [μυ:σ], by 1400-1600[25] this vowel changed into a diphthong /αY/ [ηαYσ] [μαYσ].

Nowadays, certain diphthongs[26] and triphthongs[27] have been converted to one single quality (a 'pure' vowel). The word *tyre* [ταΙ≅] with the vowel /αΙ≅/ has changed into [τΑ≅] and is now produced [τΑ:]. There is a reduction of quality from /αΙ≅/ to /Α:/. *Tyre* has, therefore, the same pronunciation as *Ptah*, *ta*, *tar*, or *Ter*.

This phenomenon *smoothing* may be more frequent among younger people, although some phoneticians such as Wells think that we cannot categorically assert that there is a clear-cut relation between age and pronunciation.

When accent undergoes any modification of its features, speakers can either adopt or discredit it. The diffusion in a speech community of new features of an accent that is considered as prestigious can be possible if it is approved by an elite or by a significant society. Any change can hardly be emulated or spread over a wider area if associated with 'commonplace' usage. In fact, it depends mainly on the people who use it and the place where we use it. Besides, achieving such diffusion needs enough time, as there are speakers who can more easily integrate modifications in their speech than others.

Some speakers are more conventional than others (however conservative) about RP speech when it is affected either by young people's innovation or by regional accents' influence. There is a kind of resistance to the intrusion of these elements which seems to be expected.

Estuary English is a combination between RP and working-class London speech; the glottal stop [?], for instance, is produced instead of /τ/ in particular contexts. When conversing, lower class speakers appear of a higher status than they are and high-class speakers appear of a lower status than they are.

Such English is a kind of compromise in which social classes speech blend. However, it is still heavily discussed and even stigmatised by some British press. According to Wells, the disapproval happens each time when figures from advantaged

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[25] The period is called the **Great Vowel Shift**.

[26] A diphthong refers to a vowel where there is a single perceptible change in quality. It is a vowel of two distinct qualities.

[27] A triphthong refers to one vowel where two changes can be heard. It is made up of three phases.

classes such as Tony Blair or some members of the royal family use the glottal stop [?] for instance.

4.2.1. Examples of Change in RP

- The labio-dental approximant [Π] (when pronouncing /ρ/) in words such as *road*, *brown*, and *very* is less stigmatised and increasingly spreading among RP speakers.

- The **high-rising tone**[28] normally associated with questions is imported from Australian and New Zealand English. It has also been noticed in American English.

As we have seen, RP accent is subject to different variations, in addition to conscious or unconscious variation from one RP speaker to another. Phonetics has shown that the same sound cannot be identical if produced twice successively by the same speaker.

4.2.1.1. Stylistic Variation

The way speakers pronounce changes according to contexts. Variation depends on whether or not the speaker's situation is formal. These changes include:

- Assimilation: in *that plate* /Δατ πλεΙτ/, the final consonant /τ/ of *that* becomes [π] through assimilation [Δαπ πλεΙτ].

- Elision: *expect so* /Ικσπεκτ σ≅Υ/ is pronounced [σπεκ σ≅Υ] through elision of /Ικ, τ/.

- Vowel weakening: an RP speaker pronounces the word *are* /A:/ [≅] when non-stressed in informal situation.

It remains problematic since learners are more familiar with these aspects in pronunciation than with the degree of their occurrence in daily conversation. Some situations require a shift from one pronunciation to another. This latter is not conditioned by correctness but by appropriateness:

> "It would be odd, even ridiculous, for a radio commentator to
> use the same style of pronunciation when telling his girlfriend
> how desirable she is, as when describing for his listeners a royal
> procession." (Hughes *et al.*, 2005: 8).

4.2.2. Historical Changes

Through time, English pronunciation has been subject to diverse transformations. This phenomenon can clearly be noticed, in comparing modern English

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[28] Also called the **High Rise Terminal** (HRT) or **Australian Question Intonation** (AQI).

literature with the older one such as *The Canterbury Tales*[29], *Doctor Faustus*[30], or *Macbeth*[31]. According to Gimson (1970), if *The Canterbury Tales* or *Macbeth* is heard it remains either unintelligible to the modern Englishman or completely non-rhyming.

4.2.2.1. Types of Changes

The following changes from Old English to Present English have been sustained by several authors (such as Gimson: 1970, Barber: 1999, Giegerich: 2001, Roca & Johnson: 2003, etc.). For reasons of clarification, we deliberately synthesise the gathered data into successive tables for vowels, semi-vowels, and consonants. For the former, we present each type of change into a table (long vowel to *diphthongised vowels*, pure vowel to *pure vowel*, *combination* of two sounds, *combination* of two sounds and the *loss of [ρ]* (voiced post-alveolar approximant), change in *length*, and *stress*) because vowels have undergone a larger number of modifications than semi-vowels and consonants.

Table n°1: Long Vowels to Diphthongised Vowels

Dates / Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. ($20^{th}/21^{st}$ c.) PE
house	[ʋ:]	[ʋ:]	[≅Y]	[αY]
divine time	[ɪ:]	[εI] or [ɪ:]	[≅ɪ]	[αI]
home	[A:]	[AY], [OY] or [O:]	[o:] or [oY]	[≅Y]
name	[A]	[α:]	[E:]	[εI]
mice	[ʋ:]	[ψ:]	[ɪ:]	[αI]
stone	[A:]	[O:]	[o:]	[≅Y]
goat	[O]	[O:]	[o:]	[≅Y]
sane	[α:]	[{:]	[E:]	[εI]
bake	[α]	[α:]	[E:]	[εI]

Table n° 2: Pure Vowel to Pure Vowel

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[29] Geoffrey Chaucer (1342-1400): an English poet. His most famous work *The Canterbury Tales* where satire and humour are depicted in the tales told by the group of pilgrims.

[30] Christopher Marlowe (1564-93): English dramatist and poet. *Doctor Faustus* a play written in 1590.

[31] William Shakepeare (1564-1616): English dramatist and port. *Macbeth* was written in 1606.

Dates Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. (20th/21st c.) PE
meat	[{:]	[E:]	[ι:]	[ι:]
meet serene	[ε:]	[ε:]	[ι:]	[ι:]
moon	[o:]	[o:]	[υ:]	[υ:]
love	[Y]	[Y]	[ɣ]	[ς]
written	[ωρΙτEν]			[ρΙτν]
copper	[κOπOρ]			[κΘπ≅]

Table n° 3: Combination of Two Sounds

Dates Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. (20th/21st c.) PE
swan		[α]	[ω + {]	[Θ]
rude		[ιY]	[φ + υ:]	[υ:]

Table n° 4: Combination of Two Sounds and the Loss of [ρ]

Dates Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. (20th/21st c.) PE
servant			[{ρ]	[3:]
hard			[αρ]	[A:]
clerk		[Eρ]	[αρ]	[A:]

Table n° 5 Change in Length

Dates ＼ Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. (20th/21st c.) PE
half, pass		[A] [α]		[A:]
good, book		[Y:]		[Y]
breath		[ε:]		[ε]

Table n° 6: Stress

Dates ＼ Examples	Old Eng. (900-1100) OE	Middle English (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present Eng. (20th/21st c.) PE
stones	[∀στA:νAσ]	[∀στO:ν≅σ]	[στο:νζ]	[στ≅Yνζ]
village		[ϖI∀λα:δZ≅]		[∀ϖIλIδZ]
courage		[κυ∀ρα:δZ≅]		[∀κςρIδZ]
necessary		[%νEσE∀σα:ρI≅]		[∀νεσ≅σρI]

The tables reveal how strikingly vowels have undergone changes. The main change of vowels English has ever witnessed is known as the *Great Vowel Shift* (before the modern period), during which all long vowels changed in quality or length. They became either:

▻Closer long vowels e. g. /{:/ ⟶ /ι:/ as in *meat*.

▻ Short vowels /ε:, Y:/ ⟶ /ε, Y/ as in *breath* and *book*.   } Length

▻ Alternatively, they became diphthongised ones /ι:/ ⟶ /αI/ as in *time*.} Quality

Rounded front vowels have totally disappeared /ψ:, ψ, 2:, 2/ and the loss of post-vocalic [ρ] gave birth to centring diphthongs /I≅, ε≅, Y≅/, to the pure vowel /3:/, and to /A:, O:/ as in *cart*, *port*.

The *Great Vowel Shift* influenced the phonological system as a whole, it has also affected the nature of syllables. Most vowels in accented syllables have undergone a

different type of change than those in unaccented syllables as in *stones* where the accented vowel changed in quality: from [∀στA:] ⟶ [∀στO:] ⟶ [στο:] ⟶ [στ≅Y].

Almost all unaccented syllables shortened and changed into /I, ≅, Y/ if not to disappear completely (elided). *Stones*, for instance, was transcribed in OE [∀στA:νAσ] and it bore the stress on the first syllable; as the second one [νAσ] was unaccented, the vowel changed into a schwa (a vowel which is by rule always unstressed) during ME [ν≅σ], then it disappeared completely in EME [νζ]. Many unaccented syllables in OE have gone through the same process. It can explain today's elision of some vowels in rapid speech *suppose* /σ≅∀π≅Yζ/ [σ∀π≅Yζ], *probably* /∀ρΘβ≅βλI/ [∀ρΘββλI]. In other words, vowels in unaccented syllables tend to be elided, a phonological process which is still up-to-date.

Table n° 7: Semi-vowels Evolution

Dates / Examples	Old English (900-1100) OE	Middle Eng. (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present English (20th/21st c.) PE
key	[γ]		[φ]	[κι:]
law	[γυ]	[ω]		[λO:]
what		[η + Ω]		[ω]

In Gimson's inventory of OE consonants (1970) /φ,ω/ are present; however, other phoneticians such as Barber (1999) and Giegerich (2001) affirm the contrary. In any case, semi-vowels did not have their actual characteristics in OE. /ω/ was introduced in ME and [φ] only in EME. [φ] is not deeply rooted in the history of English pronunciation; may be it explains why this sound is slightly disappearing nowadays in words such as *actual* /{κτφυ≅λ/ or *allude* /≅λφυ:δ/ which are increasingly pronounced [{κτΣυ≅λ] [≅λυ:δ]. Nevertheless, this statement shall stand only on hypothetical grounds.

Table n° 8: Consonants Evolution

Dates / Examples	Old English (900-1100) OE	Middle Eng. (1100-1450) ME	Early Modern Eng. (1450-1600) EME	Present English (20th/21st c.) PE
seeing			[Iν]	[IN]
key	[χ]			[κ]
church	[χ]			[τΣ]
bridge	[□]			[δΖ]
daughter	[ξτ]			[τ]
night	[Χτ]			[τ]
hotel, herb			insertion of initial /η/	
	[ϖ, Δ, ζ] allophones of [φ, Τ, σ]	/ϖ, Δ, ζ/		[φ, ϖ, Τ, Δ, σ, ζ] are contrastive phonemes

Consonants did not undergo changes as much as vowels did; some sounds were lost others have emerged:

i. The loss of many consonant clusters

> /ηλ, ηρ, ην/ by ME.

> /κν, γν, ωρ/ by EME.

ii. The loss of certain allophones

> [Γ] allophone of /γ/ in late OE.

> [ξ, Χ] allophone of /η/ in EME.

iii. The emergence of new phonemes

> /τΣ, δΖ/ in OE.

> /ϖ, Δ, ζ/ in ME.

> /Ν, Ζ, η/ in EME.

> Some words in Old English spelt with *sc* developed into [Σ] as in *fisc* ⟶ *fiss* ⟶ *fisch* ⟶ *fish*.

As we can see in all these tables, there were new sounds and a loss of some others. The result is a variation in the number of phonemes through time:

- ➢ OE: 37 phonemes.
- ➢ ME: 43 phonemes.
- ➢ EME: 46 phonemes.
- ➢ PE: 44 phonemes.

4.2.2.1.1. OE Sound System

Monophthongs: /ψ:, ψ, ι:, I, ε:, E, {:, {, α, A:, O, o:, υ:, Y/

OE Vowel Scale
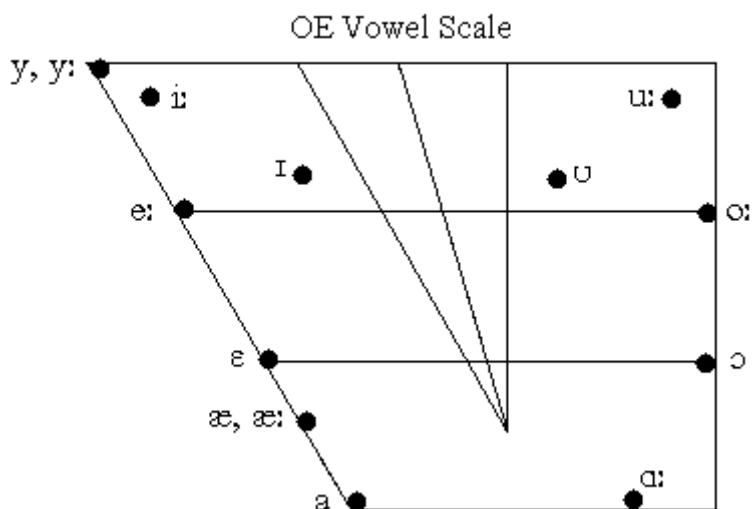
Diphthongs: there were four: /E:≅/, /E≅/, /ε:≅/, /ε≅/ according to Gimson (1970).

: /E≅/, /εY/, /IY/, /I≅/ according to Barber (1999).

Consonants: /π, β, τ, δ, κ, γ, τΣ, δZ, μ, ν, λ, ρ, φ, T, σ, Σ, η/.

Glides: /φ, ω/.

Allophones: [Θ] of /A:/ before nasal consonants as in *answered* [∀Θνδσω ΑρOδ≅].

[N] of /ν/ before velar consonants as in *long* [∀λO:Nγ].

[ϖ, Δ, ζ] of /φ, T, σ/ when medially as in *will love* [∀λYϖAT].

[Γ] of /γ/ and [ξ, X] of /η/ as in *daughter* [–ξτ≅ρ], *night* [νIXτ].

4.2.2.1.2. ME Sound System

Monophthongs: /ι:, I, ε:, E:, E, α:, α, A:, υ:, Y, o:, O:, O/.

ME Vowel Scale
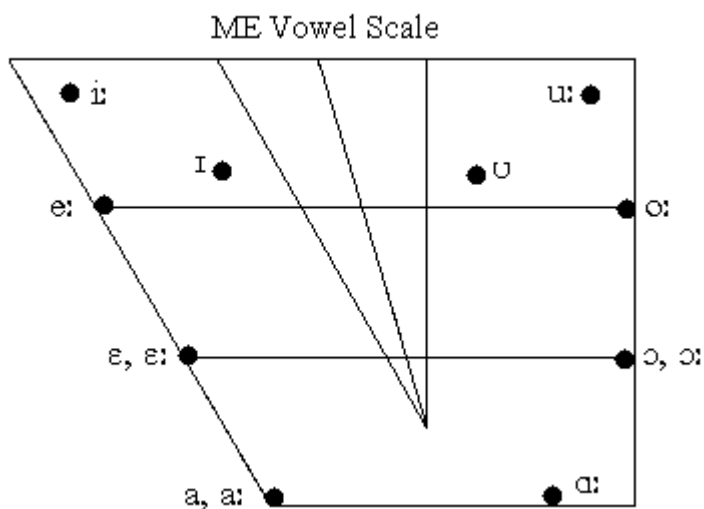
Diphthongs: /Eι/, /{ι/, /Oι/, /ι(υ,Y)/, /ευ/, /Eυ/, /Oυ/, /Aυ/.

Consonants: /π, β, τ, δ, κ, γ, τΣ, δZ, μ, ν, λ, ρ, φ, ϖ, T, Δ, σ, ζ, Σ, η/.

Glides: /φ, ω/.

Allophones: [Ω] of /ω/ after /η/ as in *when* [ηΩαν].

[N] of /ν/ before velar consonants as in *young* [∀φYNγ≅].

[ξ, X] of /η/ as in *daughter* [–ξτ≅ρ], *night* [νIXτ].

4.2.2.1.3. EME Sound System

Monophthongs: /ι:, I, ε:, E:, E, {, ≅, Θ:, Θ, o, ɤ, υ:, Y/.

EME Vowel Scale

Diphthongs: /≅ι/, /≅Y/, /ιυ/, /φυ/, /ευ/, /ου/, /Oι/, /υι/, /Eι/.
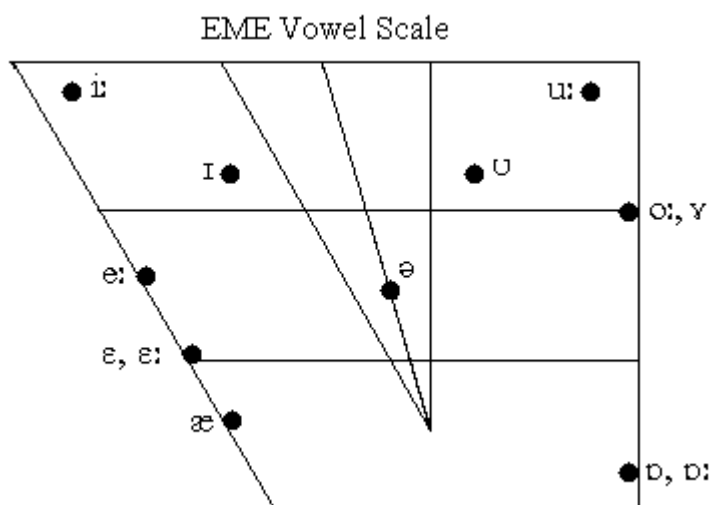
Consonants: /π, β, τ, δ, κ, γ, τΣ, δZ, μ, ν, N, λ, ρ, φ, ϖ, T, Δ, σ, ζ, Σ, Z, η/.

Glides: /φ, ω/.

Allophones: [α] and [α:] of /{/ and /Θ:/ as in *witchcraft* [ωIτΣκραφτ].

        [ε:] of /ι:/ as in *dreams* [δρε:μζ].

        [Ω] of /ω/ after /η/ as in *what* [ηΩ{τ].

4.2.2.1.4. PE Sound System

Monophthongs: /ι:, I, ε, {, ς, 3:, ≅, A:, Θ, O:, υ:, Y/.

PE Vowel Scale
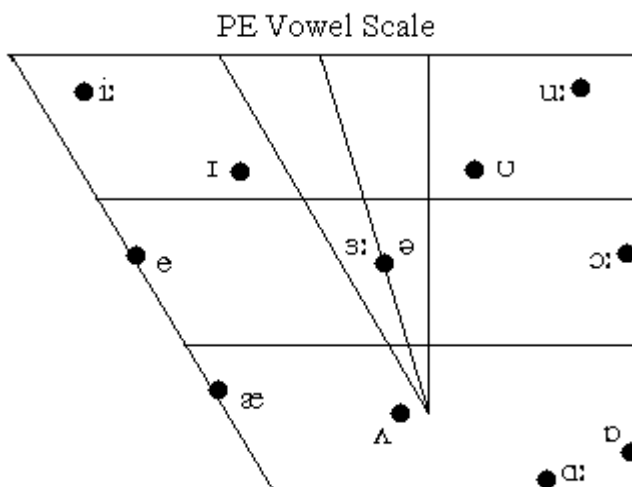
Diphthongs: /εI/, /≅Y/, /αI/, /AY/, /OI/, /I≅/, /ε≅/, /Y≅/.

Consonants: /π, β, τ, δ, κ, γ, τΣ, δZ, μ, ν, N, λ, ρ, φ, ϖ, T, Δ, σ, ζ, Σ, Z, η, (τρ, δρ)/.

Glides: /φ, ω/.

      For a clearer and concise description of the pronunciation change, we take the word *father*, for instance, to see how it has undergone phonetic as well as phonological transformation. *Father* was pronounced [∀φ{δ≅ρ] and it has undergone two major changes:

1) <u>Phonetic change</u>: this word is now pronounced [∀φA:Δ≅]:

  - [{] (short front vowel) changed into [A:] (long back vowel).

  - [δ] (voiced alveolar plosive) changed into [Δ] (voiced dental fricative).

  - [ρ] (voiced post-alveolar approximant) is absent.

2) <u>Phonological change</u>:

  - /ρ/ was no longer pronounced in RP English before consonants or word finally by the end of EME.

- [Δ] and [≅] were both allophones (contextual variants) from OE to EME, and are now phonemes /Δ/ /≅/.

What has remained unchanged from OE to present time is that:

- The schwa is always unstressed (Gimson, 1970: 79-80).

- The [I] as in *ring* (short high front vowel) is still the same as the one used in OE (Barber, 199: 197).

Change in pronunciation is a natural process; according to Gimson: "The speech of any community may, therefore, be said to reflect the pronunciation of the previous century and to anticipate that of the next." (1970: 71). He explains this change from OE to PE by:

- Changes of tongue or lip position through time: not all Latin sounds had their corresponding matches in the English alphabet. They were realised approximately.

- It was fashionable to follow a particular trend of pronunciation (as in the Elizabethan Age when people followed that of the court).

- Influence of foreign words (French ones) such as *machine*, *camouflage*, or *garage*. The integration of French sounds [α:, υ:, Z] into the English phonological system was also responsible for that change.

- The difficulty to represent the adequate English sounds with the only five Latin vowels.

4.2.2.2. Present Changes Linked with Historical Changes

- /5/ in *milk* has a back vowel resonance [Θ], a striking variation since *milk* was written *meolc* in OE (West-Saxon spelling).

- /υ/ was retained in OE to replace the French sound [ψ] in *duke* and *fortune* which is now /υ:/ with the coalesce /δZ, τΣ/.

- In the past, long vowels have diphthongised and in nowadays-English diphthongs [≅Y, εI] tend to be monophthongised.

Long vowel ⟶ diphthong ⟶ long vowel

Up to now, pronunciation is submitted to variation and it is not surprising to find more examples. Even if there are some changes (either a loss of phonemes such as /O≅/ in *sore* or the growth of homophonous words such as *meat* and *meet*), the system is assumed to remain stable mainly because it does not hinder communication. However, there are some examples that are considered as confusing e.g. if the vowels in *set* /ε/

half-close and in *sat* /{/ half-open are realised between half-open and open, *sat* will pose problem. The listener should necessarily refer to the meaning.

4.2.3. Present Situation

RP is still considered as prestigious and is the most understood variety all over the world; however, it is increasingly declined by younger generations (Gimson 1970). If this inclination should continue, there might be another standard based on extensive regional and popular features.

The phonetician Daniel Jones, who first described and codified Received Pronunciation (1917) and (1918) and who analysed how this model operates, examined only his own pronunciation, which is at this time a hundred years ago. Several works have been published since, describing the phonetic changes that took and are still taking place in RP. Among them, many assert: "no-one speaks RP any more." (Wells, 1994: 198).

According to Wells, this is valid as long as nobody is speaking "Jonesian" RP anymore first because all that former generation to which Daniel Jones did belong is already dead by now, then because all living languages change with time. Yet, according to what we have seen so far, it still exists. 'Jonesian' RP, of which some phoneticians are vigorously questioning its very nature, has become the preserve of a small number of certain 'refined' settings such as some members of the aristocracy (Wells).

The phoneticians who assert that RP is no longer used nowadays base their opinion on the fact that RP has been already codified a long time ago. However, we consider other phoneticians statements such as Wells' which suggest that RP still exists as such in spite of a number of changes: "It is more helpful, and in my view more accurate, to say that RP is still alive as ever, but that it has undergone various changes." (Wells, 1994: 198).

RP, in this case, does not only refer to Daniel Jones' accent but also to the new features it acquires. These features include those accepted and used by educated people who are convinced that they speak English RP. In other words, RP means spoken Standard English whether it varies or not.

4.2.3.1. Non-standardisation/Cockneyfication**32** of RP

Many RP speakers use some non-standard features when producing speech sounds. This phenomenon has led to a resistance or to an adoption of some changes in RP from non-standard varieties:

4.2.3.1.1. Changes Resisted by RP

These include instances of:

- /η/-dropping: concerns the omission of /η/ where it is conventionally pronounced. e.g. *hotel* [≅Υτελ] for /η≅Υτελ/, *hair* [ε≅] for /ηε≅/, *happy* [η{πι] for /η{πι/ or *behalf* [βIΑ:f] for /βIηΑ:ɸ/, *egghead* [εγεδ] for /εγηεδ/, *unheard* [ςν3:δ] for /ςνη3:δ/. It does not concern the historical loss of /η/ in words spelt with *wh* as *what* /ηωΘτ/, *wheat* /ηωι:τ/, and *white* /ηωαΙτ/ nor does it concern the weak form of function words such *him*[33] [Iμ] or *have* [≅ϖ].

- /N/-dropping: when the velar nasal /N/ (in words ending with *ing*) is omitted and replaced by the alveolar nasal [ν] as in *singing* [σΙvΙv].

- Realisation of /{/ as in *that man*: cockney speakers tend to realise this vowel as close as [ε] is; a realisation to which RP speakers reacted by producing an opener quality [a] which in itself has long been associated with Welsh or Scottish accents.

-Weakening of *you*: non-standard accents tend to weaken and realise *you* as [φ≅] or [ς]-like quality (often spelt *yer*, *ya*, or *y*[34]) a form that is avoided by RP.

The weak form of *you* /φυ:/ in RP is [φυ]. The vowel [υ] is shorter than the one used in the strong form and it is not the central vowel /Y/ of *look*. *Did you* /δΙδΖυ/ *hurt you* /η3:τΣυ/. RP *your* or *you're* is produced [φO:] or for the older [φυ≅] to avoid the less formal [φ≅][35].

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[32] Cockneyfication: a term used by J. C. Wells (1994).

[33] When speakers pronounce [∀τελ ηΙμ] in rapid and connected speech, it is considered as a hypercorrective reaction against /η/-dropping i.e. when middle-class speakers tend to avoid so much non-standard pronunciation they may use an inconvenient pronunciation where they should not, based on an analogy with a prestigious form.

[34] These forms of *you* in non-standard pronunciation can be reproduced in written literature as in Stan Barstow's *A kind of Loving*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1971.

[35] According to J. C. Wells, RP speakers try to avoid [φ≅], which is an old U-RP realisation but which is now considered as 'vulgar'. Even in words such as *ambulance* [{μβφυλ≅ντσ], *educate* [εδφυκεΙτ], or *manufacture* [μ{νφυɸ{κτΣ≅] RP speakers retain [υ] than [≅]. (Wells, 1994: 200).

- The monophthongisation of /≅Y/ word-final: cockney uses [≅] in words such as *pillow* [πIλ≅] or *window* [ωIνδ≅]. Thus, *pillar* and *pillow* in cockney are homophones.

4.2.3.1.2. Changes Accepted into RP

These include:

- The decline of weak [I]: [I] in weak syllables is either replaced by [≅] or by [ι] :

➢ [≅] in preconsonantal position e.g. before *-less* as is *careless* [∀κε≅λ≅σ], *-ness* as in *badness* [∀β{δν≅σ], *-ily* as in *family* [∀φ{μ≅λι], *-ity* as in *ability* [≅∀βIλ≅τι], adjectival *-ate* as in *accurate* [∀{κφYρ≅t], and sometimes in *-ed* as in *collected* [κ≅∀λεκτ≅δ], *-es* as in *Agnes* [∀{γν≅σ], *-et* as in *cabinet* [∀κ{β≅ν≅τ], and *-ace* as in *palace* [∀π{λ≅σ].

According to Gimson, when revising *EPD*, [≅] has become an acceptable variant of [I] in some phonetic contexts and has by now been firmly established. (1977: xvi)

➢ [ι][36] in final and prevocalic positions e.g. *agony* [∀{γ≅νι] and various [∀ϖε≅ρι≅σ].

Thus, *visibility* which was produced [%ϖIζI∀βIλIτI] is now pronounced [%ϖIζ≅∀βIλ≅τι].

-Glottalling: this process takes place when the glottal stop [?] replaces [τ] in syllable-final contexts:

➢ Before obstruents: *football* [∀φY?βO:λ], *it's quite good* [I?σ κωαI? γYδ].

➢ Before other consonants: *atmosphere* [∀{?μ≅σφI≅], *partly* [πA:?λι], *Gatwick* [∀γ{?ωIκ].

➢ Before vowels: (mainly among young RP speakers) *pick it up* [πIκ I? ςπ].

➢ Word final: *not* [νΘ?], *let's start* [λε?σ στA:?].

- /λ/ vocalisation: when dark /5/ is in preconsonantal or word final position, it loses its consonantal nature to become a vowel [ö], [Y], [ɤ], [Ö], [ς] *milk* [μIöκ], *middle* [μIδö],

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[36] The quality of this vowel varies from /I/ to /ι:/: "I refer to the /I ~ ι:/ neutralization as something intermediate or inconsistently fluctuating, as finally in [∀η{πι] *happy* and prevocalically in [ρεIδιεIτ] *radiate*." (Wells, 1994: 200).

mill [μІö]. According to Gimson, /λ/ vocalisation exists in labial environments as in *for example*, *myself* [μαІσεöφ] or in *tables* [τεІβöζ]. (1970: 203)

- Intrusive /ρ/: an [ρ] sound is introduced at words ending with a non-high vowel /≅, І≅, А:, О:/ as in *put a comma*[ρ] *in*, *I saw*[ρ] *it happen*, *the idea*[ρ] *of*, *Leamington Spa*[ρ] *and Warwick*. The previous British Prime Minister, John Major, used an intrusive /ρ/ in the phrase *the Fontainebleau* [ρ] *abatement* "[−βλ3:ρ ≅−]." (Wells, 1994: 202).

Intrusive /ρ/ can also be found before a suffix as in *magenta*[ρ]*ish*, *Kafka*[ρ]*esque*, *withdraw*[ρ]*al*, *saw*[ρ]*ing*.

Intrusive /ρ/ is more frequent in non-standard accents such as Cockney than in RP. Yet, there is an augmented tendency towards its use. Wells explains that its spread is due mainly to the merger of the former /О≅/ with /О:/. RP *manner*, *manor*, and *manna* have been homophonous /μ{ν≅/ for two centuries; but *sore*, *soar*, and *saw* have recently become phonetically alike /σО:/ which explains why many RP speakers place /ρ/ after /≅/ but not after /О:/ and why it is still overtly criticised in words such as *sawing* and not in *sonata in G*.

- Linking /ρ/: *better* [βετ≅], but *better off* [βετ≅ρ Θφ].

- Yod coalescence: when /φ/ precedes /τ, δ/

/τ, δ/ ⟶ [τΣ,δZ] / ——/φ/ in a number of situations:

▷ Before the clitic *you* or *your*: it becomes firmly established in informal RP as in *what you want* [ωΘτΣυ ωΘντ], *put your (keys here)* [πΥτΣО:], *would you mind* [ωΥδZυ μαІνδ]. Nevertheless, it faces another realisation in the same environment [?] the glottal stop as in *what you want* [ωΘ?φυ ωΘντ].

▷ Within a word, before unstressed vowels. In *EPD,* some words are more accepted to coalesce than others do and, there is a kind of hierarchy in pronunciation choices:

- Only one possible pronunciation: *Picture* /πІκτΣ≅/, *soldier* /σ≅ΥλδZ≅/.

- Two alternatives: *Actual*, *gradual*:

  ➢ First choice: /{κτΣυ≅λ/, /γρ{δZυ≅λ/

  ➢ Second choice: /{κτφυ≅λ/, /γρ{δφυ≅λ/.

- Two alternatives: *Statute*, *virtue*

  ➢ First choice: /στ{τφυ:τ/, /ϖ3:τφυ:/

> ➤ Second choice /στ{τΣυ:τ/, /ϖ3:τΣυ:/.

  - Only one possible pronunciation: *Stew* /στφυ:/, *endure* /Ινδφ Y≅/.

 ▷ Within stressed syllables: as in *tune* [τΣυ:ν] or *dune* [δΖυ:ν]. Overall, coalescence is still stigmatised in such contexts and [τφυ:ν] [δφυ:ν] are even now considerable rivals. In near-RP, *Tuesday* [∀τΣυ:ζ...] can be similar to *choose* [τΣυ:ζ] and *produce* [πρ≅∀δΖυ:σ] similar to *juice* [δΖυ:σ].

- Stress changes: although there are certain regulations where to stress a syllable, there are no predefined rules that determine stress in English. This fact would result in a change in syllables stress e.g. the penultimate stressed syllable in *controversy* [κ≅ν∀τρΘϖ≅σι] is gradually replacing the traditional initial stressed [∀κΘντρ≅ϖ3:σι] which also affects the pronunciation of three vowels (from [Θ, ≅, 3:] to [≅, Θ, ≅]). Similarly, initial stressed *contribute* [∀κΘντρΙβφυ:τ] is preferred to penultimate stressed [κ≅ν∀τρΙβφυ:τ]. The noun *research* [ρΙ∀σ3:τΣ] is now increasingly produced with stress on the first syllable [∀ρισ3:τΣ].

-The smoothing of diphthongs: as in *fire* and *going* from /φαΙ≅/, /γ≅YΙN/ to [φα≅] [γ≅ΙN].

     In 1990, Wells carried out a study to collect pronunciation preferences among RP speakers. He found out other changes in RP:

- 72% RP speakers prefer *nephew* [νεϖφυ:] to 28% [νεφφυ:].

- 92% RP speakers prefer [≅κ ϛ μπλΙΣ] *accomplish* with [ϛ] to the traditional [Θ] [≅κΘμπλΙΣ] (only 8%).

- One-third of the youngest interrogated group prefer *either* [ι:Δ≅], *secretary* [σεκρ≅τρι] to [αΙΔ≅], [σεκρΙτ≅ρι].

     Some scholars assume that language is a family of standards ⸺standard grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. Each standard knows how to vary autonomously without affecting the other:

> "We think of a language as being a single unitary system of standards. But each system is capable of considerable variation independent of variation in any other." (Goodenough, 1981: 19).

4.2.3.2. Variability in RP

     Although RP refers to an accent on its own, it consists nevertheless of a considerable variability.

4.2.3.2.1. Forms of variability

i. Systemic (inventory): when RP speakers have different systems of phonemes—mainly for vowels. Some older speakers have an additional vowel to distinguish between such pair of words *paw* /πO:/ and *pore* /πO≅/ whereas the majority of RP speakers pronounce both words /πO:/.

ii. Realisational (allophones): when a single phoneme has different possible phonetic realisations. Even if it is considered now as old-fashioned in RP, some older RP speakers pronounce [oY] in *boat* /β≅Yτ/.

iii. Lexical: when there are different possible pronunciations for the same word. The word *economic* or *either* can have two different pronunciations /%ι:κ≅∀νΘμΙκ/ or /%εκ≅∀νΘμΙκ/ and /αΙΔ≅/ or /ι:Δ≅/. Another example is the word *off* which can also have two different pronunciations /Θφ/ or /O:φ/[37].

Lexical variability is also known as *free variation*. We have already seen that some changes within RP are due to time or to the situation in which a speaker can find themselves. There exists another difference, which is due only to the speaker's choice and which can hardly be explained otherwise. This change in pronunciation is known as free variation[38]:

> "Speakers will have an individual preference for one over the other, and—at least until it is demonstrated that there is some reason for this preference—the best we can say is that some people, perhaps a majority, use this pronunciation, and other people use the other pronunciation." (Hughes *et al.*, 2005: 8-9).

The notion of free variation has come under attack by some sociolinguists such as Trudgill or Labov who claim that the shift from one pronunciation to another is due to social parameters (prestige, residence, gender, or social classes).

All this variability in RP indicates differences in pronunciation of some words between people. However, there is much more to be said about it in continuous speech in which rapidity as much as formality are to be taken into account. In this case, other features can be added:

- H-dropping in *stop him* /στΘπΙμ/.

- R-insertion in *vanilla ice-cream* /ϖ≅νΙλ≅≤αΙσκρι:μ/.

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[37] /O:φ/ is usually associated with older upper-class speakers but it is considered somehow as archaic.

[38] Free variation, in phonology, refers to the substitution of one sound for another. The word can have more than one pronouncing version without affecting its meaning.

- Elision in *expect so* /σπεκ σ≅Υ/.

- Assimilation in *that plate* /Δαπ πλεΙτ/.

4.2.3.2.2. Factors Justifying Variability

Many factors enhance variability within RP, among these:

▷ Age: as we will find out in the second chapter, older speakers' pronunciation can differ from younger ones who, in their turn, introduce new changes in speech. Younger speakers, for instance, use more monophthongs where others have been using diphthongs (Wells).

▷ Social class: people from upper classes have some characteristics that distinguish them from the others. These speakers use, for instance, open final vowel (close to cardinal vowel n° 3 [E]) in words such as *university* (Trudgill).

▷ The age at which a person begins to acquire RP: the earlier a person acquires RP the better it is, it makes them avoid some RP features in rapid speech, such as /h/ dropping (Giegerich).

Other factors that can increase variability include the speaker's occupation, attitude to RP, and personality (some speakers are more cautious about their speech than others are) (Hughes *et al.*).

4.3. The Future of English

Many observations can be added as to the future of English language. According to Marckwardt, variation has constantly been part of English and there are no reasons it should not keep on being so:

> "Words like *sap, bed, grim, full*, all of these that are pronounced with 'short vowels', have not changed in pronunciation since King Alfred's time. It's conceivable, therefore, that they will remain very much as they are. Now the long vowels and diphthongs—the [ει], [ι:], [αι] sounds—these are the ones that have constantly been shifting from one generation to another, and I should not be surprised at all to see them continue to do so." (Marckwardt, 1966: 77).

According to Quirk, English will maintain its actual status and weight worldwide; it is the means for acquiring technology and knowledge:

> "English will—at any rate, in the immediate future—be the most important language of learning… English must remain the 'window on the world' so far as science and learning are concerned." (1966: 76).

5. Reasons of Accents Variation and their Outcome

In this section, our purpose is to understand how accents differ. In order to do so, we have to locate first where English accents are geographically located.

Some linguists such as Chomsky (1964) claim that there are no significant differences provided the grammatical rules remain unchanged. Others, on the other hand, such as Labov (1972) advocate a general theory about predicting these differences, in the sense that grammar includes an aptitude for potential expansions of individual rules.

In order to locate and explain accent boundaries, a line marking areas (isoglosses) having a distinct linguistic feature must be determined. One common elucidation is to delimit and trace linguistic boundaries in the course of historical factors: the study of accents based on an analysis of their development over time. These boundaries have been identified by Kurath (1964) to compare accents of English in both USA and Britain and to differentiate North, Midland, and South areas all together.

In the light of Kurath's analysis, different inventories of phonemes are introduced. Thus, we can hear different variants of a particular phoneme in Chicago [{, o] for /A:, O:/ as in *locks* and *short* or in Yorkshire [Y, α] for /ç, ε/ as in *mum* and *very*. Allophones of one phoneme can be those of another in an entirely different vowel system. Even if a Yorkshire speaker produces [Y] as an allophone of /ç/, they can perfectly perceive that /Y/ and /ç/ are two contrastive phonemes in RP.

5.1. Reasons of Accents Variation

Accents vary according to a number of motives, among these: *ease of articulation*, *naturalness*, *timing*, *consonant cluster*, *assimilation*, and *simplicity and economy*.

5.1.1. Ease of Articulation

As time passes, nearly most languages and pronunciations go through an indefinite continued evolution. The evolution can comprise a sum of innovations, which differ from one place to another in a number of respects. According to Labov (1991), English vowels systems undergo three types of phonetic change over time: chain shifting, mergers, and shifts of syllabicity[39].

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[39] As we have seen in *Historical Changes* section 4.2.2., there were many changes:

Some changes are traditionally prejudiced against and are somewhat accused of displaying "human laziness and slovenliness" (Wells, 1996: 94). Although the notion of the least effort while articulating can explain some of these changes (such as the pronunciation of [?] when intervocalic as in *butter* [βς?≅]), it is nonetheless regarded as a preconceived opinion that is not based on logical grounds or concrete experience.

Ease of articulation does not explain why a definite sound is to be used instead of all the potential ones and why [?] is an allophone of /τ/ only and not of other alveolar or plosive phonemes. Besides, some words such as *start* where [ρ] has been deleted over time on account of the least effort principle do not clarify by analogy of this principle why the word *start* is not produced [στA:] or [σA:].

5.1.2. Naturalness

A natural class is based on criteria of simplicity. A set of segments is said to be a natural class if fewer phonetic features are needed. The natural class of sounds /β/, /δ/, and /γ/, for instance, come under the heading *voiced plosives*. They share the same features: they are pulmonic egressive, voiced, interrupted, and immediately released. A natural class of sounds[40] can be more natural than another as they can be acquired earlier than some others and are found elsewhere in many languages (Crystal, 1992).

According to Hyman, some vowels are more likely to be found in the phonemic inventory of several languages than others are. While [ψ, 2], for instance, are rare other vowels such as [ι, α] or [o, υ] are frequent in many languages. Therefore, [ι, α] or [o, υ] are said to be more natural sounds than [ψ, 2]. When pronunciation changes, it is inclined to exploit certain natural class of sounds, as it is the case of the loss of the *alveolar lateral* feature of dark [5]. When /λ/ is vocalised as in *middle* [μIδö] the choice of one particular sound is made from many remaining others.

As to consonants, /φ, ϖ/ are more natural than /T, Δ/ for three reasons:

- Chain shifting consists of change from one long vowel to a shorter one and vice versa or from a lax vowel to a tenser one.
- Merger (merge) is often used to refer to two phonemes when combining into one phoneme.
- Shift of syllabicity represents a change in the place of an accented syllable in a particular word.

[40] A language will never contain voiced stops unless it has voiceless stops, or nasal vowels without having also oral vowels. The existence of voiced stops and nasal vowels in a language implies the existence of voiceless stops and oral vowels.

/ϕ, ϖ/ are acquired earlier than /T, Δ/, they are easier to produce, and they are more recurrent in other languages. In Cockney, /ϕ, ϖ/ tend to prevail in comparison with /T, Δ/ as in *mouth* [μαΥϕ] or *mother* [μςϖ≅]. In cockney, *three* and *free* are homophones [ϕρι:]. In New York, however, /T, Δ/ are replaced by a more natural class /τ, δ/.

5.1.3. Timing

As there might be a lengthy instance for the transition from one sound to another, some segments may change as in *exhume* /εκσ∀ηϕυ:μ/ [εγ∀ζϕυ:μ], others are deleted as in *stop him* [στΘπΙμ], and others such as [τ] may be added between /ν/ and /σ/ as in *nuisance* [∀νϕυ:σ≅ντσ] and *allegiance* [≅∀λι:δΖ≅ντσ].

5.1.4. Consonant Cluster

The typical segment sequence is an alternation of consonants and vowels *he said it* /ηι σεδ Ιτ/ CVCVCVC. This can somehow explain why [ρ] disappeared before consonants as in *card* /κA:δ/ CVC. However, English admits up to three consonants cluster word-initial and up to four consonants cluster word-final as in *students* /στϕυ:δντσ/ or *texts* /τεκστσ/. The principle of consonant cluster can describe partially why some English-speaking communities kept or lost [ρ].

5.1.5. Assimilation

As we have already seen, English admits consonants cluster which may lead to a sound resembling another in the same or next word. Old English /αμτ/ is nowadays identified as /{ντ/, the change from /μ/ to /ν/ resulted from the fact that the place of articulation (bilabial) [μ] changed to alveolar [ν] because of the following adjacent sound [τ] *alveolar plosive*: bilabial ⟶ alveolar/ ——alveolar. The same phenomenon of assimilation happens with words such as *sandwich*:

Rule A) /σ{νδωΙτΣ/ alveolar ⟶ Ø / alveolar——   [σ{νωιδΖ/τΣ]

Rule B) [σ{νωιδΖ/τΣ] alveolar ⟶ bilabial / ——bilabial   [σ{μωιδΖ/τΣ]

[σ{νδωΙτΣ] ⟶ [σ{μωιδΖ/τΣ] through assimilation by rule A and B.

Among other cases of assimilation that subsist in English: *coalescent assimilation* where the combination of an alveolar and a palatal results into an alveo-palatal [τΣ]; *nature* /νεΙτΣ≅/, for instance, was once pronounced with [τϕ]. Even if

assimilation is a significant dynamic that stimulates change or progress within language, it is of an insufficient evidence to be the foundation to all that change.

5.1.6. Simplicity and Economy

Wishing for a simplification of an articulatory movement provides another explanation of accent development and differences. In fact, such a process may transform the phonological system totally. Economy while speaking provides a fewer number of phonemes, phonological rules, and conventions:

> "A solution with fewer phonemes is judged more economical than a solution recognizing more phonemes. Similarly, we might say that a solution using fewer rules is more economical than a solution requiring more rules, and so on. Economy, then, is a quantitative measure by which a given solution can be evaluated." (Hyman, 1975: 99).

The number of the phonemes in Present English differs from that of Middle or Old English and is likely to differ from 'Future' English. Monophthongisation, for instance, may cause the loss of some diphthongs and triphthongs and may condense, therefore, some phonological rules and increase the number of homophones.

5.2. Outcomes of Change

All these motives for modification can develop:
- A loss of certain contrasts between /ϕ/ *I fought* and /T/ *I thought* as in [αI ϕO:τ] or between /τ/ *latter* and /δ/ *ladder* as in [λ{4≅]. What were once considered as being contrastive phonemes may in the future cease to be so. The process is slow, *meet* [ε:] and *meat* [{:] were contrastive in Old English; it was not until the 15th century that these two words became homophones. Besides, the use of some sounds such as [Y≅] is diminishing and we witness the merger of this diphthong with /O:/ as in *sure* [ΣO:].
- One feature of modern RP is the increase of more homophones such as *far* and *fire* [ϕA:], *mints* and *mince* [μIvτσ]. For many speakers *paw*, *pour*, *pore*, and *poor* have but one realisation [πO:].
- Misunderstanding: when *mince* and *mints* become homophones; a sentence such as 'Go and buy some [μIvτσ]' seems ambiguous (what does the speaker mean? beef or herbs).
- A different pronunciation of one phoneme can influence that of another. *Set* /ε/ and *sat* /{/, *bed* /ε/ and *bad* /{/; if /ε/ becomes more open, /{/ will undergo the same change in

openness to avoid confusion between these two words. [{] has become more closer in Australia, centralised in U.S.A., and lower in RP English.

- Another feature is a multiple pronunciation for one single word. A word such as *superior* or *supernatural* has at least five possible pronunciations[41] in RP English (from *EPD*).

Superior	*Supernatural*
[συ:∀πI≅ρι≅]	[%συ:π≅∀ν{τΣ≅ρ≅λ]
[σφυ:∀πI≅ρι≅]	[%συ:π≅∀ν{τΣΥρ≅λ]
[σΥ∀πI≅ρι≅]	[%σφυ:π≅∀ν{τΣ≅ρ≅λ]
[σφΥ∀πI≅ρι≅]	[%σφυ:π≅∀ν{τΣΥρ≅λ]
[σ≅∀πI≅ρι≅]	[%σφΥπ≅∀ν{τΣ≅ρ≅λ]
	[%σφΥπ≅∀ν{τΣΥρ≅λ]
	[%σΥπ≅∀ν{τΣ≅ρ≅λ]
	[%σΥπ≅∀ν{τΣΥρ≅λ]

In the examples listed above, the difference relies in the pronunciation of a vowel within a syllable. As time passes, RP speakers may end by selecting one pronunciation or opting for many more. We can expect through these realisations that the pronunciations, which are likely to prevail, are those with [≅] or with [υ:]. In a sense, [υ:] will change into [Y] then to [≅]. As it will be mentioned in the second chapter, RP [Y] is increasingly realised as [≅], which means that [Y] is to merge with [≅] and, therefore, [Y] occurrence will tend to reduce. Nevertheless, we have no enough evidence to assert such a statement until we make sure that [Y] in *look* and *book* would change into a schwa. But according to these examples, we can deduce that [υ:] can merge with [Y] since the syllables realised with [Y] are those realised with [υ:].

However, in order to verify this hypothesis we have, at random, calculated 150 words from the dictionary (*EPD*). All these words are usually pronounced with [υ:], only 14 words (9.34%) can have a second realisation (with [Y]). With such a percentage, [Y] can hardly be a second possible allophone of /υ:/, the amount is up to

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[41] These pronunciations are from *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2003).

now too small. However, this is in itself problematic, while [Y] is not an allophone, it is nevertheless a second possible realisation. Can we then speak of free variation? What are exactly the socio-cultural parameters that can influence the choice of one quality rather than that of another?

After all, languages variation and change depend largely on people; and to conclude with one statement or another needs more study and research. We intend to provide more development as to this question in a future work.

As we have already mentioned above, accents evolve through time. However, not all English accents adopt the same changes. The outstanding problem resides in the difference of that evolution from one place to another. Therefore, why do not all English accents advance in the same path and towards the same direction?

Some English speakers need to preserve their identity through an idiosyncratic use of speech. Preserving intelligibility reinforces conservatism against any modifications; however, accents change no matter what disapproval they engage.

Outside Great Britain, RP, for example, symbolises British people i.e. when we hear somebody using RP, we directly associate that particular pronunciation to Great Britain. Even if RP is spoken by a minority, it is nevertheless constantly changing—a sign of its being alive; and that change operates within limited boundaries.

Accepted changes can spread to a wider area or can only affect a group of individuals (social group, gender, age, occupation, etc.) to demonstrate its own peculiarity. Any diffusion (wider or restricted) of speech modifications depends on imitation, and any imitation depends on how fashionable or prestigious a modification sounds like. This is why some pronunciations are said to be old-fashioned or brand new; indeed, a speech is looked at just as haircuts and clothes are.

People tend to imitate prestigious accents such as RP even if it is spoken by a minority group. According to Wells, people can modify their speech so as to follow the trend: "A television reporter coming to work in London may be made to feel provincial and ridiculous if he or she retains a working-class northern accent." (1996: 104).

Statistics reveal the percentage of RP speakers (3%~5%) who use it as their mother tongue in the UK, but they do not give enough details about those who use in particular contexts such as court, schools, and any other formal or ceremonial situation where convention and etiquette are most fitting.

However, not all fashionable modifications come out from upper-class speech, /ŋ/ dropping, for instance, is typically derived from Cockney. In spite of overt

stigmatisation and criticism, it has become largely spread in RP. The imitated groups may change with time, and the new modifications of pronunciation may become old-fashioned and may leave the place for other ones to be generated and to be set as the new fashion.

6.   Standard English and RP Definition

When reading Hyman's *Phonology: Theory and Analysis*, we have intentionally replaced the word 'phoneme' by 'Standard English' in the phonological analysis of the different views of the phoneme. Hyman relates three different views:

1) Daniel Jones' View: the phoneme is a phonetic reality and it only exists through physical/concrete realisations.

2) Trubetzkoy's View: the phoneme as a phonological reality where it functions as a minimal unit to distinguish meaning.

3) B. de Courtenay's View: where the phoneme is only a mental reality.

In substituting **phoneme** with **Standard English**, we find ourselves with three different definitions of Standard English:

1) Standard English is a family of varieties and it is virtual; it takes reality only when it becomes physical such as British English or American English. According to Dekkak, Standard English is an idealised concept with no real and phonological level; it becomes real when it is realised physically and when it carries with it all the sociocultural factors proper to the speaker's identity.

2) Standard English can be defined in terms of *oppositions* and of its *function* in the system of language. It is the sum of relevant properties (grammar, morphology, phonology, vocabulary, and orthography) of a linguistic system and which can be opposed to any other standard (English or not) in order to make distinction.

3) Standard English represents a psychological/mental reality and exists only at the level of the mind. It is an image we have in mind and try to approximate; but the target is hardly achieved since the realisation is an altered version of what we intend or of what we perceive. An American speaker, for instance, **intends** to produce /αI μIσ φυ:/ *I miss you* or /λ{δ≅ ⁄/ *ladder* but will say [αIμIΣ≅], [λ{4≅]; the hearer will have the **impression** that he has heard /αI μIσ φυ:/ and /λ{δ≅ ⁄/ and recognise the utterance as such even if the sounds differ from what should be said.

To choose one definition among the three depends mainly on the trend we want to follow. In a work limited like this one, we cannot do justice to these linguistic

schools and we must, therefore, postpone such investigation to a future work. Standard English will be defined according to what we have already seen in the preceding five sections.

Previously, English was composed of a collection of dialects used in particular by monolinguals within a limited shore. Now it consists of a wide range of non-standards and standards varieties, which are spoken at an international level:

> "English is now well on the way to becoming a world-language:
> and this means many types of English, many pronunciations
> and vocabulary-groups within the English language." (Wrenn,
> 1949: 185).

It would seem important to argue, in this respect, that there are various kinds of Englishes that are determined by use, and various examples where the term English (standard language) is preceded by an adjective, the following phrases are taken from Kachru (1994):

- *American* English, *South Asian* English, etc.

- *Legal* English, *Liturgical* English, etc.

- *BBC* English, *Oxford* English, etc.

- *Scientific* English, *Computer* English, etc.

- *Upper-class* English, *Black* English, etc.

Such absence of homogeneity in form and function for what is considered as being one language presents an opportunity for investigation. A sociolinguistic perspective is necessary to identify social attitudes to the use of the standard variety since they are imperative for language planning, language teaching, and language in public life. The social, educational, and political reactions to a particular variety or variation can largely influence the adopted norms.

The social parameters comprise: gender, dwelling in urban or rural areas, type of neighbourhood, social status, and age at which English is learnt. Besides, other important aspects are to be taken into consideration, such as the diverse situations in which speakers may find themselves. But all these variables pose problem since they need to be measured efficiently because they remind us that language reflects society.

Analysing English phonetics and phonology only from a sociolinguistic perspective remains quite challenging given that it is so widely spoken and so rapidly evolving that recording all existing data remains an exhaustive and a long-term labour.

According to Mc David (1969) or to Labov (1972), in any community the speech of some people (mainly those who ran the affairs of the empire or of the country) is considered better than that of the others (lower socio-economic classes) and thus worth imitating. In a sense, prestige or the lack of it enhances the development and the adoption of a particular variety.

If this assumption is valid (or rather taken for granted), we can, then, explain why RP English does constantly change. People holding higher socio-economic ranks coming from different backgrounds or regions may bring with them their own speech and thus introduce slight differences. However, this is not a solid argument to support what can elucidate such heterogeneity in variation from one place to another or from a generation to another. Younger speakers among whom many variations in pronunciation are observed do not take anymore their pronouncing model from older or educated RP speakers. It is no longer a problem of regional or social class influence.

They can hardly be said to form the *speech community* defined by Labov (1989) as a group of speakers sharing a common set of evaluative norms. Evaluation or recognition of what is more prestigious become relative from a generation to another; it may be possible that these younger speakers recognise what is highly esteemed but do not admit the need of it when they speak. The necessity seems to rely on their wish for demarcating their own identity from that of conformist people.

According to Gimson, "Some members of the younger generation reject RP because of its association with the 'Establishment' in the same way that they question the validity of other forms of traditional authority." (1970: 86). As this assignment is not intended to be psychological or sociological, we cannot, therefore, go forward into this design.

Even if it is quite difficult to provide a clear-cut definition of Standard English, we can claim that Standard English pronunciation (RP) and Standard English spelling alike have to be learnt during a period of time. Both require particular formal circumstances in order to be used.

As to RP, it is often associated with the ideal or prestigious form used by educated speakers and is generally viewed as the most accepted and understood English variety. It also comprises common characteristics with other English varieties, a fact that makes the latter mutually intelligible. Therefore, it is unlikely to argue that there is one single Standard English. Finally, we learn that no Standard English is to be associated with terms such as *best* and *superior*.

Some linguists consider that Standard English and RP are a 'neutral' form and that dialects and accents are its variants. Others, however, regard Standard English as one dialect and RP as one accent among many others. Regardless of any position adopted, it remains unambiguous that Standard English is a matter of dialect and RP is one of accent.

RP does not only allude to a single and unaffected form of accent that was once categorised by Daniel Jones a hundred years ago but also to the label agreed upon when pronouncing Standard English. To define standard pronunciation or RP, we have to look back, therefore, to conventions and to the people who establish them, since dealing with standard pronunciation must above all include admitted conventions.

When some features of speech become commonly widespread, firmly established, and essentially used by influential figures, they turn out into a model that has to be adopted by everybody. Indeed, as Wells announces it: "What started as a vulgarism is becoming respectable." (Wells, 1994: 201).

It is by some means ironic to see that what has long been considered as being vulgar or subject to a great disapproval has become no more so for the simple reason that it is currently used by educated people. In other words, when a way of pronunciation or another is considered 'acceptable' or 'refined' to some members of the society it can be easily adopted no matter how stigmatised it was and no matter what social background it is derived from.

However, we are in front of another dilemma. As we have already seen, today's RP is affected by non-standard accents; it is possible to say, then, that today's non-standards will be the standard of tomorrow. We can envisage the implications of such an assumption for it means that if it be true anybody will have their own standard and will no longer need to go to school. But fortunately enough, this problem is unlikely to be posed since most people target education and go to school to achieve it.

We have also discovered that RP is sensitive to variations. According to Gimson, modern English is accused as having "Mumbling and mangled vowels and missing consonants" (1970: 83). Judgements such as these imply that there is a standard to which this variation is compared and this very particular comparison shows the concrete existence of a Standard English.

The debate is not actually related to the written form. English spelling was not completely agreed upon before the eighteenth century; the codification of grammar and morphology made it easier to be more stable than pronunciation afterwards.

After all, spoken forms have always been subject to modifications and to the lack of correspondence between regions and generations. Yet, there has been one regional and social accent (the speech of the ruling class of London), which was above all the most preferred one.

If the most 'preferred' variety was agreed upon, we would claim, then, that the English linguistic situation is finally fixed; yet, this is not the case. There are increasingly and up to now modifications brought to that speech. With the spread of education and of communication, the 'prestigious' speech that had explored the world has become more accessible and, therefore, more subject to alteration. As it is based on educated speech, many educated speakers may claim that there is no need to stick to that variety and that their own accent is perfectly appropriate.

Chapter II

Phonetics and Phonology of Standard Englishes:

A Comparative Study

Unlike Arabic, French, or Spanish; English pronunciation is a well-known problem for many non-native learners of English. Beginners and advanced can equally have their problems in uttering the adequate sounds of a written word. According to De Saussure, spelling conceals language functioning: "Writing obscures language; it is not a guise for language but a disguise." (1996: 30)

Concerning English, can we say that there is a direct link between spelling and pronunciation? American usage has developed a separate orthography such as center, traveled, catalog, defense, etc. Still, differences between British and American spelling remain very slight. And spelling remains less variable than pronunciation: "On the whole, then, variations in spelling are small, and we may say that we have a fairly clear and consistent 'standard'." (Quirk; *et al.* 1964: 85)

It is valuable to understand the theoretical organisation of the nature of sounds and the way they behave in a language. For a thorough examination of sounds units, a phonological analysis is needed. The analysis studies not only the inventory of sound units in a language and the rules that govern their combination to form syllables and words but also the reasons of their phonetic manifestations (why [?], for instance, is an allophone of $/\tau/$ and not of /T/). Some phonetic features may be redundant, being predictable from other features either of the same segment or of the adjacent one. An understanding of phonology helps the teachers to examine any of these pronunciation difficulties and guide their students to overcome them.

This chapter aims at providing a framework within which the phonetic and phonological features of Standard Englishes are set. In this chapter, we discuss phonetics and phonology of Standard Englishes in the British Isles, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa and draw attention to the relationships, likenesses, and differences between them.

We mainly focus on one form of English, the one which is spoken by some native speakers (such as RP for England) and taught as the standard form at school. We concentrate on Englishes of educated speakers, skipping over lower-prestige accents. Our discussion of these Standard Englishes is not based on the assumption of their being prestigious but, on their assessment of being 'correct' standards in the eyes of their speakers.

As this chapter is meant to be a comparative study, we use RP English as the reference with which we compare the other mentioned Standard Englishes. In other words, we discuss the principal differences between each accent in relation to RP

features. This chapter is divided into three parts: *Northern hemisphere Englishes*, *Southern hemisphere Englishes*, and *Phonological and phonetic comparisons*.

We selected the following data from Gimson (1970), Laver (1995), Barber (1999), Wells (1996), Giegerich (2001), Trudgill & Hannah (2002), Roca & Johnson (2003), Schneider *et al.* (2004). We do not mention all Englishes phonetics and phonology but only the features we find in common among these writers. We also have to specify that nearly 5% of the cited examples in this work are taken from these publications; because of the lack of documentation we could not proceed otherwise.

There are 21 vowel scales among which three (RP vowel scales) are taken from Gimson (1970). The others (VSn°4 - VSn°21) are but a personal attempt to make the distinction between Englishes vowels more perceptible.

1. Northern Hemisphere Englishes

Northern hemisphere Englishes include British Isles Englishes such as English RP, Standard Scottish English, Standard Welsh English, Standard Northern Ireland English, and Standard Southern Ireland English. It comprises as well Northern American Englishes such as Standard American English and Standard Canadian English.

1.1. British Isles English

British Isles refers to two large islands consisting of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Southern Ireland.

1.1.1. Received Pronunciation

The following sections depict some key elements in RP phonology and phonetics. These include vocalic and consonantal descriptions.

1.1.1.1. RP Vowels

RP vowels are divided into three sound categories: monophthongs, diphthongs, and triphthongs.

1.1.1.1.1. RP Monophthongs

RP has twelve monophthongs[1] /ι:, I, ε, {, ς, ≅, 3:, A:, Θ, O:, Y, υ:/. As far as the front vowels are concerned, /ι:/ as in *peat* is realised with a spread of the lips. Whereas /I/ as in *pit* the lips are loosely spread. In addition to [I] (the usual allophone), this vowel (/I/) has two other allophones [ι, ≅] depending on the phonetic context in which it occurs. In final position, there is a tendency to substitute /I/ for a closer and fronter vowel [ι] as in words such as *very* [ϖερι] or *city* [σIτι]. In the *English Pronouncing Dictionary*, almost all words ending with the monophthong /I/[2] are transcribed with [ι]. In mid-position, however, there is a tendency to substitute /I/ for a central vowel [≅]. In the *EPD*, the following realisations are considered as a second possible choice and all these words below can have both pronunciations [I, ≅]:

▷ Initial suffix:

-be *believe* [β≅∀λι:ϖ], *behave* [β≅∀ηεIϖ], *beside* [β≅∀σαIδ].

▷ Final suffix:

-ity *possibility* [πΘσ≅∀βIλ≅τI], *actuality* [{κτΣυ∀{λ≅τI], *community* [κ≅∀μφυ:ν≅τI].

-itive *positive* [∀πΘζ≅τIϖ], *cognitive* [∀κΘγν≅τIϖ], *sensitive* [∀σεν τσ≅τIϖ].

-ily *happily* [∀η{π≅λI], *family* [∀φ{μ≅λI], *necessarily* [∀νεσ≅σ≅ρ≅λI].

-ate *fortunate* [∀φO:τΣ≅ν≅τ], *accurate* [∀{κφYρ≅τ], *elaborate* (adj.) [I∀λ{β≅ρ≅τ].

-ible *visible* [∀ϖIζ≅β5∧], *audible* [∀O:δ≅β5∧], *eligible* [∀ελIδZ≅β5∧].

-em *problem* [∀πρΘβλ≅μ], *system* [∀σIστ≅μ], *poem* [∀π≅Y≅μ].

-ess *hopeless* [∀η≅Yπλ≅σ], *actress* [∀{κτρ≅σ], *goodness* [∀γYδν≅σ].

-age *manage* [∀μ{ν≅δZ].

-ace *grimace* [∀γρIμ≅σ], *menace* [∀μεν≅σ], *preface* [∀πρεφ≅σ].

-et *bracelet* [∀βρεIσλ≅τ], *agate* [∀{γ≅τ], *amulet* [∀{μφYλ≅τ].

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[1] Monophthongs are also identified as **pure vowels** since there is no change in quality during the whole phase.

[2] Diphthongs such as /αI, εI, OI/ do not undergo the same process. The second vowel /I/ is transcribed as it is.

There are other possible pronunciations of /I/; among these [ε] as in *enable* [ε∀νεIβ5∧], *enforce* [εν∀φO:σ], *embark* [εμ∀βA:κ], *embody* [εμ∀βΘδI]. In unstressed syllables, it is often realised as [≅] as in *wanted* and *horses*. A process that makes the distinction between *roses* [ρ≅Yζ≅ζ] and *Rosa's* [ρ≅Yζ≅ζ] almost inexistent.

Another front vowel is /ε/ as in *pet* where the lips are loosely spread and a bit wider than /I/. /{/, on the other hand, as in *pat* is the most open of all RP front vowels (the lips are neutrally open). In modern RP, this vowel (/{/) can be lowered[3] to the quality of cardinal vowel n°4 /α/. It can also be produced as /A:/ without causing a change in meaning, both can be used for the RP pronunciation of the following words: *plastic* [∀πλ{στIκ] or [∀πλA:στIκ], *plasticine* [∀πλ{στ≅σι:ν] or [∀πλA:στ≅σι:ν], *photograph* [∀φ≅Yτ≅γρ{φ] or [∀φ≅Yτ≅γρA:φ], *elastic* [I∀λ{στIκ] or [I∀λA:στIκ], and *transfer* [∀τρ{ντσφ3:] or [∀τρA:ντσφ3:].

As to central vowels, RP encloses three qualities. First, /ς/ as in *putt* is realised with lips neutrally open. Second, /3:/ as in *pert* where there is no lip rounding. It can alter, however, between mid-open and mid-close vowels in the same way as the following vowel. Third, /≅/ as in *principate* needs no lip rounding. It is referred to as the *schwa* and is never stressed. Its quality differs depending on the adjacent segments:

▷ Near Velars: *regret* (occurs in the half-close position)

▷ Non-final as in *alarm* (occurs between the half-close and the half-open position)

▷ Word final as in *father*; /≅/ is more open.

The third and last group of RP monophthongs is that of back vowels. /A:/ as in *part* is realised with the lips neutrally open. Upper-class speakers may use a more retracted vowel than the indicated one and which is close to cardinal vowel n°5 [A]. As to /Θ/ as in *pot*, there is a slight open lip-rounding. In words written with *al* or *au*, this vowel (/Θ/) can be pronounced with /O:/ as in *salt* [σO:λτ], *alter* [∀O:λτ≅], *fault* [φO:λτ], and *Austria* [∀O:στρι≅]. Some upper-class and conservative speakers may also use /O:/ instead of /Θ/ before /φ, σ, T/ as *Waldorf* [∀ωO:λδO:φ] *auscultate*
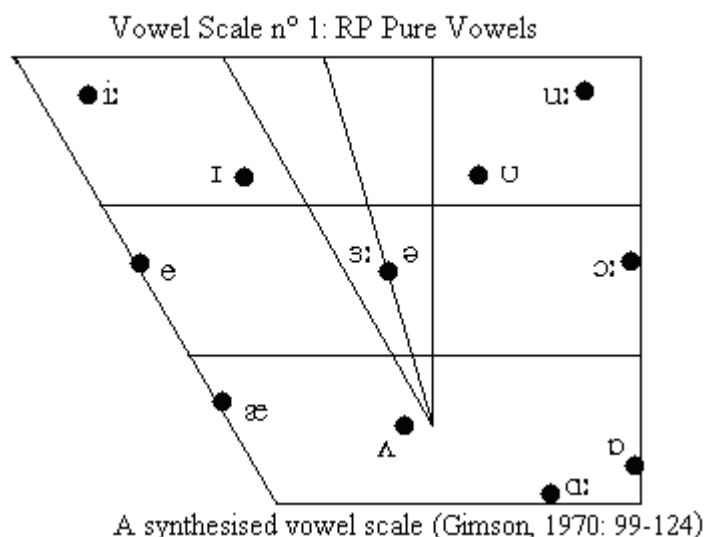
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[3] Lowering can be used not only with /{/ but also with /I, ε/; all the three are part of one practice identified as **chain shift**. The third chapter tries to identify the difference of pronunciation between older and younger RP speakers.

[∀O:σκ≅λτεIτ], *austere* [O:∀στI≅], *wrath* [ρO:T]. However, these pronunciations are very rare and they are even considered as affected.

/O:/ as in *port* is realised with a medium lip-rounding. The majority of RP speakers use /O:/ for words that were formerly produced with [O≅] e.g. *court* /κO:τ/, *four* /ɸO:/, *pour* /πO:/, and *door* /δO:/. They do not distinguish any more between *caught* and *court*, *for* and *four*, *pour* and *paw* or between *daw* and *door*. It is also worth noticing that RP speakers are increasingly using /O:/ where traditionally /Y≅/ has been used as in *cure* [κφO:], *tour* [τO:], *poor* [πO:], or *sure* [ΣO:]. This process may imply that /Y≅/ is losing its phonemic significance.

/Y/ as in *put* is realised with a close lip-rounding. Sometimes the vowel is realised so front that many listeners confuse it with /I/ *foot* and *fit*[4]. However, there is an increased tendency to realise it with an unrounded vowel [ɣ]. In /ʊ:/ as in *boot* the lips are closely round. The traditional RP vowel is close to cardinal vowel n°8 [ʊ], however, this vowel is no longer fully back or completely rounded. The quality of this vowel is near [}], it tends to be more centralised as in [σY∏}t]. Some speakers use /ʊ:/ for *room* [ρʊ:μ] but /Y/ for *bathroom* [βA:TρYμ] as well as for words such as *groom* [γρYμ], and *broom* [βρYμ].

Vowel Scale n° 1: RP Pure Vowels

A synthesised vowel scale (Gimson, 1970: 99-124)

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[4] For more details, see Torgersen (2002).

1.1.1.1.2. Diphthongs

RP has eight diphthongs. Three are centring (having the schwa /≅/ as a second element) /I≅, ε≅, Y≅/ and five are closing (having the second element /I/ or /Y/ closer than the first one) /εI, αI, αY, ≅Y, OI/.

Concerning centring diphthongs, /I≅/ as in *peer* is realised with no lip-rounding. Upper-class speakers may use for the second element a more open quality than [≅], even if it is often considered as affected. However, there is a mounting tendency to monophthongise /I≅/ by dropping [≅] to [I™:] as in *beer* [βI™:] mainly in compounds *beer garden*. This process is known as **smoothing**. As to /Y≅/ as in *poor* there is some initial lip-rounding. Many speakers have [O:] instead of [Y≅]. For the last centring diphthong /ε≅/ as in *pair*, there is no lip-rounding. In modern RP, speakers tend to monophthongise /ε≅/ to [ε:] as in *air* or *heir* [ε:]. This monophthongisation of RP /ε≅/ to [ε:] means that only length distinguishes between these pairs of words *bed* [βεδ] and *bared* [βε:δ], *fez* [φεζ] and *fairs* [φε:ζ], or *Ken* [κεν] and *cairn* [κε:ν]. However, /ε≅/ is often placed under this heading: ***resistance to innovation*** since such monophthongisation is still stigmatised.

The smoothing process (remove the second element) affects all centring diphthongs—/I≅/, /ε≅/, and /Y≅/, a tendency which is more favoured by younger RP speakers than by older ones.

VS n° 2: RP Centring Diphthongs
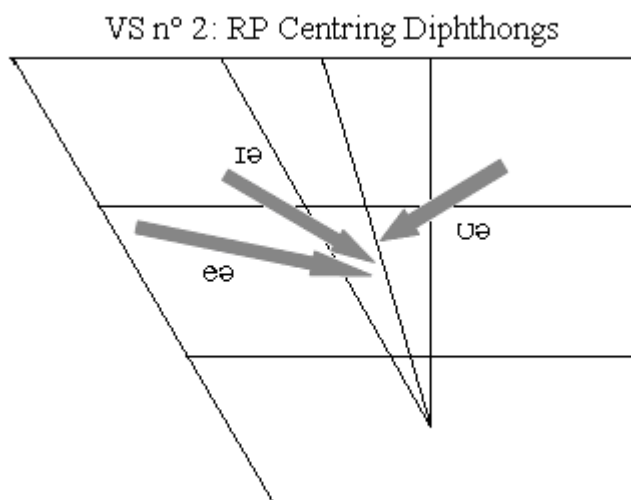
(Gimson, 1970: 141)

Another group of diphthongs is the closing ones. First, /εI/ as in *pay* is realised with a spread of the lips. The quality varies between mid-open and mid-close position. Second, /αI/ as in *pie* the lips are spread for the first element. Third, /OI/ as in *poise* the lips are rounded for the first element. Fourth, /≅Y/ as in *Po* the lips are rounded for the second element. In modern RP, speakers may use a fronter quality that suggests a small distance between the vowels of *post* /π≅Yστ/ and paste /πεIστ/. The fifth element is /αY/ as in *Pow* where the lips are rounded for the second element. Some upper-class speakers and some members of the royal family use a fronted quality [1] for the second element; so that listeners may, sometimes, confuse it with /αI/.

VS n° 3: RP Closing Diphthongs

(Gimson, 1970: 127-136)
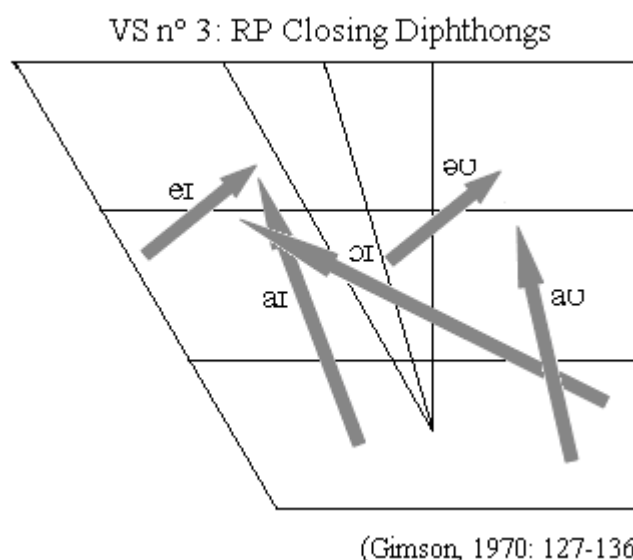
1.1.1.1.3. Triphthongs

Triphthongs are closing diphthongs followed by a schwa. The schwa can be either a constituent of the word as in *hire* /ηαI≅/ or an integrated suffix as in *higher* /ηαI≅/, yet both of them are said to contain one triphthong even if it poses problem for morphology to determine whether it is one syllable or two (made of one diphthong and one monophthong).

Some younger speakers tend to remove the third element through smoothing; the process may go further by omitting also the second element and pronouncing only the first one with length. This seems to be less valid when the schwa is a suffix, through smoothing *fire* becomes [φA:] but *flyer* is realised [φλA≅]. Monophthongisation for /ε≅/ is more common in compounds e.g. *fire brigade* [φA:β≤IγεIδ], *Tower Bridge*

[τΑ:β≤ΙδΖ], or *layer cake* [λε:κεΙκ]. More examples of smoothing are given in the following table:

Words	'Full' form	Smoothed forms
tyre	/ταΙ≅/	[τΑ≅]
		[τΑ:]
tower	/ταΥ≅/	[τα≅]
		[τΑ:]
layer	/λεΙ≅/	[λε≅]
		[λε:]
slower	/σλ≅Υ≅/	[σλ≅:]

The distinction between *tyre* [τΑ≅] and *tower* [τα≅] is so small that they are considered as homophones. The two vowels /αΙ≅/ and /αΥ≅/ have been neutralised[5] into one sound [Α:]. As in *ourselves* /αΥ≅∀σελϖζ/ [Α:∀σελϖσ], the process undergoes two rules:

A) triphthong ⟶ diphthong / syllable initial and final

B) diphthong ⟶ monophthong

Layer [λεΙ≅] and *lair* [λε≅] become homophones [λε:] by rules A and B too. Concerning the schwa (when a suffix) there is still a kind of resistance to the monophthongisation of the triphthong. Thus, *layer cake* is [ε:] and *bricklayer* is more likely to be realised [3:]. *Slower* /σλ≅Υ≅/ and *slur* /σλ3:/ can be homophones [σλ3:].

1.1.1.2. RP Consonants

The following consonantal description includes RP plosives, fricatives, affricates, nasals, laterals, post-alveolar approximant, and glides.

1.1.1.2.1. Plosives

Plosives are produced after a succession of three stages: first, a closure in the vocal tract, then the compression of air behind the obstruction, and finally the release of the compressed air in the form of an explosion. There are six plosive phonemes in RP:

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[5] Neutralisation: when two distinct sounds become reduced into only one sound and no distinction can be made.

	bilabial	alveolar	velar
Voiceless	/π/	/τ/	/κ/
Voiced	/β/	/δ/	/γ/

Plosives are realised according to a number of phonological rules, among these are the following:

a) Aspiration[6]: the voiceless /π, τ, κ/ are distinguished by the presence of aspiration [□] in initial accented syllables as in *pin* [π□Iv], *tin* [τ□Iv], and *kin* [κ□Iv]. Aspiration disappears; however, either when these three phonemes follow /σ/ as in *spin* [σπIv] or *skin* [σκIv] or when these phonemes occur word-finally *nip* [vIπ], *knit* [vIτ], and *nick* [vIκ].

b) Vowel duration: long vowels before /π, τ, κ/ are shorter than before /b, δ, γ/. The vowel /ι:/ in *bead* [βι:δ] is longer than that in *beat* [βι•τ].

c) Consonant influence: the place of articulation of alveolar plosives /τ, δ/ is influenced by the following consonants such as in *eighth* /εIτT/ and *hundredth* /ηςvδρ≅τT/ or *drugs* /δρςγζ/ and *dream* /δρι:μ/; before /T/, /τ/ becomes dental [τ∉] and before /ρ/, /δ/ becomes post-alveolar [δ⇒].

d) Vowel influence: the place of articulation of velar plosives /κ, γ/ depends on the quality of the preceding vowel, after /ι:/, as in *leak* /κ/ becomes palatal [χ] and after /A:/ as in *lark* the closure will be further back.

e) Stops cluster in three possible ways. First, when two plosives occur together either within a word or within a word boundary as in *abstract* or *bad boy*, the first plosive is not released [{βστρ{κτ] [β{δβOI]. Second, when a plosive occurs before or after a nasal consonant as in *submarine* or *grandpa,* the release is nasal [σςμ≅ρι:v] [γρ{μπA:]. The velum is lowered to allow the air to escape through the nasal cavity. Third, in case

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[6] Aspiration is term in phonetics for the audible breath [□] which may accompany a sound's articulation: "The period between the release of the closure of a consonant and the start of vocal fold activity for the vowel that follows it. Aspiration can be felt physically as a puff of air." (Roca; Johnson, 2003: 684).
Upper-class speakers surprisingly do not aspirate stressed word-initial /p, t, k/. For more details, see Wells (1996).

of a gemination[7] where there is no audible release for the first stop e.g. *good dog* [γΥδΘγ], *big girl* [βΙγ3:λ].

f) Devoicing[8]: the lenis plosives /β, δ, γ/ may be realised devoiced or completely voiceless initially or finally [b⇓, d⇓, g⟨].

Of equal importance is the release[9] of the plosives. The release can be oral, nasal, lateral, or fricative. While the oral release occurs before a vowel as in *tea*, the nasal occurs before a nasal as in *cotton* [κΘτν=]. The lateral release[10] happens when a plosive / π, β, τ, δ, κ, γ/ occurs before /λ/ as in *apple* [{πλ∧], *able* [εΙβλ∧], *bottle* [βΘτλ∧], *middle* [μΙδλ∧], *ankle* [{Νκλ∧] or *angle* [{Νγλ∧]. As to the fricative release, it occurs when we lengthen the second sound in case of two homorganic[11] sounds,. The release stage is made through the second plosive, which lengthens the whole stage e.g. *that day* [Δ{δεΙ], *what time* [ηωΘταΙμ] (this pressure is called **gemination**).

Glottalisation/glottalling: is a process that takes place in RP when the glottal stop [?] is realised as a variant of voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/:

> "Some readers may be surprised to learn that the glottal stop has long been a feature of RP. It is used by some speakers to reinforce /π, τ, κ, τΣ/ in a range of syllable-final environments… Younger speakers, upper- as well as middle-class, may be heard variably using a glottal stop in word final position, either before a pause or even before a vowel." (Hughes; *et al.*, 2005: 42-3).

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[7] Gemination: when two homorganic and identical adjacent speech sounds occur consecutively as one single melody.

[8] A devoiced phoneme means that a segment has lost voice (a phonetic manifestation of this phonological unit). A fully devoiced form of /β/ as in *bin* [β⇓Ιv] where [β⇓] is pronounced with whisper would remain discernible from the voiceless /π/ in [πΙv]. /β/ is not an allophone (a contextual realisation) of /π/ nor are π/ and /β / identical phonetically—in terms of the muscular effort being made throughout the speech organs (chiefly in the vocal tract). This difference in the muscular effort is based on the distinction between **fortis** sounds (high muscular effort usually with voiceless sounds) and **lenis** sounds (low muscular tension usually with voiced sounds). Besides, unlike voiceless sounds which are produced with a fully open glottis, voiced sounds are produced with a continuum of glottal opening to the vibrating position where the vocal cords are held fairly together.

[9] Some phoneticians transcribe lateral and nasal release with these diacritics [ˡ] and [ˠ]; thus, *bottle* and *happen* are transcribed [βΘτˡλ∧], [ηαπˠμ=]. For more details, see John Laver (1995): *Principles of Phonetics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[10] The release is lateral i.e. the air escapes from one or both sides of the tongue in a kind of plosion.

[11] Homorganic sounds: phonetically speaking, it is a term used to refer to sounds produced at the same place of articulation such as [π], [β], and [μ] (Crystal, 1992).

Some RP speakers realise voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/ as [?] in three possible contexts. These include first, when they are syllable-/word-final (before a pause) as in *six* [σI?κσ], *not* [νΘ?], *fit* [φI?], *Scotland* [σκΘ?λ≅νδ], *Gatwick* [γ{?ωIκ], *get down* [γε?δαΥν], *that* [Δ{?], *between* [βI?ωι:ν]. Second, if the following consonant has the same place of articulation e.g. *back garden* [β{?γA:δ≅ν] where both /κ/ and /γ/ are velars. Third, when preceding a vowel, the realisation of a plosive as a glottal stop is practicable e.g. *quite awful* [κωαI?O:φ≅λ], *fit us* [φI?ςσ].

RP phonological rules can be summarised as follows:

/π, τ, κ/ ⟶ [p□] [τ□] [κ□] / ## ——

⟶ [π] [τ] [κ] / s——

⟶ [π] [τ] [κ] / —— ##

/ι:/ ⟶ [ι•] / —— /π, τ, κ/

/τ/ ⟶ [τ∉] / —— /T/

/δ/ ⟶ [δ⇒] / —— /ρ/

/κ/ ⟶ [χ] / —— /ι:/

/κ, δ/ ⟶ Ø / ——plosive (see Gimson for other plosives)

Plosive ⟶ nasal / nasal—— as in *sandwich*.

/τ/ ⟶ [?] / —— # or ——v

/β, δ, γ/ ⟶ [b⇓, d⇓, g⟨] / # —— or —— #

1.1.1.2.2. Fricatives

They are produced with a turbulence of air. The speaker makes a narrow gap between the articulators involved causing friction. There are nine fricative phonemes in RP:

	labio-dental	dental	alveolar	palato-alveolar	glottal
Voiceless	/φ/	/T/	/σ/	/Σ/	/η/
Voiced	/ϖ/	/Δ/	/ζ /	/Z/	

RP voiced fricatives /ϖ, Δ, ζ, Z/ can be partially devoiced or not voiced at all word-final, as in *active* [{κτImϖ⇓], *clothe* [κλ≅YΔ⇓], *arms* [A:μζ⇓], *luge* [λυ:Z⟨]. Even if they are devoiced, they are still distinct from voiceless fricatives. For example, the

vowels /αI/ in *eyes* /αIζ/ and /ι:/ in *seize* /σι:ζ/ are longer than /αI/ in *ice* /αIσ/ and /ι:/ in *cease* /σι:σ/.

/Z/ has a limited occurrence word-final only, as in *measure* /μεZ≅/ except in French loan words as *genre* /ZA:νρ≅/ and *prestige* /πρεστι:Z/ or in proper names from other languages as *Zhivago* /ZIϖA:γ≅Y/ or *Zsa Zsa* /ZA:ZA:/.

/η/ occurs only in syllable-initial positions immediately preceding a vowel. It is influenced by the quality of the following vowel. As it is voiceless, the expulsion of air from the lungs is affected by the mouth and the tongue, which are already in position to produce the following vowel. The sound of /η/ in *heal* /ηι:λ/ is quite different from that in *hall* /ηO:λ/. Moreover, /η/ gains voice [□] when intervocalic as in *anyhow* /ενιηαY/ or in *alcohol* /{λκ≅ηΘλ/.

1.1.1.2.3. Affricates

They are plosives followed by a slow release for friction to be produced during the release phase. There are two affricate phonemes in RP:

	alveo-palatal
Voiceless	/τΣ/
Voiced	/δZ/

These phonemes are composed of a sequence of consonantal articulations and are represented with two distinct symbols /τ+Σ/ and /δ+Z/ rather than one. However, no native English speaker would consider that /τ/ and /Σ/ in *church* /τΣ3:τΣ/ are two distinct phonemes. Even if /τΣ/[12] is a combination of two sounds, it is perceived as one single phoneme.

1.1.1.2.4. Nasals

They are produced with a stop or a closure within the mouth, but the velum is lowered for the air to escape through the nose. There are three nasal phonemes in RP:

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[12] Some learners of English may unconsciously err in pronouncing these two phonemes. **Spoonerism** is a phenomenon in which the speaker moves the initial sounds of two or more words such as *church bells* [β3:τΣ τΣελζ].

	bilabial	alveolar	velar
Voiced	/μ/	/ν/	/N/[13]

The first element that characterises nasals is voicing. They are normally voiced, but they can be devoiced after a voiceless consonant as in *chestnut* /τΣεσνςτ/. As for the nasals' behaviour in vicinities, all three nasals may be syllabic[14] as in *happen* /η{π≅ν/ [η{πμ=], *button* /βςτ≅ν/ [βςτν=], *taken* /τεIκ≅N/ [τεIκṄ]. The bilabial nasal /μ/ and alveolar nasal /ν/ become generally labiodental [Φ] when occurring before labiodental fricatives /φ/ or /ϖ/ as in *comfort* [κςΦφ≅τ], in *curriculum vitae* [κ≅ρIκφ≅λ≅Φϖι:ταI], *confess* [κ≅Φφεσ], or in *canvas* [κ{Φϖ≅σ]. When /ν/ occurs before /T/ and /Δ/, / it can be dental [ν∉] as in *month* [μςν∉T] and in *in the wall* [Iν∉Δ≅ωO:λ]; and when it occurs before /ρ/, /ν/ becomes post-alveolar [ν⇒] as in *unready* [ςν⇒ρεδI] or in *enrol* [Iν⇒ρ≅Yλ].

1.1.1.2.5. Laterals

They are produced with an escape of air around one or both sides of the tongue in the midline of the oral cavity. In RP, there is only one voiced lateral phoneme /λ/ and it has three different allophones clear, voiceless, and dark /λ/.

a) Clear [λ] (with a front vowel resonance) occurs either before /φ/ as in *lucrative* [λυ:κρ≅τIϖ], *allure* [≅λφY≅], and *value* [ϖ{λφυ:] or before vowels:

  - Word initial: *leave* [λι:ϖ], *look* [λYκ], and *loud* [λαYδ].

  - Word initial cluster: *black* [βλ{κ], *glass* [γλA:σ], and *flag* [φλ{γ].

  - Word medial: ability [≅βIλ≅τI], *balloon* [β≅λυ:ν], *aloud* [≅λαYδ], and *ugly* [ςγλI].

  - Word final: *feel it* [φι:λIτ], *all over* [O:λ≅Yϖ≅], and *will you* [ωIλφυ].

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[13] Unlike /μ/ and /ν/, /N/ occurs only syllable- or word-final. "Some older upper-class RP speakers may retain /Iν/ (rather than the usual /IN/ for the verbal ending *–ing*, thus /φIΣIν/ for *fishing*. But this feature seems to have declined markedly in frequency" (Hughes; *et al.*, 2005: 44).

[14] For a nasal to be syllabic, three conditions are needed: the last syllable must contain a plosive, a schwa, and a nasal, which must be a homorganic sound of the plosive.

b) Voiceless [λ⇓] occurs either after accented /π, κ/ as in *play* [πλ⇓εI] and *clay* [κλ⇓εI] or after /π, τ, κ/ as in *apply* [≅πλ⇓αI], *atlas* [{τλ⇓≅σ], and *cyclist* [σαIκλ⇓Iστ].

c) Dark/Velarised [5][15] (with a back vowel resonance) occurs after a vowel as in word final: *ill* [I5], *lull* [λς5], and *pearl* [π3:5], before a consonant as in *field* [φι:5δ], *belt* [βε5τ], and *evolve* [IϖΘ5ϖ], or when it (/λ/) is syllabic as in *uncle* [ςNκ5∧], *title* [ταIτ5∧], *candle* [κ{νδ5∧].

1.1.1.2.6. Post-alveolar approximant /ρ/[16]

RP is a non-rhotic accent; therefore, /ρ/ is pronounced only before vowels. It has three allophones: voiced, devoiced, and fricative /ρ/.

a) Voiced [≤] occurs word initial as in *ran* [≤{ν, *roof* [≤υ:φ], and *rare* [≤ε≅], word medial as in *error* [ε≤≅], *bury* [βε≤I], and *fairy* [φε≅≤I], or in consonant cluster as in *agree* [≅γ≤ι:], *battleground* [β{τλ∧γ≤αYνδ], *brain* [β≤εIν], and *comrade* [κΘμ≤εIδ].

b) Devoiced [≤⇓] occurs after stressed /π, τ, κ/ as in *pram* [π≤⇓{μ], *tram* [τ≤⇓{μ], and *cram* [κ≤⇓{μ].

c) Fricative [≤©][17]: when /ρ/ follows /t/ /δ/ it become fricative as in *true* /τρυ:/, *attract* /≅τρ{κτ/, *petrol* /πετρ≅λ/ and *dry* /δραI/, *hindrance* /ηIνδρ≅νσ/, *dramatic* /δρ≅μ{τIκ/. Some varieties of upper class RP may employ the alveolar tap[18] [4], which is produced by the tip of the tongue against the alveolar ridge.

It should also be noted that even if RP is a non-rhotic accent, /ρ/ is sometimes pronounced to link or to intrude between two words/syllables. As far as the **linking /ρ/** is concerned, although many words in Standard English vocabulary end with the letter *r*, this latter is no longer pronounced in syllable- or word-final position as it used to be a

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[15] Some RP speakers vocalize dark /λ/ in some environments e.g. *table* [τεIβY] *beautiful* [βφυ:τιφ x]. The quality of the vowels which substitutes /λ/ can vary but, in general, it is back and rather close.

[16] Phonetically speaking, RP /ρ/ is transcribed as [≤]. We apply such phonetic transcription for English RP only; for the other Englishes we maintain [ρ].

[17] When /ρ/ becomes fricative after /τ/ or /δ/ the two segments association is viewed phonetically as one affricate, very similar to /τΣ/ and /δZ/.

[18] In North America, [4] is also known as the alveolar flap. Its use is becoming rather uncommon in contemporary RP.

long time ago. However, when it precedes a vowel-initial word, a linking /ρ/ is introduced. In *far* /ɸA:/, for instance, there is no /ρ/ which can be perceived whereas in *far away* /ɸA:ρ≅ωεI/ it is quite the contrary i.e. there is a tangible /ρ/. The latter links both vowels /A:/ and /≅/ in order to avoid not only phonetic heaviness but also the use of the glottal stop [?] which may precede vowels.

As to the **intrusive /ρ/,** when there is no historical /ρ/ in pronunciation or in spelling and when the word ends with a non-high vowel /≅, A:, O:/, once more, an /ρ/ can be inserted before the following vowel. This /ρ/ is identified as the intrusive /ρ/[19], a phenomenon which is part of RP accent. Thus, *I saw it* /αIσO:ρIτ/, *Ma and Pa* /μA:ρ≅νδπA:/, or *Canada or Mexico* /κ{ν≅δ≅ρO:μεκσIκ≅Y/.

Intrusive /ρ/ is particularly used among younger RP speakers. It is a feature which is still stigmatised and many speakers try to avoid it since it is considered as being 'incorrect' because it does not match with an *r* in spelling:

> "Many BBC newsreaders, when reading a phrase such as *law and order*, have to pause or insert a glottal stop before *and* in order not to pronounce an /ρ/." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 15).

1.1.1.2.7. Semi-vowels/glides

There are two voiced semi-vowel phonemes in English RP:

	bilabial	palatal
Approximant	/ω/	/φ/

Phonetically speaking semi-vowels are not consonants but rather vowels as they are produced with no obstruction of air in the vocal tract and the air escapes freely. Phonologically speaking, however, these phonemes are considered as consonants and not as vowels for two reasons: as the other consonants, they occur in syllable or word margins and they cannot form a nucleus of an English syllable as vowels do.

/φ/[20] can either be voiced or devoiced. It is voiced [φ] when initial as in *year* [φI≅], *yawn* [φO:ν], when intervocalic as in *for you* /ɸ≅φυ:/, or when following lenis

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[19] Intrusive /ρ/ is still stigmatised by some RP speakers yet it is used. Many speakers introduce the /ρ/ within words as for *drawing* /δρO:ρIN/.

[20] There is a tendency in informal speech or American accent for /φ/ to coalesce with fricatives /τ, δ, σ, ζ/ to form alveo-palatals /Σ, Z, τΣ, δZ/ *bet you* [βε], *virtue* [ϖ3:τΣυ:], *soldier* [σ≅YλδZ≅],*would you* [ωYδZυ], *miss you* …
Alveolar ⟶ alveo-palatal / ——j.

sounds as in *beauty* [βφυ:τι], *amuse* [≅μφυ:ζ], and *behaviour* [βIηεIϖφ≅], *and union* [φυ:νφ≅ν]. It is, however, devoiced [φ⇓] when following /σπ, στ, σκ/ as in *spew* /σπφυ:/, *stew* /στφυ:/, or *skew* /σκφυ:/, when following unaccented /π, τ, κ/ as in *popular* /∀πΘπφ≅λ≅/, *destitute* /∀δεστιτφυ:τ/, or *cupidity* /κφυ∀πιδ≅τI/, or when following fortis fricatives /φ, T, σ, Σ, η/ as in *few* /φφυ:/, *enthuse* /IνTφυ:ζ/, *assume* /≅σφυ:μ/, *Joshua* /δZΘΣφY≅/, or *hew* /ηφυ:/. Besides, /φ/ can also be realised as a palatal fricative [X]. When /φ/ occurs after accented /π, τ, κ, η/ and only before /υ:, Y≅/, it is realised as [X] as in *pew* /πφυ:/, *pure* /πφY≅/, *tube* /τφυ:β/, *Turin* /τφY≅ρIν̃/ , *cue* /κφυ:/, *cure* /κφY≅/, *hue* /ηφυ:/, or *heuristic* /ηφY≅ρIστικ/. Pronunciations of /φ/ after /σ, λ/[21], in modern RP[22], is gradually declining; *suit* /σφυ:τ /, *super* /σφυ:π≅/ or *lute* /λφυ:τ/, *illusion* /Ιλφυ:ζ≅ν/, *lucid* /∀λφυ:σIδ/ are rather rare.

Concerning /ω/, this phoneme has only two possible allophones—voiced and devoiced /ω/. Voiced [ω] occurs word initial as in *wagon* /ω{γ≅ν/, *one* [ωςν], *wage* [ωεIδZ], intervocalic as in *airway* /ε≅ωεI/, *farewell* /φε≅ωελ/, and *awake* /≅ωεικ/, or following lenis consonants as in *subway* /ςβωεI/, *dwell* /δωελ/ *anguish* /{ΝγωIΣ/, *someway* /ςμωεI/, *always* [Ο:λωεIζ], *unwell* /ςνωελ/, *longways* /λΘΝωεIζ/, *wageworker* /ωεIδZω3:κ≅/, *driveway* /δραIϖωεI/, *saleswoman* /σεIλζωΥμ≅ν/, *bourgeois* /βΟ:ZωΑ:/, and *railway* /ρεIλωεI/. Clusters with /Δ, ρ/ are mainly loanwords either from Gaelic or French.

Devoiced [ω⇓], however, occurs after accented /τ, κ/ as in *twenty* /τωεντI/, *qualify* /κωΘλIφαI/, after /σκ/ as in *square* /σκωε≅/, *disqualify* /δIσκωΘλIφαI/, and *esquire* /IσκωαI≅/, after accented fortis fricative as in *dissuade* /δIσωεIδ/, *elsewhere* /ελσηωε≅/, or after unaccented /π, τ, κ/: *shipway* /ΣIπωεI/, *software* /σΘφτωε≅/, or *adequacy* /{δIκω≅σI/.

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[21] Following the phoneme /τ/, /φ/ may also disappear as in tuna [τυ:ν≅]; however, as we have seen above, the assimilation of /τ/ and /φ/ would result in an alveo-palatal [τΣ]. We have, therefore, another pronunciation of the same word [τΣυ:ν≅].

[22] Younger RP speakers tend to omit /φ/ after /σ/ before /υ:/, this tendency is stronger in some words (*super*, *Susan*) than in others (*assume*).

1.1.2.   Scottish Standard English (SSE)

English has been spoken all over Scotland from the 18th century. Gaelic remains the native tongue of almost 40,000 people (in 2001) only 0.79 % from the entire Scottish population 5,062,011 which means that English is widely spoken throughout Scotland.

1.1.2.1.   Scottish Standard English Vowels

Concerning Scottish English pronunciation, some linguists argue that it is a difficult variety to learn when we have already learnt English English/RP:

> "Scottish English pronunciation is very different from that of most other varieties and may be difficult to understand for students who have learned English English or North American English." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 91).

The SSE discussed in this work represents the educated variety of the middle class of Central Scotland mainly in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Even if there are at least two SSE accents (Giegerich 2001), we have selected the most regular and described one.

1.1.2.2.   SSE Vowels

SSE has 13 vowels: 8 short monophthongs and 5 closing diphthongs:

Scottish English Vowels	
/ɪ/	*bee, dean, here*
/I/	*din, bird, pill*
/ɛ/	*bed, heard, pet*
/≅/	*comma, bottom, butter*
/ç/	*hurry, fur, sofa, word*
/α/	*bad, car, father, psalm*
/ʊ/	*put, fool, sure*
/O/	*dawn, long, short*
/αI/	*buy, like*[çI]
/αY/	*bout, down*[çY]
/ɛI/	*bay, same, hair*
/oY/	*boat, shore, sport*

/OI/	*boy, coin*

As it is apparent in the table, Scottish English has only 13 vocalic sounds, a fewer amount in comparison to RP English. This phonological feature is due to the lack of the two following factors.

First, as RP is a non-rhotic accent, some vowels such as /I≅, ɛ≅, Y≅, 3:/ arose because of the loss of /ρ/. Scottish English is rhotic and therefore does not need to substitute /ρ/ by another sound. Pairs such as *bee* and *beer*, *bay* and *bear*, *fen* and *fern*, *bid* and *bird*, *hut* and *hurt*, *bad* and *bard*, *moo* and *moor*, *row* and *roar*, *pock* and *pork* are contrasted only by the presence or absence of /ρ/.

Second, length as a contrastive unit does not exist either. The distinction between /{/ and /A:/ is absent in Scottish English, *Pam* and *palm* are both realised as /παμ/. However, some speakers influenced by RP English may have this distinction. Scottish English does not also distinguish between /Y/ and /ʋ:/ so that *pull* and *pool* are homophones /πʋλ/. Similarly, RP /Θ/ and /O:/ as in *cot* and *caught* correspond only to /O/ in Scottish English. Phonetically speaking, the majority of Scottish English vowels are short monophthongs (except /αI/= [ɛI]~[6I], /αY/=[3}], and /OI/); /ς/, /I/= [I√~≅©], and /ʋ/=[}] are central vowels.

Almost all Scottish English vowels have the same length so that SSE /ɛ/ sounds longer than RP /ɛ/ and /ɩ/ sounds shorter than RP /ɩ:/. However, /ς/and /I/ do not apply to the *Scottish Vowel Length Rule*, under this rule these two vowels are longer before /ϖ, T, ζ, ρ/ and word-finally; /ɛ/, for example, is longer in *pair* than in *pale*. There is distinction of length between vowels when a suffix is added such as *-ed* in the following verbs:

Short	Long
mood	*mooed*
toad	*towed*
tide	*tied*
wade	*weighed*
greed	*agreed*
loud	*allowed*

An additional feature reinforcing the contrast between RP and SSE is the realisation of RP /ɛ/. Unlike RP where words such as *serenity* and *obscenity* are realised with /ɛ/, Scottish English selects /ɪ/ for the second syllable as it is the case in RP *serene* and *obscene* [ɪ:].

VS n° 4: SSE Monophthongs

VS n° 5: SSE Diphthongs
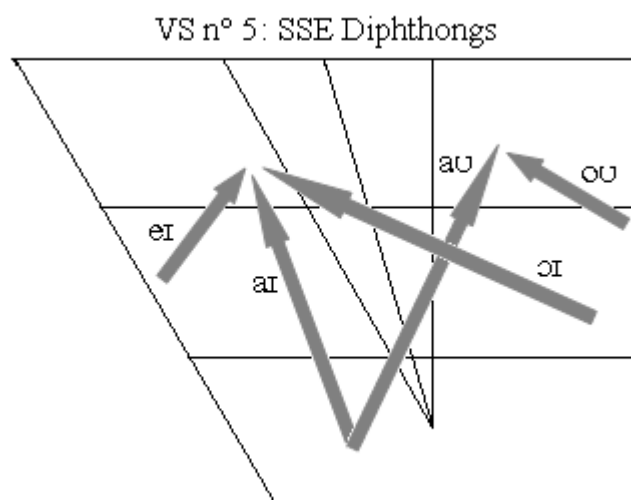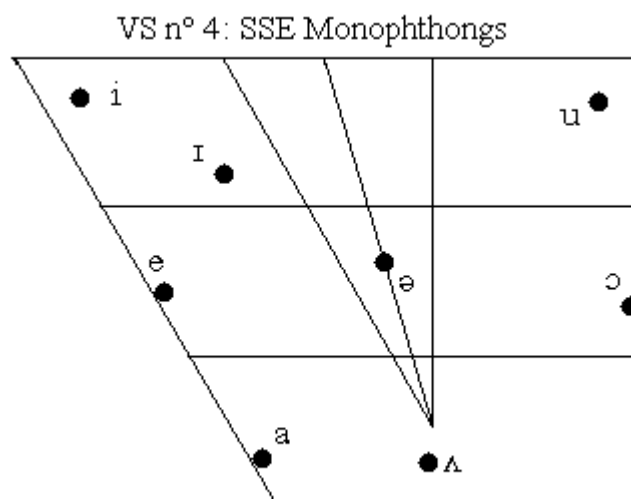
1.1.2.3. SSE Consonants

The following consonantal description of SSE includes a number of key elements that differ from RP. While Scottish English distinguishes between /Ω/ in *which* /ΩΙτΣ/ and /ω/ in *witch* /ωΙτΣ/, RP does not. Other instances include the realisation of the voiceless plosives. When initial, voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/ are often unaspirated. However, the glottal stop [?] occurs frequently as a realisation of non-initial /τ/. Besides, /ρ/ is usually pronounced as a flap [4] as in *heard* [ηE4d] (RP

[η3:δ]), and dark /λ/ [5] occurs in all positions; e.g. *lilt* [5≅5τ]. SSE has a supplementary consonant—the velar fricative /ξ/, which is derived from Scots dialects. this phoneme occurs in a number of Scottish English words such as *loch* [λOξ] 'lake' and *dreich* [δριξ] 'dull'.

The difference in SSE vowel inventory and in the realisation of some consonants is not the only difference that constitutes a demarcation between RP and SSE. Indeed, many words differ totally in pronunciation. Here are some examples:

Words	SSE	RP
length	/λEνT/	/λεNκT/
raspberry	/ρασβEρI/	/ρA:ζβ≅ρI/
realise	/ριϛ∀λαιζ/	/∀ρI≅λαIζ/
though	/Tο/	/∆≅Y/
tortoise	/τOρτOιζ/	/τO:τ≅σ/
with	/ωIT/	/ωI∆/

1.1.3. Welsh Standard English

According to Trudgill and Hannah (2002), English is spoken by a majority of the people in Wales (over 3 million). In fact, it is spoken natively by almost 80% of the Welsh population (2002: 30-1).

1.1.3.1. WSE Vowel System

Welsh Standard English

Welsh Phonemes	Pronunciation	Welsh English
/I/	[I]	*bid*
/ι:/	[ι:]	*bead*
/ε/	[ε]	*bed*
/{/	[α]	*bad, pass, above, sofa*
/ϛ/	[≅]	*bud, famous, rubber*
/≅/	[≅]	*butter*
/3:/	[2:]	*bird*
/A:/	[α:]	*bard*
/Θ/	[O]	*bod, object(v.)*
/O:/	[O:]	*paw, sort*
/Y/	[Y]	*book*
/υ:/	[υ:]	*booed*
/εI/	[ε:]	*bade*
/EI/	[ε™I]	*bait*
/αI/	[≅I]	*buy*

/OI/	[OI]	*buoyed*
/≅Y/	[o:]	*bode, board*
/AY/	[≅Y]	*bout*
/OY/	[oᵀᴹY]	*bowed, blow*
/ε≅/	[E:]	*Baird*

1.1.3.1.1. WSE Monophthongs

As far as monophthongs are concerned, Welsh Standard English has 12 pure vowels (7 short and 5 long). However, WSE phonology differs from that of RP in a number of ways. Although the phoneme /A:/ exists in WS English, words such as *last* and *dance* have /{/ rather than /A:/. Moreover, there is no contrast between /ç/ and /≅/ as in *rubber* /∀ρ≅β≅/ or *colour* /∀κ≅λ≅/ which means that a syllable containing a schwa can be stressed. Another phonological feature which characterises WSE is that unstressed orthographic *a* tends to be /{/ rather than /≅/ as in *sofa* /σ≅Yφ{/ [∀σο:φα] and unstressed orthographic *o* tends to be /Θ/ rather than /≅/ as in *condemn* [κΘν∀δεμ].

VS n° 6: Welsh Standard English Monophthongs
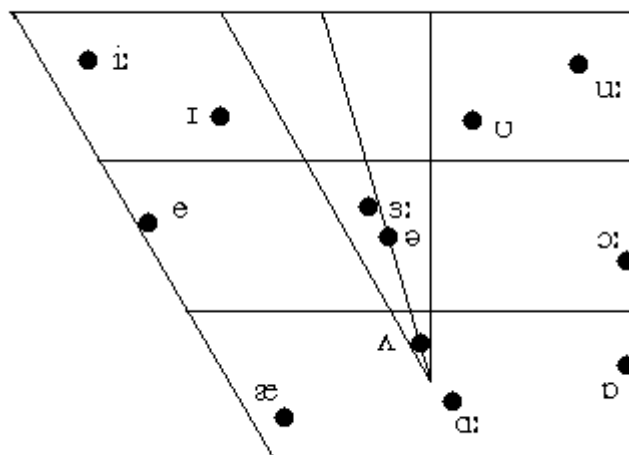
1.1.3.1.2. WSE Diphthongs

Unlike RP, Welsh Standard English has 8 diphthongs (7 closing and 1 centring). RP /I≅/, for instance, is absent in Welsh English; however, there are other phonemes which do not exist in English RP e.g. /EI/, /AY/, or /OY/. In addition to the fact that there is a difference from RP in the phonemic distribution, there is an apparent distinction of the way a phoneme is realised. In other words, the way a phoneme is realised in WSE does not necessarily resemble to that in RP—/≅Y/, for instance, is not [≅Y] but [o:]. To illustrate, we need to mention few examples. In RP, *made* and *maid*,

for instance, are homophones; whereas, in WSE they contrast since they have two different contrastive units /εI/ and /EI/—*made* /μεIδ/ [με:δ] and *maid* /μEIδ/ [με™Iδ]. Words with /EI/ are generally those spelt with *ai* or *ay*.

Another example of phonemic distribution in WSE is that RP does not distinguish *nose* from *knows*. WSE, on the other hand, contrasts between these words by the use of two distinct phonemes /≅Y/ and /OY/—*nose* /ν≅Yζ/ [vo:ζ] and *knows* /νOYζ/ [vo™Yζ]. Sometimes, it is quite the opposite. While words such as *so* and *soar* contrast in RP, they are homophones in WSE since both of them have /≅Y/=[o:] and are, therefore, realised as [σo:]. Generally speaking, many RP words with /O:/ have /≅Y/=[o:] in Welsh. Of course, this statement is not always valid since other words such as *Port* and *paw* are still pronounced with /O:/ in Welsh English.

The RP centring diphthongs /I≅/, /Y≅/ do not occur in Welsh English; *fear* and *poor* are realised /φι:φ≅/ and /πυ:ω≅/. Even in words with /I≅/ as in /αI≅/, an RP triphthong, they are absent. Thus, the Welsh version of *fire* is /φαIφ≅/ and not /φαI≅/. However, words with /φ/ such as *tune* and *music* tend to be [τIYν] and [μIYζIκ] rather than [τφυ:ν] and [μφυ:ζIκ].

VS n° 7: WSE Diphthongs
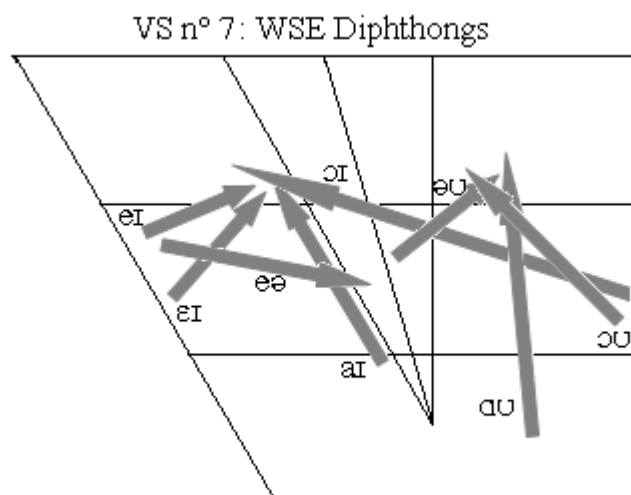
1.1.3.2. Welsh English Consonants

Like RP, Standard or educated Welsh English is non-rhotic and linking and intrusive /ρ/ do often occur; however, the quality of /ρ/ is not the same. The Welsh English phoneme /ρ/ is pronounced as a flapped [4]. What also distinguishes WSE from RP is aspiration. Voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/ are strongly aspirated when initial and

when word-final as in *pit* [π□Iτ□]. As they are strongly released, final /τ/ is produced with no possible glottalisation. In some contexts, consonants are lengthened; intervocalic consonants mainly tend to be lengthened before unstressed syllable as in *butter* [∀β≅τ□:≅] or *money* [∀μ≅ν:ι].

Even if /λ/ exists in WSE, its phonetic realisations are peculiar. /λ/ is a clear one [λ] in al positions. Besides, WSE has extra consonantal units. Some consonants such as /K/ voiceless lateral fricative and /ξ/ voiceless velar fricative, which do not exist in RP English, occur in place-names and loan words from Welsh[23] as in *Llanberis* /Kανβ∀ερIσ/ and *bach* /βA:ξ/.

1.1.4. Irish English

English spoken around Dublin (Southern Ireland) originates from the west of England and that spoken in Northern Ireland derives from Scotland. Yet, some areas of the Republic speak Northern Ireland English such as Donegal and some areas of Northern Ireland speak Southern Ireland English.

1.1.4.1. Northern Ireland English

<div align="center">

NIr English Vowels

/ι/	*bee, dean, here*
/I/	*din, bird, pill*
/ɛ/	*bed, heard, pet*
/≅/	*comma, bottom, butter*
/ς/	*hurry, fur, sofa, word*
/α/	*bad, car, father, psalm*
/υ/	*put, fool, sure*
/O/	*dawn, long, short*
/αI/	*buy, like*[ςI]
/αY/	*bout, down*[ςY]
/ɛI/	*bay, same, hair*
/oY/	*boat, shore, sport*
/OI/	*boy, coin*

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[23] Welsh: a Celtic language of Wales, spoken by about 500,000 people (mainly bilingual in English).

1.1.4.1.1. Northern Ireland English Vowels

Although Northern Ireland English derives its roots from Scottish English (in having similar vowels and intonation), it nevertheless differs. Concerning NIrE vowels, the distinction between [Θ] and [O:] exists. However, it exists only before voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/. Unlike Scottish English, *cot* [κΘτ] and *caught* [κO:τ] contrast whereas *offal* and *awful* are homophones. The vowels /ε, α, O/ are realised long in monosyllabic words closed by a consonants except by /π, τ, κ/. Sometimes, the vowel /ε/ as in *hay* can be diphthongised to [ει]; and when word-final, it is often [E•] and when pre-consonantal, it is produced as [ε≅] or [ι≅] as in *gate* [γι≅τ]. Another form of difference between SSE and NIrE is that the diphthong /αY/ as in *house* can be pronounced [9}], [E}], [{}] to [6}].

VS n°8: Northern Ireland English
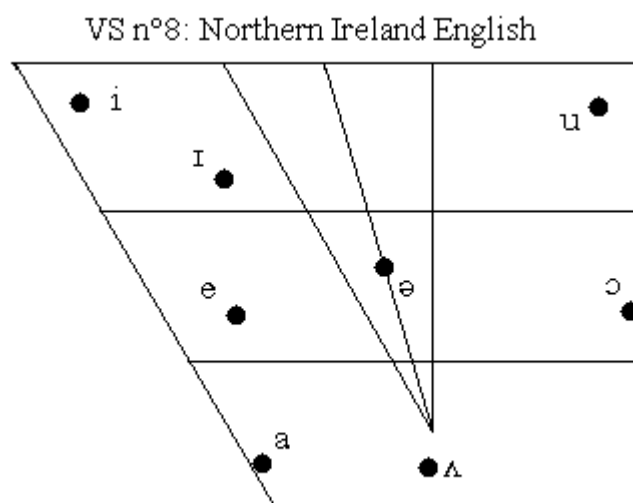
VS n°9: Northern Ireland Diphthongs
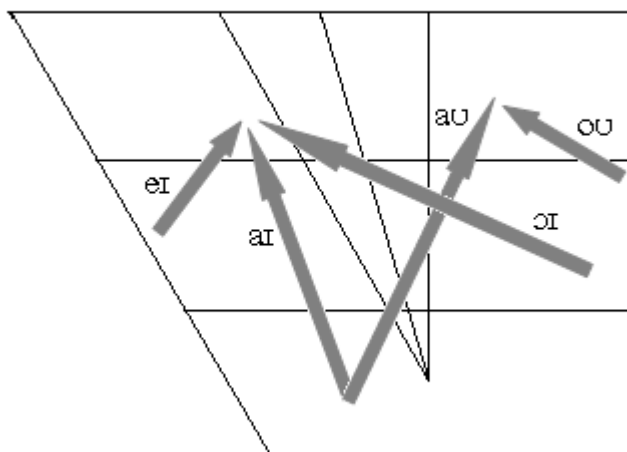
1.1.4.1.2. Northern Ireland English Consonants

As to NIrE consonants, /λ/ is realised as a clear [λ] in all environments as in *level* in the same way as that of SSE. However, /ρ/ is pronounced not as a flap but as a frictionless continuant. Words such as *hard*, *hoard*, and *heard* are pronounced as in North American English /ηA:ρδ, ηO:ρδ, η3 ̅:δ/. It is also interesting to mention that as in American English, intervocalic /τ/ is a voiced flap [δ⊥].

1.1.4.2. Southern Ireland English

1.1.4.2.1. SIr English Vowels

Southern Ireland English Vowels

SIr Phonemes	Pronunciation	Southern Ireland English
/I/	[I]	*bid*
/ɪ:/	[ɪ:]	*bead, very*
/ɛ/	[ɛ]	*bed*
/{/	[α]	*bad*
/ç/	[O∏]	*putt, nurse*
/≅/	[≅]	*butter*
/A:/	[α:]	*bard*
/Θ/	[A]	*pot*
/O:/	[A:]	*port*
/Y/	[Y]	*put*
/ʊ:/	[}:]	*boot*
/ɛI/	[ɛ:]	*bade*
/αI/	[3I]	*buy*
/OI/	[OI]	*boy*
/≅Y/	[o:]	*boat*
/AY/	[3}]	*bout*

SIrE vowels are similar to those of RP—as the presence of length. However, the RP vowels /3:/, /I≅/, /ɛ≅/, /Y≅/ are absent in Southern Ireland English because it is a rhotic accent. Moreover, SIrE phonological distribution of vowels differs in a number of ways. In fact, many English words do not have the same phonemic transcription as that in RP. Here are some examples:

- Words such as *path*, *dance* are rather pronounced with /{/ than with /A:/.

- Words like *hoarse*, *mourning* are pronounced with /O:/ and not with /≅Y/ which make them homophones with *horse* and *morning*.

- Words such as *nurse* are realised as /νYρσ/ rather than RP /ν3:σ/ or American /ν3‾:σ/.

- Words like *book*, *hook*, and *look* are pronounced with /ʊ:/ than with /Y/.

- Word such as *any*, *many* are pronounced with /{ʋɪ:/ rather than with RP /ɛʋɪ/.

- Some RP words with /Θ/ may be pronounced with /O:/. These include words such as *dog*, *doll*, *cross*, *lost*, *wrong*.

Southern Ireland English has 11 monophthongs:

VS n°10: SIreE Monophthongs
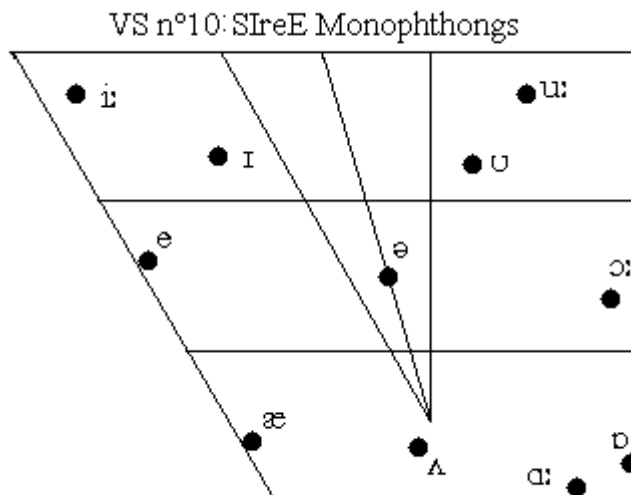
Southern Ireland English has 5 diphthongs:

VS n°11: SIre English Diphthongs
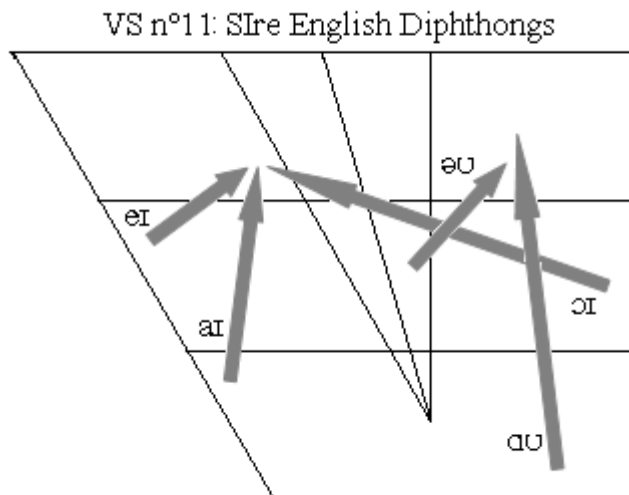
1.1.4.2.2. SIr English Consonants

SIrE consonantal description treats first the rhoticity this accent has. /ρ/ is rhotic and it is a retroflex approximant as in American and Northern Ireland English. Then /λ/ which is clear [λ] in all positions as in *labiopalatal*. Other instances include a difference from RP in the contextual variants of final voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/, for instance.

They are released with aspiration and without glottalisation. Another major characteristics of phonemic distribution is that SIrE contrasts between /Ω/ and /ω/ as in *which* /ΩIτΣ/ and *witch* /ωIτΣ/. As to the clusters /τρ/ and /δρ/, they are realised as [τ̥4], [δ̥4] as in *drop* [δ̥4Aπ□]. (similar to NIr English)

1.1.4.2.3. Stress

SIr English stress can differ from English RP in some words such as:

Words	RP English	SIr English
discipline	∀discipline	disc∀ipline
architecture	∀architecture	archit∀ecture

1.2. North American Englishes

1.2.1. Standard American English

The debate concerning Standard American English involves two major aspects: *terminology* and *phonological patterns*. Concerning terminology, some linguists such Trudgill and Hannah (2002) use the term *General American* to refer to American educated speech in formal settings. According to Giegerich (2001), *General American* is one of at least three standard accents of the USA and it is above all the most prevalent one. Others such as Kretzschmar (in Schneider *et al.* 2004) prefer to identify it as *Standard American English*. The latter will be our label for this variety.

The second problem of divergence concerns phonological patterns. Even if there is variation among linguists (such as Kurath and Mc David 1961; Labov 1991) in describing the **phonological patterns** for educated speakers of American English and variation of the same variety from one American state to another, we describe in this work the most agreed upon features of Standard American English.

1.2.1.1. Standard American English Vowels

Phonemes	SAmE
/I/	*bid, mirror, wanted*
/ɩ:/	*bead*
/ε/	*bed*
/{/	*bad, pass, dance, half, banana*
/ç/	*bud*
/≅/	*about, sofa,*
/≅‾/	*butter*
/3 :/	*bird, purse*
/A:/	*baaed, bard*
/O:/	*board, long*
/Y/	*book*
/ʋ:/	*booed*
/εI/	*bade*
/αI/	*buy*
/OI/	*buoyed*
/oY/	*bode, bowed*
/αY/	*bout*

As far as SAmE monophthongs are concerned, *Mary*, *marry*, and *merry* are homonyms /μερι/ whereas in English RP it is /με≅ρI/ /μ{ρI/, /μερI/. Another element, which characterises SAmE, is stability. In final unstressed syllables, two vowels /I~≅/ alternate in the following suffixes *-ness*, *-ity*, *-es* (*happiness* [νIσ~ν≅σ], *atrocity* [Iτι~≅τι], *actress* [Iσ~≅σ]). Such fluctuation affects English RP too. The low-back vowels /O:, A:/ are less stable as in *thought* where both vowels /O:, A:/ are possible. However, /I, ε, {/ are rather stable.

As to length, in the 18th century, /A:/ was introduced in RP before voiceless fricatives /φ/ *stuff* /στA:φ/, /σ/ *ask* /A:σκ/, /T/ *bath* /βA:T/, and sometimes before /ν/

dance /δA:νσ/ a period when American English separated from British English and, therefore, was not affected by the variation. so, /{/ is kept in such environments in SAmE. Besides, The vowel /O:/ in *paw* is shorter than that in RP.

Relating to diphthongal glides, SAmE varies from RP. As it is rhotic, some RP diphthongs (mainly those which are historically derived from the loss of /ρ/) do no exist. Some words are illustrated below:

Words	RP	Am.
dear	/I≅/	/Iρ/
dare	/ε≅/	/ερ/
tour	/Y≅/	/Yρ/

As these diphthongs do not occur in SAmE, they are transcribed with other vocalic qualities. The RP diphthong /I≅/ being absent in North American English, it may correspond to /I/ *clear* /κλIρ/, /ι:/ *hero* /ηι:ροY/, or /φ/ *Julia* /δZυ:λφ≅/. But for words such as *idea* where there are only two syllables in RP /αI.δI≅/, North American English has three syllables /αI.δι:.≅/ since the phoneme /ι:≅/ does not exist.

A second element characterising SAmE diphthongs is the realisation of /εI/ and /αY/. While the diphthong /εI/ in North American English is closer than that in RP, the first element of /αY/ in North American English tends to be more front than in RP.

VS n°12: Standard American Monophthongs

VS n°13 : Standard American Diphthongs
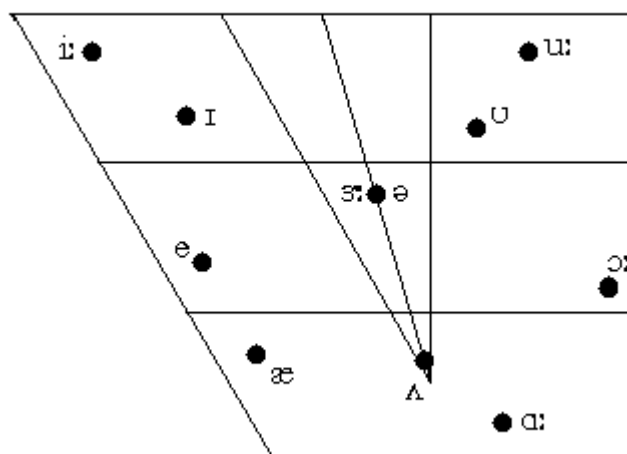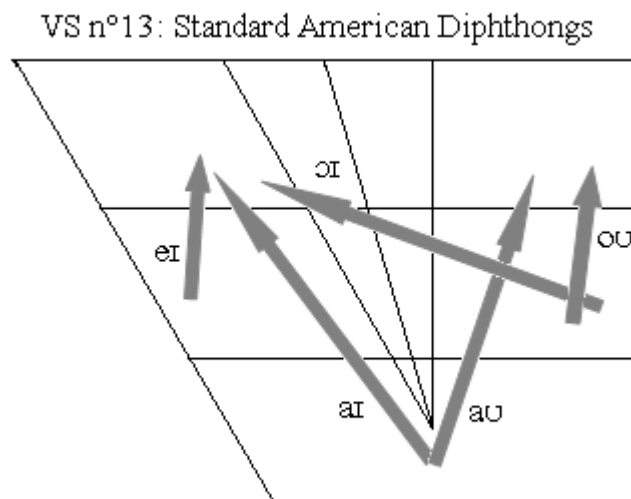
1.2.1.2. Standard American Consonants

SAmE consonantal system can be depicted throughout the following instances. While RP does not distinguish between *gnaw* and *nor*, *paw* and *pour* or between *saw* and *soar*, North American English does as it is a rhotic accent. Phonetically speaking, SAmE /ρ/ is pronounced differently from that of RP; the tip of the tongue is curled further back (retroflexion) than in RP. SAmE comprises /ρ/ also in words where no *r* is spelt as in *colonel* /κ3 ‾:ν≅λ/ [κρ=ν5∧].

A second distinguishing feature of SAmE is the phonemic and phonetic realisation of the alveolar plosives /τ, δ/. In general, /τ/ is realised with a single rapid tap and is frequently voiced so that it sounds as /δ/; /δ/ is also realised when intervocalic with a single rapid tap, a fact that makes *latter* and *ladder* homophones. It happens, also, when a sonorant[24] consonant precedes /τ/ or /δ/ as in *dirty* or in *kinder* or when the following vowels is at the beginning of the next word as in *get it*. However, these words are not totally identical; the distinction between them remains in lengthening the preceding vowel i.e. the vowel /{/ before /δ/ is longer.

Phonemically speaking, the realisation of /τ/ and /δ/ in SAmE when intervocalic is different from that in RP. /τ/ and /δ/ when intervocalic *latter/ladder* are homonyms. In fact, It is very similar to the flapped /ρ/ [4] of Scottish English. The opposition between /τ/ and /δ/ when intervocalic becomes neutralised /λ{4≅ ‾/; they are realised

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[24] Sonorant: a class of sounds to describe all sounds produced without an obstruction of air in the vocal cords so that spontaneous voicing is possible; this class includes nasals, liquids, glides, and vowels.

with the voiced flap [δ⊥] and transcribed [λ{δ⊥≅ ‾] or [λ{δ⊥ρ=]. Moreover, /τ/ is deleted in *-nt-* clusters when intervocalic as in *winter* which makes it homophonous with *winner* /∀ωIv≅ ‾/.

Phonetically speaking, final /τ/ is unreleased before a consonant such as *that man* [Δ{μ{ν] and the glottal reinforcement [?] of /τ/ found in RP does not exist in SAmE except before /ν/ as in *button* or before /λ/ as in *bottle* in New York City and Boston.

Concerning the lateral consonant, RP distinction between [λ] and [5] is almost not found in SAmE, /λ/ is fairly dark in all positions. Besides, when /λ/ occurs before vowels, it is vocalised as in *alcohol* [∀{^{Y}κ≅ηA:5] and *milk* [μI^{Y}κ]; there is a tendency of its occurrence except before juncture.

Next, the palatal glide /φ/ is present before /υ:/ or /Y/ as in *beauty* /βφυ:τι/ or *pure* /πφYρ/ but can be absent in other words such as *allude* /≅λυ:δ/ or *allure* /≅λYρ/ both of which are realised with /φ/ before the back close vowels /υ:/ and /Y/. As in Australian English, SAmE tend to drop /λ/ before /φ/ as in *million* /μIλφ≅ν/ [μIφ≅ν] or *Allende* /A:λ∀φενδεI/ [A:∀φενδεI]. Words such as *New York*, *Tuesday*, *durable*, or *neuron* can have both realisations.

Finally, the prefix *ex-* is sometimes voiced as in *exaltation*, *eczema*, or *excerpt* where [εκσ−] and [εγζ−] are possible. Yet, such possibility also occurs in English RP. After looking into *EPD* the occurrences in both Englishes, we found that out of 263 words beginning with [εγζ−] in the English language, only 233 words (88.59%) have such pronunciation in Standard American English; whereas 247 words (93.92) occur in English RP. This feature is not, therefore, Standard American English specific.

1.2.1.3. Standard American English Stress

As claimed by Kretzschmar (in Schneider *et al.* 2004), RP prefers strong initial stress more than SAmE. However, we can also find initial unstressed syllables in RP that are stressed in SAmE such as *able-bodied person* which is realised in RP as [‰εIβλ∧∀βΘδIδ] and in SAmE as [∀εIβλ∧‰βA:δIδ]. To corroborate this hypothesis, we refer to the *EPD* where 64591 words are initially stressed in RP whereas 64754 in SAmE. Even if there is no large difference (only 163 words), SAmE seems to have more initially stressed syllables. Besides, Standard American English is said to maintain

more secondary stress than RP does; *secretary*, for instance, is realised in SAmE as [∀σεκρ≅%τερι] whereas in RP [∀σεκρΙτρι] (Kretzschmar in Schneider *et al.* 2004).

1.2.2. Standard Canadian English

Unlike American colonies, French was established long before the arrival of English. By mid-18th century, the struggle between England and France over the control of Canada ended in favour of England. Both languages settled which led to the bilingual status, we currently know, in Canada. By the nineteenth century, English speakers exceeded in number French ones. In 2003, Canadian population was estimated to be over 31 million people; French native speakers represent less than 25% of the entire population and only 59% are English native speakers.

Standard Canadian English covers a wide area from Victoria and Vancouver in the west to Toronto, Ottawa and the English-speaking minority in Montreal in the east. Canadian English is classified as North American English since it shares a number of similar characteristics, but it has, also, a kind of resemblance to British English. It is a stable homogeneous variety; in other words, Canadian English does not vary from one region to another as British or American English does: "Canadians are generally incapable of guessing each other's regional origins on the basis of accent or dialect." (Boberg in Schneider *et al.*, 2004: 353).

1.2.2.1. Standard Canadian Vowels

Phonemes	Standard Canadian English
/I/	*kit, near*
/ι:/	*fleece*
/ε/	*dress, square*
/{/	*trap, bath*
/ç/	*strut*
/≅/	*horses, comma* [6]
	/≅ρ/ *nurse, letter*
/A:/	*palm*
/Θ/	*lot*
/O:/	*north*
/Y/	*foot*
/υ:/	*goose*
/εΙ/	*face*
/αΙ/	*prize*
/OΙ/	*choice*
/oY/	*goat* [8Y], *goal*
/αY/	*cow*

The vowel system of Standard/General Canadian English is identical to the Western area of USA. However, SCE is characterised by three major features:

First, **Canadian Raising** is a feature specific to Canadian English which consists in raising and centring the front vowel in /αI/ and /αY/ before voiceless consonants. [≅I] and [≅Y] are allophones of /αI/ and /αY/ before voiceless consonants e.g. *life* [λ≅Iφ], *like* [λ≅Iκ], *type* [τ≅Iπ], *ice* [≅Iσ], *light* [λ≅Iτ], *mouse* [μ≅Yσ], *Fowke* [φ≅Yκ], *doubt* [δ≅Yτ], *mouth* [μ≅YT], *vouch* [ϖ≅YτΣ]. [{Y] can be another allophone of /αY/ when it is produced before nasal consonants as in *brown*, *down*, and *town*. The difference between *prize* and *price* is that in the latter the first vowel of the diphthong is slightly raised to become [ςI, 3I, or 6I] or [ςY, 3Y] in *flout or mouth*. Therefore, *ride* and *loud* are pronounced [ραIδ] and [λαYδ] whereas *write* and *lout* are [ρ≅Iτ] and [λ≅Yτ]. In English RP, the only distinction between pairs such as *bright* and *bride*, *clout* and *cloud*, *flight* and *flied*, *fright* and *fried*, *slight* and *slide*, *tripe*, and *tribe*, *writer* and *rider* relies on absence or presence of voice. Moreover, the diphthongs /εI/ as in *bay* and /oY/ as in *boat* are very narrow i.e. the first elements of the diphthongs tend to be closer [ε©I] and [o©Y] very different from Australian and New Zealand Englishes.

Not only does Canadian Raising concern these diphthongs but it also affects some monophthongs. These include the raising of /A:/ before /ρ/ as in *bark, carve, start* [ςρ, 3ρ 6ρ] and the raising of /{/ before nasals /ν, μ, N/ and voiced velar plosive /γ/ as in *anise*, *banish*; *amber*, *exam*; *blanket*, *gang*; *anger*, *jangle*. Moreover, /υ:/ is fronted as in *suit*, *doom*, *soon* where it is raised to high-central or even to high-front position [}, 1]. The latter occur within alveolars or bilabials (as in *root*, *rude*, *rune*, *food*, *soup*) and most advanced ones occur after alveolar consonants (as in *two*, *do*, *zoo*). /υ:/ retains a back quality elsewhere, especially before /λ/ as in *cool*, *fool*, *rule*, and *pool*.

The second feature is the **merger** of different sounds. These consist of /O:/ and /A:/ and of /Θ/ and /O:/. The merger of /O:/ and /A:/ where the loss of /O:/ mainly among younger speakers led to this kind of merger, both *cot* and *caught* have /κA:τ/. Then the merger of /Θ/ and /O:/ as in *cot* and *caught* which makes several pairs become homophonous /O:/ *col* and *call*, *boll* and *ball*, *sod* and *sawed*. Canadian English is also

characterised by several front vowels mergers before /ρ/. *Mary*, *marry*, and *merry* all sound as a lengthened version of /ε/ [ε:].

The third aspect is called the **Canadian shift**. It is a phonetic shift, which has an effect on /I, ε, and {/ as in *sit*, *set*, and *sat*. /{/ is retracted to [α], /ε/ lowered to [{], and /I/ to [ε]. The vowel /{/ of *bad* and *bat* can be very open in Canadian English close to [α] (The retraction of /{/ to [α] can also be found in Northern British English).

Some foreign words such as *pasta* /π{στ≅/ have /{/ similar to RP /π{στ≅/ rather than to SAmE /πA:στ≅/ but, this is not always the case. Foreign words that are borrowed from other languages are differently assigned in each English, those written with *a*, for example, are shown in the following table:

Foreign Words	RP	StAm. English	Canadian English
falafel	{	A:	{
karate	{	A:	{
llama	A:	φA:	{
macho	{	A:	{
pasta	{	A:	{
plaza	A:	{	{
taco	{	A:	{

Canadian English prefers /{/ even when British and American English agree on /A:/ as in *nirvana* except in some French loan words where we find /A:/ as in *bra*, *eclat*, *faux pas*, *foie gras*, *garage*, *spa*. Close to SAmE, Canadian English has /oY/ in words such as *borrow*, *sorrow* but not in words such as *sorry*, and *hoary*:

Words	RP	SCanE	SAmE
borrow	/βΘρ≅Y/	/βA:ροY/	/βoYροY/
sorrow	/σΘρ≅Y/	/σA:ροY/	/σoYροY/
sorry	/σΘρI/	/σA:ρι/	/σoYρι/
hoary	/ηO:ρI/	/ηO:ρι/	/ηoYρι/

In some respects, Canadian English is closer to RP than to SAmE:

Words	SCanE	SAmE
again(st)	/≅∀γεν(στ)/ /≅∀γεIν(στ)/	/≅∀γεν(στ)/
been	/βι:ν/ /βIν/	/βIν/
capillary	/κ≅∀πIλ≅ρI/	/∀κ{π≅λερι/
corollary	/κ≅∀ρΘλ≅ρI/	/∀κΟ:ρ≅λερι/
shone	/ΣΘν/	/ΣοΥν/
Tomato	/τ≅∀μ{τοΥ/	/τ≅∀μεItoΥ/

VS n°14: Standard Canadian Monophthongs
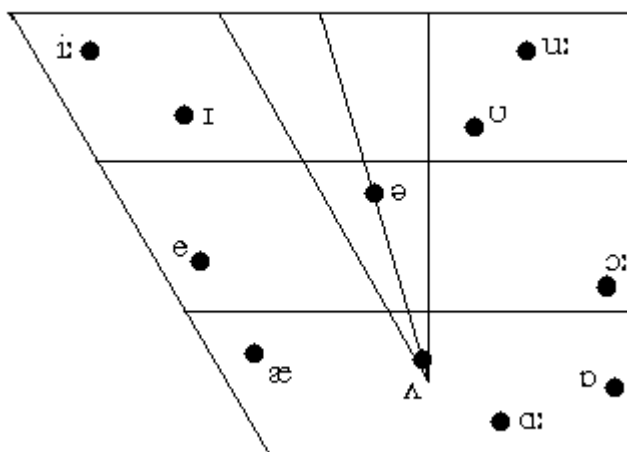
VS n°15: Standard Canadian Diphthongs
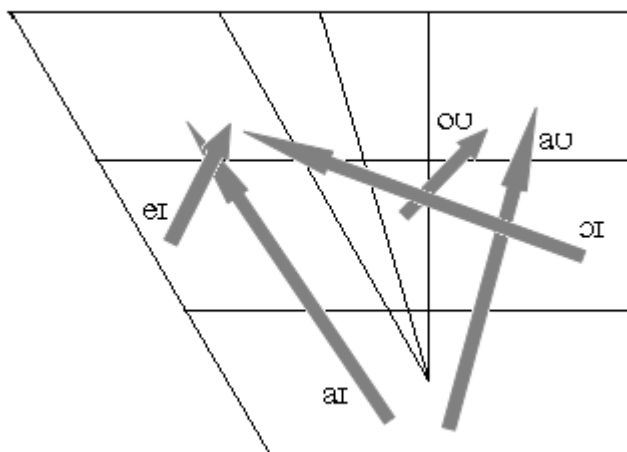
1.2.2.2. Standard Canadian English Consonants

Concerning consonants, Canadian English is very similar to SAmE except for the distribution of /λ/. Canadian English uses dark /λ/ [5] in all positions and SAmE has two allophones dark /λ/ [5] and clear /λ/ [λ]. However, their distribution differs from that in RP for dark /λ/ [5] in SAmE is used in intervocalic position as in *Billy* and *yellow*. Canadian English is also characterised by the loss of /φ/ before /ʊ:/ as in *news*, *nude*, *duke*, *dupe*.

2.   Southern Hemisphere Englishes

2.1.   Standard Australian English

Australian Aboriginal languages were about 260 by the mid-20th century. With the disappearance of over 50 languages, there are at present nearly 45,000 Aborigines who speak these languages natively, which represents in itself only 0,23 % of the entire Australian population (20 million). English, on the other hand, has about 15 million native speakers in Australia (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 16).

Horvath (in Schneider *et al.* 2004) cites three types of Australian English, *Cultivated*, *Broad*, and *General Australian English*. Cultivated Australian English is the most prestigious variety and is spoken only by almost 10% of the population. Broad Aus.English is the least prestigious and General Aus.English takes place between the two previous varieties. He claims that there are no significant differences between Cultivated and General Aus.English. To simplify our analysis, we term it Standard Australian English.

Some linguists such as Trudgill and Hannah (2002), who compared Australian English with British English dialects, argue that Australian English share some similarities with London speech more than it does with RP and this difference lies on phonetics and mainly on vowels.

2.1.1. Standard Australian English Vowels

Phonemes	Pronunciation	Standard Australian English
/I/	[≅]	*bid*
/ι:/	[ˉι]	*bead*
/ε/	[εᵀᴹ]	*bed*
/{/	[{ˉ]	*bad*
/ς/	[6]	*bud*
/≅/	[≅]	*butter, horses, comma*
/3:/	[≅:]	*bird*
/A:/	[α:]	*bard*
/Θ/	[{ˉ]	*bod*
/O:/	[o:, o6]	*board*
/Y/	[Y]	*book*
/υ:/	[}:]	*booed*
/εI/	[Eε]	*bade*
/αI/	[Aε]	*buy*
/OI/	[oI]	*buoyed*
/≅Y/	[≅}]	*bode*
/αY/	[{O]	*bowed*
/I≅/	[Iˉ, ι:]	*beard*
/ε≅/	[εˉ, ε:]	*Baird*
/Y≅/	[}≅, o:]	*pure*

Australian English front vowels tend to be close than in RP (i.e. the body of the tongue is closer to the palate). Phonemically speaking, these vowels do not have the same occurrence as in RP. As in SAmE and SCanE, the *happy* vowel /I/ seems to be realised as /ι/. Words such as *very*, *seedy*, *city* and *many* are transcribed with /ι:/ rather than with /I/ /ϖερι:/, /σι:δι:/, /σIτι:/, /μενι:/. Besides, it has /≅/ rather than /I/ in unstressed syllables /≅/ as in *begin* /β≅γIν/ and *laxity* /λ{κσ≅τι:/. Thus, /≅/ occurs in words such as *horses* /ηO:σ≅ζ/, and *wanted* /ωΘντ≅δ/ (for the grammatical suffixes *es* and *ed*) and in *David* /δεIϖ≅δ/, *honest* /Θν≅στ/, and *village* /ϖIλ≅δZ/. Phonetically

speaking, the vowel /ɛ/, sometimes, in words such as *memo* is pronounced with [ι:] in Australian English.

The schwa /≅/, a central vowel, is realised open as in *ever* [εϖ6] when word-final. As to back vowels, the RP vowel /A:/ is generally very front in Australian English [α:] as in *dance*, *sample*, *grant*, *branch*; occasionally, /A:/ can be realised as [{] especially in *laugh*, *telegraph*, and *graph*. Resembling RP, Australian English has /A:/ in *laugh*, *path*, *grass* but it has /{/ in *dance*, *sample*, *plant*, *branch*, etc. In Australia, /A:/ forms are considered more prestigious than those with /{/. Concerning /O:/ distribution, SAusE is similar to RP. Like RP English, words such as *Australia*, *auction*, and *salt*, can be produced either with [Θ] or with [O:] and /O:/ is heard in *off* and **often**. As to RP /Y/, it is more rounded in Australian English.

The diphthongs are slower in Australian English (i.e. there is a tendency to lengthen the first element, it sometimes becomes monophthongised as in /αI/ as [ΘI ~ Θ^I ~ Θ$^{\tilde{=}}$]. Some Australian English diphthongs are wider than in RP (i.e. the open first element and close second element is greater in Australian English than in RP).

In centring diphthongs the schwa is lengthened and loses its quality as a short central vowel since it is lowered and fronted. The process of a falling diphthong concerns, for instance, the second quality of /Y≅/ as in *pure* where it is realised between /{~α/ position. Sometimes, diphthongs are raised. Raising diphthongs, a feature that characterises Australian English, occurs when the realisation of a diphthong is raised such as /αY/ in *mouth* [{O], /αI/ in *price* [Aε], /Y≅/ in *pure* [}≅], and /≅Y/ in *goat* [≅}].

Another form of difference between RP and SAusE is smoothing. While days of the week pronounced in RP with [I] as in *Monday* [μςνδεI] are produced in Australian English with [εI] especially by younger speakers, RP smoothing of /AY≅/ to [A:] does not occur in Australian English.

VS n°16: Standard Australian Monophthongs
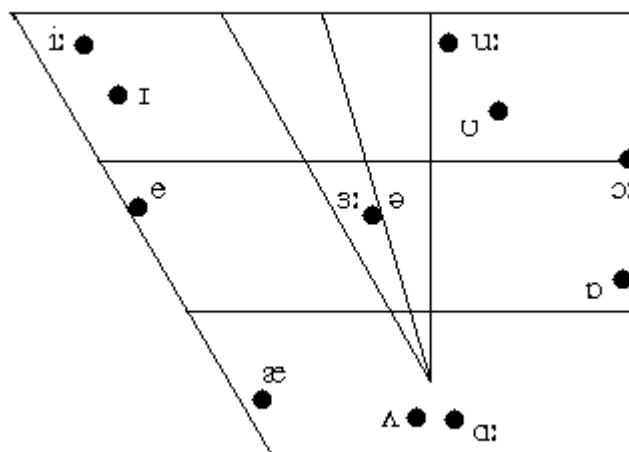
VS n°17: Standard Australian Diphthongs
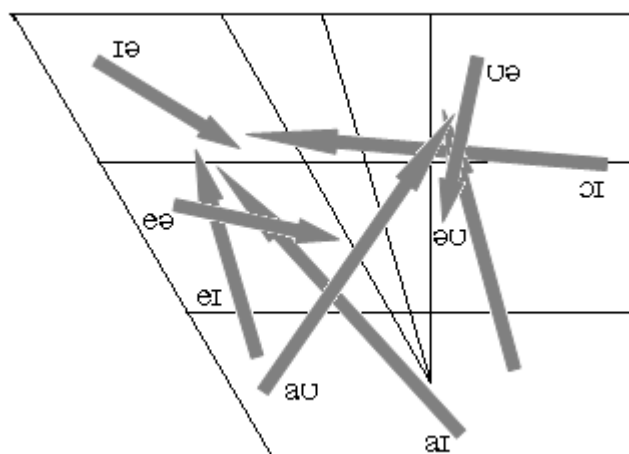
2.1.2. Standard Australian English Consonants

As far as consonantal description is concerned, Australian English is a non-rhotic accent and has linking as well as intrusive /ρ/. The Australian English /ρ/ is more retroflexed than in English RP. Concerning the voiceless alveolar plosive /τ/, SAusE shares common features with both RP and SAmE. When /τ/ is intervocalic as in *city* and *better*, it may become a voiced flap [4] or [δ⊥] as in American English but it is not as common as it is in American English. The flapping of /τ/ [4] or [δ⊥] occurs mainly:

- In numbers as in *fifteen* [φIφ∀4ι:ν] or *eighteen* [εI∀4ι:ν].

- In intervocalic final contexts as in *get up* [γε4ςπ] or *lot of* [λΘ4≅ς].

- In intervocalic medial positions as in *latter*, *matter*, *beauty*, *pity*.

- Before syllabic /λ/ [λ∧] and /ν/ [ν=] as in *battle* [β{4λ∧] or *cotton* [κΘ4ν=].

/τ/ can also be articulated in two other ways. It can undergo friction of /τ/ [τ^σ] as in *and that's as far as it went* [ωεντ^σ] or glottalisation [?]. Glottal stop realisation of /τ/ (similar to RP English) is possible in *fit them* but not in other environments such as *box* or *batch*. Glottalisation of /τ/ [?] occurs mainly in medial position as in *butler* [βς?λ≅], *boatman* [β≅Υ?μ≅ν], in *get out* [γε?αΥτ], *sit in* [σΙ?Ιν], and in intervocalic position *water* [ωΟ:?≅], *better* [βε?≅]. However, where both flapping and glottalisation of /τ/ can occur, flapping is more frequent.

Concerning laterals, Australian English has a darker /λ/ in all positions as in *leaf* [53Ιφ] where RP /λ/ is a clear one [λ]. Besides, the cluster /λφ/ often becomes [φ] as in *brilliant*. As to fricatives, /σ/ as in *assume* can be realised as [≅Συ:μ] instead of [≅συ:μ] or [≅σφυ:μ]. Similarly *resume* can be realised with [Z] instead of [ζ] or [ζφ] and initial /τφ/, /δφ/ can be pronounced [τΣ], [δZ] as in *tune* [τΣ≅}ν]:

tune	/τφυ:ν/	/τΣυ:ν/
dune	/δφυ:ν/	/δZυ:ν/
assume	/≅σφυ:μ/	/≅Συ:μ/
resume	/ρ≅ζφυ:μ/	/ρ≅Zυ:μ/

This feature is common with other Englishes. However, the use of /φ/ occurs in most unstressed syllables and is used mostly by men, working class, and young people in stressed syllable. It remains quite uncommon in most educated usage (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002). Nevertheless, there are some features that are stigmatised in both RP and SAusE are /η/ dropping, the substitution of [φ, ϖ] by [T, Δ], the substitution of [N] by [ν], and the vocalisation of/λ/.

2.1.3. Standard Australian English Intonation

SAusE is characterised by the High Rising Tone (HRT) ↗. It is also referred to as the Australian Questioning Intonation since the tone rises in a declarative utterance as if it was a question is. It occurs in descriptions, opinions, explanations, factual texts, and narratives. It is salutary to notice that HRT affects teenage girls and women mostly.

2.2. Standard New Zealand English

English has been spoken in New Zealand since "the early 19th century and has about 3 million native speakers there." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 23). It is the mother tongue of 95% of over 4 million people. Phonetically and phonologically speaking,

Australian English and New Zealand English are very much alike, mainly for older speakers.

2.2.1. Standard New Zealand English Vowels

Phonemes	Pronunciation	S New Zealand English
/I/	[≅]	*bid*
/ɿ:/	[3I]	*bead*
/ɛ/	[ɛ©]	*bed*
/{/	[E©]	*bad*
/ς/	[6∏]	*bud*
/≅/	[ς, 6]	*butter*
/3:/	[2√:™]	*bird*
/A:/	[α:]	*bard*
/Θ/	[Θ]	*bod*
/O:/	[o™:]	*board*
/Y/	[ʏ]	*book*
/ʋ:/	[≅}]	*booed*
/ɛI/	[αI]	*bade*
/αI/	[AI]	*buy*
/OI/	[o™I]	*buoyed*
/≅Y/	[6™}, 6™8]	*bode*
/αY/	[{}]	*bowed*
/I≅/	[ɛ©≅]	*beard*
/ɛ≅/	[ɛ©≅]	*Baird*
/Y≅/	[}≅, o:]	*pure*

Some characteristics of New Zealand vowel system are as follows. The New Zealand vowel /I/ as in *bid* is a central vowel in close proximity to [≅]. Besides, /I/ ([≅]) has merged with /Y/ after /ω/ so that *woman* /ωYμ≅ν/, for example, becomes homophonous with *women* /ωIμIν/ in New Zealand English since both of them are pronounced [ω≅μ≅ν]. According to Trudgill and Hannah (2002), phonologically speaking younger New Zealanders do not distinguish between /I/ and /≅/ and pronounce

words such *finish* and *Philip* [ɸ≅ν≅Σ] and [ɸ≅λ≅π] compared to Australian English [ɸιλ≅π] and [ɸιν≅Σ] and to RP [ɸIλIπ] and [ɸIνIΣ]. This fact indicates that there is no need for two distinctive phonemes if [≅] is recognised as the realisation of /I/. However, the phoneme /≅/ is realised, sometimes, as [ς] in unstressed word-final position as in *butter* [βςτς], it is also appropriate to the indefinite article *a* as in *a cup* [ς κςπ]. The front RP vowels /ε/ as in *bed* and /{/ as in *bad* are closer in New Zealand English, they are realised as *bed* [βε©δ] and *bad* [βE©δ]. However, as in Australian English *very* and *wanted* in New Zealand English occur with /ι:/ /ϖερι:/, and with /≅/ /ωΘντ≅δ/. Regarding lip-rounding, while /Y/ tends to be unrounded, /3:/ of *bird* tends to be produced with a considerable degree of lip rounding.

Another major feature concerns vocalic mergers. /Θ/ and /≅Y/ are merged when they before /λ/ such as *doll* and *dole*. Many other vowels distinctions are neutralised when occurring before /λ/ or /ρ/ so that *pull* /Y/ and *pool* /υ:/, *fellow* /ε/ and *fallow* /{/, *will* /I/ and *wool* /Y/, and *Derry* /ε/ and *dairy* /ε≅/ are identical. Furthermore, there is increasingly a tendency for /I≅/ to merge with /ε≅/ so that *peer* and *pair* are produced likewise [πε©≅] or [πε©:]. As to diphthongs, New Zealand English has wider and slower diphthongs than RP. The first element in /αI/ and /αY/, for example, is very open /A:/ and almost all diphthongs lacks smoothing.

VS n°18: Standard New Zealand Monophthongs
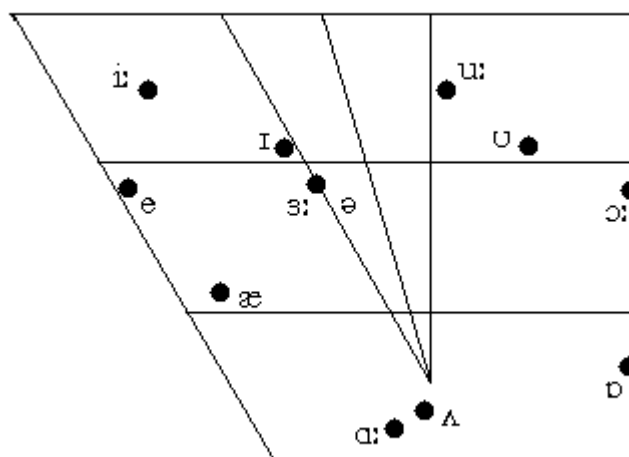
VS n°19: Standard New Zealand Diphthongs
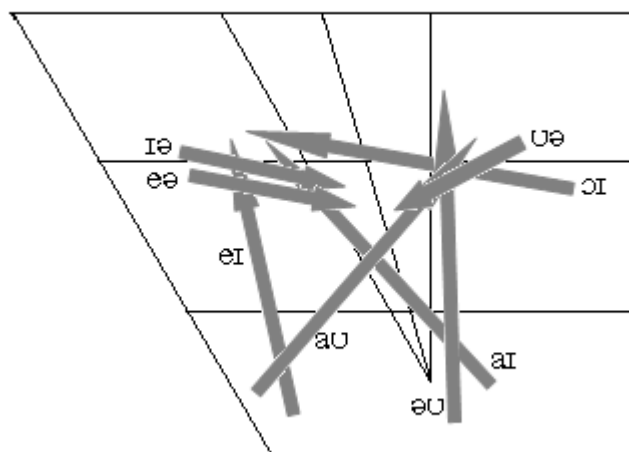
2.2.2. Standard New Zealand Consonants

Standard New Zealand English is non-rhotic, but there are some forms of rhoticity in the southern part of the Island which is said to be influenced by Scottish and Irish settlers. Even if people changed their residence, they took within their luggage their culture and beliefs. What was considered once as being the standard in Great Britain seems to be maintained as such while being outside its boundaries.

The following consonantal description includes /τ/, /λ/, and /Ω/ occurrence. Similar to Australian English, intervocalic /τ/ as in *city* or *better* is a voiced flap [δ⊥]. The lateral /λ/ is dark in all positions, and there is a growing tendency either to vocalise /λ/ or to form a lip rounding when syllable final as in *bell* so that [βεo] or [βε5│] are produced. As to /Ω/ of *which*, it has been maintained in New Zealand English more than it has been in RP; however, Trudgill and Hannah (2002) claim that there are signs of its loss among younger new Zealanders.

2.3. Standard South African English

South African English presented in this work is the standard variety of White South Africans which is either used natively or learnt at school for formal purposes. White South African English is divided into three varieties *Cultivated*, *General*, and *Broad*. In a population of 46 million, only 8.2% use this variety (*Cultivated* and *General*) as their L1. English is spoken natively by about 2 million whites and nearly 1

million 'coloured'[25] and Indian-origin speakers. It is the English to which a particular attention will be given since it is considered as the Standard English among its speakers—English-speakers, White Afrikaans, Coloured people, and Asians.

2.3.1. Standard South African English Vowels

Phonemes	Pronunciation	Standard South African English
/I/	[ɪ, ≅]	*bid*
/ɪ:/	[ɪ:]	*bead*
/ɛ/	[ɛ]	*bed*
/{/	[E]	*bad*
/ҫ/	[6]	*bud*
/≅/	[≅]	*butter*
/3:/	[2√:]	*bird*
/A:/	[A:]	*bard*
/Θ/	[O]	*bod*
/O:/	[o:]	*board*
/Y/	[}]	*book*
/ʊ:/	[}:]	*booed*
/ɛI/	[{I, 6ɛ]	*bade*
/αI/	[Aⁱ̃]	*buy*
/OI/	[oɛ]	*buoyed*
/≅Y/	[EY, 9Y]	*bode*
/αY/	[A©Y, A:]	*bowed*
/I≅/	[ɛ:]	*beard*
/ɛ≅/	[E≅, ɛ:]	*Baird*
/Y≅/	[Y≅]	*pure*

As far as the vocalic analysis is concerned, South African vowel /I/ has two allophones [ɪ] and [≅].The high front [ɪ] as in Australian English occurs before and after velar consonants /κ, γ, N/ as in *big* [βɪγ], before /Σ/ as in *issue* [ɪΣ}:], after /η/ as in

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[25] Coloured (mixed race): a term used as an official ethnic label for people of mixed ethnic origin, including Khoisan, African, Malay, Chinese, and white.

heroic [ηιρςικ], and word-initial as in *edition* [ιδιΣ≅ν]. Whereas, the centralised [≅] occurs elsewhere as in *bit* [β≅τ] or *dim* [δ≅μ].

Generally speaking, South African English shares some phonemic and phonetic features with both RP and the two other Southern Hemisphere Englishes. South African /A:/ is similar to that of RP pronunciation: a front one [α:] and it is present in a set of words such as *dance* or *car*. As Australian English, South African English has /ι:/ in syllable-final as in *very* and *many* and [≅] in unstressed syllables as in *wanted* and *village*. As to diphthongs, there is a strong tendency in South African English to monophthongise them.

VS n°20: Standard South African Monophthongs
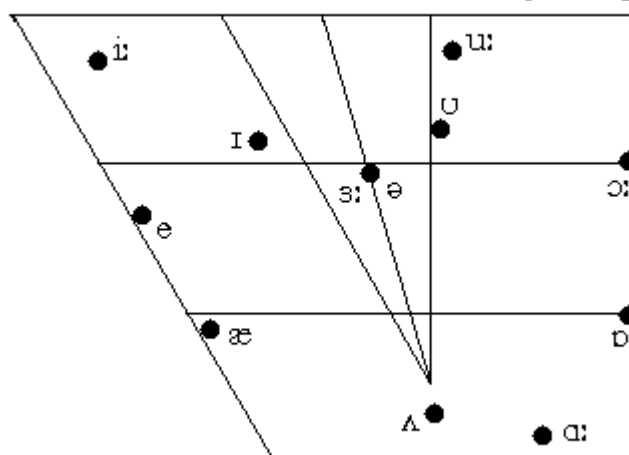
VS n°21: Standard South African Diphthongs
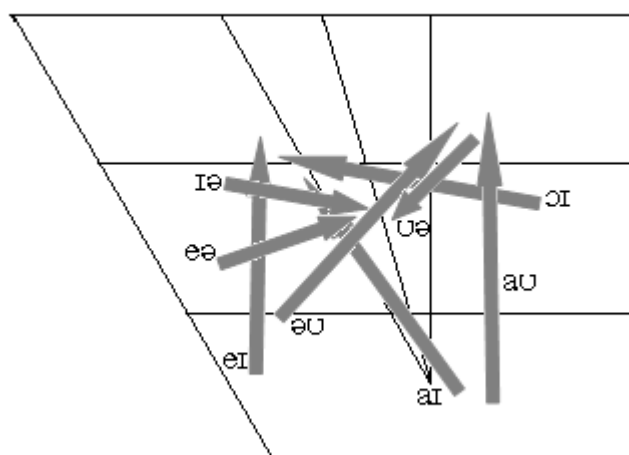
2.3.2. Standard South African Consonants

South African English is non-rhotic; it does not include linking and intrusive *r* e.g. *four o'clock* [φo:(?)≅κλOκ] or *law and order* [λo:ν∧o:δ≅]. South African English is the only English having this aspect. Other Englishes can either be rhotic or have a linking or an intrusive *r*. Phonetically speaking, /ρ/ tends to be is postalveolar or retroflex [≤] unlike the frictionless continuant [≤] of RP, Australian, or New Zealand English.

As to plosives, similar to Australian and New Zealand English, intervocalic /τ/ in South African English is realised as a voiced flap [δ⊥] as in *better*. Whereas for aspiration, initial stressed voiceless plosives and the voiceless affricate /π, τ, κ, τΣ[26]/ tend to be unaspirated because of Afrikaans[27] influence. While RP *pin* is pronounced [π□Iv], South African is [π≅v].

According to Trudgill; Hannah, In South African English, the dark [5] allophone of /λ/ as in *hill* does not occur. However, according to (Bowerman, in Schneider *et al.* 2004), South African English /λ/ has two allophones a clear [λ] and a dark one [5]. /λ/ is clear [λ] syllable initial and before vowels, and dark [5] syllable final.

/τφ, δφ/ are often pronounced as [τΣ, δZ] e.g. *tune* [τΣ}:v] and *dune* [δZ}:v]; as it is feature widespread in many Englishes; it will be interesting to see where it is derived from. Another important element concerning, this description is the existence of non-English phonemes within South African consonantal inventory. These include voiceless uvular fricative /Ξ/ and the voiceless velar fricative /ξ/, an additional phonemes in Standard South African English. They are used in borrowed words from Afrikaans or Khoisan such as *gogga* [∀ξΘξ≅] (=bug).

We can observe that Standard South African English is rather close to English RP but most differences are influenced by Afrikaans vowel system. Since it is also exposed to different local varieties, it may not preserve its current similarity with RP (Bowerman, in Schneider *et al.* 2004: 940, 941).

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[26] Oddly enough, we have found that /τΣ/ is also aspirated in initial accented syllable as in *church* (in Cheshire, 1996).

[27] Afrikaans: a language of southern Africa derived from the form of Dutch brought to the Cape by Protestant settlers in the 17th century. It is an official language of South Africa, spoken by around 6 million people as their first language.

3. Phonological and Phonetic Comparison

Two major factors are to be taken into consideration. First, the sociolinguistic situation in the English-speaking countries is not the same. In comparison with Canada and the USA, we find less variation in pronunciation in Southern Hemisphere Englishes and more standardisation in Great Britain. Then, there is no single standard North American English pronunciation that can be considered as neutral or regionless by its speakers:

> "There is more regional variation in North American English pronunciation than in Australian New Zealand and South African English, yet there is no universally accepted totally regionless standard pronunciation as in English English." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 35).

The difference between the standard Englishes depends normally on the number and the methodical behaviour of the phonemes and basically on the phonetic realisations of vowels. Sometimes the difference in pronunciation is so considerable that it can affect reading poetry where words such as *word* and *bird* may rhyme in RP but not in another English.

Besides, homophonous words in one English are not necessarily the same in another since the realisation of a particular phoneme is different. [{], for instance, has become closer in Australia, centralised in U.S.A., and lower in RP English. As in all English-speaking countries, pronunciation evolves; *evolution for all is a matter of fact but not automatically towards the same direction.*

3.1. Northern Hemisphere Englishes

3.1.1. Inventory

North American English separated early from British English, a fact that created somewhat a different system mainly in vowels, since consonants system of RP and North American are quite identical. One consequence of North American English rhoticity is the absence of centring diphthongs /I≅/, /ɛ≅/, and /Y≅/. For an RP speaker *peer*, *pair*, and *poor* are uttered /πI≅/, /πɛ≅/, and /πY≅/ whereas for a Standard American English speaker these words are pronounced /πIρ/, /πɛρ/, and /πYρ/. Moreover, RP distinguishes between *baaed* /A:/, *bawd* /O:/, and *bod* /Θ/ whereas Standard American English has only /A:/ for all the three. There is a difference between the systems in terms of number of phonemes.

3.1.2. Realisation

Length for vowels seems to be more important in RP than it is in North American English. Indeed, many phoneticians such as Trudgill and Hannah (2002) and Barber (1999) use /A:/ and /O:/ to describe RP vowels and /A/ and /O/ for North American English claiming that: "In General American, differences of vowel-length play a smaller part than in RP, and length-marks are not normally used in phonemic transcriptions." (Barber, 1999: 243).

North American English as many other Englishes, as seen previously, has /ι/ rather than /I/ in *very* etc. Such realisation is also affecting English RP. Allophones of /λ/ are not found in American English, Welsh English, or Irish English, there is only a clear [λ]. On the other hand, [?] is frequent, it occurs before /μ/ *batman*, between two vowels *fit us*, before /τΣ/ *church*, *box* [βΘ?κσ], *simply* [σΙμ?πλΙ]

3.1.3. Distribution

There can be a different distribution of phonemes when the use of a phoneme in one English is not similar to another one. Thus, there are differences between two systems in terms of their permitted combinations of phonemes. In RP, *car* and *card* are realised [κA:] [κA:δ] whereas in American English [κA:ρ] [κA:ρδ]. The occurrence of /ρ/ word-final or before another consonant in American English is predictable. The distribution of this phoneme /ρ/ differs from one English to another; in RP it does not occur finally or before another consonant.

As far as the vocalic system is concerned, the three RP vowels /Θ, {, A:/ correspond only to two North American English vowels /A:, {/. The correspondence becomes more complex when including as well /O:/ and rhotic/non-rhotic difference.

	RP	SAm. English
bad	{	{
Han	{	A:
path, half, dance	A:	{
father	A:	A:
boss	Θ	A:
cough, fog	Θ	A:/O:
forest	Θ	O:
what	Θ	ς
shone	Θ	oY
bard	A:	A:ρ
port	O:	O:ρ

This table sums up the following points:

- The words in the chart spelt with *a* can correspond to /{, A:, Θ/ in RP English and to /{, A:, ς/ in SAmE. Those spelt with *o* correspond to /O:, Θ/ in RP English and to /O:, A:, oΥ/ in SAmE. Many words felt 'foreign' such as *Han*, *Datsun*, *Milan*, or *Tang* with /{/ in RP have /A:/ in SAmE.

- As /A:/ is an unrounded vowel, to realise foreign words spelled with *o* SAmE tend to use /oΥ/ in comparison with RP /Θ/ as is in *Bogota* and *Carlos*.

- Unlike RP, North American English does not distinguish between *bomb* and *balm* both words have /A:/. Similarly, *cot* and *caught* in North American English are realised with /O:/.

- Where RP /A:/ is before the phonemes cluster (a nasal with a homorganic sound) /ντ/, /ντΣ/, /νδ/, /νσ/, and /μπ/; North American English has /{/ as in *grant*, *can't*, *branch*, *demand*, *glance*, and *sample*.

- Where RP has /A:/ before /ϕ/, /σ/, and /T/, North American English has /{/ as in *path*, *laugh*, and *grass*.

- Some RP words with /Θ/ correspond to North American /A:/ or /O:/. According to Trudgill and Hannah (2002), there are cases where words having orthographic *o* before *ng*, *g*, or before the voiceless fricatives /ϕ/, /σ/, and /T/ are chiefly realised with /O:/.

However, in the *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2003), among words such as *wro**ng***, *dog*, *coffee*, *boss*, and *cloth*, many can have two possible realisations /O:/ and /A:/. Moreover, sometimes only /A:/ is possible as in *boss* /βA:σ/, *loss* /λA:σ/, and *toss* /τA:σ/.

To validate or refute such hypothesis, we examined the *EPD* and have found that the occurrence of /A:/ before *ng*, *g* and /ϕ/, /σ/, or /T/ seems to be, indeed, more frequent than that of /O:/ in North American English. Besides, its occurrence is more frequent before all the other consonants except before the phoneme /ρ/. The following table shows the number of words in American English having /O:/ and those having /A:/ before all English consonants.

According to *EPD* (2003), American English contains:

Words with /O:/		Words with /A:/	
/O:π/	27	/A:π/	1167
/O:β/	51	/A:β/	709
/O:τ/	218	/A:τ/	1096
/O:δ/	211	/A:δ/	1477
/O:κ/	279	/A:κ/	2005
/O:γ/	453	/A:γ/	859
/O:φ/	111	/A:φ/	653
/O:ϖ/	25	/A:ϖ/	251
/O:T/	61	/A:T/	199
/O:Δ/	1 *swaths*	/A:Δ/	80
/O:σ/	161	/A:σ/	1366
/O:ζ/	133	/A:ζ/	470
/O:Σ/	104	/A:Σ/	266
/O:Z/	8	/A:Z/	92
/O:τΣ/	50	/A:τΣ/	182
/O:δZ/	8	/A:δZ/	395
/O:μ/	61	/A:μ/	1589
/O:ν/	290	/A:ν/	3719
/O:N/	332	/A:N/	503
/O:λ/	1283	/A:λ/	3190
/O:ρ/	5879	/A:ρ/	4549
/O:φ/	9	/A:φ/	58
/O:ω/	2	/A:ω/	31

This table shows that before all consonants (except /ρ/), American English has more words with /A:/ than with /O:/. This table gives us a different idea as to whether the distribution of such combination is identical in all Englishes. Because of the unavailability of materials we can compare such data only with RP.

/O:/	RP	SAm. English	/A:/	RP	SAm. English

/O:π/	143	27	/A:π/	156	1167
/O:β/	194	51	/A:β/	395	709
/O:τ/	1343	218	/A:τ/	1118	1096
/O:δ/	917	211	/A:δ/	1006	1477
/O:κ/	442	279	/A:κ/	752	2005
/O:γ/	193	453	/A:γ/	194	859
/O:φ/	205	111	/A:φ/	531	653
/O:ϖ/	15	25	/A:ϖ/	184	251
/O:T/	177	61	/A:T/	102	199
/O:Δ/	13	1 *swaths*	/A:Δ/	54	80
/O:σ/	495	161	/A:σ/	968	1366
/O:ζ/	337	133	/A:ζ/	255	470
/O:Σ/	129	104	/A:Σ/	89	266
/O:Z/	22	8	/A:Z/	88	92
/O:δZ/	63	8	/A:δZ/	205	395
/O:τΣ/	86	50	/A:τΣ/	138	182
/O:μ/	493	61	/A:μ/	633	1589
/O:ν/	712	290	/A:ν/	1343	3719
/O:N/	10	332	/A:N/	19	503
/O:λ/	1327	1283	/A:λ/	494	3190
/O:ρ/	1348	5879	/A:ρ/	267	4549
/O:φ/	7	9	/A:φ/	20	58
/O:ω/	70	2	/A:ω/	48	31

We can see that there are more words in American English having such combinations than there are in RP. Indeed, only 156 words with /A:π/ occur in RP but 1167 in American English. The exception lies only on /A:τ/, /A:ω/, and few words having /O:/. It would be interesting to see in a future work:

- The reason of such difference in the phonemic distribution.
- Whether or not it occurs for other vowels.

- And whether such divergence does exist elsewhere in other Englishes' phonologies.

3.1.4. Spelling

The difference in spelling words such as *aluminium* may result in a difference in pronunciation; British English *aluminium* /%{λφ≅∀μIvφ≅μ/ differs from American English *aluminum* /≅∀λυ:μIv≅μ/. Other instances include words like *either* and *neither*, which can both be realised either with /αI/ or with /ι:/ in RP or in Standard American English. However, educated speakers in England prefer /αIΔ≅/ and /vαIΔ≅/, whereas educated speakers in the USA prefer /ι:Δ≅/ and /vι:Δ≅/. On the other hand, words such as *clerk*, *Derby*, and *Berkshire* which have an orthographic *er* and which are realised with /A:/ in RP[28] /κλA:κ/, /δA:βI/, /βA:κΣ≅/ are realised with /3 :/ in North American English /κλ3 :κ/, /δ3 :βι/, /β3 :κΣ≅ /. Other examples are words such as *what* and *was* that have /ς/ in North American English instead of /Θ/ as in RP. Of equal importance are the words such as *status*, *agamete*, *apparatus*, *data* that are realised with stressed /εI/ and sometimes with both /εI/ and /{/ in RP /στεIτ≅σ/, /εI∀γ{μι:τ/, /%{π≅ρ∀εIτ≅σ/, /∀δεIτ≅/ and realised with /{/ in North American English /στ{τ≅σ/, /%{γ≅∀μι:τ/, /%{π≅ρ∀{τ≅σ/, /∀δ{τ≅/. Finally, words ending with /αIλ/ in RP end with /≅λ/ in North American English:

Words	RP	Standard American
agile	/∀{δZαIλ/	/∀{δZ≅λ/
docile	/∀δ≅ΥσαIλ/	/∀δA:σ≅λ/
facile	/∀φ{σαIλ/	/∀φ{σ≅λ/
fertile	/∀φ3:ταIλ/	/∀φ3 :τ≅λ/
fragile	/∀φρ{δZαIλ/	/∀φρ{δZ≅λ/
hostile	/∀ηΘσταIλ/	/∀ηA:στ≅λ/
imbecile	/∀Iμβ≅σαIλ/	/∀Iμβ≅σ≅λ/
juvenile	/∀δZυ:ϖ≅ναIλ/	/∀δZυ:ϖ≅ν≅λ/
missile	/∀μIσαIλ/	/∀μIσ≅λ/
reptile	/∀ρεπταIλ/	/∀ρεπτ≅λ/
tactile	/∀τ{κταIλ/	/∀τ{κτ≅λ/
virile	/∀ϖIραIλ/	/∀ϖIρ≅λ/

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[28] We have to underline that not all words spelt with *er* are realised with /A:/ in RP, this occurrence involves but few words.

This shift from /αIλ/ to /≅λ/ can be explained by the fact that /αIλ/ is an unstressed syllable, and as we have seen in the first chapter, many vowels in unstressed syllables changed into a schwa /≅/. Besides, such a phenomenon would change completely the rhythm of the words i.e. in *docile* /∀δA:σ≅λ/, for instance, /λ/ becomes syllabic [∀δA:σ5=] which is not likely to happen in RP unless it undergoes the same changes.

The prefixes *anti-* and *semi-* are realised in RP either with /I/ or with /ι/, whereas in North American English there is another possible realisation /αI/. While, many words ending with *-sia* such as *Tunisia*, *Andalusia* can be pronounced in RP either with /ζ/ or with /σ≅/ /τφυ:∀νIζI≅/ /%{νδ≅∀λυ:σI≅/ but are pronounced in North American English with /Z/ or with /Σ/ /τυ:∀νι:Z≅/ /%{νδ≅∀λυ:Σι≅/.

3.1.5. Stress

In the following list of words, there are no predictable differences. Canadian English often uses English RP variants, and the stressed words below are alike in both pronunciations even if they are unpredictable.

Words	RP	SAm English
charade	/Σ≅∀ρA:δ/	/Σ≅∀ρεIδ/
cordial	/∀κO:δI≅λ/	/∀κO:ρδZ≅λ/
herb	/η3:β/	/3̄:β/
leisure	/∀λεZ≅/	/∀λι:Z≅ ̄/
lever	/∀λι:ϖ≅/	/∀λεϖ≅ ̄/
privacy	/∀πρIϖ≅σI//∀πραIϖ≅σI/	/∀πραIϖ≅σι/
route	/ρυ:τ/	/ραΥτ/
schedule	/∀Σεδφυ:λ/	/∀σκεδZυ:λ/
shone	/ΣΘν/	/ΣoΥν/
tomato	/τ≅∀μA:τ≅Υ/	/τ≅∀μεIτoΥ/
vase	/ϖA:ζ/	/ϖεIσ//ϖεIζ/

Foreign words, especially of French origin tend to be initially stressed in RP but finally stressed in North American English. All the following words, for instance, bear stress in the last syllable in North American English: *ballet*, *brasserie*, *cachet*, *café*, *causerie*, *chalet*, *château*, *croissant*, *ennui*, *gateau*, *matinee*.

Several words are initially stressed in American English but are stressed elsewhere in British English. These include:

Words	RP English	American English
address	/≅∀δρεσ/	/∀{δρεσ//≅∀δρεσ/
Antoine	/A:ν∀τω{ν/	/∀{ντωA:ν/
croquette	/κρΘκ∀ετ/	/κροΥ∀κετ/
inquiry	/IN∀κωαI≅ρI/	/Iν∀κωαIρI//∀Iνκω≅ ‾I/
margarine	/%μA:δZ≅∀ρι:ν/	/∀μA:ρδZ≅ ‾Iν/

Many compound words such as *ice cream*, *weekend*, or *New year* are stressed on the second element in RP but on the first in SAm English. While, many polysyllabic words ending with -*ary* or -*ory* have stress on the penultimate syllable being reduced in RP. In SAm English, primary stress is somewhere else:

Words	RP English	SAm English
ancillary	/{ν∀σIλ‾≅ρI/	/∀{ντσ≅λερι/
appreciatory	/≅∀πρι:Σι≅τ‾≅ρI/	/≅πρι:∀Σι≅τO:ρI/
capillary	/κ≅∀πIλ‾≅ρI/	/∀κ{π≅λερι/
corollary	/κ≅∀ρΘλ‾≅ρI/	/∀κO:ρ≅λερι/
laboratory	/λ≅∀βΘρ≅τ‾≅ρI/	/∀λ{βρ≅τO:ρι/

3.1.5.1. Stress and Intonation

RP and SAmE are stress-timed i.e. all syllables in an utterance occur at equal intervals. RP uses more stress contrasts and a wider range of pitch than North American or Southern Hemisphere English so that it sounds to an American or a New Zealand speaker over-emotional. According to Barber (1999), RP uses in a word, for instance, one heavy stress but several weak ones; SAmE or Standard Australian, however, add within the same word another stress known as *secondary stress* on one weak syllable, *insane*, for example, has one stress in RP /Iv∀σεIν/ whereas an additional stress in SAmE /%Iv∀σεIν/.

He claims that in a word ending with –*ary* such as *customary* or *military* there is only one *heavy* stress in RP but in North American or Australian English there is a *primary* and a *secondary* stress on *a* of –*ary* .It implies, then, that *a* has a full vowel in

North American and in Australian English whereas in RP it is either a schwa /≅/ or complete vowel elision (1999: 249).

In the *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2003), *military* and *customary* can be realised as /∀μΙλΙτ⁼ρΙ/ and /∀κςστ≅μ⁼ρΙ/ which means, as Barber says, that in these words there is only one stressed syllable and that *a* of *–ary* can be either /≅/ or completely omitted. In the same dictionary, *military* and *customary* can be realised in SAmE as /∀μΙλΙτερΙ/ and /∀κςστ≅μερΙ/. *a* of *–ary* is pronounced /ε/ in SAmE but there is no sign of a secondary stress /%/ before it. Besides, we have calculated words bearing secondary stress in the *English Pronouncing Dictionary* (2003), we find 25223 words in RP and 24329 in SAmE which implies that there are more secondary stressed words in RP than in American English and not the contrary—a difference of almost 3.54% (894 words).

Concerning primary stress, RP records 107942 words bearing primary stress and 107776 ones in SAmE —almost 0.15% more (166 words). Though small, both results show that words in RP bear more stress than in SAmE. Marckwardt, for instance, argues that stress has been changing by dropping secondary stress for American English (1966: 77).

The use of more stresses entails that the rhythm in speech is slower. It can explain to a certain extent why most students of English prefer the BBC to the CNN as if RP English sounds easier or more intelligible than any other accent. Of course, we must point out that such an attempt of explanation is an impression based only on our personal experience and not on scientific grounds; and can therefore be subject to discussion either by its being confirmed or invalidated in the next chapter.

3.2.   Southern Hemisphere Englishes

In comparison with British or American English, very little research has been devoted for other Englishes. Australian, New Zealand, and South African phonological systems are very similar to that of RP. Nevertheless, New Zealand phoneme inventory record one phoneme fewer than RP's since /Ι/ and /≅/ have merged so that *kin* and *can* (weak form) are pronounced with a close central vowel [κ≅ν].

Australian English has the same number of phonemes as RP has, but most vowels are realised differently /{/ and /ε/ are closer than in RP. /A:/ as in *park* and *path* is pronounced [α:].

New Zealand English is very similar to Australian English but with some differences, /I/ as in *pit* in New Zealand is much retracted while /ε/ in *pet* is very close almost [I]. Sometimes, /ε/ after /φ/ is diphthongised /I≅/ as in *yet* which is pronounced [jι≅τ].

In Australian as well as in New Zealand pronunciation, /3:/ as in *bird* is much closer to /ε:/ than to a central quality and in New Zealand; it is realised with a lip-rounding nearer [2:] as in the French word *feu* 'fire'.

South African English as Australian and New Zealand English has a closer realisation than RP of /{/ and /ε/ and a fronted and rounded /3:/. However, the realisation of /A:/ is backward similar to RP but can be rounded [Θ:]. /I≅/ and /ε≅/ are often realised as [ε:], so that *beer* and *bear* are both [βε:]. In South African English /ρ/ is realised a single tap rather than as an approximant as in RP; the voiceless plosives /π, τ, κ/ tend to be unaspirated.

In spite of the geographical distance, the difference between RP and Southern Hemisphere phonology is not that large as it is between RP and North American . Southern Hemisphere agrees with RP in using /A:/ in *ask*, *far*, *aunt*, and *dance* but Australians use /{/.

Final unstressed –*y* as in *very* and *happy* is /I/ in RP but /ι:/ in Australian and new Zealand English. In unstressed non-final syllables RP distinguishes between /I/ as in *offices* /ΘφIσIζ/ and /≅/ as in *officers* /ΘφIσ≅ζ/. In Australian English, however, only /ΘφIσ≅ζ/ is realised in both words. In RP, words such as *naked*, *rabbit*, *village*, and *waited* /I/ is produced whereas /≅/ occurs for Australian English a feature which is shared by both New Zealand and South African English. RP does not distinguish between *taxes* and *taxis* both are /τ{κσIζ/ whereas in Australian English *taxes* /τ{κσ≅ζ/ and *taxis* /τ{κσIζ/ differ.

3.3. Summary

The following tables summarise key phonological characteristics (dealt with above) of accents of English in English-speaking countries.

3.3.1. Rhoticity

	Non-prevocalic /ρ/ *for*	Linking /ρ/ *for it*	Intrusive /ρ/ *saw it*
RP	no	yes	Variable
Scottish English	yes	—	no
Welsh English	no	yes	yes
N Ireland English	yes	—	no
S Ireland English	yes	yes	—
Canadian English	yes	—	no
Mid-West US English	yes	—	no
North-eastern US English	no	yes	yes
Lower Southern US Eng.	no	no	no
Australian English	no	yes	yes
New Zealand English	no	yes	yes
South African English	no	no	no

3.3.2. Phonological Distribution and Phonetic Realisation

	/ι:/ in *hazy*	/A:/ in *path*	/A:/ in *palm*	/ç/ in *mud*	/Y/ in *pull*	/η/ in *harm*	/γ/ in *sing*	[5] in *dull*	/ρ/ in *bar*	/φ/ in *few*
RP	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+
Standard Scottish English	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	+
N. Ireland English	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+
S. Ireland English	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+
Standard Welsh English	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+
Standard Am. English	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+
Standard Can. English	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Standard Aus. English	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+
Standard NZ English	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+
Standard SAf. English	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+

3.3.3. Phoneme Inventory

English Phonemes	Northern Hemisphere							Southern Hemisphere		
	RP	SSE	StWsh Eng.	StNIr. Eng.	StSIr. Eng.	StAm. E	StCanE	StAus. Eng.	StNZ Eng.	StSAf. Eng.
/I/	[I]	[I]	[I]	[I]	[I]	[ɪᵀᴹ]	[ɪᵀᴹ]	[ɪᵀᴹ][≅]	[≅]	[ʊ][≅]
/ɪ:/	[ɪᵀᴹɪ]	/ɪ/ [ɪ:]	[ɪ:]	/ɪ/ [ɪ:]	[ɪ:]	[ɪ:]	[ɪ:]	[3I][≅̃ɪ]	[3I]	[ɪ:]
/ɛ/	[ɛ]	[E]	[ɛ]	[E]	[ɛ]	[E]	[E]	[ɛᵀᴹ]	[ɛ©]	[ɛ]
/{/	[{]	/α/ [α]	[α]	/α/ [α]	[α]	[{Π]	[{Π]	[Eᵀᴹ][{≅̃]	[E©]	[E]
/ç/	[6]	[6]	[≅]	[6]	[OΠ]	[6]	[6]	[6Π][6]	[6Π]	[6Π][6]
/≅/	[≅]	[ç]	[≅]	[ç]	[≅]	[≅]	[≅]	[≅]	[ç][6]	[≅]
/≅̄/	—	—	—	—	—	[≅̄]	—	—	—	—
/3:/	[3:]	—	[2:]	—	—	—	—	[≅:]	[2√:ᵀᴹ]	[2√:]
/3̄:/	—	—	—	—	—	[3̄:]	—	—	—	—
/A:/	[A:]	—	[α:]	—	[α:]	[A]	[A]	[α:]	[α:]	[A:]
/Θ/	[Θ]	—	[O]	—	[A]	—	[Θ]	[Oᵀᴹ][{≅̃]	[Θ]	[O]
/O:/	[O:]	/O/ [O]	[O:]	/O/ [O]	[A:]	[O]	[O]	[o:][o6]	[oᵀᴹ:]	[o:]
/Y/	[Y]	—	[Y]	—	[Y]	[Y]	[Y]	[Y]	[ɤ]	[ʊ][}]
/ʊ:/	[ʊᵀᴹʊ]	/ʊ/ [}]	[ʊ:]	/ʊ/ [}]	[}:]	[ʊ:]	[}:]	[}}Π][}:]	[≅}]	[}:]
/ɛI/	[ɛI]	[ɪᵀᴹɪ]	[ɛ:]	[ɪᵀᴹɪ]	[ɛ:]	[ɛI]	[ɛI]	[α©I][Eɛ]	[αI]	[6ɛ][{I]
/EI/	—	—	[ɛᵀᴹI]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
/αI/	[αI]	[çI]	[≅I]	[çI]	[3I]	[αI]	[αI][çI]	[ΘI][Θ≅][Aɛ]	[AI]	[A≅̃]
/OI/	[OI]	[Oɪ]	[OI]	[Oɪ]	[OI]	[OI]	[OI]	[oI]	[oᵀᴹI]	[oɛ]
/≅Y/	[8Y]	—	[o:]	—	[o:]	—	—	[Θ}][6≅][≅}]	[6ᵀᴹ}][6ᵀᴹ8]	[EY][9Y][çΠ≅̃]
/αY/	[AY]	[çY]	—	[çY]	—	[AY]	[AY][çY]	[{}][{Θ][ɛʊΠ]	[{}]	[A©Y][A:][{≅̃]
/AY/	—	—	[≅Y]	—	[3}]	—	—	—	—	—
/OY/	—	—	[oᵀᴹY]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
/oY/	—	[o]	—	[o]	—	[oY]	[oY]	—	—	—
/I≅/	[I≅]	—	—	—	—	—	—	[ɪᵀᴹ:][I≅̃]	[ɛ©≅]	[ɛ:]
/ɛ≅/	[ɛ≅]	—	[E:]	—	—	—	—	[ɛᵀᴹ:][ɛ≅̃]	[ɛ©≅]	[E≅] [ɛ:]
/Y≅/	[Y≅]	—	—	—	—	—	—	[}≅][o:]	[}≅][o:]	[Y≅]
Total	**20**	**13**	**20**	**13**	**16**	**17**	**16**	**20**	**20**	**20**

We can thus observe that, a variation in one system does not necessarily entail a variation in another. Yet, there is a significant difference in vowels between various Englishes mainly where rhoticity or non-rhoticity influences the inventory. Many Englishes we have dealt with above coexist with other official languages. English-speakers are different people with different cultures. It is interesting, therefore, to understand the extent to which this supposition is valid in influencing the variation.

The purpose of the comparative study to which we have just proceeded is not simply a comparison for its own sake, but an attempt to know whether these varieties can permit us to say if there is a standard that should be, in preference, taught in Algerian schools and foreign institutions of language.

Chapter III
Language, Culture, and Educational Implications

This chapter emphasises the relationship between language and culture; we will, therefore, analyse such a relationship in terms of phonetics and phonology of English. We will focus briefly on some cultural aspects that relate to a particular pronunciation as well as to some of its varieties.

Undoubtedly, English will keep on culturally and phonetically discriminating many speakers all over the world. English is increasingly used as a world language; a sociolinguistic phenomenon that makes us wonder whether English characterises the British people and their descents or, simply, all those who use it. And if so, what variety can be most practical in Algeria and which 'Standard English' is to be taught at schools and universities.

1.   Language and Culture

Language is part of the cultural heritage transmitted from one generation to another. When speaking, certain social parameters can be easily identified. These include parameters such as region, social class, level of education, gender, age, ethnic background, voice quality, physical state, and so forth. Consciously or unconsciously, speech is an identity marker and an identity print.

Culture in this dissertation does not allude to arts and other manifestations of the human intellectual accomplishment. It is rather the distinguishing attitudes and behaviour of a particular social group; it is viewed from:

> "Its anthropological sense… [a] Socially acquired knowledge:
> i.e. as the knowledge that someone has by virtue of his being a
> member of a particular society." (Lyons, 1981: 302).

Language must be seen in terms of the set of sociolinguistic features specific of a particular society and its history. Sociocultural factors are depicted not only in speech but also in the way it varies. According to Yule, many language variations are caused by cultural differences; a linguistic variation implies a sociocultural one: "Linguistic variation is tied very much to the existence of different cultures." (1991: 195). Speech varies largely in terms of its people use and needs.

As we have seen in the first chapter, the spread of a certain phonetic realisation can be due to the imitation of a prominent social group. Indeed, English middle-working class women, for instance, tend to sound more educated by using [IN] in words such as *sing* rather than [Iv] (Trudgill). The choice of one pronunciation [IN] instead of another

[Iv] reflects the impact the linguistic behaviour on social credit or recognition. These women enjoy greater prestige or status in their community when adopting [IN].

Labov (1971) has also sustained the fact that variation in pronunciation is influenced by social parameters. He indicates that free variation has sociological implications; and that a speaker may choose one pronunciation or another according to the social context in which they find themselves. The same French speaker, for example, uses the alveolar thrill [ρ] when he is at home (countryside) but the uvular fricative [P] when he visits Paris (Labov, 1971: 432-437). For that reason, many sociolinguists (such as Trudgill and Labov) think that there is undeniably a direct link between language and the world in which we interact.

Language, in general, has often been approached from different angles of investigation. Among these, what has supplied with a better understanding of some of its mysteries was to identify the nature of the relationship between language and culture. In other words, the question is to know whether it is language that shapes the world or the world that shapes language.

1.1. The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis analyses the representations of the world through the linguistic systems since the latter influences or determines our vision of the world and shapes our thought. In other words, people discern the world largely through language. Languages are dissimilar because they represent different people and societies:

> "Language is a guide to social reality… No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached." (Sapir, 1956: 69)

According to Sapir, our different cultures are the outcome of our different languages. It is not a random fact that we differ from one another. On the contrary, we vary because we do not express ourselves in the same way and we do not use the same linguistic systems or sub-systems.

The hypothesis states that the structure of a language conditions the way in which a speaker thinks and behaves. Therefore, the different linguistic structures affect the speakers and the way they view the world. According to this hypothesis, the way people, for example, view time and punctuality depends mainly on the verb tenses

existing in their grammar. Arabic, for instance, has only three forms of finite verbs[1], namely *madhi* 'past', *modharee* 'present and future', and *amr* 'imperative'. Consequently, Arabs can hardly perceive the distinction between the present and the future time since there is only one grammatical form to express them. However, grammarians of Arabic such as Boukhalkhal (1987) claim that even if Arabic does not explicitly have such a distinction, grammatical particles are used with the verb to indicate the future.

1.1.1. Language an Acquired Cultural Function

According to Sapir[2], speech is an "institutional and cultural entity" and language shapes ideas since it influences the group through different environmental needs. Language materialises concepts; it is the bridge between the concrete and the abstract. He insists on the fact that the 'content' of language is closely related to culture. Language and culture move together and the history of one cannot be detached from the other:

> "Language is intimately related to the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives." (Sapir (1921) cited in De Beaugrande, 1993: 46).

For Whorf[3], who studied Hopi[4], each linguistic system is a kind of a particular 'programme' that orients the mental activity and the way we discern life and reality. In a sense, language directs and conditions not only ourselves but also our culture. Nevertheless, this hypothesis has come under attack by some linguists such as Rosch (1974). She has found that Dani language, a tribe in Papua New Guinea (North Australia), does not enclose more than two nouns to name all different colours. She claims that even if those speakers' language cannot label each colour with a different noun, the speakers can perfectly distinguish between all the colours she made them see.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis can be valid if we could not communicate with different people speaking different languages or translate one language to another. In sum, language can be used as a vehicle for our culture but not as a machine that

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[1] Among the three forms, only *madhi* 'past' is considered, sometimes, as a grammatical tense; they are generally referred to as σι:Γα 'forms of the verb'. See "matn al-alfijja" li-Bni Ma:lik (El-Hachimi, 1976).

[2] Edward Sapir (1921): *Language*. New York: Brace & World.

[3] Benjamin Lee Whorf (1956): *Language, Thought and Reality*. New York: Wiley.

[4] Hopi: an Indian language spoken mainly in North East Arizona by around 2,000 speakers (in 2001).

generates it. Besides, Americans from Texas and Britons from London do no have necessarily the same vision of the world even if they speak the same language. Each one has their own culture. Although there are similarities between these two speech communities, the language develops according to the needs of people. Language may influence culture to some extent, but it can hardly determine it. If language determines thought, there could be no possible variation since it is already predetermined.

1.1.2. Spoken Language

As we have just seen, language can shape but not determine our thoughts and vision of the world. This denial can put forward the idea that it is the sociocultural factors that determine or influence language and its variation through time. Language, generally, can be either written or spoken, which was not always the case few centuries ago. For literacy has been a long time a privilege granted to special groups such as the upper-class or the priesthood.

To portray sociocultural factors, this dissertation is more interested in the oral form of English than in the written one since the spoken language is 'prior' to the written one by at least four reasons:

➢ The human race used speech a long time ago before using written forms.

➢ The child learns how to speak first.

➢ Unlike written language, which can be converted into speech without loss, speech has more striking characteristics such as prosodic and paralinguistic features (stress, rhythm, tempo, intonation, whisper, silence, etc.). The semantics of intonation and stress, for instance, is a major subject in its own.

➢ Speech plays a far greater role in our lives than writing does; we spend far more time speaking than writing or reading.

The spoken language in general and pronunciation in particular reveal some aspects of our society and culture. According to Dekkak, language is an instrument that contributes to expressing the speaker's sociocultural identity. While speaking, each individual reveals consciously or unconsciously a component of their personality, their society, and the period of time in which they live: "Language is the mirror of given beliefs, attitudes, and cultural norms of a given society at a given time." (Dekkak, 1985: 3).

Language, by some means, portrays the community in which it is used because each speaker uses language in the way they or their society perceives it (Goodenough,

1981). This statement calls for closer investigations; first to see how English can reflect people's cultures, then how such reflections are recorded and represented onto the phonological level.

1.2. Sociocultural Aspects and Pronunciation

Language and culture may influence each other. Even if they are independent, they are inter-influent. As will be seen in this chapter, such inter-influence can be minor or quite consequential. The inter-influence can be summarised as follows. On one hand, we take from language what we need in order to adapt it to our use. On the other hand, our own culture can significantly influence language, its development, and its use along to the social context in which we find ourselves.

1.2.1. Internal Factors Influence

Not all linguists agree with the fact that social factors influence phonology. Many phonologists such as Anttila (2002) sustain that an alteration in phonology and phonetics is due mainly to internal factors such as morphology, lexicon, or syntax. He supports his theory by supplying few examples similar to the [τ, δ] assimilation. He argues that [τ, δ] assimilation does not occur at random. Indeed, it must be in accordance with the following segment and the morphological status it has. The following table[5] shows the amount of [τ, δ] assimilation in percentage before different segments:

Following segment		Following segment	
stop	78%	/λ/	40%
/ω/	68%	pause	17%
fricative	65%	vowel	6%
nasal	57%	/ρ/	7%
/η/	45%	/φ/	5%

According to this table, [τ, δ] are more likely (78%) to be assimilated when occurring before a stop as in *that day* [Δ{δεI], or *that girl* [Δ{γ3:λ] where the first segment [τ] is lost. He also suggests that [τ] in *lost* /λΘστ/ can be easily deleted than [τ]

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[5] Figures from Labov (1997) cited in Anttila (2002: 207).

in *tossed* /τΘστ/ because *d* is a morpheme, which indicates the past, and its deletion may result in confusion with the present tense *toss*.

Giegerich (2001), another phonologist, shares Anttila's view. He claims that a sound variation depends largely on its adjacent segments and on the speaker's pronouncing habits. He states that as long as we observe people speak, nobody's speech is identical with that of someone else:

> "On the level of precise phonetic description, the number of different sounds of English is practically infinite. Speech sounds will always differ in different contexts; no two speakers pronounce the same word in exactly the same way, and even the same speaker rarely pronounces the same word twice in precisely the same way." (2001: 30).

It is not, therefore, a matter of external factors but rather of internal ones. Giegerich supports his statement with a number of examples. There are three nasal stops in English: a bilabial one as in *my*, an alveolar one as in *nigh*; and a velar one as in *hang*. He claims that we may come across two more nasals. The nasal in *tenth* differs from that in *ten* since it is dental [v∉], and the one in *on five* is often pronounced as a labiodental [Φ].

Among oral voiceless stops, there are different places of articulation such as bilabial as in *pool*, alveolar as in *tool* and velar as in *cool*. But again, we may find more than these three places of articulation—before a front vowel as in *keel* the stop is not as far back as it is in *cool*. *Keel* is no longer velar but palatal [c]. In *width*, the stop is not alveolar but dental[d∉].

In *tenth*, *on five*, and *keel*, the consonants we have just referred to can only be influenced by internal factors, a fact which can be predicted easily. Thus, it is possible to consider sound variation only from its own structural system. For, phonetic description remains each time dependent on internal contexts and on individual's verbal habits (in case of rapid speech). Nevertheless, speech sounds are delivered by people and are used according to the settled habits of their society.

1.2.2. External Factors Influence

External factors or sociocultural features can fulfil similar functions. According to Hume and Johnson, there is a direct link between external factors and phonology:

> "Social and communicative factors play an important role in shaping language sound structure. From a social perspective, the need to conform to a linguistic norm, for example, can exert

> influence over an individual's cognitive language sound patterns. The need in a communicative system to use forms that others will identify and accept also influences sound systems." (2001: 14)

They assert that external/social factors influence the change or stability of a sound system either in the sound production or in the sound perception stage. Indeed, external factors have the capacity to shape pronunciation through age, social class, regional background, English contact with other languages, etc.

1.2.2.1. Age Differences

Many phoneticians such Gimson (1970), Wells (1999), Trudgill & Hannah (2002), and Hughes *et al.* (2005) carried out an investigation to observe pronunciation preferences among RP speakers. For a better legibility of statistics, we believe it more pertinent to synthesise the different data in two groups instead of maintaining them into various age groups for the reason that such statistics vary from one author to another.

In the following tables, we put forward only two categories; namely older and younger RP speakers[6]. We do not separate between male and female pronunciation either. Although many findings agree that female speakers use a higher quantity of standard forms, the authors cited above implicitly suggest that sex differences within standard pronunciation are not that significant compared to age differences.

The purpose from this description is not to portray one more time RP sounds but to depict some variations within *one accent* in terms of older and younger generation criteria. We select only few key elements:

1.2.2.1.1. RP Monophthongs

English RP monophthongs are divided into three categories—front, central, and back vowels:

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[6] We do not include a third group (middle-aged speakers) since their speech varies from older speakers to younger speakers pronunciation.

1.2.2.1.1.1 Front RP Vowels

/I/ as in *pit*

* In non-final position:

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
They have a strikingly central vowel /≅/ where /I/ is traditionally produced in a number of syllables.	They use a closer vowel than younger ones; there is barely any difference between *peat* [πι:τ] and *pit* [pit] excluding length, or *emerge* [ι:μ3:δZ] with length.

* In final position:

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
There is a tendency to substitute /I/ for a closer and fronter vowel /ι(:)/ in words such as *very* [ϖερι] or *city* [σIτι].	They may lean for /ε/ as in *city* [σIτε].

/ε/ as in *pet*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
[ε]	They may use an /ε/ which is close to cardinal vowel n°2[7].

/{/ as in *pat*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
They lower and retract it to the quality of cardinal vowel n°4 /α/.	They realise /{/ which is closer and fronter that some listeners may confuse it with /ε/.

1.2.2.1.1.2 Central RP Vowels

/ς/as in *putt*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
/ς/ fluctuates between [ς] and [Θ]. Sometimes *one* is realised [ωΘν].	They may use a more retracted quality [ς√] to realise this vowel.

/3:/ as in *pert*

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[7] Gimson (1989) has termed this realisation as *over-refined*.

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Some younger RP speakers, typically females, tend to produce it with an open quality [6:].	It alters between mid-open and mid-close vowels, depending on its phonetic context —word-initial, word-final, or next to velars.

1.2.2.1.1.3 Back Vowels

/A:/ as in *part*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
/A:/ fluctuates between [A:] and [{].	Upper-class speakers may use a more retracted vowel than the indicated and which is close to cardinal vowel n°5 [A].
chance [τΣ{ντσ]	*chance* [τΣAνσ]

/Θ/ as in *pot*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Off, *froth*, and *lost* are pronounced by younger speakers with [Θ]. Similarly, words such as *salt* and *fault* are pronounced by younger speakers with [Θ].	Many words spelt with *o* before voiceless fricatives /ϕ, T, σ/ are pronounced by older speakers with [O:][8] as in *off* [O:ϕ], *froth* [ϕρO:T], and [λO:στ].
Cross [κρΘσ]	*Cross* [κρO:σ]

/O:/ as in *port*

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[8] The pronunciation of these words with [O:] has almost faded, it does not exist anymore in the *EPD*, these examples are from Trudgill; Hannah (2002).

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
The majority of RP speakers use /O:/ for words that were formerly produced with [O≅] e.g. *court* /κO:τ/, *four* /φO:/, *pour* /πO:/, and *doo*r /δO:/. They do not distinguish anymore between *caught* and *court*, *for* and *four*, *pour* and *paw* or between *daw* and *door*.	Older speakers, however, maintain this distinction [O:] [O≅] and have therefore a supplementary phoneme /O≅/—a case of system variability.

/Y/ as in *put*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Some younger speakers realise this vowel with a front and unrounded quality, which is close to [≅].	[Y]

/ʋ:/ as in *pool*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Younger speakers are increasingly pronouncing a fronter vowel in the direction of [}:] except before /λ/ as in *fool*.	[ʋ:]

1.2.2.1.2. RP Diphthongs

/ε≅/ as in *pair*.

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Younger speakers tend to monophthongise /ε≅/ to [ε:] as in *air* or *heir* [ε:].	[ε≅].There is no lip-rounding and a kind of resistance to [ε:].

/≅Y/ as in *Po*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Some younger speakers may use a fronter quality that suggests a small distance between the vowels of *post* /π≅Υστ/ and *paste* /πεΙστ/.	Older speakers may use [o] as the first element instead of /≅/ as do some younger speakers when pronouncing a vowel before [5] as in *bowl*.
The diphthong as in *boat* varies from [OY] among older speakers to [2}] among younger speakers, the most neutral pronunciation may be [8υ].	

/Υ≅/ as in *poor*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
/Υ≅/ tends to disappear and to be replaced by [O:].	/Υ≅/ is well maintained.

1.2.2.1.3. RP Triphthongs

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
Some younger speakers tend to remove the third element through smoothing; the process may go farther by omitting also the second element and pronouncing only the first one with length. This seems to be less valid when the schwa is a suffix, through smoothing *fire* becomes [φA:] but *flyer* is realised [φλA≅]. Monophthongisation for /ε≅/ is more common in compounds e.g. *fire brigade* [φA:β≤IγεIδ], *Tower Bridge* [τA:β≤IδZ], or *layer cake* [λε:κεIκ].	RP triphthongs are generally well maintained.

1.2.2.1.4. RP Consonants

/Σ/ as in *schedule* or *Asia*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
[σκεδΖυ:λ]	[Σ≅δφυ:λ]
[εIZ≅]	[εIΣ≅]

/τφ/ and /δφ/ as in *tune* and *dune*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
[τΣυ:ν] and [δZυ:ν]	[τφυ:ν] and [δφυ:ν]

/Δ/ as in *booth*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
[βυ:T]	[βυ:Δ]

al before a consonant

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
alcove [{λκ≅Yϖ]	*alcove* [Θλκ≅Yϖ]
altitude [{λτItφυ:δ]	*altitude* [O:λτItφυ:δ][ΘλτItφυ:δ]
falcon [ϕ{λκ≅ν]	*falcon* [ϕO:λκ≅ν][ϕΘλκ≅ν]

1.2.2.1.5. RP Stress

Initial Stress as in *mischievous*

Younger Speakers (Modern RP)	Older Upper-class Speakers (Conservative RP)
mischievous [μIσ∀τΣι:ϖ≅σ]	*mischievous* [∀μIστΣι:ϖ≅σ]

1.2.2.2.   Social Class

Bayard (1996), a sociolinguist, studied pronouncing variation within New Zealand speakers. He claims that social class status is of great influence for speech variation. His statistics show that upper middle class speakers use a high proportion of RP sounds and stick more to conservative sounds than lower class speakers do:

> "The phonological variables show clear variation within the threefold arbitrary division of the socioeconomic spectrum employed here, with the 'lower class' using a high proportion of the 'broad' variant and the 'upper middle class' using a high

proportion of the more 'conservative' variant (closer to RP)."
(in Cheshire (ed.), 1996: 176)

Even if upper middle class and lower class speakers use the same accent; namely Standard New Zealand English, their pronunciation does not vary towards the same direction. He also claims that women desiring to appear more prestigious favour conservative variants. A word such as *speech*, for instance, is produced [σπι:τΣ] by most upper middle class and women speakers and [σπ□ιτΣ] (with a slight diphthongisation) by most lower class and men speakers.

1.2.2.3. Regional Background

People who migrated from the British Isles to the British colonies took with them not only language but also their culture. They arrived from different parts of the Isles (England, Scotland, Wales, or Ireland) and came into contact to create new communities. After two or three generations, new varieties came into existence with basically assorted features and mixtures from their fathers' different dialects.

American standard, for instance, developed because of demographic and public education. The first settlers in the diverse colonies were from different areas with different cultures and pronunciations. After many generations, many colonies sounded alike and no one was as that of England. With the arrival of other non-English communities, English was fixed by then and the new settlers had to integrate the local communities by speaking English first. More schools were founded and English was the language to teach.

Canada, for instance, witnessed the merging of the vowels *cot* /Θ/ and *caught* /O:/ a feature from Scotland and the merging of *pull* /Y/ and *pool* /ʊ:/ from England. As a result, there is no difference in pronunciation between *cot* and *caught* or between *pull* and *pool*.

In Southern Hemisphere Englishes, (as in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand) RP is still considered as highly prestigious. The 'Cultivated' English varieties in these territories have maintained in their phonology English RP features (Cheshire, 1996). Indeed, there are many similarities in spite of the thousand miles separating them. Sticking to English RP makes the speaker acquire higher social status[9]. Another evidence that the choice of a particular pronunciation remains socially significant.

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[9] Idem.

Within the British Isles we also find phonetic and phonological variations. Irish English, for example, is influenced by its having for a long time preserved a number of linguistic features from Early Modern English (EME). Even if they do no longer exist at present, they have somehow directed the evolution and variation of English progress for Irish English (Harris in Cheshire ed., 1996: 41). It can explain, to a certain extent, the reason that makes them sound different.

1.2.2.4.   Phonological Variation and Cultural Influence

The study of language structure and evolution within the social context of a speech community is worth investigating. Actual life shapes phonetic and phonological features. According to Labov, a speech community becomes an organisation of ways of speaking. Indeed, a speech community consents to adopt a particular speech according to its needs and its culture.

Even if regional variation exists in Canada, Australia, or in the other English-speaking countries, it does not stand on the same stance as that of Great Britain or the USA. There are more regional variation in Northern Hemisphere Englishes than in Southern Hemisphere ones. The sociocultural attributes associated with pronunciation in the latter countries are mostly educational and hierarchical (social class) than regional:

> "There is much less regional variation in the overseas varieties than there is in England and Scotland. In Britain you can often tell where someone comes from by the way they speak to within, say, 15 km. In eastern North America it is often more like 200km; and in western North America [Canada], and in Australia, it is hardly possible at all." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 8).

Australian, New Zealand, and South African phonologies are very close to RP; yet, their phonetics are increasingly diverging. Besides, these varieties are more and more resembling American English rather than RP. According to Bayard (1989), the New Zealand spoken media is massively influenced by American English; a fact that is not without consequence. RP has no longer the same prestigious status it used to have mainly among young people:

> "The 'mild' accents differ somewhat from RP, while the 'broad' accents differ considerably from RP. The 'mild' accents tend to be found towards the top of the social scale, particularly amongst older speakers. (RP is an accent which still has considerable prestige in these countries, but there has been a

> very marked decline in this prestige in the last three decades or
> so." (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002: 16).

The way people perceive RP in these societies differs from what it used to be. Likewise, Canadian English is quite similar to RP rather than to American English. This reality becomes less valid for younger Canadians who are more and more receptive to American phonetics and phonology (Chambers in Cheshire ed., 1996: 93).

1.2.2.5.   English Contact

In many regions (such as Scotland, Canada, New Zealand, or South Africa) English is not the only language. When English is in contact with other tongues or languages it can undergo modifications according to certain conditions but still, within certain limits. These alterations do not occur at random; they are influenced by other varieties such as:

- Indigenous languages such as Gaelic in Scotland or Maori in New Zealand.
- Non-standard English varieties such as Broad Australian influences General and Cultivated English in Australia or Cockney in London (Wells, 1994).
- Or by tongues imported from other speech communities such as Afrikaans in South Africa (Schneider *et al.* 2004) or American English in England. A word such as *schedule* usually pronounced /Σεδφυ:λ/ in RP is increasingly realised as [σκεδΖυ:λ] by young RP speakers (Wells, 1994).

The contact of a language with another is of no small consequence. Yet, it is important to bear in mind that such an influence can be either optional or compulsory. As it is observed above, young RP speakers adopt a preference for few American English sounds of their own choice. However, it is not always the case. Sometimes, it is quite the opposite and the contact becomes no longer a matter of alternatives but of compulsion. Colonised territories have often witnessed such phenomena. According to Dekkak, any colonialist policy consists of imposing its own people's language on the colonised land. The adoption of a newly come language reveals as a result the failure or success of a colonialist policy:

> "France introduced a different system of education with
> language to strengthen its colonial policy...The cultural and
> political role of language was perceived as essential in the
> colonial life." (Dekkak, 1986: 5)

The people who surrender the invasion progressively introduce some features of their language into the newly established tongue. The latter, with time, becomes affected by the local sociocultural attributes and stops to be the invader to become an invaded language. Some Arabic words such as *baraka* 'luck' were introduced into French and are commonly used by native French speakers *la baraka* meaning 'luck'/gift.

One finds this same phenomenon in the Anglo-Saxon countries. In some territories or islands where English is in contact with local languages such as Zulu in South Africa, the influence has a considerable importance on English phonological variation. In New Zealand, for instance, Maori has the capacity to produce an effect on the nature, development, and behaviour of English phonology and phonetics (Trudgill; Hannah, 2002).

As language is the means by which people communicate, it must, therefore, cope with their environmental and social needs. People living in a particular region or country have in common collective customs, laws, and organisations which are all transmitted by language.

The nature of the English contact can explain somehow what distinguishes one English from another. Clyne (2003) studies language contact in Australia from different angles: sociological, phonetic, phonological, morphological and so forth. He firmly believes that people speaking another language can influence English i.e. English varies through contact with different languages and cultures. He calls this phenomenon *language shift* (LS). He claims that a language such as English can adopt a phoneme from another language —as for the blend of (English *of* and German *auf*) that led to a compromise [Oɸ] in some Australian English varieties instead of the RP [Θɸ].

Pronunciation *reflects* context since it reveals our ability to distinguish between the range of different and assorted contexts, settings, and relationships we find ourselves in. Besides, it can also *determine* context: a speaker who deliberately produces an utterance in RP, for example, may influence the linguistic choice of the interlocutor. The impact of an utterance in a particular accent on the hearer can enhance a positive or a negative attitude (either physical or verbal feedback) depending on the evaluation one associates to that accent.

1.3. The 'Ownership' of English

Usually, the name of a language designates an ethnic group or a set of ethnic groups. The term *Chinese*, *Italian*, or *Polish* for instance, refers to the language and to the people who speak it. Such language can act as a strong unifying force of the nation that is why some countries may develop a new one[10] to mark their differentiation from other countries or nationalities.

When the U.S.A., for example, claimed its independence[11] there were schemes and proposals about a linguistic difference from Britain. Americans felt so dissimilar and distant from the British that they decided to abandon English and adopt another language. Hebrew and Greek, for instance, were among these proposals: "There was even one proposal that Americans should adopt Hebrew! Others, again, favoured the adoption of Greek." (Quirk *et al.*, 1964: 3).

Nowadays, the name of a language such as English does not automatically indicate a national identity. If somebody speaks English, they can belong to some other speech community than to England. Recent statistics (Mc Arthur, 2002) on English use prove that over 400 million of people whose mother tongue or first language is English have different cultures. And almost 80% of its speakers all over the world are bilingual—approximately one-and-a-half to two billion of English speakers. This amount clearly demonstrates that speakers have different languages and belong to different cultures.

To consider English as the private property of a particular speech community cannot be based on solid grounds because English is considered as the first *second and foreign language* (ESL, EFL) spread all over the world. As we have already seen in the first chapter, it has become the most widely used language in the world.

English has become *a world language*, which means that it is used by many speakers all over the world and is, thus, affected by different cultures and traditions. The major outcome of such a situation is the existence of many varieties, which are influenced by the nature of their speakers. In a sense, English is rather a 'universal' language; and it belongs no more to the English people/nation.

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[10] Bahasa is a newly created language in Indonesia. (Hudson, 1983: 33)

[11] Thomas Paine (1737-1809): English political writer who called for American independence in his pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776). His writings had a considerable impact on American people and influenced their Revolution (1775-1783).

According to Swiderski, English is a language that mirrors not only its people's culture but also foreigners' one:

> "The mirror has many facets and many shadings of reflectivity. Even then, is it the same mirror? … The mirror also changes with the changing reflection, and that the truth is more complex than a single image or set of words." (1996: 28).

The term *mirror* in this quotation is to be compared to *English*; it always reproduces a different reflection depending on the way and on the number of people using it. English becomes American, Canadian, Australian, etc. Each time culture and people change, English changes too. English is flexible in order to express the local culture of its speakers. There are, therefore, as many Englishes as there are many English-speaking cultures:

> "We must note that 'English' does not necessarily mean 'British English', and in [some] countries too it seems increasingly likely that we shall see the emergence of new 'Standard Englishes', sharing enough features with English… but with regular regional features… English is not the prerogative or 'possession' of the English. It is the property of the Yorkshireman no more than the Californian." (Quirk *et al.*, 1964: 14-16).

As the notion of plural Englishes is foregrounded, we have to ask, then, whether one English variety is to be considered or valued more correct than another. Do we have as foreigners to stick to one standard and reject all the others? Which standard is to be chosen as the most suitable reference? And under what criteria and decisive factors a standard is to be selected?

Fortunately or unfortunately, there is no one single 'correct' standard. Many standard Englishes already exist and many more are likely to come forward (similar to Indian, Nigerian Englishes, etc.). Each standard exposes a tiny picture of the society in which it is used and each use is determined by function and evokes the purposes of its use.

Accents/pronunciations are what their uses have made them; not just what their inner structure or nature has bestowed upon them. In fact, no value judgement is to be assigned to a *language* or to a *pronunciation*; neither is to be acknowledged as 'superior' or 'inferior' than another. It is the usage of a particular pronunciation or phonology and in a particular context, which endows it with 'satisfactory' or 'deficient'

attributes. In the following quotation, all Englishes are considered alike and there is no English better than another is:

> "It is therefore not for the American to tell us that English in Great Britain is 'clipped' or 'affected' and hence inferior to the English he speaks. Nor is it for the Englishman to say that Australian English is 'uneducated' and 'Cockney', or that American English is 'vague' and 'slangy'." (Quirk *et al.*, 1964: 14-16).

According to the above quotation, no Standard English is to be considered more satisfactory or more worthy. As for the most appropriate or advantageous one; we shall be discussing this matter in the subsequent section.

2. Educational Implications

Becoming proficient when learning Standard English, a language abundantly supplied day-by-day with neologisms, remains a considerable task. Proficiency is a great deal and it is not only a matter of reaching skilfulness in speaking, listening, reading, or writing. It calls for little awareness and understanding of the culture(s)/ social parameters in which a language operates as well.

As language reflects society, speech sounds share a similar task. And when pronunciation varies, variation is used to reveal the speaker's social identity in terms of their region, gender, social class, and level of education. When acquiring a particular pronunciation, we also acquire cultural practices and values.

Before moving to *the 'English situation' in Algeria*, a distinction between the terms *learning* and *acquisition* must be put forward. Many linguists such as Leather (1999) distinguish between foreign language *learning* and foreign language *acquisition* by which *acquisition* means a thorough understanding and mastering of L2; while *learning* is acquired by a designed and a fixed instruction and guidance. Moreover, he claims that *learning*, at variance with *acquisition*, is preferably applied to both children and adults acquiring a foreign tongue.

Language planning is an important question and will probably gain more attention in the future. In a multilingual society as Algeria, the debate concerning second language acquisition begins to emerge—whether or not to replace French with English. Whatever may be the result, French and English are two different and distinct languages which is not the case of British and American English since we find within the same language [English] many varieties.

This section will try to provide few answers to the following questions: on what claim a variety is more advantageous and beneficial than another. What is the impact of this difference on Algerian learners of English? Do Englishes detach on the scale of intelligibility for us? What is the particular status or significance, if any, of these varieties for English learners? Is it the ministry of education, the teachers or the students themselves that decide on which English to teach and learn?

2.1. English a Foreign Language

According to (Quirk, *et al.*), English as a foreign language means a language other than one's own and through which we can communicate all over the world:

> "By *foreign* language we mean a language as used by someone for communication across frontiers or with people who are not his countrymen: listening to broadcasts, reading books or newspapers, commerce or travel, for example. No language is more widely studied or used as a foreign language than English." (, 1979: 3-4).

Proficiency in English entails a competence and performance not only in grammar and lexicon but also in phonology and phonetics. As we have already seen in this chapter, sounds reflect society and are essential to carry the suitable meaning speakers try to convey. Since sounds reflect a slight part of our identity, our English can sometimes bear the stamp of our character and even of our Algerian phonological system.

2.1.1. Native Language Interference in English Learning

Students of English can utilise the target sound system with more or less important interference of their own phonological or phonetic properties. The native tongue influences foreign language performance, because learning enfolds a new sound structure and new models of articulation and perception (James 1988) which only few can master.

Among the pronouncing errors made by some Algerian students (first year students of English at Mostaganem University) are the following. First, /σ/ when intervocalic as in *disagree* or *disappear* undergoes a French phonologic rule —when intervocalic [s] becomes [z]. These words are, therefore, realised as [δIζ≅γρι:] and [δIζ≅πI≅] instead of [δIσ≅γρι:] and [δIσ≅πI≅]. Next, a vowel is inserted between English initial consonant clusters. Arabic syllabic structure is usually CVCVCV as in

kataba 'to write', words such as *spring* or *clothes* are frequently pronounced as [σ≅π≅ρIνγ] and [κ≅λ≅Υ∆≅ζ]. Then, diphthongs such as /≅Υ/ as in *most* /μ≅Υστ/ are, sometimes, changed into [εω] [μεωστ] where the second vowel becomes a consonant; becoming, thus, an Algerian rural diphthong.

Arabic has only 28 consonants and 3 vowels, which makes it a far less complicated sound system than that of English. Besides, the script of English appears not that difficult to learn in comparison with the corresponding pronunciation and especially phonology. The latter can be difficult for foreigners to learn since there is no close relationship with English orthography.

Unlike English, French initial or final voiced consonants, for instance, are fully voiced. In a word such as *oui* 'yes' /ωι/, /ω/ is fully voiced whereas /ι/ is pronounced with a whisper phonation [ι⇓] rather than a voiceless phonation [ι⇓]. English pronoun *we* /ωι:/ is produced in the same way as the French *oui* [ωι⇓].

Moreover, learners do not often grant rhythm and rhoticity their due. Stress frequently causes problems for non-native speakers which is likely not the case for speakers of the Germanic languages for the reason that their rhythms are alike:

> "The stress-timed rhythm of English poses virtually no problems for speakers of the Germanic languages of North-Western Europe, because they have similar rhythms in their own languages. This is one reason for the success of the Dutch, the Scandinavians, and the Germans in learning English." (Mc Arthur, 2002: 448).

The following table encloses some other pronouncing mistakes observed in the speech of first year students of English at Mostaganem University. All mistakes are caused heavily by a transfer of phonology from Arabic to English:

Word	RP	Error	Problem
ship/sheep	/I/ - /ɪː/	/I/	The same realisation for both words since Arabic does not include length as a contrastive element.
but	/ç/	/{/	Central vowels seem to be the latest to acquire among all English vowels.
no	/≅Y/	/ɛːω/	Front vowel and the lips are slightly relaxed.
hair	/ɛ≅/	/ɛː/	Tongue high and front.
*ath*lete *brothe*r	/T/ - /Λ/	/τ/ - /δ/	/T/ - /Λ/ are used when reading slowly. When trying to answer a question rapidly they are frequently substituted by /τ/ - /δ/. It also depends on their occurrence in Algerian dialects. Those who use /T/ - /Λ/ in their dialect are not generally confronted with this problem.

Some linguists such as James (1988) consider that when learning a foreign language, it is most advantageous to have a notion of contrastive phonology. For, identifying some differences and similarities between two phonological systems may help us learn the target language. He firmly believes that contrastive phonology can influence the learner's language behaviour by predicting mistakes and grading their gravity. Learning English can be thus consolidated by a purposeful practice since different foreigners do not make the same kind of mistakes (James 1988; Mc Arthur 2002). An Algerian English learner, for instance, will not have the same errors as a German or a Spanish. Consequently, foreign language learning also depends on the Mother Language a learner has.

Another way of helping the students grasp the correct pronunciation is to make them comprehend the direct relation between phonetics and phonology —between sounds and the way they behave in a particular context. Such comprehension with a good training will help them be autonomous in being potentially able to reproduce any pronunciation of any English they choose.

2.2. The Choice to Make

Undoubtedly, the choice would be limited to no more than three varieties of English: British, American, and probably Australian English since these Englishes are the most widely used varieties throughout the world. However, can a combination between them be the key to solve the problem or should each teacher or learner decide on the variety to use? Does not such combination add to the complexity of the teaching/learning process? Students have already difficulties in learning one foreign language and annexing more standard varieties may augment their difficulty in acquiring English.

Students may not stick to one English during an examination on phonetics or phonology which in itself disturbs evaluation. How can a teacher grade a student's work and discern between what is 'wrong' from what is 'correct'? How can students be satisfied with their results? How can we know that the students do really know the difference and that they do not answer at random? After all, tests such as quizzes and MCQ to which some students can provide correct answers at random are still popular and widely used in the USA.

One can suppose that "evaluation results" are not of our concern, as we are more interested in choosing the 'befitting' English first for ourselves then for our students. Indeed, the selection of a standard seems to be the hardest task —what standard(s) to choose, when it/they is/are taught, and how much of it/them should be exposed to learners remain fundamental. However, evaluation seems to be up to now the most representative method to reflect students' achievements, learning, and attitudes towards knowledge.

The teacher has to evaluate errors according to their importance or to the learning priorities and objectives. It must not be seen a devaluation of the learner but rather a value to errors that really matter. The teacher, of course, has to provide reasons for any given value instead of another. Besides, evaluation is also a sociocultural factor: "Evaluation is indeed a matter of ethics, since society rewards those who get things right—what counts as right being decided upon consensually by each society, or at least by those who wield power in that society." (James, 1998: 205). Seen as such, evaluation may become an ideology, which is the vehicle of culture and of socialisation rules of the community.

2.2.1. English a World Language

Nowadays the world does no longer seem to be an immense planet; the earth has become one single area and its inhabitants its dispersed neighbours. English is used as a medium of instruction and is the most prominent language in which many articles and books are published.

The reason of English popularity does not rely on its having a simplified grammar, spelling, or pronunciation; Chinese grammar, Arabic spelling, or Spanish pronunciation are less complex than those of English. As we have seen in the first chapter, English is a world language; and many linguists such as Quirk (1981) consider it as the best means to enhance and reinforce international communication. For no artificial language could rival or fulfil such a function.

People from different speech communities may communicate in English when meeting. And it does not really matter whether the pronunciation they use obeys entirely the phonological rules of the 'target' language provided that they can communicate with one another.

English has become a world language and it might be taught as such. A world language can consist of a combination of British and American English. But what remains more problematic in teaching English as a world language is to determine how we can estimate or determine the share of each variety.

2.2.2. Whose English?

From a sociolinguistic standpoint, the question of which and whose language to teach raises a very complex issue: what norm? Whose norm? Whose English? An English speaking country may promote its own variety; but what grants it the right to choose which English, foreigners, must learn? Why not another English variety? How about South African English, which is also a native speaker variety? How about Scottish English that has a 'nice'[12] sound.

Recent debates on the teaching of English have drawn special attention to the problematic question of which Standard English to teach. According to Wilkinson:

> "There is, however, a bigger problem with the teaching of Standard Spoken English—the imposition of a 'capital' language on a 'mountain' language." (Carter (ed.), 1995: 43).

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[12] The Scottish accent is often referred to as being 'nice' or 'singing' as in: "I recognized the singing speech of Glasgow." By W. Somerset Maugham (1971): *Collected Short Stories 1* "A Man From Glasgow." G.B.: Nicholls & Company Ltd. P 368.

Kachru (1986) divided English into three types called 'English circles':

- Inner Circle Englishes: it includes older Englishes: British, American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, and South African Englishes. They are usually equated with native-speakers Englishes.

- Outer Circle Englishes: it is where English has been introduced by a colonial system as in India, Ghana, Nigeria, Malaysia, Philippines, and Zambia.

- Expanding Circle: includes English taught at school in countries having no colonial link with Britain, among these countries China, Japan, Russia, Brazil, etc. In these countries, the norms are directly taken from Inner Circle Englishes.

As to the norm, the countries of Outer and Expanding Circles might select remains problematic. India and Malaysia adopted British English whereas the Philippines American English because of different historical reasons. Besides, a third choice is put ahead—Australian English: "Now the choice is getting wider, and South-East Asian countries are faced with an easily justified third choice—Australian English." (James, 1998: 40).

There are many varieties; and what renders the situation more complex is the fact that many non-native speakers use English. Such phenomenon hardens the identification of any particular variety as being the norm to teach. It is complex because many non-native speakers are increasingly using English as a means of communication. Indian English, for instance, which does not belong to the Inner Circle, is becoming an authentic norm for Indian teachers who are hired at schools (James, 1998: 40).

Everybody has an accent when they speak their mother tongue or a foreign language—English RP or another. On what foundation can we claim that an accent is better than another or even that a native accent is better than a non-native accent? The importance should lie on the mutual comprehensibility. The problem is that English has to fulfil two different yet important roles:

- It has to reflect the national identity.

- It has to be used for international communication purposes.

For the second role, it has to remain intelligible and to be conform to the British or the American norm and model:

> "A model to which they can refer, a model which tells them
> what to regard as a 'learner's mistake' and what to consider as a
> legitimate feature of the educated variety of the new English."
> (Platt *et al.* 1984 in James, 1998: 43)

According to Leather, a foreign accent even a strong one may not hinder intelligibility: "a strong foreign accent may not be the direct cause of reduced intelligibility or comprehensibility." (1999: 9). According to Griffen, however, a foreign accent is a bad thing and must be subject to treatment, intervention, or even eradication in the same way as to a language pathology:

> "The goal of instruction in pronunciation is that the student (or patient) should learn to speak the language as naturally as possible, free of any indication that the speaker is not a clinically normal native." (1991: 182)

Other linguists such as Munro and Derwing claim that the chief goal of a learner is to understand and be understood in a variety of contexts. Foreign accent can sometimes impede this goal, but it can never be an overall barrier to communication: "Researchers and teachers alike were aware that an accent itself does not necessarily act as a communicative barrier." (Leather (ed.), 1999: 285)

According to the following statistics, pronunciation is considered as the most important cause of unintelligibility. Tiffen (1974: 227) analysed what causes unintelligibility in Nigerian English. He found that syntactic as well as lexical mistakes represent only 8.8% of the reasons of intelligibility failure whereas pronunciation errors constitute as much as 91.2%, partitioned as follows:

- Rhythmic and stress errors   38.2%
- Segmental errors   33%
- Phonotactic errors   20%

The effect of these statistics sustains the idea that there must be, to some extent, a unity in pronunciation. Indeed, when making students read a list of words and when there is no way to distinguish their meaning from the context, some pronunciation mistakes may induce spelling ones such as *suffer* and *gone* for *sofa* and *gun*.

If pronunciation is to vary in non-English speaking countries, it will probably cause a degree of unintelligibility. Besides, an altered pronunciation can obviously modify rhyming poems for example. In this case, the demarcation between what is correct and what is randomly put forward by foreigners becomes clear. Native speakers of English are to set the limits of what is correct from what is not. After all, it is their language.

However, comparing foreign learners' level with that of the natives can be rather a rigid criterion. In the following quotation, a major suggestion is introduced —the way

native speakers would judge non-natives must be lessened and less demanding than it used to be:

> "This is judging the students by what they are not—native speakers. L2 learning research considers that learners should be judged by the standards appropriate to them, not by those used for natives." (Cook, 1991 in James, 1998: 43).

On the other hand, Prator in a paper called "The British Heresy" (1992) claimed that it is almost heretical to establish the local model for English language teaching as 'the norm' for a universal teaching. In countries where English is used only as a medium of instruction, British English must be the reference and the source of accuracy:

> "The heretical idea, in a country where English is not spoken natively but is widely used as the medium of instruction, to set up the local variety of English as the ultimate model to be imitated by those learning the language." (Prator 1992 in James, 1998: 44)

Prator explains his view by asserting that there will always be variation within English even in a non-native English speaking country. Such a variation will, therefore, cause a kind of unintelligibility. To answer Prator, we can say first that an English local variety is a solution to the problematic selection of one native variety. Second, that a variation in the local English can simply be viewed as an additional English dialect.

Kachru (1986) maintains that the Outer Circle Englishes must be given their autonomy even if it sets aloof from the oldest varieties such as British or American Englishes: "I do not believe that the traditional notions of codification, standardization, models, and methods apply to English any more." (Kachru, 1986: 29)

Conversely, according to Quirk (1981) a standard norm must be kept in these countries. He attacks suggestions such as those of Kachru's by forewarning of having no standard (such as British or American English) to stick to. Else, it will lead to mutually unintelligible English; the same linguistic phenomenon that happened once with Latin and the Romance languages—the prelude to the fall of the Roman Empire and the death of Latin.

Prator, Quirk, Kachru, and James' argument is only proposed for ESL speakers and not for EFL ones. Whatever their disagreements, they absolutely exclude the scheme that foreign learners might have their own English Standard. James says it would be 'foolish':

"…to extend it to the English as a foreign language (EFL) learner. I have no sympathy with the idea that one should set out to 'teach Brazilian English' in Brazil for instance." (James, 1998: 45).

He goes on further to claim that even if Japanese learners of English speak English 'Japanesely' they do not have to consider themselves as English speakers. And the fact that they do not intend to adopt a Japanese English standard as their norm reassures him greatly. The solution is that they adopt World English taken from the Inner Circle Englishes (Quirk). For this, they must define the model and the goal.

The idea to speak a norm of a native language entails that natives do not make errors. As Mey (1981) puts it: "the native speaker is always right" (in James, 1998: 46) for they have a natural authority and are allowed a kind of linguistic deviation which is not the case for a non-native speaker. However, native speakers (such as Cockney speakers) cannot always be understood by speakers of still other English varieties.

Such accents can be incomprehensible thus the necessity of a standard. Besides, one can suppose that learning a language does not only subsist in learning pronunciation. There are, indeed, many other aspects such as grammar, morphology, or vocabulary which are important enough to be most outstanding. One can also say that we have to determine above all the learners' need of a foreign language—for what situations and/or communicative purposes is English to be used.

Today's Algerian students of English may become teachers, clerks, participants in international meetings, tourists, or immigrants and they may need to communicate in English. The act of oral communication will fail if speech is unintelligible. It is crucial to use intelligible speech in a period of high technology and of extensive mass media. However, according to Heaton, we can communicate and be intelligible even if our English phonology and syntax are faulty: "People can make numerous errors in both phonology and syntax and yet succeed in expressing themselves fairly clearly." (1988: 88).

British English used to be the model to teach to foreign English learners. Hughes and Trudgill describe why RP is the most suitable accent for foreigners. They explain that it is the most described of the British accents (1979: 3). At present, there subsist many other possible rivals mainly American English. As we have seen in chapter one, prestige plays an important role in the selection of an accent instead of another.

Another argument for teaching RP to foreigners is that it is the most "widely understood pronunciation" (Jones, 1976: 4) which was based on the idea that BBC broadcasts all over the world. The Queen's English can be very attractive to some speakers or on the contrary completely stereotyped. Nevertheless, linguists such as Trudgill or Abercrombie suggest that RP is more difficult to learn than a Scottish accent for foreigners (in Macaulay, 1997: 39).

Macaulay also emphasises the fact that RP is not widely spoken among its people so why, therefore, impose it as a model in foreign language teaching:

> "It is somewhat paradoxical that RP should so frequently be proposed as the model when most teachers of English as a foreign language do not themselves speak RP. It is more important for teachers to be fully aware of their own form of speech so that they can avoid confusing the learner." (Macaulay, 1997: 43).

He goes on further, by attacking the use of RP, as to use the Latin expression normally written on graves "*requiescat in pace*" 'rest in peace':

> "As English progresses towards a new role as a world language, there is less justification for assigning a special status to RP. No doubt, like some other idealizations, it has helped to further the progress of phonetics, but it has probably outlived its usefulness; in the words of another ex-imperialist language, *requiescat in pace*." (Macaulay, 1997: 44).

We can also suppose that the phonological and phonetic variance between Englishes is too small and that knowing one single English pronunciation is enough to communicate with all English speakers. After all, English people can without difficulty communicate with Americans or with South Africans and be fairly understood. This may be so, but language and culture cannot be disconnected for there are different people having different cultures, and living in different countries.

For two centuries, the USA and UK have been institutionally and politically separate bodies, and thousands of books appear each year, which make the establishment of different national standards almost observable.

2.2.3. Educational Proposals

As we have seen, many linguists affirm that American English increasingly influences young English speakers in England, Canada, or New Zealand. Does it not mean that the variety to teach must be the American one? Thanks to movies and to music American English widespread among the youth. It can be viewed as a matter of

fashion to clothe, behave, or pronounce as an American star. Such a social and cultural phenomenon is influencing pronunciation and its variation through time too.

Learning more than one English does not necessarily mean that we have to learn all pronunciations or all Inner Circle Englishes. First, it will be too demanding and too exhausting for English learners, then, it will be impossible to learn all English pronunciations with all the sociocultural attributes they carry. Besides, there are emerging Englishes such as Indian or Nigerian English and their corresponding cultures, a phenomenon that hardens the task and makes it quite unattainable. For, it is almost impossible to learn and to master all Englishes. To solve the problem we have to establish criteria for our selection. Therefore, we have to put four basic assumptions into question:

- What pronunciation has traditionally been taught in Algeria?
- What English is most admired in the country?
- What model do students prefer to learn?
- What English publications are available at the university?

2.2.3.1.   The Model Taught in Algeria

Students can get confused if teachers have different pronunciations; the same standard ought to be followed by everybody. In Algeria, for instance, British English is taught at state as well as at private schools. Louznaji, an inspector of west Algerian schools, states that the variety taught in Algeria is the British one. Even if there is no official decree stipulating the adherence to British English, it is implicitly suggested in English textbooks and via the use of British English that it is the norm to which teachers and learners have to refer to.

2.2.3.2.   Attitudes towards a Model

A learner's advance in learning a foreign language is very often subject to personal, social, and linguistic constraints. The attitude of a learner towards a foreign language structure or its cultural aspects can determine its acquisition to a certain extent. Indeed, if there are any stereotyped judgements, they will probably contribute to accepting or resisting the target language. But it can result in a conflict between English-speaking countries interests. Each country desires to promote its own variety.

2.2.3.3.   The Favoured Model among Students

Students may prefer one variety to another. But can we really know all Algerian students' preferences? A questionnaire[13] on this account was handed out in the University of Mostaganem. The survey was to gather students' preferences for one English Standard or more. Data was recorded from 10% of all students—about 268 undergraduates and graduates.

The majority of the students (64.93%) prefer English RP to the other varieties. American English is second only to RP by 31.34%. Among all students, 1.86% like both varieties, 0.75% favour South African English, and 1.12% have no preference at all. According to these statistics, American English appears to be the only rival to English RP.

What is strikingly revealed in this study is that some students prefer RP to American English even if they do not differentiate between the two accents. RP is the Standard norm one *has* to adopt. Indeed, nearly one third of the students (30.60%) claim that they do not make any distinction between RP and another accent. Among this amount, 62.19% prefer English RP though they do not know the way it sounds.

Each student was also asked to specify the reason(s) of their choosing RP or American English. The following histograms represent all the reasons students have provided when choosing a particular accent. The first two diagrams analyse the reasons in terms of differences. The third one encloses likenesses between both accents.

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[13] See Appendix I.

Graph N°1: Reasons to Choose RP
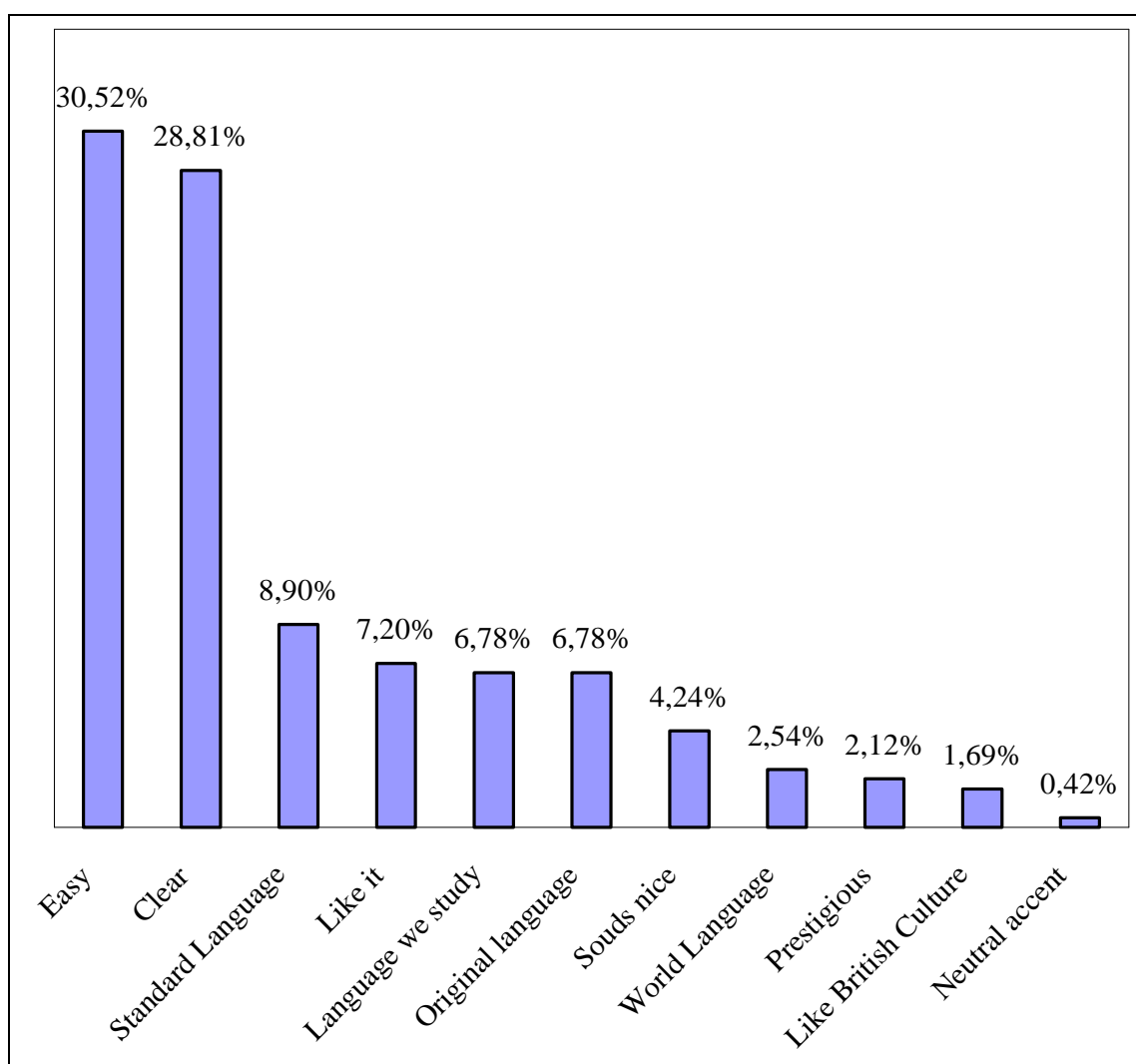
According to this graph, RP is favoured mainly because it is a clear and an easy accent to learn and to understand—almost 60%. Other reasons were given which are completely different from those of American English. Many think that RP is the only Standard English, i.e. the other Englishes are not standard varieties at all. Others believe that RP is the 'real', 'pure', or the 'original' English; a fact which makes it more valuable and reliable than any other accent. For these students English RP is somehow perceived as a model for instruction.
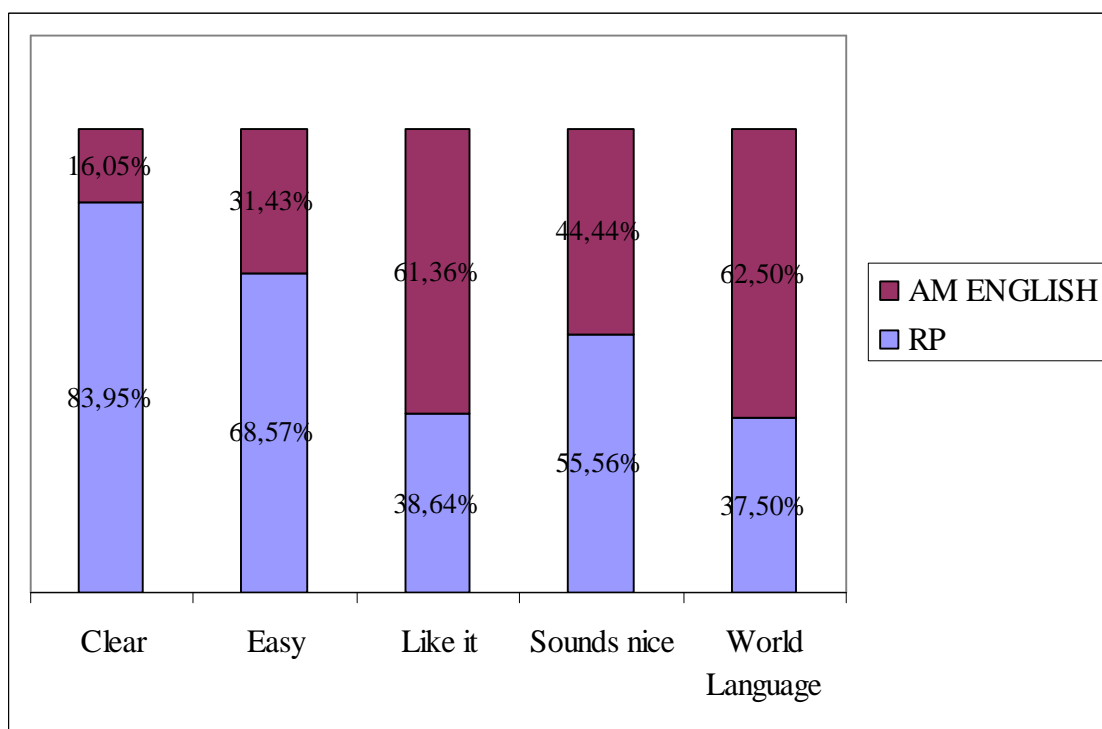
Graph N°2: Reasons to Choose American English
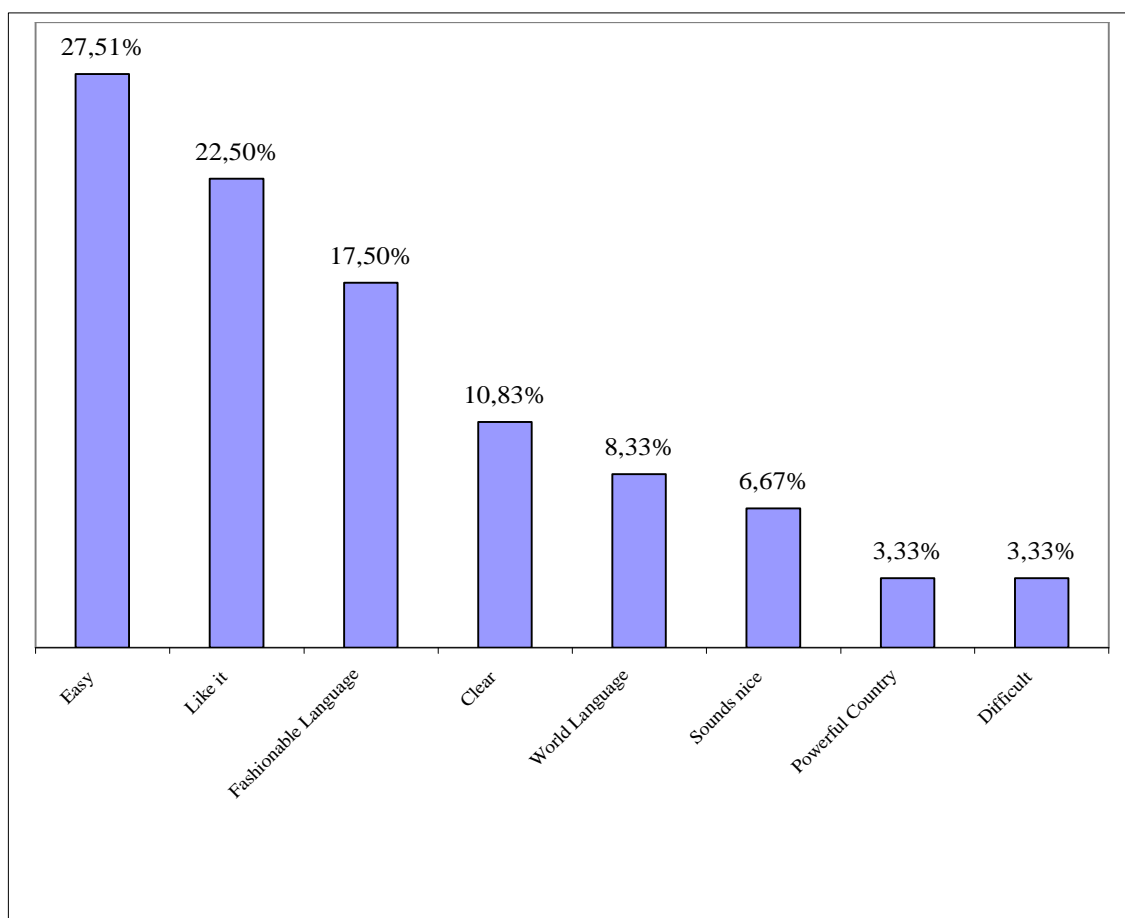
In the second diagram, the reasons differ from those of RP. This difference appears in the number (8 reasons only) and in the reasons themselves. American English is chosen mainly because of its easiness in learning and its symbolisation as being the attractive accent of so many actors and singers. The latter reason contributes to consolidating the fact that culture and language are tightly linked. We also have to bear in mind that this reason was given only when choosing the American norm. Of course, not all students share the same vision.

Others (8.33%) think that American English is a world language and thus the necessity of its being studied. Politically speaking, only 3.33% of the students choose American English because it corresponds to the most powerful country in the world. The remaining students (3.33%) have chosen it because it is a difficult accent which implies that RP is easier and clearer for them.

Graph N°3: Comparison between Similar Answers

	Clear	Easy	Like it	Sounds nice	World Language
AM ENGLISH	16,05%	31,43%	61,36%	44,44%	62,50%
RP	83,95%	68,57%	38,64%	55,56%	37,50%

The third histogram traces five different criteria for selecting an accent. Each rectangle represents the same reason for both groups (those who have chosen RP and American English). Among the students who have favoured an accent in terms of its being clear, 83.95% prefer RP. We can also notice that in the last criterion, more students 62.5% believe that American English is a world language.

To conclude, we observe that RP is principally chosen not because of its social dimensions but because it is perceived as the most practical one. According to these students, it is, therefore, the most suitable and evident norm for academic purposes. However, this survey represents only 10% of all the students in Mostaganem University and less than 1% of all Algerian students.

2.2.3.4.   Available Publications: a Powerful Reason

We often have limited resources of publications to teach all varieties of English phonetics and phonology. Students may prefer one English rather than another not because of its culture but mainly because of the availability of reference books.

We can suppose, on one hand, that teachers' initial objective is to make their students communicate their ideas unambiguously. Pronunciation may come next; and distinction between different English phonologies and phonetics and their constant variations may be of less consequence among priorities. On the other hand, students

may neglect that particular aspect of the English linguistic situation as long as they know they will not be tested on it.

The question can be formulated in a different way, in the sense that we have to ask where and when to start learning these Englishes. English teaching in Algeria does not start with phonetic lessons; and phonology is almost excluded from secondary school curricula. Nowadays, phonetics and phonology are initiated and taught mainly at university (ninety minutes a week). A fact that makes the students' acquisition (either for adolescents or for adults) be difficult. Children are more predisposed to adopt a native accent than adults are. The latter's accent can be extremely comprehensible but not inevitably free from any regional or cultural interference unless they immerse in an English native speaking land. Even though, it requires much time to rid their English of all their native language characteristics.

As this is the situation of pronunciation, as it actually exists in Algeria, students need to get closer to it by *listening comprehension* activities—listen then decode. Such an exposure cannot be but advantageous especially when it is planned. English language planning is crucial and any choice of a particular standard must be under deliberate guidance. In fact, choosing freely between rhotic and non-rhotic accents may pose problem first to students as they are left unaccompanied; then to teachers when evaluating as there would be no homogeneity in the classroom.

Usually, such a decision depends on historical associations either with the UK or with the USA, or on the available teaching materials. It may also depend on learners' abilities i.e. students can learn, perhaps, the easiest English for them; the one which has few similarities with their mother tongue. The sound $[\rho]$, for instance, is more frequent in some languages than in others. Therefore, speakers of Arabic or of the Romance languages can use a rhotic accent better, whereas speakers of African, Chinese, and Japanese languages can adopt a non-rhotic accent. However, it may be salutary to direct attention to the fact that some people may agree or disagree with such 'logic'. Arabic speakers, for instance, might claim the need to select a variety according to their preferences. Besides, sharing common features with an English variety does not necessarily entail effective proficiency.

For beginners, students should rather start with one variety. The teaching of one single norm seems imperative because they can find a reference mark to orient them. Moreover, a presentation of a language with diverse pronunciations from the very beginning can demotivate them. For intermediate students (in a second stage), the

teacher can suggest a possibility of choice among the most current ones at the same time as the students strengthen their bases and deepen their knowledge of the language and all the possibilities it offers.

This second stage has to represent a phase of transition to the third one (the advanced): during which the teacher proposes a larger number of varieties. Such introduction would not be, therefore, sudden and unexpected. The students can smoothly view themselves analysing the various uses of the language.

We believe that the advantage of such a formation resides in the fact that if such students should intend teaching they might appear less prescriptive (by imposing one possible norm) in their daily educational practice. In fact, avoiding or neglecting these varieties can pose problems especially when the teacher qualifies a different pronunciation as a mistake while, in fact, this very pronunciation may belong only to another norm. The aim is to train students consciously recognise and use at least two Englishes proficiently—such as RP and American English.

Indeed, it is a suitable principle to aim at, even if it seems more ideal than real. For, it would entail many difficult targets to achieve. First, teachers need enough qualifications to be able to transmit their knowledge to the students. They cannot accomplish such an objective without a frequent and intensive training in English-speaking countries to avoid interferences from their mother tongue. Next, students need to spend time enough in language laboratories to be capable of discriminating between these accents. Then, the condition that must be fulfilled before the target can be achieved is the availability of enough materials and well-equipped laboratories for teaching.

Personally, after many years of English studies (from school to university), we cannot master one single Standard English yet. Therefore, it is more adequate to adhere to one accent than to try to master them all. Besides, distinction must be made between recognising a language and mastering it. The problem would be settled if we master only one accent and be able to recognise major features of some others.

2.2.4. The Choice of a Country

The remaining problem is about the Standard to teach. No linguist has actually asserted that there exists a unique international Standard. With the existence of different Standard Englishes, is there a pronunciation to which it is **necessary** to refer and other to refuse? Shall we adopt a Standard according to its country status and political power?

For countries such as Algeria, where students learn English as a foreign language, the choice of the norm would be in relation to one country or to another depending on historical or political relations. In other words, can we adopt or skip an English because of political agreement? What happens then if the agreement changes over time?

As language reflects society and culture, a selection of a particular English can also be viewed as a selection of a particular country. However, we can suppose that learning a definite pronunciation does not absolutely require knowing its corresponding culture. We can perfectly learn English without travelling to England. Pronunciation and culture can be easily detached in the learning process. Some foreign learners believe that unlike vocabulary, pronunciation does not have denotative and connotative meaning. The sound [αI] of the pronoun *I* is perceived as such by any one who uses English no matter where he comes from.

Nevertheless, sounds are not uttered at random and are not devoid of any sense; they can even carry some sociocultural aspects. *Often*, for instance, has two possible realisations [Θφ≅ν] and [Θφτ≅ν] both in England and in the USA. As we have seen in chapter one, upper-class speakers in England prefer to use [Θφ≅ν] and those in the USA produce [A:φτ≅ν].

In Australia, using the **high-rising tone** (normally used in questions) in a statement would identify the speaker as a teenage girl. It would be, indeed, very odd if an adult (a student or a teacher) used such a tone with Australians and New Zealanders. According to Wells (1994), this tone has been imported to England and even to America and is also associated with youngsters. This importation of intonation from the Southern hemisphere to the Northern one was not devoid of its sociocultural components so does the choice of language of a particular country. The way an utterance is pronounced can carry a wide range of sociocultural aspects.

English learners should acquire not only language but cultural practices and cultural values too. They should acquire not just the target pronunciation but also the knowledge of how it is performed in the target culture or context.

2.3. Teaching Standard English Implications

Modern mass media support and enhance the spread of one Standard rather than another; Radio and TV make RP more available and appear less remote. The teacher must be capable of distinguishing between a mistake in pronunciation and an element

added either by use or by necessity to the language. [h]-dropping and [?] in *not*, for instance, are two characteristics of Cockney; however, [h]-dropping is stigmatised whereas [?] has been adopted into English RP. As we have seen in chapter one, some non-standard words exist in the dictionary. To what extent can a teacher accept a word or a different pronunciation? If teachers and students pronounce differently, can it be a source of conflict and of educational problems? To what extent can the notion of correctness be harmful?

Many university teachers anxious about correctness may get their students panic as soon as they make a mistake and stop concentrating and listening to the lesson. Teachers need to consider Standard English with all its social and educational implications; however, they have, at the same time, to recall their students' background. Society, culture, and language are not to be considered apart since it is the language of some people learnt by some others. Besides, students need to take advantage of the different varieties available to them. They need to be aware of the existence of the varieties and the variations that occur within Englishes over time. Even if it is difficult to achieve, these varieties and variations are an integral part of English.

When foreigners visit an English-speaking country for the first time, they are frequently surprised that they do not recognise the English they hear. It seems that it is no longer the language they learnt from their teachers in their home countries and that the tempo of words is so rapid. Moreover, a difference in grammar or in vocabulary may let things get worse for them. Fortunately, with media globalisation, it is increasingly no more the case; foreigners are already prepared to face a different facet of the English they know.

As Kashru (in Cheshire ed. 1996), we propose that no Standard English variety (of the Inner Circle) can be neglected when teaching English-language. It would be very interesting and in agreement with Kachru to include in the Algerian academic syllabus, a module dedicated to the different Standard Englishes. A learner who knows only English RP, an accent produced by 3% of the population of Great Britain, is by far uninformed of the remaining 97% and of all the other English-speaking communities. It is no longer a matter of phonetics and phonology but of discovering the other.

Conclusion

This dissertation has tried to unveil a small part of the rich diversity in the form and function of English as it is used around the world today. The first chapter has dealt with the meaning of Standard English and Englishes and with various concepts related to it. It also has tried to find out why it is that complex to afford one clear-cut definition. Standardisation has proved to be a deliberate product of educated and upper-class people; and it has been interesting to see how English operates around the world as long as it represents the medium of communication of various countries. At the end, we discern that linguistic change is reversible whereas linguistic evolution is irreversible. As all living beings, language keeps on mutating.

The second chapter has dealt briefly with the phonetics and phonology of Standard Englishes in the British Isles, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. The objective is to portray briefly the differences as well as the similarities between these Englishes and to answer how these standards are to be opposed.

The third and last chapter has targeted the existing connection between language and culture. The link is to be found between culture and speakers, between culture and speech, and between culture and learning. A small inquiry is also made to know whether or not all Standard Englishes are to be learnt in Algeria.

It is agreed upon that Standard English is the variety used by educated speakers for specific functions. The concept exists insofar as it unites all English standards, but it is necessary to realise that an English pronunciation can be very different from another, evidence that a teacher should bear in mind.

This limited study allows us to say also that English, the world language, is not anymore the language of English people, but that of the five continents. It is no longer, the possession of the English but that of many who are far from being English or their descents.

Phonologically speaking, English Southern Hemisphere varieties such as Australian, New Zealand, and South African Englishes along with Canadian English do not differ so much from English RP. Even if large distances separate them, the USA seems the only exception or barrier for an English phonological homogeneity. Moreover, little regional variation is to be found in Canada or in the Southern Hemisphere in comparison to Great Britain or the USA. Yet, there are distinct Englishes

with different people and culture. We also notice that RP does not have the value it used to have among the youth since these Englishes are increasingly influenced by American English.

Among English speakers, there are those who use other languages than English, which can result in finding foreign accent interferences within English. Speakers of languages with pure vowels, for instance, may find it difficult to reproduce gliding vowels of English. Foreign speakers of English succeed in adapting the language to their own environmental and cultural needs.

These differences in pronunciation seem to be too significant to be considered only as accents. The usual analysis makes Standard English a matter of grammar and vocabulary, whereas pronunciation a matter of accent in other words a person can speak Standard English with an RP accent or with another. However, this view seems not to be sustainable to a certain extent. We have seen that some phonetic or phonological variations are due to sociocultural parameters and using an accent is using specific cultural dimensions. Moreover, each country is developing its own standard and its own codification to maintain it.

English remains the most spoken language and the most shared means of communication in the world, and distorted pronunciation may result in misunderstanding or miscommunication. As we have proposed the introduction of an additional subject (Standard Englishes) for Algerian students of English, we have become aware of the difficulties it may engender. However, the objective is to be as ambitious as possible in learning more than one English variety since all these standards are an integral part of the English language. As literature and civilisation, pronunciation can also be dealt with from a British, American, or an African perspective.

To become aware of so many standards enables us to understand the other better and to tolerate mistakes that are in fact only phonological attributes of another English. A teacher who knows only one standard or one norm will have the inclination to consider it as the only possible and correct one. It can be, therefore, a sort of a sanction to students who are already acquainted with another standard used by another teacher or heard on TV.

Such situations can be disturbing to learners who no longer understand nor determine the boundaries between what is wrong and what is right as long as they find no fixed norm or norms to which they stick to. Only a few students could rely on their own judgment as to the appreciation of the teacher's pronunciation.

This discomfort in the classroom may cause demotivation. Therefore, important training in this field seems to be an educational necessity so as to avoid such a problem. The latter may be solved efficiently by an adequate formation and would not be added, therefore, to other educational problems that already exist in any language teaching situation.

Learning all Englishes phonetics and phonology remains unattainable. The objective is mainly to be aware of more than one English and some major characteristics of the others to be able to make the distinction. Once we have decided what is wrong we can know what is right.

Some other changes should also be taken in account. The way people perceive, use, and react to a language cannot be taken for granted since references are a fluctuating variable. It is therefore necessary not to forget that this report of differences, which may be valid today, will not be so anymore in a future time because language inevitably and necessarily evolves.

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