

# Chapter 18

## Workings with American English Accents (and beyond!)

William Katz, UT Dallas  
Phonetics  
SPAU 3343

# In this PPT

- Dialect/Accent
- Vowel shifts
- How to get a “corpus”?
- Major dialects of American English
- “Crossing the pond” → UK, Ireland, Aus, NZ, Caribbean and elsewhere

# Key Terms

- Dialect – regional or social variety of a language distinguished by pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar,
- Accent – refers to the pronunciation part of the language/dialect

*“A language is a dialect with an Army and a Navy...”*

(Max Weinreich, ~ 1944)

# Aspects of dialect

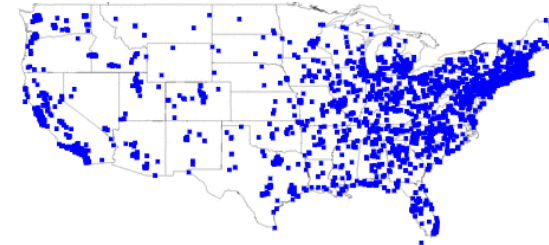
- ✓ Pronunciation / accent (e.g., “*which*”, “*realtor*” )
- Lexical – e.g., “*supper*” vs. “*dinner*”
- Grammar – e.g., “*might could go*”

# LEXICAL

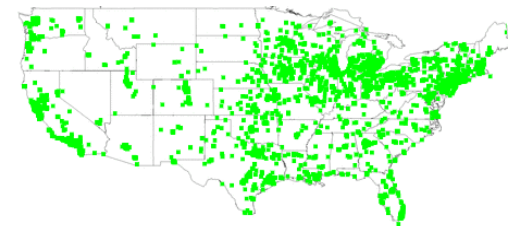
a. tag sale (4%)



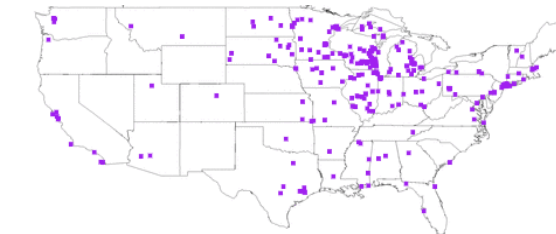
b. yard sale (36%)



c. garage sale (52%)



d. rummage sale (3%)

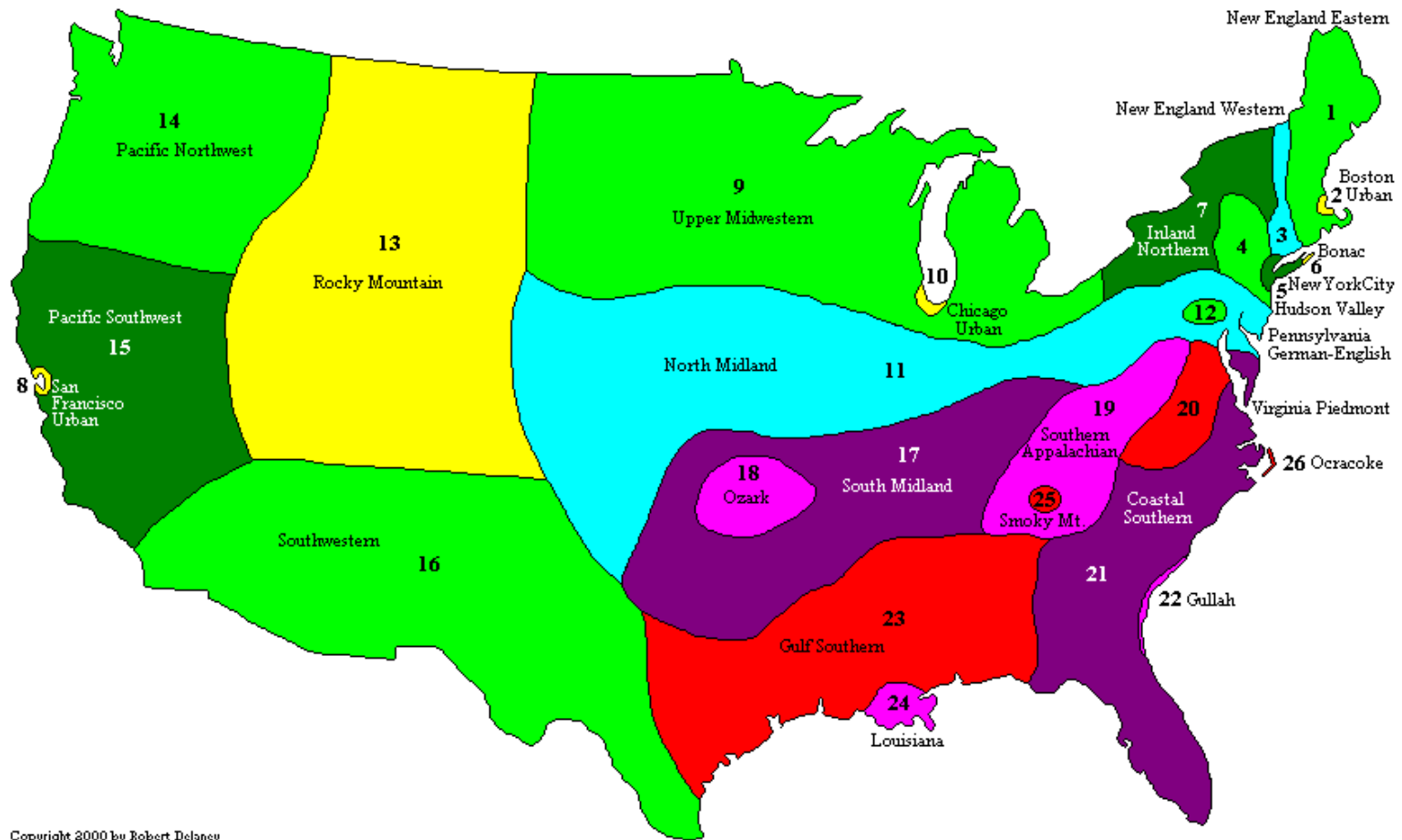


- Bert Vaux, Harvard University;  
Scott A. Golder, MIT Media Labs

# Review

- Geographic
- Social factors

# Dialect map – (extreme?) example



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# Sample Corpus

## “Mary Passage”

A foreign-accented example: (Cambodian)



*"Mary is only five and she loves to play in the water. This morning she got so dirty that I heard her mother call her in to take a bath. It was very early for I was still boiling water for my coffee. Also, there was still a little fog. After a while, however, Mary came across the path into my yard and sat down with me to eat an orange. As I had my second cup of coffee, I asked her if she had been bad. 'No,' she said, 'the dog had been the one.' He had gotten her so dirty she couldn't brush it off."*

## Other corpuses:

- “Comma gets a cure”
  - *Uses J.C. Wells standard lexical sets*
- “Stella/Snow Peas passage”
  - *for IDEA project*
- “Grandfather passage”, “Caterpillar passage”
  - *more common for speech pathology*



# An older corpus...



<http://dare.wisc.edu/audio/arthur-the-rat>

- **ARTHUR THE RAT (1965-1970)**

- “Once upon a time there was a rat who couldn't make up his mind. Whenever the other rats asked him if he would like to come out hunting with them, he would answer in a hoarse voice, "I don't know." And when they said, "Would you rather stay inside?" he wouldn't say yes, or no either. He'd always shirk making a choice. One fine day his aunt Josephine said to him, "Now look here! No one will ever care for you if you carry on like this. You have no more mind of your own than a greasy old blade of grass!" The young rat coughed and looked wise, as usual, but said nothing. "Don't you think so?" said his aunt stamping with her foot, for she couldn't bear to see the young rat so coldblooded. "I don't know," was all he ever answered, and then he'd walk off to think for an hour or more, whether he would stay in his hole in the ground or go out into the loft. Next morning -- it was a foggy day -- some men came to look over the damage. It seemed odd that the old building was not haunted by rats. But at last one of them happened to move a board, and he caught sight of a young rat, quite dead, half in and half out of his hole.... .. Thus the shirker got his due, and there was no mourning for him.”

- **Nine Speakers:** Brooklyn, NY; Rural Maine; Roxbury, MA; Memphis, TN; Eastern VA; S. Central GA; Wichita Falls, TX, N. West WA; NW Wisc;

...shows that accents CHANGE over time.....

# Read corpus - challenges

- Naturalness?
- Sampling adequacy?
- Rapidly grow dated?

# American Dialect Maps

- North Central
- New England (+ NYC)
- Midland
- South
- West

- **Atlas of North American English**  
(formerly, the *Phonological Atlas of North America*).  
William Labov, Sharon Ash and Charles Boberg  
(Linguistics Laboratory, University of Pennsylvania)

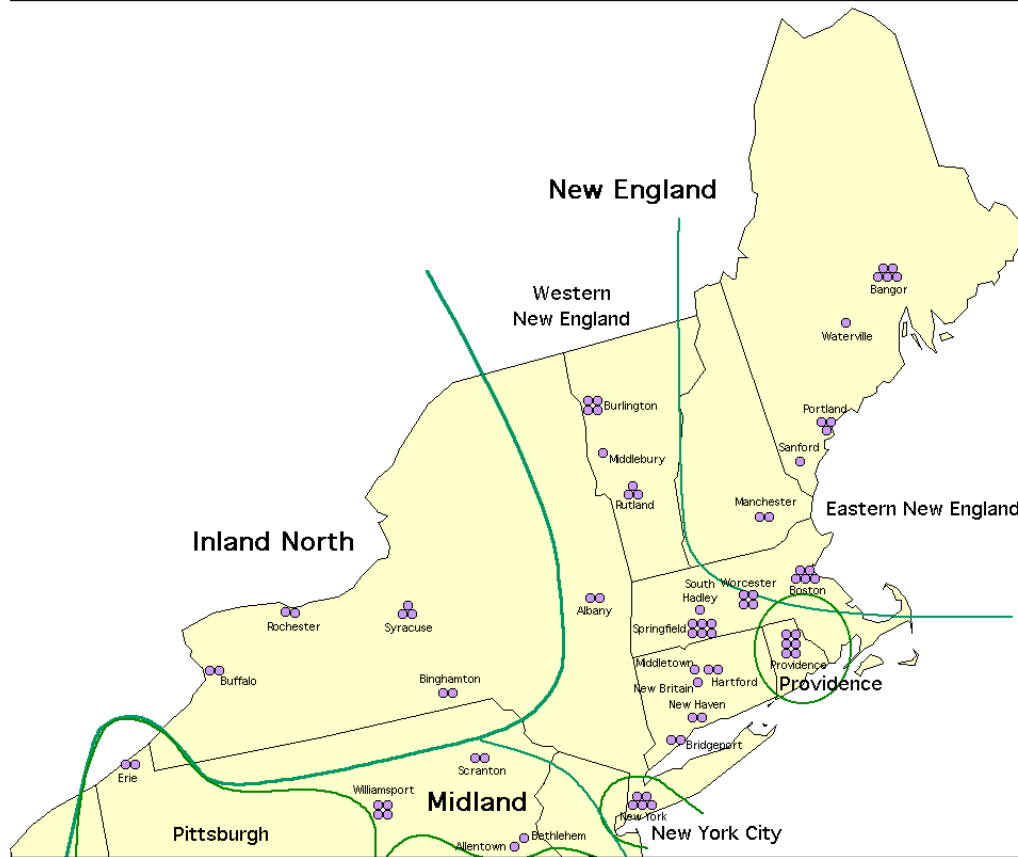
# Method

- Searched phone books for ‘representative speakers’
- ...by ‘prominent national ancestry groups’
- **SCRIPT:**  
*“Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_, I’m calling from the University Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. We’re doing research on communication between people from different parts of the country, so we’re looking for people who grew up in one place to help us by telling us a little about how people say things in your area. Did you grow up in \_\_\_\_? If yes: Can you take a few minutes now to answer some questions?”*

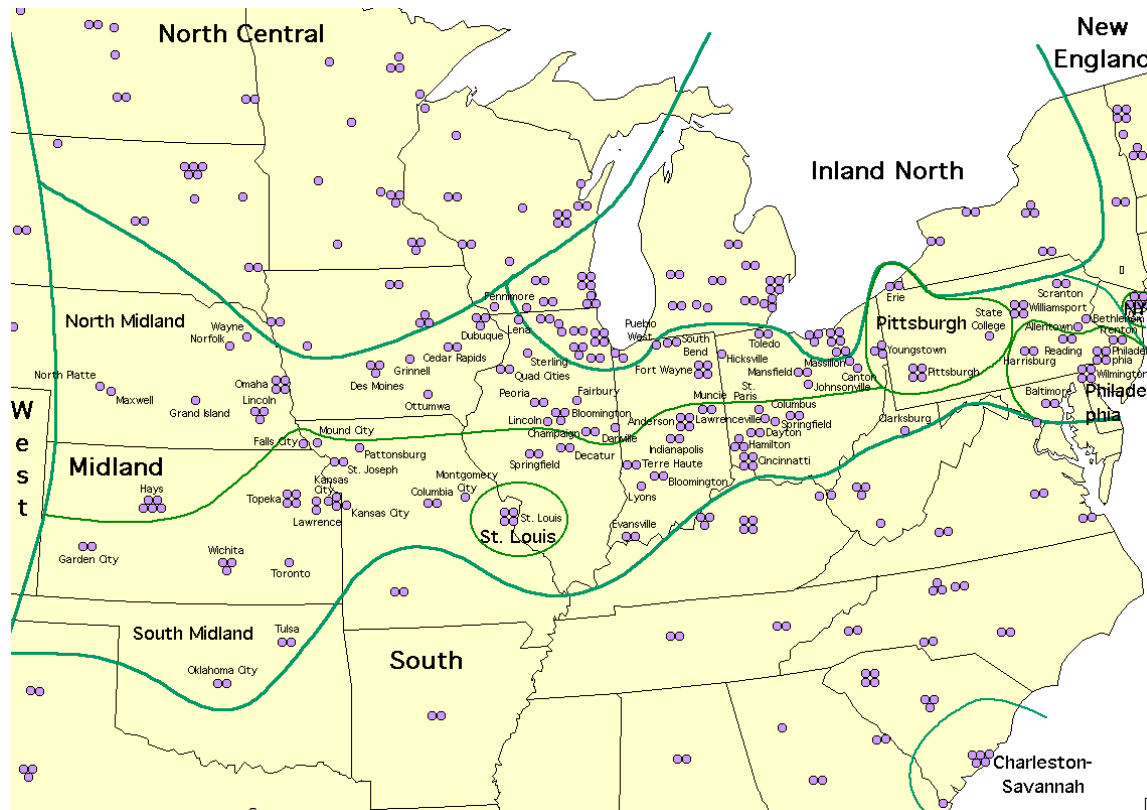
# North Central



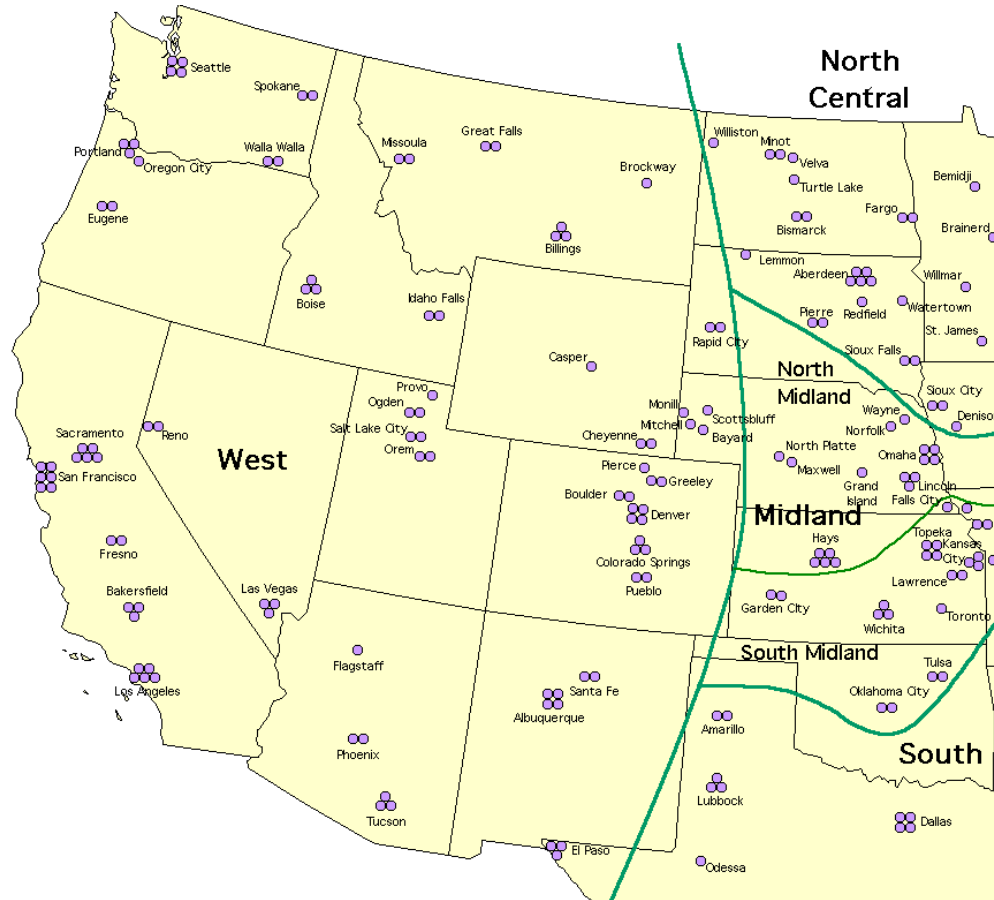
# New England to NYC



# The Midland

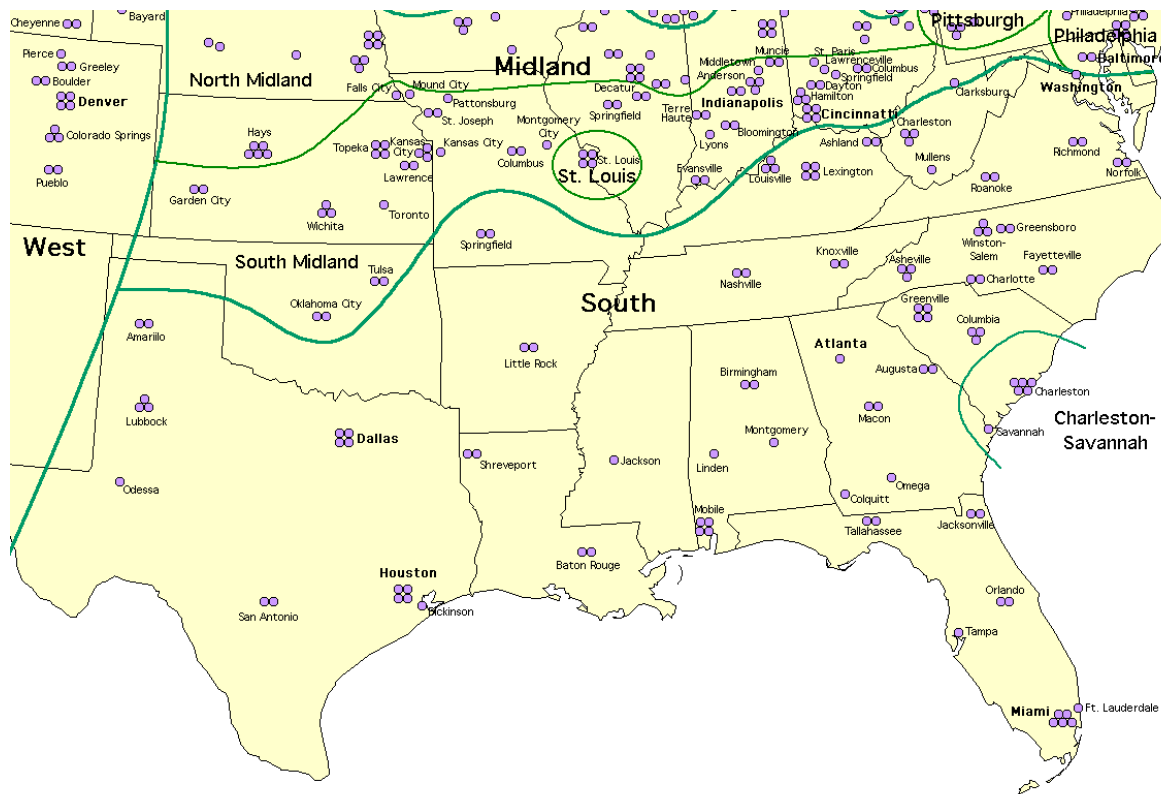


# The West

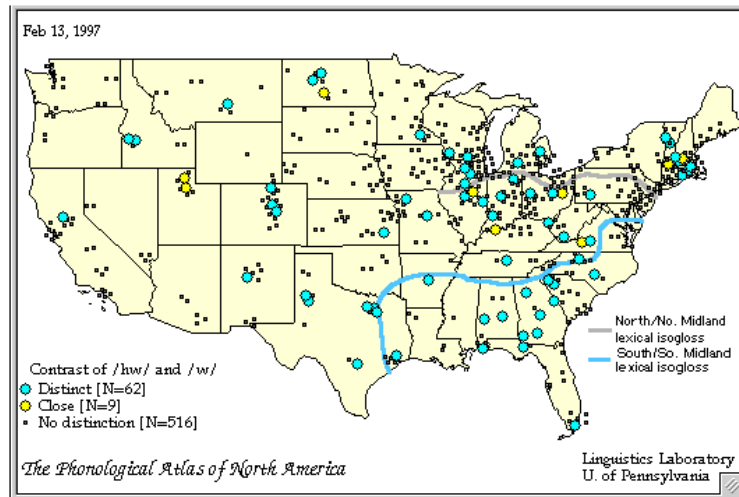




# The South



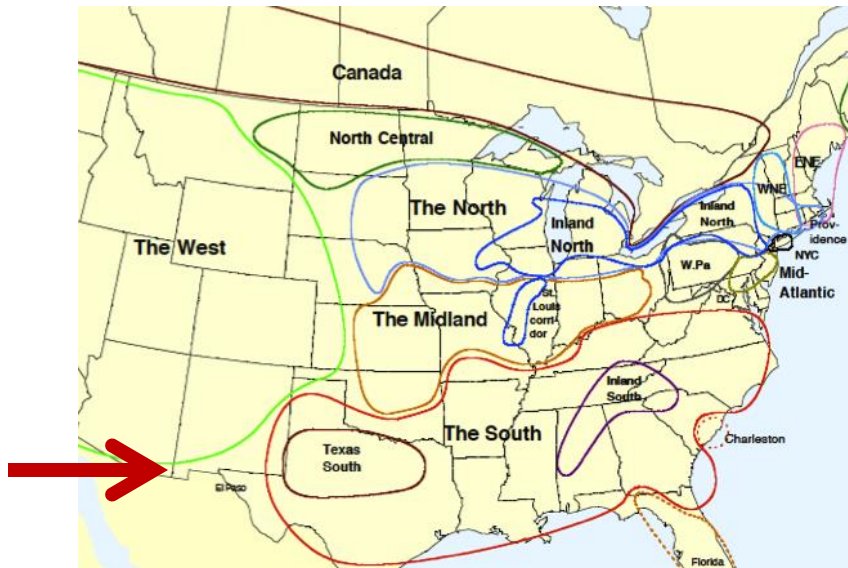
# Example: Maintenance of the /hw/~/w/ contrast



- Fr, Kurath and McDavid's *Pronunciation of English in the Atlantic States (1961)*
- Characteristic of the North and the South, but not the Midland

# What about Texas?

- Originally within “the South”
- By 2006, “Texas South” division included



Based on degree of [aɪ]  
monophthongization

# Texas



- Texas English Project (UT Austin)

## Morphosyntax:

- *Y'all's car*
- *Fixin' to*
- *Might could*
- *Like'ta died*
- *Done left*

## Phonetics:

- [hw] vs. [w]
- *horse* vs. *hoarse* (/oʊ/, /ɔ:/ - distinct)
- *dew* vs. *do?* /dju:/, /du/)
- *cot* = *caught* (/ɔ/ = /ɑ/)
- *pin* = *pen* (/ɪ / = /ɛ/)
- *oil* → "ol" (monophthongization)

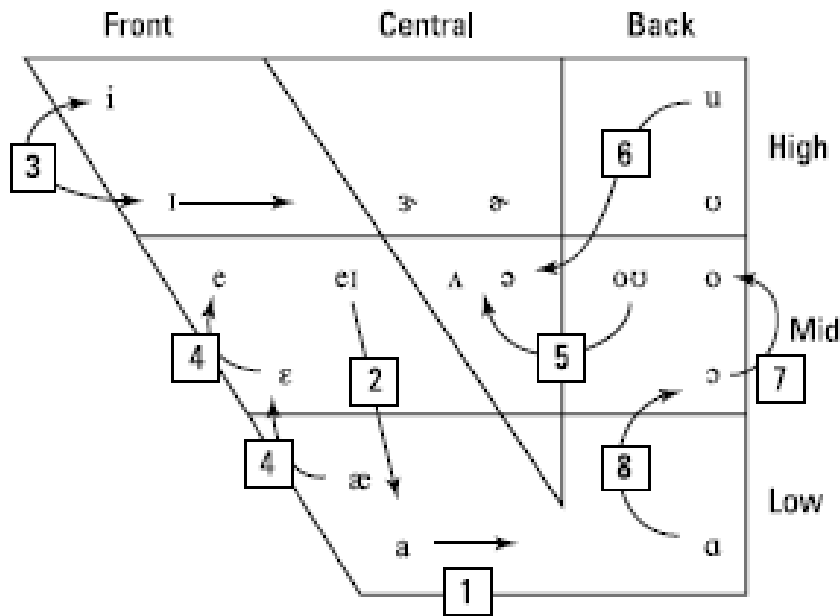
# Texas English Project -findings

- Compared Underwood 1988 recordings (Austin)
- ..with 2010 recordings of same utterances
- Featural and acoustic analyses
- Analyzed for possible gender, age, time of recording, geographic factors
- MAIN FINDINGS:
  - Key property affecting accent was urban vs. rural divide
  - Dialect leveling led by young females (expected);
  - in some cases of minority ethnicities (unexpected)

# Let's try some American accents

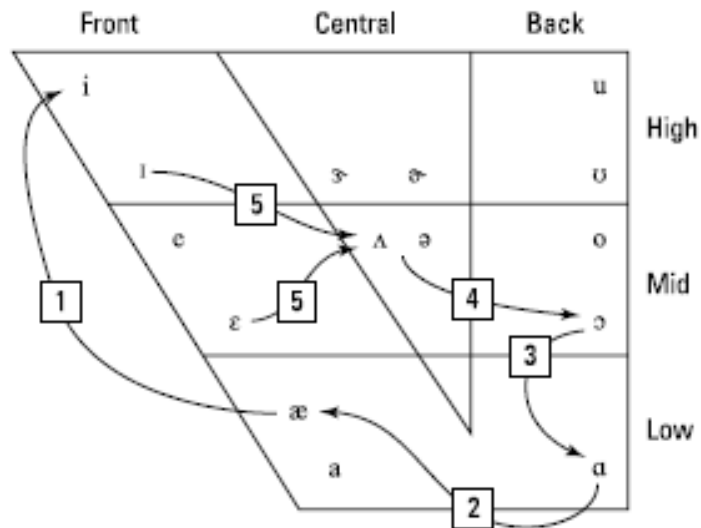


# Southern vowel shift



1. Delete your [aɪ] diphthong and substitute an [ɑ] monophthong.  
"Nice" becomes [nas].
2. Drop your [eɪ] tense vowel to an [aɪ].  
"Great" becomes [gɹaɪt].
3. Merge your [ijs] and [ijs] before a nasal stop.  
"Greet him" now is [gɹɪt hɪm].
4. Merge your [æ]s and [ɛ]s.  
"Tap your step" becomes [tʰɛp jə stɛp].
5. Swing your [æ] all the way up to [e].  
"I can't" becomes [aɪ kənt].
6. Move your back vowels [u]s and [o]s toward the center of your mouth.  
"You got it" becomes [jə ˈgɑt ɪt].
7. Raise the [ɔ] up to [o] before [ɪ].  
"Sure thing" becomes [ʃoə θaɪŋ].
8. Raise [ɑ] to [ɔ] before [ɪ].  
"It ain't hard" becomes [ɪʔ eɪnʔ hɔəɪd].  
Congratulations.  
[weɪ ðə ˈmaɪn θaɪŋɪz | jə ˈspɪkɪn ˌsʌðəŋ]

# Northern Cities Shift



1. Change low vowel [æ] to an [iə].  
"I'm glad" becomes [ɛ̃m gliəd].
2. Move the back vowel [ɑ] to [ɔ].  
"Stop that" becomes [stɔp dæt].
3. Move the [ɔ] to where [ɑ] was.  
"Ah, get out" becomes [ɑ: ɡɪt ət].
4. Move central [ʌ] to where [ɔ] was.  
"Love it" becomes [lɔv ɪt].
5. Move the front [ɛ] and [ɪ] to center [ʌ]/[ə].  
"Let's move it" becomes [ləts 'muv ət].



# American English Accents - vowels

- Off-glide symbols:

*W. Mass.*      “over there”      [ovɪ 'de<sup>ə</sup>]

*N.Y.C*      “cup of coffee”      [ ,k<sup>h</sup>ʌpə 'ku<sup>ə</sup>fɪ]

*Southern*      “lamp”      [le<sup>ə</sup>m<sup>ə</sup>p]

- Fronting/backing/raising/lowering diacritics (for “graded” cases):

*Southern*      “red”      [rɛ̟d]

“food”      [fʊ̟d]

- Length diacritic:

*W. Mass*      “park the car”      [pɑk ðə 'k<sup>h</sup>ɑ:]

- Note monophthong ↔ diphthong substitutions:

*W. Texas*      “oil business”      [ˈɔɪ ,bɪd<sup>ə</sup> nɪs] ← note the stopping rule here!

“tire”      [t<sup>h</sup>ɑɪ]

- Note vowel substitutions

*Southern*      “pet”      [p<sup>h</sup>ɪt]      - lax vowels

“sense”      [sɪ̃ns]

*Midwest*      “guarantee”      [ˈgɑɪ̃ntɪ]      - r-coloring

*Northeastern*      “Cuba and America”      [ˈkju̯bə æ̃n əˈmɛɪk<sup>h</sup>ə]

# American English Accents - consonants

## II. CONSONANTS

- /ŋ/ to /n/ substitutions

“winning”      [ˈwɪnɪŋ]  
“skipping”      [ˈskɪpɪŋ]

✓ For “Black English” (=African-American Vernacular English; AAVE; Ebonics; Black English Vernacular)

- Substitutions

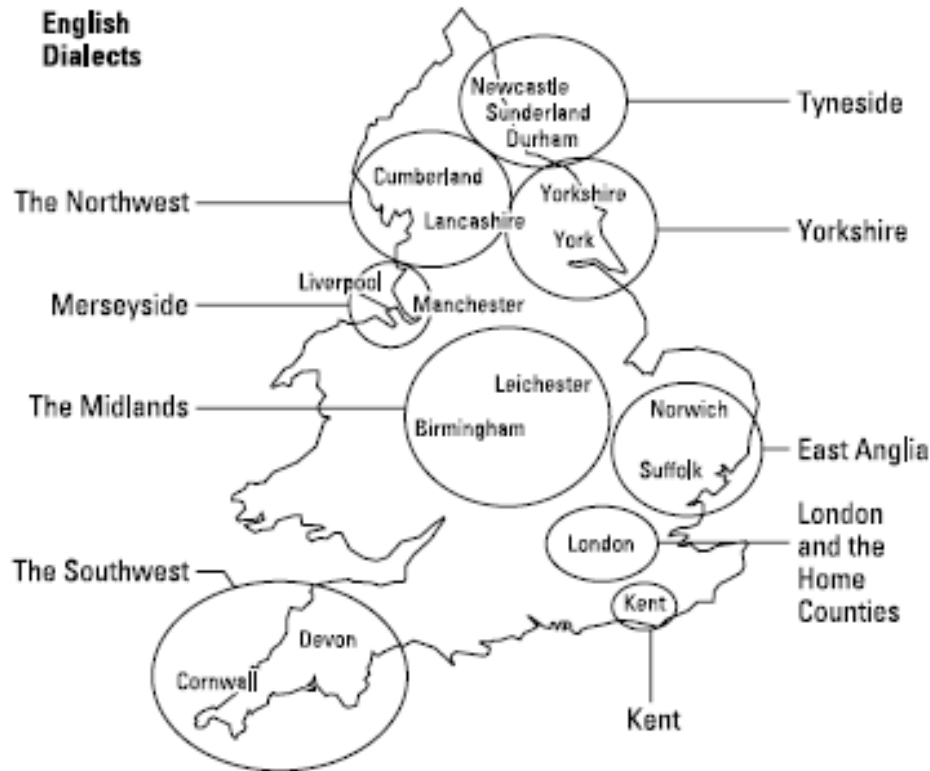
“Ruth”      [rʌf]  
“breathe”      [brɪv]  
“kids”      [kɪz]

- Deletions

“told”      [tɔ:d]

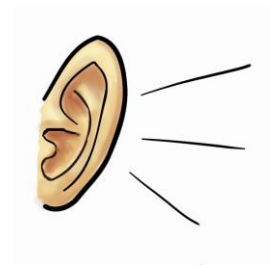
(for more info on “Black English”, including videos, see [“languageandlife.org”](http://languageandlife.org) – a project of NC State University)

# Now -- some British accents



Blimey!

# Features to listen for...



- *Raised vowels?* “trap” → /trep/ and “cat” → /ket/
- *Rhoticity or not?*
- *Trap-bath split?* “dance” → /dɑns/  
(pronounced with *broad-a*)
- *London vowel shift:* Cockney “day” → /dæɪ/
- *Glottal Stopping:* “better” → /'beʔə/
- *L-vocalization:* “pal” → /pɑʊ/
- *Th-Fronting:* “thing” → /fɪŋ/, “mother” → /'mʌvə/

# English examples

- RP (Received Pronunciation), Margaret Thatcher  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odb8ux3g9\\_8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odb8ux3g9_8)
- Cockney, Actor Ray Winston  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ppswJ7sg-vU>
- “Estuary English”, (scolding) Chef, Jamie Oliver  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlwrV5e6fMY>
- West Country (Southwest) guy from Taunton (Devon) - too close to his mic!  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh5iMXvO5Gk>
- (Midlands/Birmingham), Les Ross, Broadcaster  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1zbRIs03Cs>
- Geordie (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne), Singer, Cheryl Cole  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6EPrD\\_kKM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6EPrD_kKM)

(hat tip: [dialectblog.com](http://dialectblog.com))



Video from *YouTube*. New York Times. "Margaret Thatcher's Memorable Remarks: A Video Mash-up | The New York Times". April 8, 2013. Accessed June 23, 2016. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odb8ux3g9\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odb8ux3g9_8)

Video from *YouTube*. Actor Ray Winston". Accessed June 23, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rSvieNOW7QM>

Video from *YouTube*. Jamie Oliver. "Jamie Oliver's TED Award Speech". February 12, 2010. Accessed 6/23/16. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jlwrV5e6fMY>

Video from *YouTube*. Wiltshire Museum. "Phil Harding's favourite object – the Stonehenge Dagger". September 7, 2009. Accessed June 23, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3k4FuKx1aU>

Video from *YouTube*. PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals). "Black Sabbath's Geezer Butler". May 5, 2009. Accessed June 23, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5ASHXylc-g>

Video from *YouTube*. Cheryl. "Cheryl Cole YouTube Fan Interview". November 2, 2010. Accessed June 23, 2016. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6EPrD\\_kKM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6EPrD_kKM)

# Elsewhere in the UK and Ireland



- Welsh English – recording from ‘Mic’ project in Wales
- <https://youtu.be/AFMhtLnup-c>
- Scottish English – young lady from Glasgow –
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGKoekcThLE>
- Scottish English (Edinburgh – Actor Ewen Bremner)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4IzLhXoYvw>
- Irish accent (Dublin -Pardraig Harrington, Pro Golfer)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8w0A9tg450#t=1m47s>
- Irish accent (Donnegal, N. Ireland)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z4zBULIOgVI>

# Some UK consonant differences

<u>Feature</u>	RP	Cockney	Estuary	Welsh	Scottish	Irish
/r/ at end of words	non-rhotic	non-rhotic	non-rhotic	usually non-rhotic	rhotic	usually rhotic
/r/ consonant	+	+	+	often trilled, tapped	often trilled, tapped	+
glottal stopping?	+	+	weak	-	+ of /t/	-
/θ, ð/ → /f,v/	+	+	weak	-	-	becomes alveolar
/l/ allophones?	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	velarized	non-velarized
/l/ → /w/	+	+	+	-	-	-

# Heading 'Down Under'



- Australia (broad) the late Steve Irwin  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4\\_mWRnmWEs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4_mWRnmWEs)
- New Zealand (cultivated) Prime Minister John Key  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=\\_r-VSRTmjQ0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=_r-VSRTmjQ0)
- South Africa (accent tag, Capetown)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKqqH8jUo3k>



# Some Aussie – Kiwi - S. African consonant differences

<u>Feature</u>	AUSSIE	KIWI	SOUTH AFRICAN
/r/ at end of words	non-rhotic	Mostly non-rhotic	non-rhotic
linking- and intrusive /r/	+	Mostly +	-
/θ, ð/ → /f,v/	-	-	+
// allophones	May all be velarized	velarized	-
/w/ vs. /hw/	-	Merged in younger	Merged in younger

# To the Islands



- Trinidad (accent tag)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HF6zJeYlaXQ>
- Jamaica (the Night before Christmas)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=zoWkNVctUtc#t=38](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=zoWkNVctUtc#t=38)
- Grenada (making kites)  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7rytYKgWLk>

# Summary: Vowels, /æ/ - /ɑr/

Dia- phoneme <sup>[1]</sup>	AuE <sup>[19]</sup>	CaE	GA <sup>[20][21][22]</sup>	InE <sup>[23]</sup>	IrE <sup>[24]</sup>	NZE <sup>[22][25]</sup>	RP <sup>[26][27]</sup>	ScE <sup>[28]</sup>	SAE <sup>[29][30]</sup>	SSE	WaE <sup>[31]</sup>	Keyword	Examples
æ	æ, æ <sup>[32]</sup>	æ, eə~cə <sup>[33]</sup>		æ~ɛ	ɑ~ɑ~æ	ɛ	æ~ɑ		ɑ~æ~ɛ	ɛ <sup>[34]</sup>	a	TRAP	lad, bad, cat <sup>[35]</sup>
ɑ: or æ	ɑ:			ɑ:	ɑ:	e:	ɑ:	ɘ	ɑ~ɑ~ ɒ~ɔ:	ɑ <sup>[36]</sup>	a	BATH	pass, path, sample
ɑ:		ɑ~ɑ			ɑ:						a	PALM	father
ɒ	ɔ	ɑ~ɒ		ɒ~ɑ	ɑ	ɔ	ɒ~ɔ	ɔ	ɒ~ɒ, ɔ~ɔ:	ɔ	ɒ	LOT	not, wasp
ɒ	ɔ	ɑ~ɒ		ɒ~ɑ	ɑ	ɔ	ɒ~ɔ	ɔ	ɒ~ɒ, ɔ~ɔ:	ɔ	ɒ	CLOTH	off, loss, cloth, long, dog, chocolate <sup>[38]</sup>
ɔ:	o:	ɑ~ɒ		ɒ~ɑ	ɑ	o:	o:		ɔ~ɔ:		ɒ	THOUGHT	law, caught, all, halt, talk
ə	ə	ə		ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	COMMA	bull
i	i	i				ə	i	i			i	KIT	spotted
i		i					i~ə~ʌ	i~i, ə <sup>[39]</sup>	i, i	i, i	i		sit
i	i	i				i	ij	e, i	i		i	HAPPY	city
i:	i:	i		i	i, e~i:	əj	ij	i	i:	i	i	FLEECE	see meat
eɪ	æj	ej~e		e:	e:	æɘ	ej	e	eɪ~ej~ æj~əj~ ʌj	e <sup>[40]</sup>	e, ei	FACE	date day, pain, whey, rein
ɛ	e	ɛ				e~i	e~ɛ	ɛ	ɛ~e~i	ɛ, e <sup>[41]</sup>	ɛ	DRESS	bed <sup>[42]</sup>
ɔr	ə (j)~ ɔ (j)	ɔ~ə~j		ɜ:(r)~är	ə~, ɔj~uj <sup>[43]</sup> ə~, ej <sup>[43]</sup> ə~, ɔj~uj <sup>[43]</sup>	ə (j)~ ø (j)~ œ (j)	ə (j)~ ɜ (j)	ʌr <sup>[43]</sup> ɛr <sup>[43]</sup> Ir~ʌr <sup>[43]</sup>	ø (j)~ ø (j)~ ə (j)	ə (j)	ɜ (r)	NURSE	burn herd, earth bird
ər	ə (j)	ə~j		ə (r)	ə~j	ə (j)	ə (j)	ər	ə (j)		ə (r)	LETTER	winner, donor, massacre <sup>[44]</sup>

# Vowels – cont'd

Dia- phoneme <sup>[1]</sup>	AuE	CaE	GA	InE	IrE	NZE	RP	ScE	SAE	SSE	WaE	Keyword	Examples
ʌ	ä	ʌ	ʌ~ɜ	ə~ɜ	ə, ʊ	ɛ	ə ~ ʌ ~ ɔ <sup>[45]</sup>	ʌ	ɛ~ä	ɑ, ʌ	ə~ɜ	STRUT	run, won, flood
ʊ	ʊ				u:	ʊ~ɜ	ʊ~ɜ	ʊ	ʊ~ü	u	ʊ	FOOT	put
u:	u:	u:	u:	u:		u:	u:		u:		u:		u:
ju:	jʊ:	(j)ʊ		ju:	jʊ:	jʊ ~jʊ	jʊ	jʊ ~jʊ ~ jy:	jʊ	ju	ju <sup>[46]</sup>	GOOSE	threw, yew
aj	aɛ~ɑɪ	aɪ, eɪ~eɪ <sup>[47]</sup>		äɪ	ɔɪ	eɛ	ɑɪ	əɪ~aɛ	äɪ~ä ~ ɑɪ~ɑ:	ɑɪ, ɑ <sup>[48]</sup>	ɑɪ	PRICE	my, wise, high flight, mice
ɔɪ	oɪ	ɔɪ	ɔɪ~ɔɪ	ɔɪ	ɔɪ~ɔɪ, äɪ	oɛ	oɪ	oɪ	ɔɪ~ɔɪ	ɔɪ	ɔɪ	CHOICE	boy, hoist
ou	əʊ~əʊ	oʊ~o		o:	oʊ, o:	ɑʊ	əʊ	o	əʊ~əʊ~ oɛ~oɛ~ oɛ~ʌʊ	o <sup>[40]</sup>	o:	GOAT	no, toe, soap
	oʊ	o~oɛ~oʊ				oʊ	əʊ~oʊ~oʊ		oʊ		oʊ		oʊ
au	æʊ~æʊ	äʊ, ʌʊ~əʊ <sup>[47]</sup>	äʊ	äʊ	äʊ~äʊ	æʊ	au	əʊ	äʊ~ä ~ æʊ	au		MOUTH	now, trout
ɑr	ä (r)	ɑr		ä (r)	ɑr~ ä (r)	ɑ (r)	ɑ (r)	ɑr	ä (r)~ɑ (r)~ ɑ (r)~ɑ (r)	ɑ (r)	ɑ (r)	START	arm, car
ɔr	ɪ (r)~ ɪ.ä (r)	ɪ	ɪ~ ɪə	ɪə(r)~ ɪ (r)	ɪr	ɪə (r)~ ɪə (r)	ɪə (r)~ ɪ (r)	ɪr	ɪə (r)~ ɪ (r)	jə (r)	ɪə (r)	NEAR	deer, here
ɛər	e (r)~ e.ä (r)	ɛ	ɛ(ə)r~ ɛr	ɛə(r)~ e (r)	e (r)	ɪə (r)~ eə (r)	eə (r)~ ɛ (r) <sup>[50]</sup>	ɛr	ɛə (r)~ ɛ (r)~ e (r)	ɛ (r)	ɛ (r)	SQUARE	mare, there, bear
ɔr	o (r)	ɔr	ɔr~ɔr	ɔ (r)	ɑr	o (r)	o (r)	ɔr	ɔ (r)~ o (r)	ɔ (r)	D (r)	NORTH	sort, warm
ɔər					o (r)						OR	o (r)	FORCE
uər	u.ə (r)~ o (r)	u:	u:~ɔr~ɔr	uə(r)~ u (r)	u.ɪ, ɪ.ɔr	uə (r)~ u.ə (r)	u.ə (r)~ o (r) <sup>[51]</sup>	ur	uə (r)~ o (r)	wə (r)	uə (r)	CURE	tour, moor
juər	jʊ.ə (r)~ jo (r)	ju, jɜ~jɜ		jʊə(r)~ ju (r)	ju, jo.ɪ	jʊə (r), jə.ə (r)	jə (r)~ jo (r)	jur	jʊə (r), jo (r)	jo (r)	jʊə (r)		pure, Europe