

# Areas in phonetics & Phonology

## Differences Between Speech and Writing

By

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## Key to Symbols

### Consonants

<b>/p/ as in pay /pei/</b>	<b>/h/ as in high /hai/</b>
/b/ as in bee /bee/	/f/ as in free /fri:/
/k/ as in cap /kæp/	/v/ as in vague /veig/
/g/ as in give /giv/	/l/ as in led /led/
/s/ as in sip /sip/	/m/ as in map
/z/ as in /zip/	/n/ as in nap /nap/
/t/ as in tea /ti:/	/ŋ/ as in hang /hang/
/d/ as in day /dei/	/r/ as in red /red/
/ʃ / as in ship /ʃ ip/	/w/ as in wet /wet/
/ʒ / as in measure /meʒ ə/	/j/ as in yet /jet/
/tʃ / as in chin /tʃ in/	/θ/ as in thief /θi:f/
/dʒ / as in June /dʒ u:n/	/ð/ as in this /ðis/

## Key to Symbols

### Vowels

Pure vowels	Diphthongs	Triphthong
/ɪ / as in pit /pit/	/ei/ as in hey /hei/	/eiə/ as in player /pleiə/
/e/ as in pet /pet/	/ai/ as in buy /bai/	/aiə/ as in fire /faɪə/
/æ/ as in hat /hæt/	/ɔ i/ as in oil /oil/	/ɔ iə/ royal /rɔ iə/
/ʌ/ as in up /ʌp/	/ɪ ə/ as in peer /pɪ ə/	/əʊə/ as in lower /ləʊə/
/o/ as in pot /pot/	/eə/ as in pear /peə/	/aʊə/ as in hour /aʊə/
/ʊ/ as in put /pʊt/	/ʊ ə/ as in poor /pʊ ə/	
/i:/ as in key /ki:/	/əʊ / as go in /gəʊ /	
/a:/ as in car /ca:/	/aʊ / as in cow /kaʊ /	
/ɔ:/ as in court /kɔ:t/		
/u:/ as in spoon /spu:n/		
/ə/ as in the /ðə/		
/ɛ :/ as in bird /bɛ :d/		

OLD ENGLISH SOUNDS

How do we know what Old English sounded like? The unhelpful answer is that we do not. In later periods, we can rely on accounts by contemporary writers (p. 69) – but there is none of this in Old English. The best we can do is make a series of informed guesses, based on a set of separate criteria (see below), and hope that the results are sufficiently similar to warrant some general conclusions. A great deal of scholarship has been devoted to this issue, and we now have a fair degree of certainty about how most of the sounds were pronounced. If an Anglo-Saxon were available, using the information on these pages we could probably communicate intelligibly.

We would have to get used to each other's accent, of course, in much the same way as modern speakers (unused, say, to Geordie or Cockney speech) need to do. There is no reason to suppose that there was any less phonetic variation in



GETTING IT RIGHT

Generations of Old English students have pored over tables such as this one, in an effort to work out the 'sound' of the language. Many must have identified during their university days with the students of Ælfric (p. 16), caring not so much about what they said, as long as they said it right. But the analogy is only a partial one: 21st-century university tutors of Old English would not, on the whole, beat their charges.

Letter	Example and its meaning	IPA symbol	Modern example
æ	sæt 'sat'	[æ]	Southern BrE sat
ǣ	dǣd 'deed'	[e:]	French bête
a	mann 'man'	[ɑ] <sup>1</sup>	AmE hot
	dagas 'days'	[ɑ]	German Land
ā	hām 'home'	[ɑ:]	fāher
c	cyrice 'church'	[tʃ] <sup>2</sup>	church
	cēne 'bold'	[k]	keen
cg	ecg 'edge'	[dʒ]	edge
c	settan 'set'	[e]	set
ē	he 'he'	[e:]	German Leben as for [æ], [e:], [e], [e:], followed by the first syllable of about
ea	carm 'arm'	[æə]	
	ear 'ear'	[e:]	
eo	eorl 'nobleman'	[eə]	
eo	beor 'beer'	[eə]	
f	ǣfre 'ever'	[v] <sup>3</sup>	ever
	fif 'five'	[f]	five
	gʷt 'get'	[j] <sup>2</sup>	yet
B	fugol 'bird'	[v] <sup>4</sup>	colloq. German sagen
	gān 'go'	[g]	go
h	heofon 'heaven'	[h] <sup>5</sup>	heaven
	nihht 'night'	[ç] <sup>6</sup>	German ich
h	brēhta 'brought'	[x] <sup>7</sup>	German brachte
	eitan 'it'	[i]	sit
ī	wīd 'wide'	[i:]	weed
m	mann 'man'	[ɑ] <sup>1</sup>	AmE hot
	God 'God'	[ɑ]	BrE hot
o	god 'good'	[o:]	German Sohn
	stan 'stair'	[a] <sup>8</sup>	rise
o	hūs 'house'	[a]	house
	scip 'ship'	[ʃ]	ship
p, θ	þæt, oðer 'other'	[ð] <sup>8</sup>	other
	þurh, þurh 'through'	[θ]	through
u	ful 'full'	[u]	full
ū	hūs 'house'	[u:]	goose
y	wynn 'joy'	[y]	German Würde
ƿ	ƿrman 'make way'	[y:]	German Güte

A birch of the type used in medieval monastic schools.

Anglo-Saxon times than there is today, and the symbols opposite should not be interpreted too narrowly. To say that Old English *æ* was pronounced as an open front vowel (p. 238) is sufficient to distinguish it from *e* and other vowels, but it does not tell us the exact vowel quality which would have been used.

The evidence

There are four main types of evidence used in deducing the sound values of Old English letters.

- **Alphabetical logic** We know a great deal about how the letters of the Roman alphabet were pronounced, and it seems reasonable to assume that, when the missionaries adapted this alphabet to Old English, they tried to do so in a consistent and logical way. The letter representing the sound of *m* in Latin would have been used to represent the same sound in English. Likewise, if they found it necessary to find a new letter, this must have been because they felt no Latin letters were suitable (as in the case of the new symbol *æ*).

Similarly, a great deal of information comes from the way variations of regional accent and changes over time are shown in the spelling of Old English texts. The

Notes  
Some of the sounds are restricted to certain contexts.

- 1 before m, n, n(g)
- 2 before/after i, and after æ, e, y
- 3 between voiced sounds
- 4 between back vowels
- 5 initially
- 6 after æ, e, i, y
- 7 after a, o, u
- 8 between vowels

The following riddle (No. 86 in the Exeter Book (p. 12)) illustrates the use of this transcription in a continuous piece of writing.

(After R. Quirk, V. Adams, & D. Davy, 1975.)

Wlht cwōm gagan þæt weras sæton  
 [wlht kwōm gagan θæt weras sæ:ton]  
 moniſa on mæðle, mōde snottre;  
 [mon]iſa on mæðle mō:ðo snotræ]  
 hæfde ān āga ond ēaran twā  
 [hæfde an ā:ga ond ē:aran twa:]  
 ond twēgen fit, twelf hund hēafda,  
 [ond twē:ſen fit twelf hund hē:afda]  
 hrycg ond wombe ond honda twa  
 [hrycg ond wombe ond honda twa:]  
 carmas ond eazle, ānne swēoran  
 [c:armas ond eazle an:nə swe:oran]  
 ond aldan twā. Saga hwæt ic hātte!  
 [ond aldan twa: sa:ga hwæt iſ hāt:tə:]

## Differences Between Speech and Writing

### Abstract

In any language there is some amount of difference between written language (planned) and spoken language (spontaneous). Since planned speech could be considered a form of written language, it could be inferred that there are also differences between planned speech and spontaneous speech. Some of these differences are very clear in terms of syntax, lexis, phonology and discourse. These differences are highlighted in order to make a clear distinction between spontaneous and planned speech.

This paper is an attempt to show the differences between the two forms of a language (written & spoken English) as far as number of linguistic features are tackled

### Introduction

**The following are the linguistic structures that underlie a number of differences which appear clearly in the following:**

- **1/ Syntactic Structure**

One of the main differences between spontaneous and planned speech is that of syntax. The syntactic structure tends to be more complicated in planned speech, so the sentences tend to be very long, complicated and complete. Therefore, grammatical cohesion and semantic links between words could be easily detected in planned speech. On the other hand, the syntactic structure in spontaneous speech is very simple, incomplete and sometimes even incorrect. The sentences are very simple and short. However, these incomplete sentences are acceptable because they are a typical feature of spoken English.

## 2/ Lexical Features

### • a) Vocabulary and the Interactive features & Organization of Text

- In spontaneous speech, the speaker tends to switch from one point to the other without paying attention to the organization of his message. He might start talking about a certain topic and then moves to talk about something totally different and then returns to his main topic and continues in that circle. Moreover, vocabulary items are carelessly selected and they could be repeated again and again in order to communicate the meaning. However, in planned speech, the speaker makes use of the vocabulary in organizing his message so that it has a beginning, middle and an end. Moreover, he tends to focus on high lexical density and complex vocabulary including abstract and he uses a variety of vocabulary with lower level of repetition.
- Vocabulary is not only necessary for the organization of the message in planned speech; it is also important to reflect an interactive impression about the message in spontaneous speech. Spoken speech in general and spontaneous speech in particular is noticeable for its interactive expressions like *well, now, you know...* etc

- **b) False Starts**

Maclay and Osgood (1959) have observed that false starts are when a speaker starts an utterance, stops abruptly and restarts. False start occurs a lot in spontaneous speech due to the high speed of interaction, the fast flow of utterances and the short time that the speaker has to think about his utterances. On the other hand, false start does not occur in planned speech because the speaker has enough time to plan, organize and think about what he is going to say. So, his utterances are more likely to be very organized, accurate and focused on the main idea of the message which means there is no chance for false start to exist in such a speech.

- **3/ Phonological Features**

- **a) Pauses and Rhythms.**

Preplanned speech, such as a talk, can be read smoothly and continuously. Spontaneous speech can rarely be described in this way. It is full of pauses, hesitations, false starts, fragments and corrections. In actual fact, these factors have some important functions in the spontaneous speech. For instance, the pause or the silence in speech can play a social role, as when we pause for effect, in order to emphasize a point; it can also signal that the speaker has finished talking and now wishes someone else to talk. Pauses may occur when we are planning what to say next.

In fact, a pause of planning will not always be silent. Many of the hesitations which occur in speech - the 'ers' and 'ums' - are thought to be attempts to achieve the cognitive function of planning something else to say, while retaining control of the conversation. If the silence is filled with sound, the speaker is indicating that no interruption is to be tolerated. On the other hand, in the planned

speech pauses do occur but rhythmically along with ebb and flow of the sentence. Planned speech is more rhythmic than spontaneous speech in that short pauses are used for commas, long ones for full stops and longer pauses while switching to the next passage and this rhythm is almost lacking in spontaneous speech.

- **4/ Discourse Features**

- **a) The use of referring expressions**

"Referring expressions are words whose meaning can only be discovered by referring to other words or to elements of the context which are clear to both sender and receiver" (Cook, 1989:16). Planned speech is explicit with precise and specific references, whereas the spontaneous speech frequently demonstrates nonspecific references. The most common example of these references is third person pronouns (she, her, hers, herself; he, him, his, himself; it, its, itself; they, them, their, theirs, themselves). However, it is not only the third person pronouns which work in this way. The meanings of (this, that, here and there) have also to be found. Referring expressions fulfill a dual purpose of unifying the text (they depend upon some of the subject matter remaining the same) and of economy, because they save us from having to repeat the identity of what we are talking about.

- **b) Ellipsis**

The complexity of the grammatical features found in spontaneous speech often stems from a high incidence of a characteristic called ellipsis. According to Hughes(1996:20), "Ellipsis is a complex concept which basically hinges on the notion that something is 'missing' from an utterance or clause, but that it can be understood because of the surrounding discourse and context". Ellipsis is more



likely to occur in spontaneous speech rather than in planned speech because in the latter, the ideas tend to be expressed in complete sentences and they are relatively straightforward; whereas in the former, the message is implicitly expressed to an audience who is supposed to know the context of the speech.

Conversely spoken language can sometimes be more communicative as it allows for clarification and additional information in a way that a standalone written document does not. Often it is the case that the tone, intention or meaning of a written piece of language may be unclear. In spoken language you communicate with more than the words you use: tone and body language add a significant amount of information to the language receiver.

### **Phonetic Transcription Versus Orthography**

The pronunciation of words in many languages, as distinct from their written form (orthography), has undergone significant change over time. Pronunciation can also vary greatly among dialects of a language. Traditional orthography in some languages, particularly French and English, often differs from the pronunciation. For example, the words "bough" and "trough" do not rhyme in English, even though their spellings might suggest they do. In French, for example, the 's' at the end of words is usually silent ("militaire" is pronounced the same as "militaires") unless followed by a word beginning in a vowel. In the orthography of most European Languages, the fact that many letters are pronounced or silent depending on contexts causes difficulties in determining the appropriate pronunciation, especially in the cases of English, Irish, and French. However, in other languages, such as Spanish and Italian, there is a more consistent though still imperfect relationship

between orthography and pronunciation. Therefore, phonetic transcription can provide a function that orthography cannot. It displays a one-to-one relationship between symbols and sounds. Phonetic transcription allows us to step outside of orthography and examine differences in pronunciation between dialects within a given language, as well as to identify changes in pronunciation that may take place over time.

## **Orthography vs. Phonetic Alphabet**

### **English Orthography**

**\*Many mappings to one sound**

to, too, two = /tu:/'

through, throw = /Tru:/'

clue, shoe, suit, coup = /u:/'

**\*One to many mapping**

dad, father, sofa, many "a"

character, charter "ch"

sign, pleasure, resign "s"

**\*More than one letter = one sound**

character [k], tough [f], thorough [o], deal [i:]

**\*One letter = more than one sound**

exit [ks]

### **Phonetic Alphabet**

**\*1-to-1 correspondence between sound and symbol**

**\*Symbols can be used for all languages**

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## Narrow Versus Broad Transcription

- Phonetic transcription may aim to transcribe the [phonology](#) of a language, or it may wish to go further and specify the precise phonetic realization. In all systems of transcription, there are two general types of phonetic transcription: **broad transcription** and **narrow transcription**. Broad transcription is usually just a transcription of the phonemes of an utterance. It indicates only the more noticeable phonetic features of an utterance. It is also called **phonemic transcription**, whereas narrow transcription encodes information about the phonetic variations of the specific allophones in the utterance.
- The broad, phonemic transcription, placed between slashes ("/ /"), A transcription that specifically denotes only phonological contrasts, but the narrow, allophonic transcription, placed between square brackets("[ ]").

A narrow transcription would note several phonetic features that may not even be evident to a native speaker. A broader transcription indicates some of the features that are easier to hear.

- The advantage of the narrow transcription is that it can help learners to get exactly the right sound, and allows linguists to make detailed analyses of language variation.
- The disadvantage is that a narrow transcription is rarely representative of all speakers of a language. It also involves larger number of symbols which may be unfamiliar to non-specialists.
- The advantage of the broad transcription is that it usually allows statements to be made which apply across a more diverse language community. It is thus more appropriate for the pronunciation data in foreign language dictionaries, which may discuss phonetic details in the preface but rarely give them for each entry.
- **Phonetic transcription - Types of notational systems**
- Most phonetic transcription is based on the assumption that linguistic sounds are segmentable into discrete units than can be represented by symbols.
- **Phonetic transcription - Alphabetic**
- The International phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is one of the most popular and well-known phonetic alphabets. It was originally created by primarily British language teachers, with later efforts from European phoneticians and linguists. It is becoming the most often seen alphabet in the field of phonetics. Most American dictionaries for native English-speakers American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language employ respelling systems based on the English alphabet, with diacritical marks over the vowels and stress marks.

- **Phonetic transcription - Iconic**

In *iconic* phonetic notation, the shapes of the phonetic characters are designed so that they visually represent the position of articulators in the vocal tract.

- **Phonetic transcription - Analphabetic**

Another type of phonetic notation that is more precise than alphabetic notation is *analphabetic* phonetic notation. Instead of both the alphabetic and iconic notational types' general principle of using one symbol per sound, analphabetic notation uses long sequences of symbols to precisely describe the component features of an articulatory gesture. Although more descriptive than alphabetic notation, analphabetic notation is less practical for many purposes. As a result, this type of notation is uncommon.

**THE PRONUNCIATION OF OLD ENGLISH:  
VOWELS**

Old form	Key word	New form
/i:/	Feel	/i:/
/i /	Fill	/ɪ /
/e/	Fell	/e/
/ɔ:/	Fall	/ɔ:/
/u/	Full	/ʊ/
/u:/	Fool	/u:/
/eɪ /	Fail	/eɪ /
/ou/	Foal	/əʊ/
/aɪ/	File	/aɪ /

Old form	Key word	New form
/au/	Foul	/aʊ/
/oi/	Foil	/oɪ/
/æ/	Cat	/æ/
/ɔ/	Cot	/o/
/ʌ/	Cut	/ʌ/
/ə:/	Curt	/ɛ:/
/ɑ:/	Cart	/ɑ:/
/i ə/	Tier	/ɪə/
/ɛə/	Tear	/eə/
/uə/	Tour	/ʊə/
/ə/	banana	/ə/



## Old Consonants

- Old English consonants: /p/: pat, /b/: bat, t/: time, /d/: dime, /k/: came, /g/: game, /tʃ /: chump, /dʒ /: jump, /f/: fat, /θ/: thigh /s/: sap, /ʃ /: glacier/mesher, /h/: ham, /m/: man, /n/: nun, /l/: lamp, /r/: ramp, /w/: world, /y: you
- no phonemic voiced fricatives in Old English (/v/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ /)
- OE [h] always distinctly pronounced Examples:
- hraefn ("raven"), hand ("hand"), sihp ("vision," "sight"), eahta ("eight"), heah ("high"), þurh ("through")
- OE had distinctly pronounced consonant clusters (/hr/, /hl/, /hn/, /hw/, /kn/, /gn/) (lost in modern English pronunciation).  
Examples: hlaford ("lord"); hlaefdige ("lady"); hraefn, ("raven"); hlud ("loud"); sometimes still spelled in modern English (not pronounced): what, whale, whistle, knee, gnat)

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## Conclusions

- With the emergence of language change, English has noticed a number of linguistic changes, starting from sound change throughout a number of linguistic structures. This paper has pointed out a number of these changes that show how language elements are interwoven and that one element affects the other one.
- 1- since civilization the written form of English was prior to the spoken one.
- 2- as far as man is born to speak , priority has been given to the spoken form of English.
- 3- the diachronic & synchronic studies have dominated the fields of language change concerning linguistic levels
- 4- the changes and differences have been very clear between the spoken & written forms. In other words, the written forms have formalities rather than the spoken forms.
- 5- sounds & letters have changed from old English into the updated English.
- 6- as far as letters are written , sounds are spoken ; the latter have been identified throughout transcription , which reveals the identity of the sounds from Shakespeare time up till the millennium.
- 7- within orthography the English letters have revealed a number of different shapes , this is because of the etymology of these letters.
- 8- there could be no clear & distinct boundaries between the written & spoken forms of English, for both of them overlap as well as continue each other .

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