



# Analyser et transcrire les variétés d'anglais oral à l'agrégation externe d'anglais

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# ***Analyser et transcrire les variétés d'anglais oral à l'agrégation externe d'anglais***

## **Atelier : Enjeux en vue de la préparation à l'épreuve de phonologie**

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# Ideas for discussion

- digraphs and *neons*
- LOT and CLOTH in GA
- suffixes and endings
- Iambic Reversal in compound adjectives

# Digraphs and *neons*

# **Digraphs and neons**

**first thing to teach and make learners realize:**

**it is not the pronunciation that's wrong, it's the way we spell**

# Digraphs and neons

What would be wrong with /ɪ'nʌf/?

# Digraphs and neons

What would be wrong with /ɪ'nʌf/?

What's less trivial is that it corresponds to the spelling **<enough>**

# Digraphs and neons

What would be wrong with /bɪəd/ or /wɪəd/?



# Digraphs and neons

What would be wrong with /bɪəd/ or /wɪəd/?

What's less trivial is the alternative spellings of the same vowel: *beard* versus *weird*

# Digraphs and neons

nothing strange in the pronunciation of  
**/kwaɪət/** and **/kwaɪə/**

## Digraphs and neons

nothing strange in the pronunciation of  
/kwaɪət/ and /kwaɪə/

but a near-total mismatch in spelling:

*quiet* and *choir* (they only share <i>)

# Digraphs and neons

there are **2 main reasons** for this discrepancy btw pronunciation and (standard) spelling:

- 'English' pronunciation has **changed through time** and is changing

- English, like French by the way, has a very **long uninterrupted written tradition**

# Digraphs and neons

'English' pronunciation has **changed through time** and is changing

the vowels in ***meat* [ɛ:]** and ***meet* [e:]** were audibly different when these words acquired their current spelling

=> at the time a different spelling made perfect sense

# Digraphs and neons

**'English', like French by the way, has a very  
long uninterrupted written tradition**

**=> conservatism**

**=> absorption of various writing traditions**

# Digraphs and neons

## conservatism

to maintain the cultural access to earlier documents, it is not a bad idea to stick to the spelling of those documents

=> *meat* and *meet* are still spelt as if they had different pronunciations

# Digraphs and neons

absorption of various writing traditions

*Germanic tradition:*

letter doubling to encode long sounds (mainly vowels) : **ee**, **oo**, **aa**



# Digraphs and neons

absorption of various writing traditions

*Latin tradition:*

**qu,**

the spelling of Greek words

=> spelling of Greek words: **ph**antom versus **f**antasy, **rh**ythm, **ch**orus, **arch**itecture, **ch**oir

# Digraphs and neons

absorption of various writing traditions

*French (Romance) tradition:*

the idea of using digraphs

(ou/ow, au/aw, th, ch, gh > then sh)

instead of using diacritics ø, ö, ü, ä

or ligatures like æ, œ (which were used in OE)

# **Digraphs and neons**

**These phenomena reinforce the wide-spread perception that English has a complicated writing system and hence pronunciation**

# Digraphs and neons

*quietly, neon, Leo, riot*

# Digraphs and neons

*quietly, neon, Leo, riot*

*these words do not have a digraph because  
the vowel letters do not function as a unit*

# Digraphs and neons

*riot*

<io> is never a digraph in English

/'jaɪət/ is syllabified as /'jaɪ.ət/ with  
compression possible ['jaət]

# Digraphs and neons

*neon, Leo*

there is indeed *people* where <eo> does encode a vowel, /i:/

=> this example is, however, isolated (unique example)

=> eo does not function as a digraph

# Digraphs and neons

*neon, Leo*

***/ˈni:ɒn/ /ˈli:əʊ/ are syllabified /ˈni:.ɒn/ /ˈli:.əʊ/***

**ne|on and Le|o**

**perfectly regular**



# Digraphs and neons

*quietly*

**<ie> is a regular digraph before consonants:**

***/i:/ chief, relieve/relief, thief, hygienic, field, fiend, priest***

***/ɪə/ as in pier, tier***

# Digraphs and neons

*quietly*

**/'kwaɪət/ is syllabified as /'kwaɪ.ət/ with compression possible ['kwaət]**

**similar explanation in: diet**

**(chaos too, with a different letter group)**

**LOT and CLOTH**

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

**Wells 1982: LOT realized with /ɑ:/ in GA**

**stop, pot, sock, notch, Goth,**

**rob, odd, cog, dodge,**

**Tom, con, doll,**

**solve, romp, font, copse, box,**

**profit, possible, proverb, bother, rosin,**

**honest, ponder....;**

**swan, quality, yacht, wasp, watch, squabble, waffle...;**

**knowledge, acknowledge.**

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

**Wells 1982: LOT realized with /ɑ:/ in GA**

**Both LPD and EPD are unanimous:**

**All these words *invariably* have /ɑ:/ in GA**

**(with *cog* only in EPD and *watch* in both also recorded with /ɔ:/ as a *secondary* GA variant, though...)**

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

**Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA**

**Most of these words are recorded with /ɑ:/ as a secondary (or even *only* or *main!*) variant in LPD 2008 and EPD 2011**

(colour coding in following slides is according to LPD 2008)

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

**Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA**

**a) off, cough, trough, broth, froth, cross, across, loss,  
floss, toss,**

**fosse, doss,**

**soft, croft, lost, oft, cost, frost,**

**often, soften, lofty,**

**Australia, Austria, Austen, Austin,**

**gone;**

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

**Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA**

**a) off, cough, trough, broth, froth, cross, across, loss...**

**-all** are recorded with **a secondary variant in /ɑ:/ in LPD**

(except **fosse**, **doss** where /ɑ:/ is the **only** recorded variant in both EPD and LPD)

**-all** are recorded with an older **variant in RP in /ɔ:/**! (except *across*, *floss*, *loft(y)* while *gone* has non-RP §gɔ:n/§gɑ:n)

**-EPD**: practically **all have /ɑ:/ only**: *cough*, *trough* and the group *Aust-* have /ɔ:/ too, and the latter have a variant in /ɔ:/ in RP as well)



# LOT and CLOTH in GA

Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA

b) moss, boss, **gloss**, **joss**, Ross,  
long, strong, wrong, gong, song, thong, **tongs**, throng,  
accost, coffee, coffer, coffin, offer, **office**, **officer**, **glossy**,  
**foster**, Boston, **Gloucester**, sausage;  
**wash**;

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/

b) moss, boss, gloss, joss...

-**all** are recorded with **a variant in /ɑ:/ in LPD**

-**none** are recorded with an older **variant in RP in /ɔ:/** (except *Gloucester*, which is in LPD but not in EPD)

-**foster, joss**: /ɑ:/ is the **only** recorded variant in both EPD and LPD

-EPD **consistently has /ɑ:/** for all these words, with /ɔ:/ as secondary in the -ong words, *coffee, coffer, Boston, wash, sausage* and as main variant in *coffin*)

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

## Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA

c) origin, Oregon, oratory, orator, orange, authority,  
borrow, categorical, correlate, coroner, coral,  
florid, Florida, florist, florin, historic(al),  
horrid, horrible, majority, horrify, horror,  
metaphoric(al), morrow,  
Morris, moral, Norwich, porridge, rhetorical, sorrel, moribund, ...;  
sorrow, tomorrow, sorry,  
Laurence/Lawrence, laurel, laureate,  
quarrel, quarry, warrant, warren, warrior, Warwick.

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

## Wells 1982: CLOTH realized with /ɔ:/ in GA

c) origin, Oregon, oratory, orator, orange, authority,

-**all** are recorded with **a secondary variant in /ɑ:/ in LPD** (except *authority*)

-**EPD does not record /ɑ:/ for any of these** (except: *sorry*, those in *-orrow*, which only have /ɑ:/ (*morrow*: /ɔ:/ too); those in *-au/aw*, *Florida*, the group /wɒ/ in RP, which have secondary /ɑ:/ in GA

-**none** are recorded with an older **variant in RP in /ɔ:/** (except *florist*, which is in both LPD and EPD, *moribund* has secondary /ɔ:/ only in EPD, and *laureate* which has /ɔ:/ first in RP and only /ɑ:/ in GA in LPD but has /ɔ:/ first in EPD)

# LOT and CLOTH in GA

## The LOT and CLOTH sets

-show **considerable variation** between /ɑ:/ and /ɔ:/ in GA

-are recorded with different main variants and amount of variation in the **dictionaries**

> The general tendency is **towards /ɑ:/** in all these words but much less so in words where the vowel is before /r/

# Suffixes and endings

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## Grotesque – picturesque

**=> in *picturesque* one can assume it is a suffix because its morphological (and semantic) relation to *picture* is clear and felt by native speakers**

# Suffixes and endings

## Grotesque – picturesque

=> this is not the case in *grotesque* because there is no morphologically related word today (its relation to *grotto* is etymological, no semantic link anymore)



# Suffixes and endings

**Grotesque – picturesque**

**for practical teaching purposes:**

**=> whenever a word ends in *-esque*, it is expected to be final stressed, whether this element is semantically active or not**

# Compound adjectives

# Compound adjectives

**Main message:**

**-you can't always simply rely on your past experience of listening to English when it comes to discussing fine points of stress placement**

**-this is particularly true for cases of Iambic Reversal**

# Compound nouns

*flattened [cigarette butts]*

# Compound nouns

*flattened cigarette butts*

lexical stress	1	0	2	0	1	1
compound stress	n/a		3	0	1	2
phrasal stress	2	0	0	0	1	3

# Compound adjectives

**[*white-haired*] man**

# Compound adjectives

*white-haired man*

lexical stress

1

1

1

# Compound adjectives

*white-haired man*

lexical stress	1	1	1
compound stress	[2	1]	n/a



# Compound adjectives

*white-haired man*

lexical stress	1	1	1
compound stress	[2	1]	n/a
phrasal stress	[2	3]	1

# Compound adjectives

*white-haired man*

lexical stress	1	1	1
compound stress	[2	1]	n/a
phrasal stress	[2	3]	1

[half-masked] smile

[white-coated] consultant

[black-suited] crowds

# Compound adjectives

*user friendly* in COCA (Contemp. Corpus AmE)

This adjective is expected to show lambic Reversal before a noun

*user 'friendly*

*'user friendly appli'cations*

# Compound adjectives

*user friendly* in COCA (Contemp. Corpus AmE)

150 tokens

19 tokens from speech (13%)

=> 17 are used predicatively

# Compound adjectives

*user friendly* in COCA (Contemp. Corpus AmE)

=> 2 are before a noun:

'And out of those five, which do you think is the most *user friendly site*?'

*user friendly* | smart things

# Compound adjectives

**high-'fibre/'fiber in COCA**

**200 tokens**

**=> 198 followed by nouns like *diet, foods, fruits, breakfast, cereal(s), options***

# Compound adjectives

**high-'fibre/'fiber** in COCA

**200 tokens**

**=> 2 tokens that were used predicatively:**

**for a dessert that's sweet, high-fiber and  
virtually fat-free**

**...that the food you choose are high-fiber**

# Compound adjectives

**high-'fibre/'fiber in COCA**

**200 tokens**

**=> only 10 tokens came from speech (5%)**

**=> NONE had high-fiber predicatively**