CANADIAN RAISING IN A WINDSOR, ONTARIO DIALECT

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There is a rule found in most if not all Canadian Dialects in which the diphthongs /aw/ and /ay/ are heightened under varied conditions to produce [ʌw] and [ʌy]: this rule has been called Canadian Raising.[1] Let us first look at the most common version of this phonological rule in Western Canada. We have to examine four phonetic environments to see where Canadian Raising is obligatory or blocked. These include the occurrence of the diphthongs /aw/ or /ay/ before a voiced or voiceless consonant, at the end of a word, or where followed by a syllable with primary stress.

Canadian Raising applies when the diphthongs /aw/ or /ay/ are followed by a voiceless consonant:

height	/hayt/	[hʌyt]
write	/rayt/	[rʌyt]
lighter	/laytər/	[lʌytər]
clout	/clawt/	[klʌwt]
shout	/šawt/	[šʌwt]
doubter	/dawtər/	[dʌwtər]

But if the diphthong is followed by a voiced consonant, or if it's at the end of a word, then it doesn't undergo raising:

hide	/hayd/	[hayd]
spider	/spaydər/	[spaydər]
tiger	/taygər/	[taygər]
cloud	/klawd/	[klawd]
clown	/klawn/	[klawn]
my	/may/	[may]
jaw	/haw/	[haw]

The placement of stress in the word is irrelevant for Canadian Raising in Western Canadian English:

hypóthesis	/hayp$\acute{ɔ}$θəsəs/	[hʌyp$\acute{ɔ}$θəsəs]
hypothétical	/haypəθ$\acute{e}$təkəl/	[hʌypəθ$\acute{e}$təkəl]

The rule for Canadian Raising in Western Canada is, therefore:

(1) Canadian Raising (Western Canada)

$$\begin{bmatrix} ay \\ aw \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} ʌy \\ ʌw \end{bmatrix} \quad / \underline{\quad} \begin{smallmatrix} C \\ [-voi] \end{smallmatrix}$$

Another dialect, which will be referred to here as the Windsor Dialect,[2] shows some differences in these environments affecting Canadian Raising. Words in which the diphthong /aw/ occurs follow the first rule (part 6) as does Western Canadian:

(2) Candian Raising (Windsor)

$$aw \longrightarrow ʌw \quad / \underline{\quad} \begin{smallmatrix} C \\ [-voi] \end{smallmatrix}$$

(=1b)

According to this rule, the diphthong /aw/ when followed by a voiceless consonant becomes [ʌw], and is blocked when followed by a voiced consonant. The Windsor Dialect follows this rule as the following list indicates for both environments:

Voiceless Consonant	--	Raising Obligatory
clout	/klawt/	[klʌwt]
clouted	/klawtəd/	[klʌwtəd]
shout	/šawt/	[šʌwt]
shouted	/šawtəd/	[šʌwtəd]
pouter	/pawtər/	[pʌwtər]*3
doubter	/dawtər/	[dʌwtər]

Voiced Consonant	--	Raising Blocked
cloud	/klawd/	[klawd]
clouded	/klawdəd/	[klawdəd]
shroud	/šrawd/	[šrawd]
clown	/klawn/	[klawn]
loud	/lawd/	[lawd]
louder	/lawdər/	[lawdər]

In the third environment, that in which the dipthong [aw] occurs at the end of a word, the informant for the Windsor Dialect has a difference from Western Canadian: for most such words, Canadian Raising applies optionally (in the Western Canadian dialect, Canadian Raising is blocked completely in this environment). Only for the word <u>now</u> is Canadian Raising blocked and this word is consistently pronounced [naw]:

Word Finally	--	Raising Optional
now	/naw/	[naw]
how	/haw/	[haw] or [hʌw]
cow	/kaw/	[kaw] or [kʌw]
powwow	/pawwaw/	[pawwaw] or [pʌwwʌw]
plough	/plaw/	[plaw] or [plʌw]

The environment for Canadian Raising as stated in (2) must therefore be modified as in (3). I use the double cross # to indicate word boundary.

(3) Canadian Raising (Windsor)

$$ \text{aw} \longrightarrow \text{ʌw} \quad / \begin{cases} \underline{\quad} [\text{-voi}]^{C} & \text{(a)} \\ \underline{\quad} \# & \text{(b)} \end{cases} \quad (= \text{rule (2) modified}) $$

The windsor Dialect differs noticeably from the Western Canadian in the environments where the diphthong /ay/ is raised to [ʌy]. The rule for Western Canada is:

(4) Canadian Raising (Western Canada)

$$ \text{ay} \longrightarrow \text{ʌy} \quad / \underline{\quad} [\text{-voi}]^{C} \qquad (=\text{1a}) $$

Although as would be predicted, the diphthong /ay/ is raised to [ʌy] in words such as <u>write</u> or <u>sight</u> in the Windsor Dialect, also included are words such as <u>ride</u> and <u>side</u>:

Voiceless Consonants

height	/hayt/	[hʌyt]	hide	/hayd/	[hʌyd]
write	/rayt/	[rʌyt]	ride	/rayd/	[rʌyd]
writer	/raytər/	[rʌytər]3a	rider	/raydər/	[rʌydər]
whiter	/waytər/	[wʌytər]	wider	/waydər/	[wʌydər]
sight	/sayt/	[sʌyt]	side	/sayd/	[sʌyd]
lighter	/laytər/	[lʌytər]	tiger	/taygər/	tʌygər]
pipe	/payp/	[pʌyp]	spider	/spaydər/	[spʌydər]

Thus, since the Windsor Dialect raises [ay] to [ʌy] whether followed by a voiceless or voiced consonant, the rule must be expressed:

(5) Canadian Raising (Windsor)

ay ⟶ ʌy /___[+ segment]

Like Western Canadian, the Windsor Dialect also blocks raising at the end of a word with the diphthong [ay]:

Raising Blocked

eye	/ay/	[ay]
my	/may/	[may]
high	/hay/	[hay]

Therefore the above rule is applicable for these three environments.

A fourth environment, the stress condition, is described by J. K. Chambers as affecting Canadian Raising. Raising "...is blocked if and only if the low tense segment has non-primary stress and is followed by a stressed syllable."

Chambers lists a few exceptions, such as vice-chancellor and high school which are raised. He says the former illustrates the fact that Canadian Raising operates within word boundaries, and the latter is inexplicable. Chambers goes on to state that as none of his informants raise the diphthong /aw/ to [ʌw] in a word such as cow poke, high school appears to be an exception. The informant for the Windsor Dialect pronounces cow poke as [kʌwpok], contrary to Chambers. The explanation could lie in the fact that he has optional raising in words like cow. He can also say [hʌwevər].

Aside from the above exception, the Windsor Dialect consistently follows Chambers' findings in this area:

Windsor Dialect

cite	/sayt/	[sʌyt]
citation	/sayteyšən/	[sayteyšən]
hypothesis	/haypóθəsəs/	[haypóθəsis]
hypothetical	/haypəθétəkəl/	[hʌypɔθétikəl]

To take this fourth environment into consideration, the rule must undergo a modification from version 5, for the Windsor dialect:

(6) Canadian Raising (Windsor)

ay ──→ ʌy / when followed by at least one segment. If there is a syllable following the syllable containing /ay/, then the former must be unstressed.   (= 5, modified)

Summary of Rules

Canadian Raising -- Western Canada

$$\begin{bmatrix} ay \\ aw \end{bmatrix} \longrightarrow \begin{bmatrix} \Lambda y \\ \Lambda w \end{bmatrix} / \underline{\quad} [-voi]^{C}$$

Canadian Raising -- Windsor, Ontario

ay ──→ ʌy / _____[+ segment]

Condition: if there is a syllable following the syllable containing /ay/, then the former must be unstressed.

$$aw \longrightarrow \Lambda w / \begin{Bmatrix} / \underline{\quad} [-voi]^{C} \\ / \underline{\quad} \# \end{Bmatrix}$$

FOOTNOTES

1. See article in "The Canadian Journal of Linguistics", Ed., E. N. Burstynsky; "Canadian raising", by J. K. Chambers, pp. 113-135; University of Toronto Press, 1973.

2. The informant for the Windsor Dialect is a twenty-eight year old male, born in Kingston and raised in Frontenac County and Hastings. He got his university education in Windsor where he lived for six years before moving to Calgary. It does not seem to be the case that this dialect is more common than the one reported by Chambers for the same geographical area.

3. Note the informant also raises /aw/ in powder to [ʌw], but this is an exception; perhaps he assumed the d to be a t when he was learning the dialect, as he does have T-Voicing.

3a. The words clouted, shouted, pouter, doubter, writer, whiter, and lighter include a t which is unaspirated and not fully voiced, closely resembling a d.

4. "Canadian Raising", J. K. Chambers, p. 132.