

## A COMPARISON OF NEW BRUNSWICK AND SASKATCHEWAN ENGLISH

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This paper deals with the phonological differences of three dialects within two provinces in Canada. One dialect recorded was that from a region in New Brunswick, while the other two dialects were from different areas in Saskatchewan. The two informants from Saskatchewan came from the central and southwest regions. The subjects were asked to read a list of words which contained all the vowel sounds. This was taped and later transcribed phonetically and can be found in the appendix.

Coupled with the above mentioned data, Table I in the appendix also contains Bloomfield's phonetic transcriptions of a Maritime and a Western Saskatchewan dialect.<sup>1</sup> This was for comparison. The validity of his transcriptions were also checked against our own data. A more detailed explanation of this table will be given later.

Another table in the appendix includes the differences and similarities between Bloomfield's data and our own. One interesting difference noted that has not been indicated in Bloomfield's article was the vowel length in the New Brunswick dialect. This will be discussed following the introduction.

The rest of this paper will encompass variation within Saskatchewan. Four major differences will be elaborated upon separately.

The first section will explain and give examples of the rule of medial T-devoicing in this dialect.

A second section will deal with the voicing alternation, [hw] versus [w] within Saskatchewan, in words such as what, whether, and which.

A third section will deal with Canadian Raising as described by Chambers.<sup>2</sup> The general Canadian Raising rule will be explained as well as the conditions which can be added in order to yield different English Canadian dialects. However, an extra condition will be mentioned and explained, yielding a distinct dialect not mentioned by Chambers.

The last variation dealt with is the devoicing of fricatives at the end of words recorded from data collected on Saskatchewan dialects.

### New Brunswick Lengthening

Vowel lengthening is not mentioned as a difference between the dialects of the Maritimes and Saskatchewan in Bloomfield's article. Although these specific examples were taken from a New Brunswick dialect, it probably occurs throughout the whole Maritime area.

A lengthening of the vowel occurs in a strong, stressed syllable. A strong syllable is one that has a tense vowel followed by any number of consonants or any vowel followed by two consonants.<sup>3</sup> For example, the lengthening occurs in the word romance (romæ:ns) but not in the word coffin (kɒfɪn) because there is no strong, stressed syllable in this word.

Examples of vowel lengthening that occur in New Brunswick and not in Saskatchewan are listed below.<sup>4</sup>

<u>Word</u>	<u>New Brunswick</u>	<u>Saskatchewan</u>
romance	[romæ:ns]	[romæns]
wives	[wáI:vz]	[wáIvz]
devise	[díváI:z]	[díváIz]
yoke	[jók]	[jók]
ladder	[læ:tə]	[lætə]
latin	[læ:tn]	[lætn]
choose	[čú:z]	[čúz]
feud	[fjú:d]	[fjúd]
gourd	[gó:rd]	[górd]
hew	[hjú:]	[hju]
advise	[ædváI':z]	[ædváIz]

### T-Voicing

A medial "t" in words such as bitter and butter can be optionally voiced by our informants from Saskatchewan. This rule does not apply in New Brunswick English.

t --> d medially

	<u>Saskatchewan</u>	<u>New Brunswick</u>
butter	(bʌtə) or (bʌdʌ)	(bʌtə)
bitter	(bItə) (bIdə)	(bItə)
litter	(lætə) or (lædə)	(lætə)

### Variation Within Saskatchewan: [w] versus [hw]

A variation found within Saskatchewan pertains to the voiced and voiceless phonetic representation of the wh sound. Initial consonants in such words as whether, what and why are sometimes pronounced phonetically as voiced, [w], or voiceless [hw]. This variation, however, seems to be optional initially, regardless of the environment which follows. In other words, people speaking in this dialect sometimes pronounce words spelled with wh as [w] or as [hw]. But, in other words, namely those spelled with w only, e.g. wear, weather, the only permitted pronunciation is with a voiced [w]; the voiceless counterpart [hw] is excluded here. In pairs of words such as weather; whether and wear; where at times the phonetic distinction is made while, at other times, no phonetic distinction is made between these pairs of words. Examples of this are given in chart below:

what	[wʌt]	or	[hwʌt]
whether	[wɛðə]	or	[hwɛðə]
wheel	[wɪl]	or	[hwɪl]
whip	[wɪp]	or	[hwɪp]
whim	[wɪm]	or	[hwɪm]
whisk	[wɪsk]	or	[hwɪsk]
whiff	[wɪf]	or	[hwɪf]
whack	[wæk]	or	[hwæk]
whale	[wel]	or	[hwel]
wear	[wɛr]		
weather	[wɛðə]		

### Canadian Raising

In Canadian English, the rule of Canadian Raising is present. This was reported by Chambers (1973).<sup>4</sup> The essence of this rule is this: a low back vowel [a] is raised to a mid vowel [ʌ] before a glide. Thus, if one applied CR to such words as twice, /twaɪs/, citation /saɪteɪʃən/ and cite /saɪt/, the low back vowel [a] would be converted to [ʌ] yielding [twʌys], [saɪteɪʃən] and [saɪt].

There are conditions, however, which are added to this general rule which result in dialect variations within Canada. For instance, there is a central Canadian condition which stipulates that CR would not apply to words whereby the next vowel is stressed.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the following consonant must be voiceless. An example of this can be found in a pair of words such as cite /saɪt/ and citation /saɪteɪʃən/. The second word, citation meets the requirements of the above mentioned condition, therefore blocking the rule for such a word in this dialect. However, the word cite would undergo Canadian Raising because the first vowel is not followed by a stressed vowel, thereby yielding [saɪt].

In another dialect, CR applies when the low back vowel [a] is followed by a glide and a voiceless consonant. That is, the condition on stress is absent. An example of this is found in words such as ride /raɪd/ and down /daʊn/ which contain a voiced consonant after the vowel and thus prevents CR from occurring. The phonetic form of these two words are as follows [raɪd], [daʊn]. However, CR would apply to such words as citation /saɪteɪʃən/ and tight /taɪt/ --> [tʌɪt] because this dialect has no condition on stress and the low back vowel [a] in both words is followed by a voiceless consonant. This dialect is the most common one in Western Canada. And for the purposes of this paper, could be called Western Canadian Dialect I.

Still another dialect in Canada lacks the condition on stress and, in addition, the condition on voicing of the following consonant is less restrictive. For instance, in words such as the following Canadian Raising is applied:

lout	/laʊt/	-->	[lʌʊt]
(noun) house	/haʊs/	-->	[hʌʊs]
clout	/klaʊt/	-->	[klʌʊt]
out	/aʊt/	-->	[ʌʊt]
about	/əbaʊt/	-->	[əbʌʊt]

However, interestingly enough, the subject who speaks this dialect also consistently applies CR before a [w] glide and a voiced consonant. Thus, the following words containing a low back vowel are converted to a mid vowel.

loud	/laʊd/	[lʌʊd]
(verb) house	/haʊz/	[hʌʊz]
cloud	/klaʊd/	[klʌʊd]
shroud	/sraʊd/	[ʃrʌʊd]
powder	/paʊd r/	[pʌʊdər]
louder	/laʊd r/	[lʌʊdər]
rouse	/rawz/	[rʌʊz]
hound	/haʊd/	[hʌʊd]
howl	/haʊl/	[hʌʊl]
found	/faʊnd/	[fʌʊnd]

But when the /aʊ/ is at the end of the word, CR is blocked. Examples:

how	/haU/	[haU]
now	/naU/	[naU]
wow	/waU/	[waU]
cow	/kaU/	[kaU]
brow	/braU/	[braU]

In this dialect, CR is also always applied before a [y] glide and a voiceless consonant. For instance, this subject raises a low back vowel [a] to a mid vowel [ʌ] consistently in the above mentioned environment. Thus, CR applies to these words:

write	/raIt/	[rʌIt]
rice	/raIs/	[rʌIs]
advice	/ədvaIs/	[ədʌvʌIs]
cite	/saIt/	[sʌIt]
citation	/saItéʃən/	[sʌItéIʃən]

However, Canadian Raising blocks before the glide [I] elsewhere. In other words, CR is not applied, before a voiced consonant or at the end of a word. Examples of this can be found in such words as tide, five, and tie.

tide	/taId/	[taId]
five	/faIv/	[faIv]
tie	/taI/	[taI]
ride	/raId/	[raId]
rider	/raIdər/	[raIdər]
advise	/ədaIz/	[ədaIz]
devise	/divaIz/	[divaIz]

For clarification purposes, the following chart may be useful. Canadian Raising in this dialect is:

	<u>obligatory</u>	<u>obligatory</u>	<u>blocked</u>
	loud	lout	now
	/laUd/	/laUt/	/naU/
CR	[lʌUd]	[lʌUt]	[naU]
	Environment: before	before a voice-	before a
	a voiced consonant	less consonant	[U] glide and at
	and a [U]	and a [U] glide	the end of the word
	glide		
	<u>obligatory</u>	<u>blocked</u>	<u>blocked</u>
	write	ride	tie
	/raIt/	/raId/	/taI/
CR	[rʌIt]	[raId]	[taI]
	Environment: before	before a voiced	before a [I] glide
	a voiceless con-	consonant and a	and at the end of a
	sonant and a [I]	[I] glide	word
	glide		

As we have seen so far, Canadian Raising is applied in this dialect before the [U] glide followed by at least one segment. The formal statement of this rule is as follows:

a U --> ʌU / \_\_\_\_ [+segment]

However, CR applies to the vowel before the glide [I] in this dialect only before a voiceless consonant. The formal statement of this rule is:

aI --> ʌI /\_\_\_(-voice)

For the purposes of this paper, this dialect will be called Western Canadian Dialect II.

### Devoicing of Final Fricatives

This section will deal with another aspect found in the Saskatchewan dialect. Words which end in phonemic voiced fricatives are virtually completely devoiced phonetically, but are, nevertheless, still distinct from their voiceless counterparts. The difference seems to be one of tenseness. The phonemically voiceless fricative is lax phonetically, while the phonemically voiced one is tense phonetically. This difference was noted when the informant verbally articulated the words while using the voicing test. This test consists of placing your fingers in your ears while the words are being pronounced. If a sound is voiced, then you will hear a buzzing sound. If it is voiceless, then the buzzing will be absent.

Nevertheless, a distinction between underlying voiced and voiceless fricatives is maintained, at least for /s/, /z/. An underlying /s/ is lengthened phonotocally in word final position: a /z/ is not (length will be represented by a colon). This rule, S-lengthening, evidently precedes the rule by which the fricatives are completely devoiced phonetically. In addition, vowel devoicing is preceded by vowel shortening. (This will be represented by the symbol ʌ). The vowel shortening rule stipulates that a vowel be made shorter before a voiceless consonant. Here is an example of a phonological derivation.

	advice	advise
	/advays/	/advayz/
Canadian Raising	ʌy	--
Vowel Shortening	ʌy	--
s lengthening	s:	--
Fricative devoicing	[adv ʌys:]	[advays]

The following chart indicates the difference in tenseness as mentioned above:

<u>Voiceless Lax</u>	<u>Voiceless Tense</u>
wife	wives
leaf	leave
advice	advise
rice	rise
cloth	clothe
bath	bathe
clash	
patch	

### APPENDIX

#### Explanation of Table I (following)

The first column (words 1 to 43 inclusive) indicates Bloomfield's representation of the pronunciation of a Maritime dialect (Halifax) and the final column is his representation of a Western Saskatchewan dialect.

The middle columns represent our data collected on dialects from Southern New Brunswick (Saint John), Southwest Saskatchewan and Western Saskatchewan.

Words 44 to 68 inclusive are of our own inclusion so columns one and four are blank.

An arrow indicates that the word is pronounced exactly the same as the representation given in the preceding column.

TABLE I

	M.W.B. Maritime (Halifax)	New Brunswick	S. W. Saskat- chewan	Central Saskat- chewan	M.W.B. Saskatchewan (Western)
1. aseptic	æ'septik	əsɛptik	--->	--->	ə'septik
2. aunt	ænt	ant	ænt	--->	--->
3. beauty	bjuti	--->	--->	--->	--->
4. boss	bɒs	bas	bɒs	--->	bɒs
5. brewed	brud brjud	brud	--->	--->	--->
6. camphor	kæmfə	kæmfə	--->	--->	kæmfə
7. caterpillar	kætəpɪlur	--->	kætəpɪlə	--->	kætəpɪlur
8. chocolate	tʃɒklət	tʃɒklət	--->	tʃakɛlət	tʃaklɛt
9. choose	tʃuz	tʃu:z	čuz	--->	tʃuz
10. coffin	kɒfən	kɒfɪn	kafɪn	--->	kafɪn
11. cushion	kuʃən kuʃʌn	kusən	--->	--->	kuʃɪn
12. doll	dɒl	dɒl	dal	--->	dɒl
13. fatality	fətəˈlɪti f t lɪti	fətəˈlɪti	--->	fətɪlɪti	fətəˈlɪti
14. food	fud	--->	--->	--->	--->
15. feud	fjud	fju:d	fjud	--->	--->
16. gourd	ɡɔrd	ɡɔ:rd	ɡɔrd	--->	ɡɔrd
17. grease	ɡrɪs ɡrɪz	--->	--->	--->	--->
18. greasy	ɡrɪsi ɡrɪzi	ɡrɪsi	--->	--->	--->
19. hew	ju hju	hju:	hju	--->	--->
20. hiccup	hɪkəp	hɪkʌp	--->	hɪkəp	--->
21. hoof	hʊf	--->	huf	--->	hʊf
22. horror	harər	harər	hɔrər	--->	hɔrə
23. house	hʌʊs hʌʊs	hʌʊs	h ʊs	--->	--->
24. latin	lætɪn	læ:tn	lætɪn	--->	lætɪn
25. march	mɑrtʃ	mɑrʃ	--->	--->	mɑrtʃ
26. miracle	mɛrəkɪ mɪrəkɪ	mɪrəkɪ	mɪrɪkɪ	mɪrəkɪ	--->
27. mock	mak	--->	--->	--->	--->
28. moth	məθ	--->	--->	--->	--->
29. nausea	nauziə	--->	nazia	--->	nasɪə
30. nominative	namɪnətɪv	namɪnətɪv	--->	namɪnətɪv	--->
31. of	ɒv, əv	ɒv	av	əv	--->
32. persist	pəˈsɪst	pəˈsɪst	--->	--->	pəˈsɪst
33. poor	--->	pɔr	--->	pʊr	pʊr

	M.W.B. Maritime (Halifax)	New Brunswick	S.W. Saskat- chewan	Central Saskat- chewan	M.W.B. Saskatchewan (Western)
34. romance	romæns	ro:mæns	romæns	---->	ramæns
35. sirup	sirɛp	sɛrɛp	sirɛp	---->	---->
36. swath	swθ swæθ	swaθ	---->	---->	---->
37. tune	tun	tun	---->	tyun	tjun, tun
38. waft	waft wæft	waft	---->	wæft	waft
39. wasp	wasp	---->	---->	---->	---->
40. what	wat	---->	hwat	wat	hwɔt
41. wife	wɪf	---->	wɪf	wɪf	---
42. wives	wɪvz	wɪ:vz	wɪvz	---->	---->
43. yoke	jok	---->	---->	---->	---->
44. louder		laude	laude	---->	
45. powder		paude	paude	---->	
46. bitter		bɪtə	---->	bɪde	
47. butter		bɪtə	bɪde	bɪde	
48. latter		lætə	---->	---->	
49. ladder		læ:də	læde	---->	
50. looter		lute	---->	---->	
51. vicarious		vaɪkəriəs	vɪkəriəs	vaɪkəriəs	
52. micron		maɪkrən	mɛɪkran	---->	
53. micro- scope		maɪkro- skop	---->	---->	
54. granery		grənɛi	grænɛi	grənɛi	
55. garage		gɛrɛɛj	gɛraj	---->	
56. squirrel		skɛrrɛl	---->	---->	
57. drought		draut	---->	---->	
58. creek		krik	---->	---->	
59. bitter		bɪt	bɪd	---->	
60. bidder		bɪde	bɪde	---->	
61. citation		saɪ:teɪən	saɪteɪən		
62. cite		saɪt	---->	---->	
63. hypothesis		haɪpəθɛsɪs	haɪpaθɛsɪs	---->	
64. devise		divaɪ:z	divaɪz	---->	
65. device		divaɪs	divaɪ:s	---->	
66. loud		laud	lawd	---->	
67. advice		ædvaɪs	---->	---->	
68. advise		ædvaɪ:z	---->	---->	

### Explanation of Table II in the Appendix

The main purpose in setting up this table was in order to clarify differences and similarities between Bloomfield's data and our own. In Bloomfield's article if a word was pronounced differently in the Maritimes as opposed to the Western Saskatchewan dialect, the number representing this word was placed on the left hand side of the page under differences. If, on the other hand, Bloomfield's data indicated that no difference existed between these two distinct dialects, then the numbers representing these words were placed on the left side of the page under similarities.

Our data in comparison to this is represented on the right hand side of the page. The same form as above mentioned was also used for listing our data. For instance, the first word number 1 (aseptic), according to our data was pronounced the same way in both dialects. On the other hand, Bloomfield recorded a difference in the pronunciation of this word.

### DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN BLOOMFIELD'S DATA AND OUR DATA

TABLE II

In Bloomfield's article words that are	In our data words that are		
<u>Different</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Different</u>	<u>Same</u>
1	2	2	1
4	3	4	3
5 (gives 2 variations for one dialect)	6		5, 6
8	7	7	
11 (gives 2 variations)	12	8 (variation within Sask.)	
	14	9 (vowel length)	11
	15	10	
16		12	14
17 (gives 2 variations)		15 (vowel length)	
18 (gives 2 variations)		16 (vowel length)	17
19 (gives 2 variations)			18
	20	19 (vowel length)	
22	21	20 (within Sask.)	
23 (gives 2 variations)	24	21, 22	
26 (gives 2 variations)	25	23	
	27	24 (vowel length)	25
29	28	26 (variations within Sask.)	27
30		28	28
31 (gives 2 variations)		30 (within Sask.)	
32	33?	31 (within Sask.)	
34	35	33 (within Sask.)	32
		34 (in vowel length)	



In Bloomfield's article  
words that are

In our data words that are

<u>Different</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Different</u>	<u>Same</u>
36 (gives 2 variations)		35	36
37		37 (within Sask.)	
38 (gives 2 variations)		38 (within Sask.)	
40	41	40 (within Sask.)	
	42	41 (within Sask.)	
	43	42 (in vowel length)	43
		44	
		45	
		46, 47	48
		49 (in vowel length)	50
		51 (in vowel length)	
		52	56
		54 (within Sask.)	57, 58, 59, 61
		55, 60, 62	67
		64 (in vowel length)	68
		65 (in vowel length)	
		66	

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bloomfield, Morton W., Canadian English and Its Relation to Eighteenth Century American Speech, Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. 47 (1948), pages 58-67.

<sup>2</sup>Chambers, Jack, 'Canadian Raising', The Canadian Journal of Linguistics XVIII (Fall, 1973), pages 113-135.

<sup>3</sup>Chomsky, Noam and Morris Halle, The Sound Pattern of English, Harper and Row, 1968.