UDC: 811.111'342.41

THE MONOPHTHONGS OF TRADITIONAL COCKNEY AND POPULAR LONDON SPEECH IN CONTEXT

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Ovaj rad ispituje monoftonge tradicionalnog koknija proizvedene u vezanom govoru tri starija muška ispitanika i upoređuje vrednosti F1 i F2 sa onima koje je za opšteprihvaćeni izgovor (eng. RP) izmerio Deterding, kao i sa vrednostima iz prethodnog eksperimenta sa istim tim ispitanicima u pojedinačnim izolovanim rečima (u kontekstu /h_d/).

Ključne reči: kokni, engleska dijalektologija, engleski monoftonzi, engleska sociolingvistika, popularni govor Londona

1. INTRODUCTION

In its strictest sense, "Cockney" refers to the basilectal extreme of the popular speech of London, used in an imprecise area north of the River Thames referred to as the East End, whose traditional core neighbourhood is the present-day borough of Tower Hamlets. However, most of the time, the term "Cockney" is used loosely to include any working-class London accents that deviate noticeably from the standard (RP or SSB, as it is variously called). Among these, the varieties that are closer to RP might be more accurately termed Popular London Speech.

In a previous experiment (Mott 2012), I examined the pronunciation of the (relatively) pure vowels of Cockney in citation form in the context /h_d/ and compared the results with those obtained for RP by Wells (1962) and Deterding (1997). Recordings were made of three men from London, aged 55, 63 and 67 at the time of recording, reading the vowels in the context /h_d/. Calculations of averages for the F1 and F2 of each of these vowels produced the following findings:

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Vowel	**height and frontness compared to RP**
FLEECE	lower, slightly fronter
KIT	similar in height, fronter
DRESS	higher, fronter
TRAP	higher, fronter
START	slightly higher, similar in frontness
LOT	very slightly lower, fronter
THOUGHT	slightly higher, similar in frontness
FOOT	similar in height, fronter
GOOSE	lower, fronter
STRUT	similar in height, fronter
NURSE	higher, fronter

If we compare these results with previous observations made in the literature on the vowels of Cockney, we can say the following:

Regarding the KIT vowel, it is generally assumed that it can be more central in Cockney than in RP, but it was actually found to be fronter. The PALM vowel was not found to be fully back and low, as it may be in some Cockney accents, but slightly higher and similar in frontness to RP. The STRUT vowel was similar in height to RP and not lower, despite my anticipating a much lower articulation, as predicted in the literature, by using the symbol [a]. The LOT vowel was not found to be higher than in RP, as is often claimed, but very slightly lower and fronter.

2. THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study is a continuation of an earlier inquiry into the frequencies of the first two formants of the Cockney (relatively) pure vowels in citation form, whose results are summarized above. This study concentrates on the frequencies of the same vowels as pronounced by the same participants, but in connected speech. For the purpose of the exercise, they were asked to read the passage "The Boy who Cried Wolf" (adapted version by Deterding [2006: 193]), whose orthographic version and approximate RP transcription are provided below (3.1 and 3.2), together with a transcription of the version provided by one of the three readers (3.3). The words underlined in the orthographic version were those chosen to form the basis of the analysis of the vowel qualities.

The passage "The Boy who Cried Wolf" was chosen as more appropriate than "The North Wind and the Sun" to measure the English vowels for the reasons expounded in Deterding 2006, the most important being the many lexical repetitions in "North Wind", and the fact that some of the sounds of English are consequently absent from it. Moreover, although all of the English monophthongs are represented, the NURSE vowel occurs only in the form *first*, and there are rather a lot of pre-vocalic approximants (*wind*, *were*, *which*, *was*, *when*, *warm*, *one*, *stronger*, *traveller*, *wrapped*, *around*) which will lower the F2. In contrast, the Wolf passage has at least three clear instances of each of the monophthong vowels without neighbouring approximants. For my own study, I have chosen three tokens of each vowel from those listed by Deterding (2006: 194).

3. THE RECORDINGS

The recordings, made on a Sony mini-disc recorder (MZ-R55) with a Sony electret condenser microphone (ECM717), were converted to wave files using Goldwave and transcriptions were produced. When it was necessary to check features such as aspiration, voice and glottalization, the relevant segments were examined in the programme PRAAT. To keep the transcriptions reasonably consistent, cases where laryngealization seemed to be present rather than complete glottal closure were all treated as cases of glottalization and the symbol for the glottal stop was used.

Nasalization of vowels is not indicated in the transcriptions. It is normal for vowels to be nasalized to a greater or lesser extent when followed by a nasal consonant, and this is particularly noticeable in Cockney and PLS. However, as it is a feature that is entirely predictable, it was considered unnecessary to record it in the phonetic notation.

3.1. *THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF*. ORTHOGRAPHIC VERSION

There was once a poor shepherd boy who used to watch his flocks in the fields next to a dark forest near the foot of a mountain. One hot afternoon, he thought up a good plan to get some company for himself and also have a little fun. Raising his fist in the air, he ran down to the village shouting 'Wolf, Wolf.' As soon as they heard him, the villagers all rushed from their homes, full of concern for his safety, and two of his cousins even stayed with him for a short while. This gave the boy so much pleasure that a few days later he tried exactly the same trick again, and once more he was successful. However, not long after, a wolf that had just escaped from the zoo was looking for a change from its usual diet of chicken and duck. So, overcoming its fear of being shot, it actually did come out from the forest and began to threaten the sheep. Racing down to the village, the boy of course cried out even louder than before. Unfortunately, as all the villagers were convinced that he was trying to fool them a third time, they told him, 'Go away and don't bother us again.' And so the wolf had a feast.

3.2. *THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF*. RP TRANSCRIPTION

ðə wəz̩ ˈw̩ʌns ə ˈpʰʊə ˈʃepʰəd̩ b̩ɔɪ | huː ˈjuːstə ˈwɒtʃ ɪz ˈflɒks ɪn ðə ˈfiːldz̩ | ˈneks tʰu ə ˈdɑːk ˈfɒrɪst | nɪə ðə ˈfʊtʰ əv ə ˈmaʊntʰɪn || ˈwʌn ˈhɒtʰ ɑːftʰəˈnuːn | hi ˈθɔːtʰ ʌpʰ ə ˈgʊd̩ ˈpl̩æn | tʰə ˈgeʔ sm̩ ˈkʰʌmpʰəni fər ɪmself | ən ˈɔːlsəʊ ˈhæv ə ˈlɪtl̩ ˈfʌn || ˈreɪzɪŋ ɪz̩ ˈfɪst ɪn ðɪ ˈeə | hi ˈræn daʊn tʰə ðə ˈvɪlɪdʒ̬ ˈʃaʊtʰɪŋ | ˈwʊlf | ˈwʊlf || əz̩ ˈsuːn əz̩ ð̩eɪ ˈhɜːd ɪm | ðə ˈvɪlɪdʒ̬əz ˈɔːl ˈrʌʃt frm̩ ðeə ˈhəʊmz̩ | ˈfʊl əv̩ kʰn̩ˈsɜːn fə hɪz̩ ˈseɪftʰi | ən ˈtʰuː əv ɪz̩ ˈkʰʌzn̩z ˈiːvn̩ ˈsteɪd wɪð ɪm fˀ̩ə ˈʃɔːʔ ˈwaɪl || ˈðɪs ˈg̩eɪv̩ ð̩ə bɔɪ ˈsəʊ mʌtʃ ˈpl̩eʒ̬ə | ðətʰ ə ˈfˀ̩uː deɪz ˈleɪtʰə | hi ˈtr̩aɪd ɪgˈzækl̩i ðə ˈseɪm trɪkʰ əˈgen | ən ˈwʌns ˈmɔː hi wəz̩ səkˈsesfl || hauˈevə | ˈnɒʔ lɒŋ ˈɑːftʰə | ə ˈwʊlf ð̩ətʰ əd̩ ˈd̩ʒʌst ɪˈskeɪpt frm̩ ðə ˈzuː | wəz ˈlʊkɪŋ fər ə ˈtʃeɪnd̩ʒ̬ frm̩ ɪts ˈjuːʒ̬juəl daɪətʰ | əv ˈtʃɪkn̩ ən ˈdʌkʰ || ˈsəʊ əʊvəˈkʰʌmɪŋ ɪts ˈfɪər əv ˈbiːɪŋ ˈʃɒtʰ | ɪt ˈæktʃuəli ˈdɪd̩ kʌm ˈauʔ frm̩ ðə ˈfɒrɪst | ən bɪˈgæn tʰə ˈθreʔn̩ ðə ˈʃiːpʰ || ˈreɪsɪŋ ˈdaʊn tʰə ðə ˈvɪlɪdʒ̬ | ð̩ə ˈbɔɪ əv̩ ˈkʰɔːs | kr̩aɪd ˈaʊtʰ iːvn̩ ˈlaʊdə ðn̩ bɪˈfɔː || ʌnˈfɔːtʃənətl̩i | ˈæz ɔːl ðə ˈvɪlɪdʒ̬əz̩

ˌwə kʰənˈvɪnst ðˌətʰ i wəzˌ ˈtˌɾaɪɪŋ tə ˈfuːl ðm̩ ə ˈθɜːdˌ tʰaɪm | ðeɪ ˈtʰəʊld ɪm | ˈɡˌəʊ əˈweɪ | ən ˈdəʊntʰ ˈbˌɒðər əs əˈgen || ən ˈsəʊ ðə ˈwʊlf hæd ə ˈfiːst

3.3. *THE BOY WHO CRIED WOLF*. TRANSCRIPTION OF MALE COCKNEY SPEAKER (TS, AGED 63)

ðɛə wəzˌ ˈwanʔs ə ˈpʰɔə ˈʃɛpəb bˌɔɪ | ˈhjyːstə ˈwɒtʃ ɪzˌ ˈflˌɒks ɪn̪ n̪ə ˈfɪɤdzˌ | ˈnɛks tʊ ə ˈdɑːʔ ˈfɒrɪst | niə ɾə ˈfʊʔ əv ə ˈmæ̃əʔɪn || ˈwan ɒʔ ɑːftʰəˈnʊʉn | hɪi ˈfoːʔ aʔp ə ˈɡˌʊbˌ ˈplæn | tə ˈɡɛʔ sm̩ ˈkʰamʔni fʊ ɪmsɛɤf | ən ˈɔːsw æv ə ˈlɪʔɤ ˈfan || ˈrʌɪzɪn ɪzˌ ˈfɪst ɪn̪ n̪ɪi ˈɛə | hɪi ˈræn dæːn tʰə ðə ˈvɪlɪʒ ˈʃæəʔɪn | ˈwoːf | ˈwoːf || ə̯ˌzˌ ˈsʊʉn əz ðʌɪ ˈɜːd ɪm | ðə ˈvɪlɪʒəz ˈɔː ˈʊʌʃ frm̩ ðɛər ˈʌʊmzˌ | ˈfʊl əv kn̩ˈsɜːn fər ɪzˌ ˈsʌɪftɪi | æn ˈtʰʊʉ əv ɪzˌ ˈkʰazn̩zˌ | ˈɪivn̩ ˈstʌɪd wɪv ɪm | fɾ̩ ə ˈʃɔːʔ ˈwɑo || ˈðɪs ˈɡʌɪv ðə bɔɪ ˈsʌʊ matʃ ˈplɛʒə | ðəʔ ə ˈfjʊʉ dʌɪzˌ ˈlʌɪʔər ɪi ˈtˌɾɑɪdˌ ɪgˈzækl̩i ðə ˈsɛɪm tɾˌɪʔ əˈɡɛn | ən ˈwʌns ˈmɔər ɪi wəzˌ sə̯kˈsɛsfo || æʊˈʷɛvə | ˈnɒʔ lɒŋ ˈɑːftʰə | ə ˈwoːf əʔ əd ˈdˌʒʌst əˈskʌɪp frm nə ˈzʊʉ | wəzˌ ˈlˌʊkɪn fɾ̩ ə ˈtʃʌɪnʒ frm̩ ɪʔs | ˈjʊʉʒɤ ˈdɑɪəʔ əˌ ˈtʃɪkn̩ ən ˈdak || ˈsʌʊ | ˈʌʊvəkʰamɪn ɪʔs ˈfɪəʊ ə ˈbɪin ˈʃɒʔ | ɪt̬ ˈæʔʃˌlɪi ˈdɪdˌ kʰam ˈæəʔ ə fɾ̩m̩ ˈdˌə ˈfɒrəst | m̩ bəˈɡæn ʔə ˈfrɛʔn̪ n̪ə ˈʃɪiʔ || ˈrɛɪsɪn ˈdæːn ʔə ˈvɪlɪdˌʒ | ðə ˈbɔɪ əˌ ˈkʰɔːs ˈkɾˌɑɪd æəʔ | ˈiːvn̩ ˈlæədə ðm̩ bɪˈfɔə || ʌnˈfɔːʔtʃnətlɪi | ˈɔː ðə ˈvɪlɪdˌʒəzˌ | kənˈˌvɪnsː ˈɡæʔ ɪi wəzˌ ˈtˌɾɑɪɪn tə ˈfoː ðɛm ə ˈθɜːdˌ tʰɑɪm | ðeɪ ˈtʰʌʊd ɪm | ˈɡʌʊ əˈwʌɪ | ən ˈdˌʌ̃ʔ ˈbɒvər əs əˈgɛn || ən ˈsʌʊ ðə ˈwoːf ˈæd ə ˈfɪist

4. RESULTS

The study outlined in this paper produced the results recorded in tabular form below.

Vowel	Word in context	Steve Wood age 55, Deptford (SE8)		Tony Corsini age 67, Paddington (W2)		Tony Saward age 63, Barnes (SW13)		Averages per word for the three speakers		Global averages	
		F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2	F1	F2
1. [ɪi]	sheep	419	2020	423	1865	483	1707	441	1864	383	2049
	even	410	2243	279	2347	334	2170	341	2253		
	feast	382	1941	325	2157	402	1998	369	2032		
2. [ɪ]	fist	487	1980	351	1991	412	1617	416	1862	398	1904
	This	412	2002	327	1892	444	1438	394	1777		
	chicken	402	2092	369	2015	382	2118	384	2075		
3. [ɛ]	shepherd	539	1722	465	1646	490	1691	498	1686	495	1717
	get	541	1983	466	1928	457	1574	488	1828		
	success -ful	519	1691	505	1653	500	1568	500	1637		
4. [æ]	exactly	709	1791	810	1708	593	1607	704	1702	622	1598
	began	576	2021	468	1597	563	1195	535	1604		
	had	644	1679	670	1560	569	1228	627	1489		
5. [ɑː]	dark	684	1157	576	1087	591	968	617	1070	621	1423
	after -noon	602	1061	584	1085	609	1008	598	1051		
	after	701	1233	599	1000	648	1007	649	1080		
6. [ɒ]	flocks	571	1037	553	920	555	993	559	983	569	1013
	hot	645	975	477	839	611	1135	577	983		
	bother	596	956	643	1305	480	961	573	1074		
7. [oː]	thought	470	748	435	1081	432	782	445	870	448	769
	course	580	625	373	695	459	858	470	726		
	Unfortun -ately	428	663	362	717	504	758	431	712		
8. [ʊ]	foot	389	1170	432	1021	455	1095	425	1095	409	1184
	good	432	1061	331	1096	395	1282	386	1146		
	looking	460	1308	359	1334	437	1297	418	1313		
9. [ʊʉ]	soon	378	1613	308	1591	468	1655	384	1619	400	1529
	two	412	1319	334	1309	423	1453	389	1360		
	zoo	464	1562	359	1555	463	1714	428	1610		
10. [a]	cousins	644	1272	687	1414	600	981	643	1222	649	1265
	once	628	1226	553	1173	605	1140	595	1179		
	duck	716	1386	729	1471	683	1327	709	1394		
11. [ɜː]	heard	545	1350	510	1616	480	1032	511	1332	499	1349
	concern	540	1478	468	1374	453	1152	487	1334		
	third	534	1343	484	1436	485	1367	501	1382		

Fig. 1. Cockney vowel frequencies based on three male speakers and three words per vowel

Vowels of Cockney and RP	Averages for Cockney Vs in citation form		Figures from Cruttenden (Gimson) for RP Vs in citation form		Observations on Cockney Vs in citation form as compared to RP Vs in citation form	Averages for Cockney Vs in connected speech		Figures from Cruttenden (Gimson) for RP Vs in connected speech		Observations on Cockney Vs in connected speech as compared to RP Vs in connected speech
	F1	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**		**F1**	**F2**	**F1**	**F2**	
/iː/	311	2389	275	2221	lower, slightly fronter	383	2049	280	2249	lower and backer
/ɪ/	369	2221	382	1958	similar in height, fronter	398	1904	367	1757	slightly lower, fronter
/e/	499	2048	560	1797	higher, fronter	495	1717	494	1650	similar in height, slightly fronter
/æ/	679	1825	732	1527	higher, fronter	622	1598	690	1550	slightly higher and slightly fronter
/ɑː/	650	1075	687	1077	slightly higher, similar in frontness	621	1423	646	1155	slightly higher, fronter
/ɒ/	602	934	593	866	very slightly lower, fronter	569	1013	646	1047	higher, slightly backer
/ɔː/	437	650	453	642	slightly higher, similar in frontness	448	769	415	828	slightly lower, backer
/ʊ/	391	1073	414	1050	similar in height, fronter	409	1184	379	1173	slightly lower, very slightly fronter
/uː/	387	1438	302	1131	lower, fronter	400	1529	316	1191	lower and fronter
/ʌ/	709	1373	695	1224	similar in height, fronter	649	1265	644	1259	similar in height and frontness
/ɜː/	499	1452	513	1377	higher, fronter	499	1349	478	1436	slightly lower, backer

Fig. 2. Cockney vowel formant frequency averages (stressed vowels) compared to formant frequencies for RP (relatively) pure vowels (in citation form and connected speech) given in Cruttenden 2008 (Gimson 7th ed.), pp. 99-100, for male speakers in all cases. The figures given in Cruttenden (Gimson) 2008 are taken from Deterding 1997. No figures are given for /ə/, whose quality varies according to the phonetic environment, and whose average values may be taken to be equivalent to those for /ɜ:/.

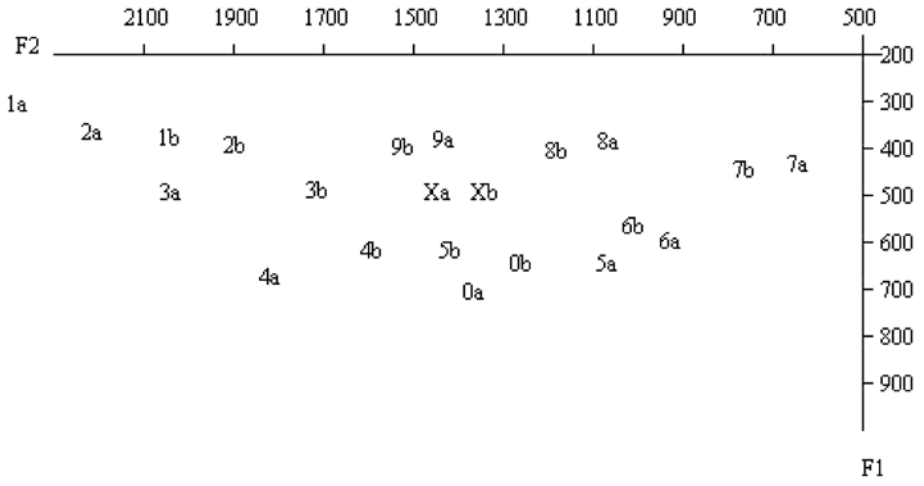

Fig. 3. Cockney vowel formant chart: stressed vowels in citation form (1a, 2a, etc.) and connected speech (1b, 2b, etc.)
1 = FLEECE 2 = KIT 3 = DRESS 4 = TRAP 5 = START 6 = LOT
7 = THOUGHT 8 = FOOT 9 = GOOSE 0 = STRUT X = NURSE

5. CONCLUSION

From fig. 2 we can see that the DRESS and STRUT vowels are very similar in Cockney and RP in connected speech, while the FLEECE and KIT vowels are slightly lower in Cockney. The open back vowels (START and LOT) are slightly higher than in RP, while the mid-high and close back vowels (THOUGHT, FOOT and GOOSE) are slightly lower. All this seems to point to greater centralization in Cockney than in RP, even though the frontness-backness variable shows some variation, with the FOOT and GOOSE vowels both showing a strong tendency to front, like their RP counterparts.

Fig. 3 shows a consistent tendency for vowels in connected speech to be less peripheral than in citation form, as is to be expected.

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SUMMARY

THE MONOPHTHONGS OF TRADITIONAL COCKNEY AND POPULAR LONDON SPEECH IN CONTEXT

The paper examines the pure vowels of Traditional Cockney as pronounced in connected speech by three elderly male speakers and compares the F1 and F2 values with those obtained for RP by Deterding, and those from a previous experiment with the same speakers for the vowels in citation form (in the context /h_d/).

KEYWORDS: Cockney, English dialectology, English pure vowels, English sociolinguistics, Popular London speech.

(Original scientific paper received 03.09.2011;
revised 10.10.2011;
accepted 17.10.2011)