

Homework week 3

Recap: *Dialect and Accent*

Course: *Introduction to Linguistics* – Instructor: Alexander Rauhut
Due date: 20.11.2020

1. Varieties we Speak

Do you use different varieties of your native language? In which situations? Are they different accents, dialects or even languages?

Answer. (personal answer)

2. Language vs Dialect

(a) Why do some consider Swiss German a separate language from (standard) German, but not Bavarian German?

(b) Do you know English varieties with questionable language status?

Answer.

a) Swiss German is associated with the national state of Switzerland, while Bavaria is part of Germany. People are more frequently exposed to varieties of Bavarian, thus more used to it. Therefore, **intelligibility** is higher. Many famous Bavarians keep their **accent** in public, but otherwise use rather standard grammar and vocabulary. People are usually unaware of stronger dialectal variants.

b) Many International Englishes are so different that they could be considered separate languages. Among those are Pidgins and Creoles, e.g. Jamaican Creole. Mutual intelligibility can be very low. Very often those varieties are not recognized and falsely described as “broken English”.

Another common misconception revolves around Scottish English, Scots and Scottish Gaelic. Scots is a decendent of Middle English and developed mostly in parallel as separate language, while Scottish English is Modern English as a Scottish Dialect. Lastly Scottish Gaelic is a Celtic language that is not related at all.

3. Levels of Linguistic Analysis

(a) On what levels can we analyse language?

(b) On which levels do dialects differ from each other?

(c) On which levels do accents differ from each other?

Answer.

- a) The traditional levels of linguistic analysis are **Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics**
- b) On all levels.
- c) Only on the levels of phonetics and phonology, i.e. in their pronunciation.

4. Vowels in New Zealand English

Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Po9Z5yr9aU4>

The 2 people on the left speak a variant of New Zealand English and the one on the right speaks American English. The misunderstanding is based on differences in the pronunciation of vowels.

Provide an American style transcription for the words below. How do the highlighted vowels differ in the accent of the guys from New Zealand? Try to use phonetic terminology.

- (a) de**ad**
- (b) ve**st**
- (c) ma**p**
- (d) off**ice**

Answer.

- (a) BE/AE: [ded] — NzE: [dɪd]
- (b) BE/AE: [vest] — NzE: [vɪst]
- (c) BE/AE: [mæp] — NzE: [mep]
- (d) BE/AE: [pɪs] / [ɑfɪs] — NzE: [pʰəs]

The front vowels are all raised, i.e. they are higher/more close than in AE or BE. The highest front vowel /i/ is centralized.