

BBN–ANG–242 Phonology

3. The distribution of /r/; long vowels in SSBE

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The distribution of /r/

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in **General American English**?*

Our friend Albert hardly ever remembered the rules of the game, but he never ever lost a round.

Now that he's started to memorize them, he loses more often.

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in General American English?*

Our **r** friend Albert **r**t hard**r**ly ever **r** rememb**r**ed the **r**ules of the game, but he never **r** ever **r** lost a **r**ound.

Now that he's start**r**ed to memor**r**ize them, he loses more **r**e often.

In GenAm all orthographic *r*'s are pronounced. Such accents are referred to as **rhotic**.

The distribution of /r/

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In GenAm all orthographic *r*'s are pronounced. Such accents are referred to as **rhotic**.

SSBE is a **non-rhotic accent**, i.e. orthographic *r*'s are not pronounced in certain environments.

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in **Standard Southern British English**?*

Our friend Albert hardly ever remembered the rules of the game, but he never ever lost a round.

Now that he's started to memorize them, he loses more often.

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in Standard Southern British English?*

Our friend Albert hardly ever remembered the rules of the game, but he never ever lost a round.

Now that he's started to memorize them, he loses more often.

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in Standard Southern British English?*

—ll

ever

our

—(#)C

Albert

hardly

started

our friend

—(#)V

rules

rounds

memorize

more often

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in Standard Southern British English?*

R-dropping: an orthographic *r* is not pronounced unless it is in prevocalic position, i.e. followed by a vowel.

—||

ever~~r~~

ou~~r~~

—(#)C

Albe~~r~~t

ha~~r~~dly

sta~~r~~ted

ou~~r~~ friend

—(#)V

~~r~~ules

~~r~~ounds

memor~~r~~ize

more~~r~~ often

The distribution of /r/

*Which of the following r's are pronounced
in Standard Southern British English?*

R-dropping: an orthographic *r* is not pronounced unless it is in prevocalic position, i.e. followed by a vowel.

It is a **post-lexical** rule, i.e. it applies across word boundaries.

—||

ever~~r~~

ou~~r~~

—(#)C

Albert~~r~~

hard~~r~~ly

start~~r~~ed

ou~~r~~ friend

—(#)V

~~r~~ules

~~r~~ounds

memor~~r~~ize

more~~r~~ often

The distribution of /r/

$$r \rightarrow \emptyset / _ \{ (\#)C \}$$

The distribution of /r/ Linking-R

So, an orthographic *r* is pronounced if it is in prevocalic position:

rule

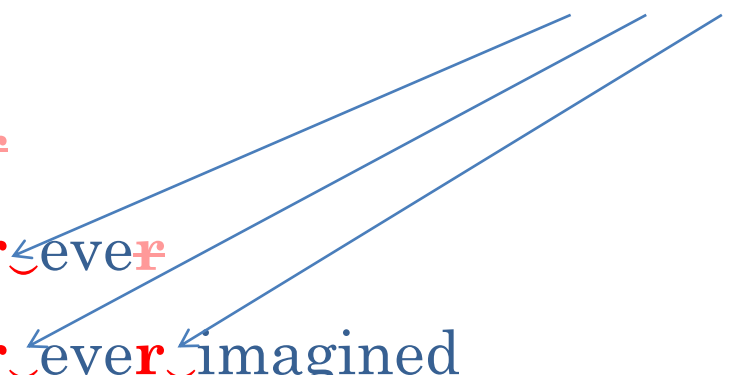
friend

never**r**

never**r**ever**r**

never**r**ever**r**imagined

Linking-R: a word-final *r* that is pronounced when the immediately following word begins with a vowel.



Dictionaries often use the following methods to indicate this potential /r/: e.g. *more* /**mo:***/ = /**mo:r**/ = /**mo:(r)**/

The distribution of /r/ Intrusive-R

Intrusive-R:

- A /r/ inserted after a word ending in an R-vowel (mostly /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ and /ə/) in case the next word begins with a vowel even though there is no *r* there in spelling.
- It is phonetically the same as linking-R.

The distribution of /r/ Intrusive-R

Linking-R: car /kɑː/ car was /kɑː wəz/ car is /kɑːr_ɪz/
Intrusive-R: spa /spɑː/ spa was /spɑː wəz/ spa is /spɑː(r)_ɪz/

other examples:

/-ɑː/ (spelled -a, -ah): Shah_/_r/_ of Iran, schwa_/_r/_ insertion,
grandpa_/_r/_ and grandma

/-oː/ (spelled -aw): law_/_r/_ and order, saw_/_r/_ a car; draw_/_r/_ing

/-ə/ (spelled -a): visa_/_r/_ application, vanilla_/_r/_ ice-cream,
panda_/_r/_ is, America_/_r/_ and China_/_r/_ are,
idea_/_r/_ of it

Practice

*Pronounce the following words and phrases
in Standard Southern British English.*

earlier

rarely

hair

car

cars

car and bike

hear

hearing

hear it

never

never ever

hear our words

saw a bar

for her hair

Robert heard her

a schwa isn't hard to say

murmur

Vienna in winter

furthermore

wherever

wherever it is

Practice

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murmur

Vienna in winter

furthermore

wherever

wherever it is

Long vowels
in Standard Southern British English

The short vowels of Standard Southern British English

Gimsonian (traditional)	CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
ɪ	ɪ	KIT
e	ɛ	DRESS
æ	ɑ	TRAP
ʌ	ʌ	STRUT
ɒ	ɔ	LOT/CLOTH
ʊ	ʊ	FOOT

The long vowels of Standard Southern British English

Gimsonian (traditional)	CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
ɪə	ɪ:	NEAR
eə	ɛ:	SQUARE
ɑ:	ɑ:	START/PALM/BATH
ɜ:	ə:	NURSE
ɔ:	o:	NORTH/THOUGHT/FORCE
ʊə		CURE

Practice

Transcribe the following English words containing long vowels.

his, hears

appearing

head, haired

nowhere

spot, sport

airplane

match, March

emergency

murder

birthday

personal

passport

The **long vowels**
of Standard Southern British English
Origin 1

GenAm		SSBE	
car	/kɑr/	car	/kɑː/
card	/kɑrd/	card	/kɑːd/
for	/fɔr/	for	/fɔː/
force	/fɔrs/	force	/fɔːs/
fir	/fɛr/	fir	/fɛː/
first	/fɛrst/	first	/fɛːst/

The long vowels of Standard Southern British English

Origin 1

ar →
er →
or →

CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
ɪ:	NEAR
ɛ:	SQUARE
ɑ:	START/PALM/BATH
ə:	NURSE
o:	NORTH/THOUGHT/FORCE
	CURE

R-dropping & compensatory lengthening

The long vowels of Standard Southern British English

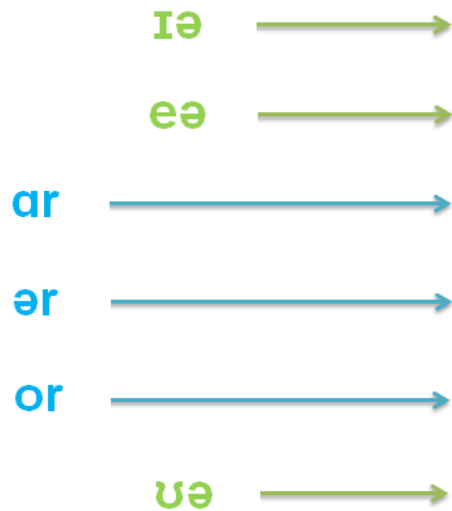
Origin 2

Gimsonian (traditional)		CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
ɪə	→	ɪ:	NEAR
eə	→	ɛ:	SQUARE
ɑ:		ɑ:	START/PALM/BATH
ɜ:		ə:	NURSE
ɔ:		o:	NORTH/THOUGHT/FORCE
ʊə	→		CURE

smoothing

The long vowels of Standard Southern British English

Their origin



CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
I:	NEAR
ε:	SQUARE
a:	START/PALM/BATH
ə:	NURSE
o:	NORTH/THOUGHT/FORCE
	CURE

R-dropping & compensatory lengthening
smoothing

Further cases of smoothing...



Tower of London
/táwə əv lándən/

/tá:r əv lándən/

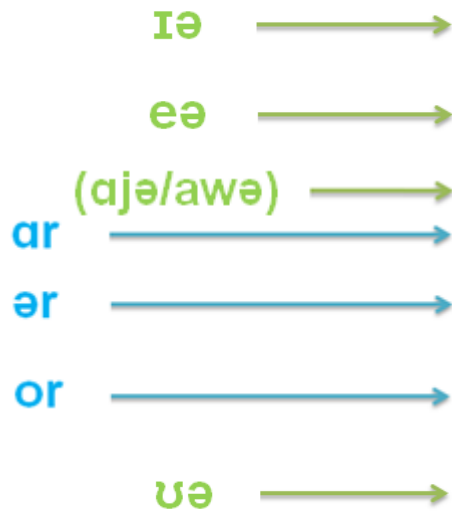


tyre of London
/tájə əv lándən/

For further examples of smoothing in SSBE, see the optional home assignment of lesson 2.

The long vowels of Standard Southern British English

Their origin



CUBE (updated)	Standard Lexical Set
ɪ:	NEAR
ɛ:	SQUARE
ɑ:	START/PALM/BATH
ə:	NURSE
o:	NORTH/THOUGHT/FORCE
	CURE

R-dropping & compensatory lengthening
smoothing

Terms to check

rhotic accent (*rotikus / rotacizáló / r-ejtő akcentus*)

vs. **non-rhotic accent** (*nem rotikus / r-elhagyó akcentus*)

R-dropping (*r-elhagyás*)

Linking-R (*kötő r*)

vs. **Intrusive-R** (*intrúzió / betoldott r*)

compensatory lengthening (*pótlónyúlás*)

smoothing (*simulás*)

Recommended reading

- **The distribution of r**
(<http://seas3.elte.hu/phono/notes/r.html>)
- **The vowels of English: Long vowels**
(<http://seas3.elte.hu/phono/notes/141-V-system.html>)