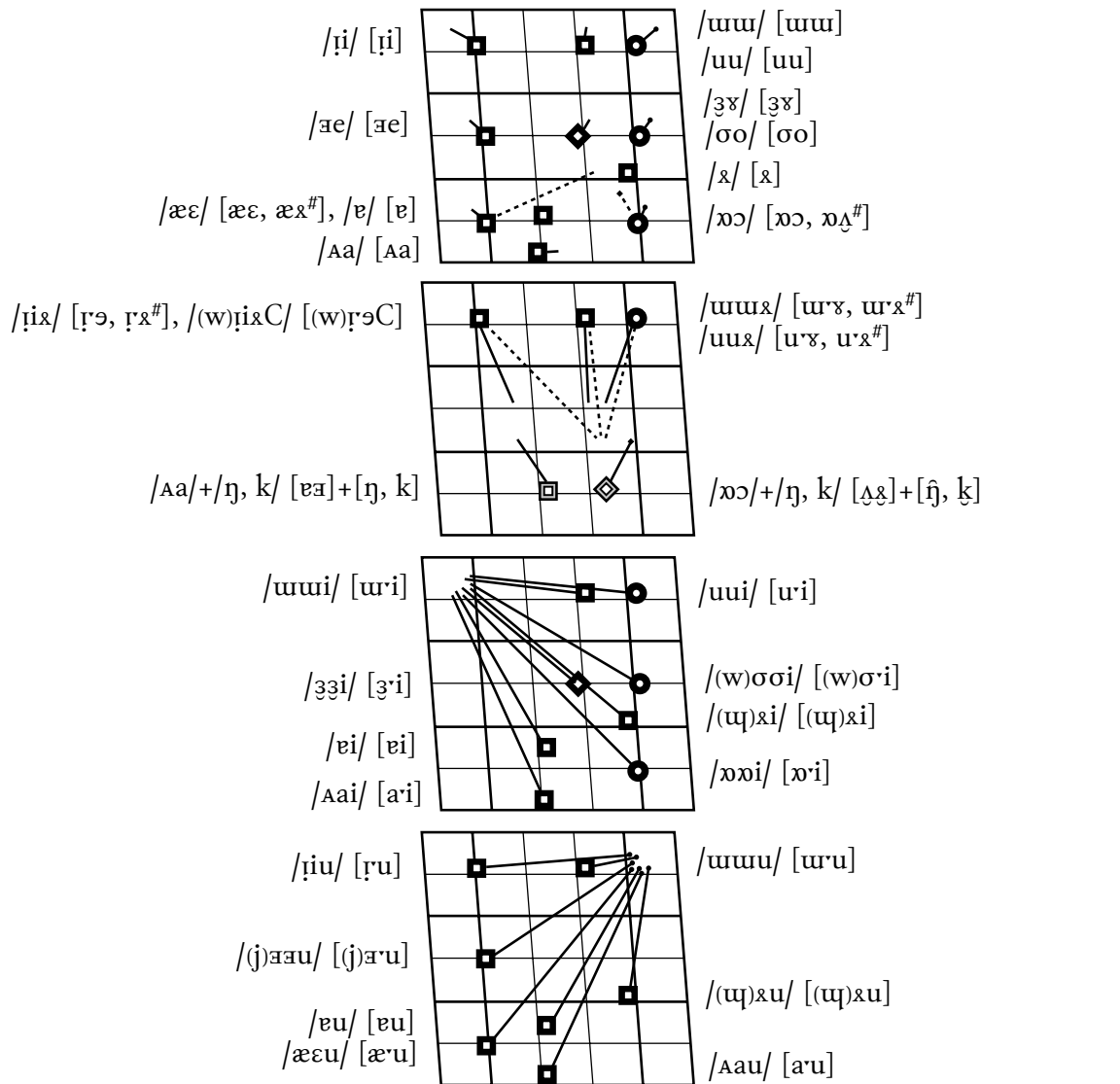


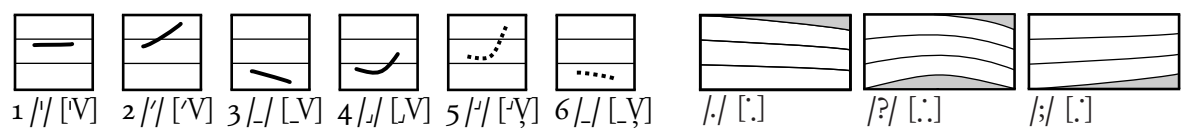
Vietnamese Pronunciation © 2012 Luciano Canepari

19.43. *Vietnamese* (Austro-Asiatic) has 11 *V* and 3 centering/opening *VV* (official diphthongs, given in the first two vocograms). In addition, we find other juxtapositions: 15 more diphthongs, shown in the third and fourth vocograms).

Two of the *V* are short, /e, ə/ [e, ə], which differ only in their timbres, while the others are half-long, [VV] (narrow diphthongs), and form three series of three elements: /i, e, ə/ [i, e, ə], /u, o, ɔ/ [u, o, ɔ].



m [m] n [n] ɲ [ɲ] p b t th d f v s z ɸ ʒ ɣ ʒ j [ɟ] ɰ w h



Final /æ, ɒ/ have peculiar taxophones, [æ̂̂#, ɒ̂̂#]; likewise, /a, ɒ/ + /ŋ, k/ are realized as [ɛ̂̂, ʌ̂̂], which are given in the second vocogram together with the three phonemic diphthongs and their final taxophones, /iɜ/ [î̂, î̂#], /uɜ/ [û̂, û̂#], /uɜ/ [û̂, û̂#].

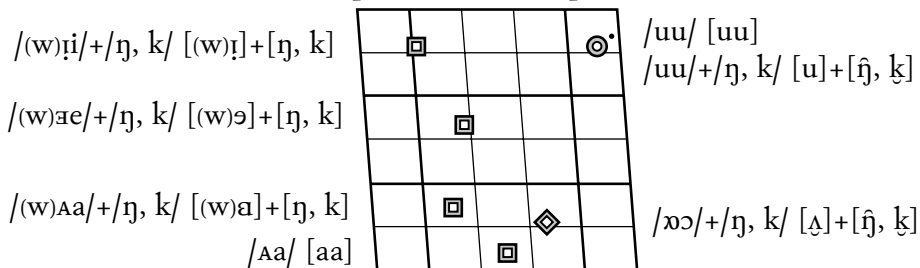
It is incredible that the recent illustration of Vietnamese (*JIPA* 2011) only gives 9 vowel qualities, [i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u] – and six of them out of nine in a perfect ‘cardinal’ position! Indeed, it would be much easier to hit the jackpot than to find such a coincidence, in real languages.

Thus, the reader is invited to carefully check our vocograms (also for the 3 centering diphthongs, simply shown there as [iə, uə, uə], which, although combined with the quadrilateral shown, is just half-truth).

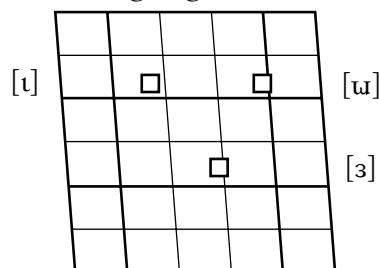
The third and fourth vocograms of ours also show the four sequences [jɛ̂̂u, ɥ̂̂xi, ɥ̂̂xu, wɔ̂̂i] (which are given as triphthongs in that article). Initial V are [ʔV].

After /u, o, ɒ/, /ŋ, k/ are realized with lip rounding, [ŋ̂̂, k̂̂]; final /p, t, k, t̂̂/ are [C]; /ŋ/ occurs even initially; /ɲ/ occurs only initially (#nh – but nh# stands for /ŋ/); //b, d// are injective, [b̂̂, d̂̂] (but variably so, especially in the mediatic accent, since [b, d] are sufficient, because not distinctive). On the contrary, /t, th/ are distinctive. The taxophones [p̂̂#] (only final) and [#b̂̂] are not to be considered as belonging to the same phoneme //b̂̂/. In Hanoi /t̂̂, ŝ̂/ become /t̂̂, ŝ̂/, as /ẑ̂, ʒ̂̂/ become /ẑ̂/.

Frequent variants in protunes



Reductions occurring in grammeme reduced forms

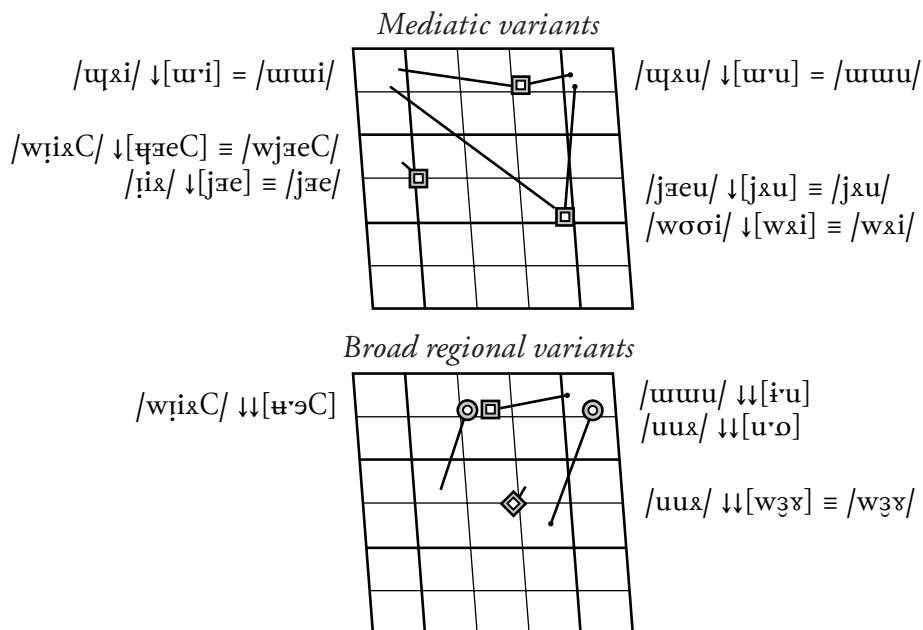


The fifth vocogram shows 7 possible partial reductions of the syllabic nucleus, that may occur in weaker positions in the sentence, as in protunes.

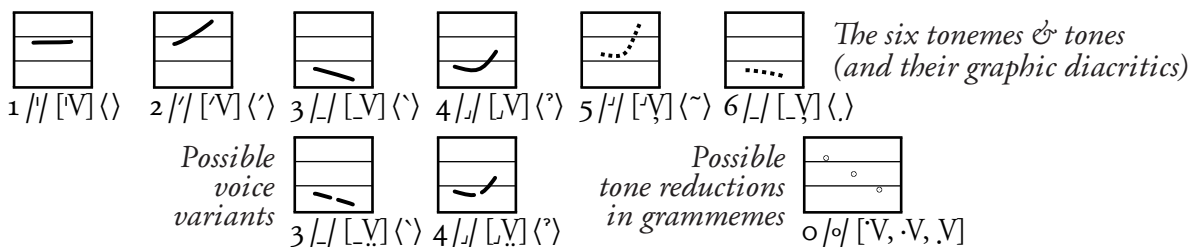
The syllabic nucleus of the reduced forms of certain grammemes can become [ɪ, ɜ, ɯ] (as shown in the sixth vocogram) or [ɱ, ɲ, ɲ̂, ɲ̂], with or without a C in front of them. For instance: *môt* [ɱ, ɱɪ; ɱmɔ̂̂t] ‘a(n)’, *qua* [wɜ, kwɜ; kwAA] ‘across’, *trong* [ɲ̂, t̂̂ɲ̂; t̂̂ɲ̂̂̂̂] ‘at’, *cái* [kɪ, kɜ; k̂̂â̂i] ‘the’, *với* [vɪ, vɜ; v̂̂ɜ̂̂i] ‘with’.

In addition, they are generally said with no stress and short level tones, [ˊ], [ˊ̂], [ˊ̂̂], according to the average height of their original tones: [ˊ] for [ˊ, ˊ̂], [ˊ̂̂] for [ˊ̂, ˊ̂̂], [ˊ̂̂̂] for the two [ˊ̂̂] (as shown in the added tonograms).

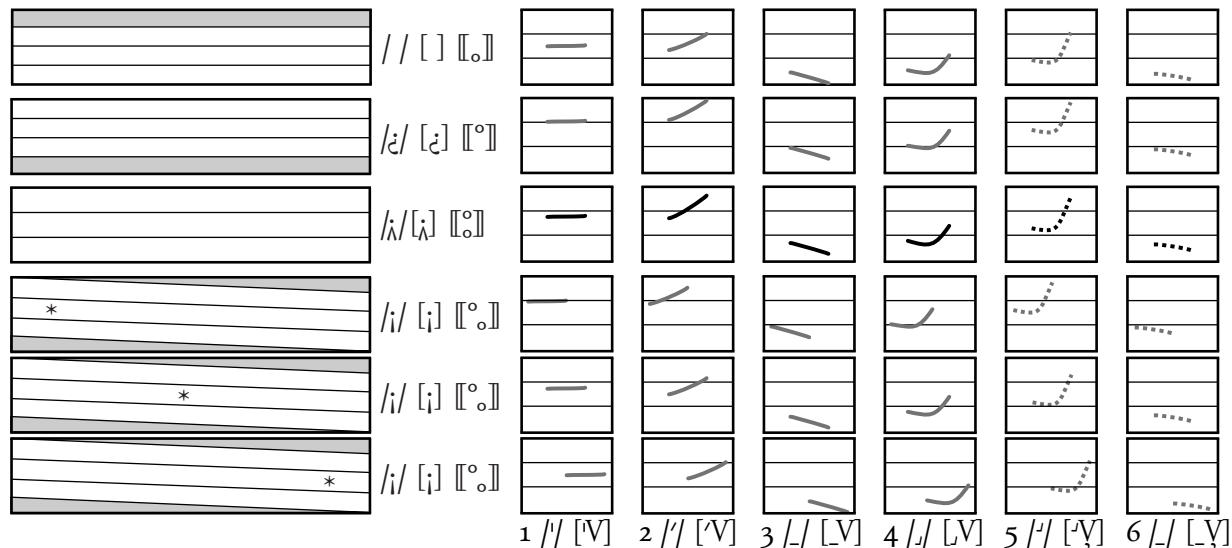
The seventh vocogram shows some frequent mediatic variants. The eighth vocogram, instead, gives a few broad regional variants.



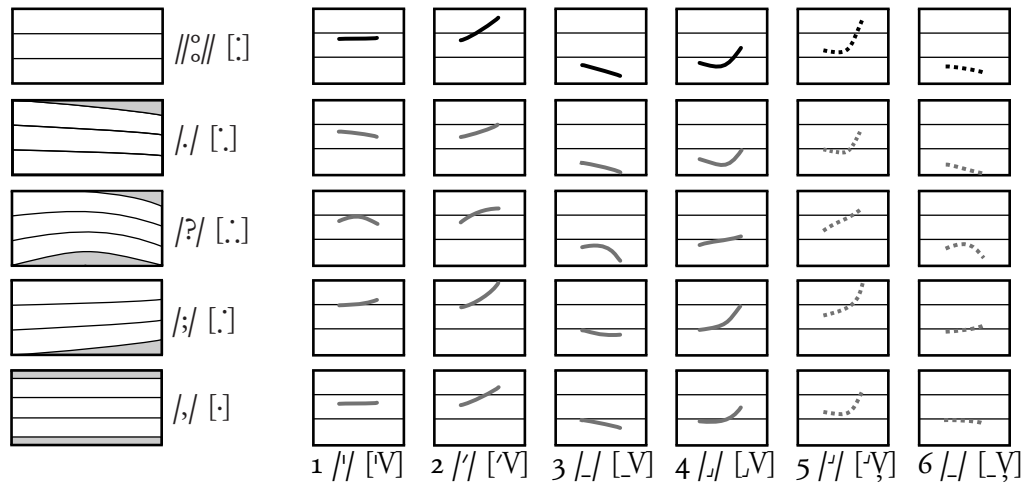
There are six tonemes, the last two have a creaky phonation type (which distinguishes the 6th from the 3rd toneme and helps distinguish the 5th from the 2nd one), eg *ma* [ˈmaa] ‘ghost’, *má* [ˈmaa] ‘cheek’, *mà* [ˌmaa] ‘but’, *mǎ* [ˌmaa] ‘tomb’, *mã* [ˈmãã] ‘horse’, *mạ* [ˌmãã] ‘rice seedling’. The 3rd and 4th tonemes can be said with



The four protunes (and the taxotones of the six tonemes, when combined together)



The four tunes (and the taxotones of the six tonemes, when combined together). The first row shows the tones as said in isolation, in an unmodified tonetic situation, //°// [:], with no tune adaptations



a murmured voice. The 5th toneme, instead of [^V], can be realized as [V[?]V]. In the South, the 4th and 5th tonemes merge into one, which begins like the 4th and ends like the 5th: [J].

The tonograms added above complete what we have already seen, by showing more characteristics of the six tonemes and their realizations, also when combined with intonation.

Spelling: *a* /a/, *ă* /ə/, *â* /ʌ/, *e* /æ/, *ê* /e/, *i*, *y* /i/, *o* /ɒ/, *ô* /o/, *ơ* /ɔ/, *u* /u/, *ư* /ɯ/, *c* /k/, *ch* /tʃ/, *d* /z/, *đ* /d̥/, *g*, *gh* /ʒ/, *gi* /ʒ/, *h* /h/, *kh* /x/, *ng* /ŋ/, *nh* /[#]n/, *ñ* /[#]/, *ph* /f/, *qu* /kw/, *r* /z/, *s* /s/, *t* /t/, *th* /tʰ/, *tr* /tʃ/, *x* /s/; tonemes: *o* /^V/, *ó* /^V/, *ò* /₋V/, *ô* /₋V/, *õ* /^V/, *ơ* /₋V/.

The list on next page –analytically– shows all the parts that form the syllables of Vietnamese.

	[V]	-a(C) [Aa(C')]	-oa(C) [wAa(C')]	-ue [wæɛ, wæɔ [#]]
'	[ʷV]	-ac [Aakʰ]	-oach [wɛəkʰ]	-ueC [wæɛC']
`	[_V]	-ach [ɛəkʰ]	-oanh [wɛɛŋʰ]	-ueo [wæ'u]
?	[V]	-anh [ɛɛŋʰ]	-oai [wa'i]	
~	[ʷV]	-ai [a'i]	-oao [wa'u]	-uê(C) [wɛɛ(C')]
.	[_V]	-ao [a'u]	-oay [wɛi]	-uêch [wɛikʰ]
		-au [ɛu]		-uênh [wɛiŋʰ]
b-	[ʰb]	-ay [ɛi]	-oăC [wɛC']	
-c	[k]			-uêu [wɛ'u]
c-	[k]	-ăC [ɛC']	-oe [wæɛ, wæɔ [#]]	
-ch	[k]		-oeC [wæɛC']	-ui [u'i]
ch-	[tʃ]	-âC [ɔC']	-o eo [wæ'u]	
d-	[z]	-âu [ɔu]		-uôC [u'ɔC']
đ-	[ʰd]	-ây [ɔi]	-oi [ɔ'i]	
g-	[ɣ]			-uôi [wɔ'i]
gh-	[ɣ]	-e [æɛ, æɔ [#]]	-ô [σo]	
gi-	[z]	-eC [æɛC']	-ôc [ɔukʰ]	-uo(C) [u'ɔ(C')]
h-	[h]	-eo [æ'u]	-ông [ɔuŋʰ]	
k-	[k]		-ôi [σ'i]	-uy(C) [wɪ(C')]
kh-	[x]	-ê(C) [ɛ(C')]		-uych [wɪkʰ]
l-	[l]	-êch [ɛikʰ]	-ôông [σoŋʰ]	-uynh [wɪŋʰ]
-m	[m]	-ênh [ɛiŋʰ]		
m-	[m]	-êu [ɛ'u]	-o(C) [ɜɔ(C')]	-uya [wɪ'ɔ]
-n	[n]		-oi [ɜ'i]	-uyu [wɪ'u]
n-	[n]	-i(C) [ɪ(C')]		-uyêC [wɪ'ɛC']
-ng	[ŋ]	-ich [ɪikʰ]	-u(C) [uu(C')]	
-nh	[ŋ]	-inh [ɪiŋʰ]	-uc [uukʰ]	-u(C) [uu(C')]
ng-	[ŋ]	-ia [ɪə, ɪɔ [#]]	-ung [uuŋʰ]	-ua [u'ɔ]
nggh-	[ŋ]	-iu [ɪ'u]		-ui [u'i]
nh-	[ɲ]		-ua [u'ɔ]	-uu [u'u]
p-	[p]	-iêC [ɪ'ɛC']	-uaC [wAaC']	
ph-	[f]	-iêu [jɛ'u]	-uach [wɛəkʰ]	-uoC [u'ɔC']
qu-	[kw]		-uanh [wɛɛŋʰ]	-uoi [u'ɔi]
r-	[z]	-o [ɔɔ, ɔɔ [#]]	-uai [wa'i]	-uosu [u'ɔu]
s-	[s]	-oC [ɔɔC']	-uay [wɛi]	
-t	[t]	-oc [ʌɔkʰ]	-qua [kwAa]	-y [ɪ]
t-	[t]	-ong [ʌɔŋʰ]		-yêC [ɪ'ɛC']
th-	[th]		-uăC [wɛC']	-yêu [jɛ'u]
tr-	[tʃ]	-oong [ɔɔŋʰ]		
v-	[v]		-uâC [wɔC']	
x-	[s]		-uâc [wɔkʰ]	
			-uây [wɔi]	