

Luciano Canepari & Daniele Vitali (2018)

# *Russian Pronunciation & Accents*

*Geo-social Applications of the Natural Phonetics & Tonetics Method*

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# 5. Vowels & vocoids

5.1. As far as the *vocalic elements* are concerned, let us recall that from a phonetic point of view it is more convenient to use the term *vocoids*, while reserving the more traditional term *vowels* for *phonemes* and *graphemes* (or more generally).

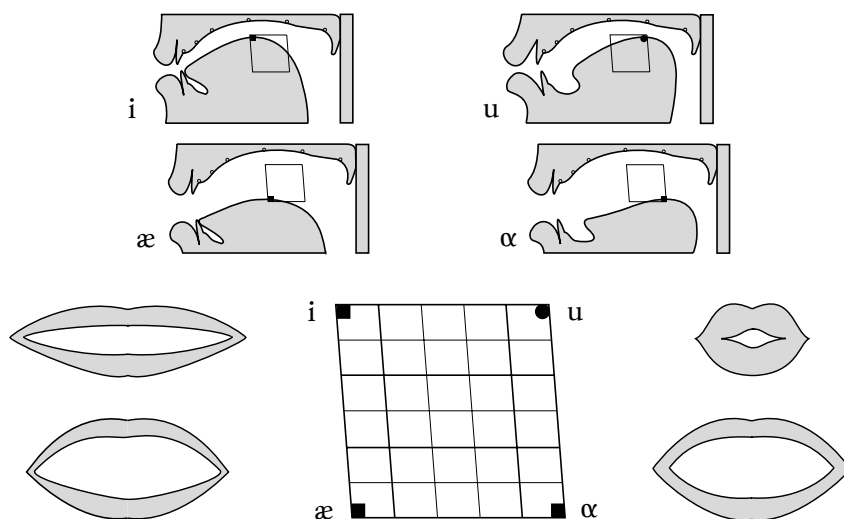
fig 5.1 will help to ‘reconstruct’ the typical modalities for the production and identification of vocoids, which have *three* fundamental components that – concisely– are: the *fronting* and *raising* of the dorsum (or central part of the tongue), with different degrees of jaw opening, and different *lip* positions (since adding lip rounding doubles the number of all possible vocoids).

5.2. Let us notice that our *vocogram* is different from the currently official *trapezoid*, which we decided to abandon because of its partially unsatisfactory shape and conception (for more details and general information, cf ¶ 8 of our *NPT –Natural Phonetics & Tonetics–* also on the *canIPA* website).

In addition, the vocogram is subdivided into a considerable number of boxes, 30, which renders it more precise a tool than the overly vague official one (which can be seen at the end of this book).

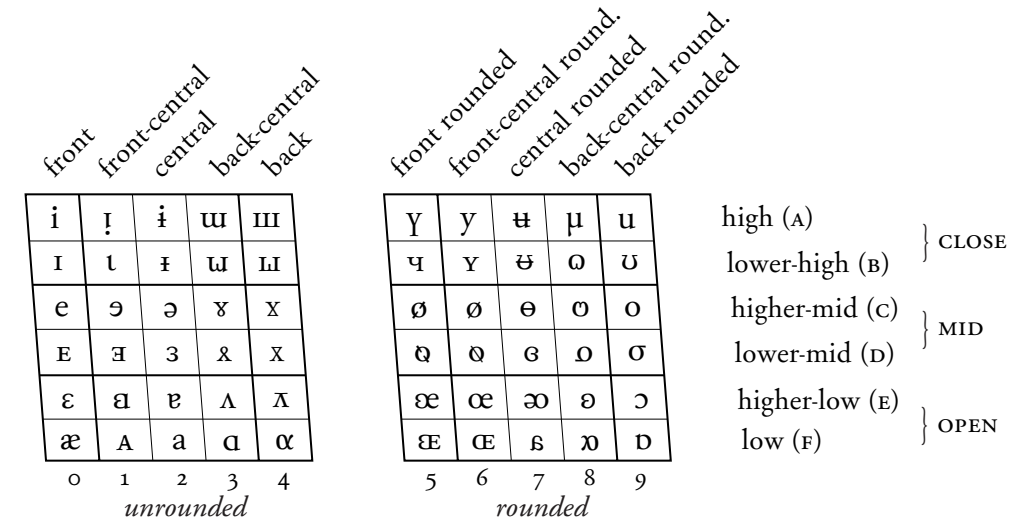
Furthermore, the two low vocoids are –more realistically– [æ, α], not ‘[a, a]’, corresponding to *canIPA* [A, a] (as acoustic phonetics can also easily prove).

fig 5.1. *Orograms* of the four extreme points for vocoid articulations (with corresponding *labio-grams*) and the *vocogram*. Note that rounded vocoids (such as [u]) have round *markers*, instead of square ones.

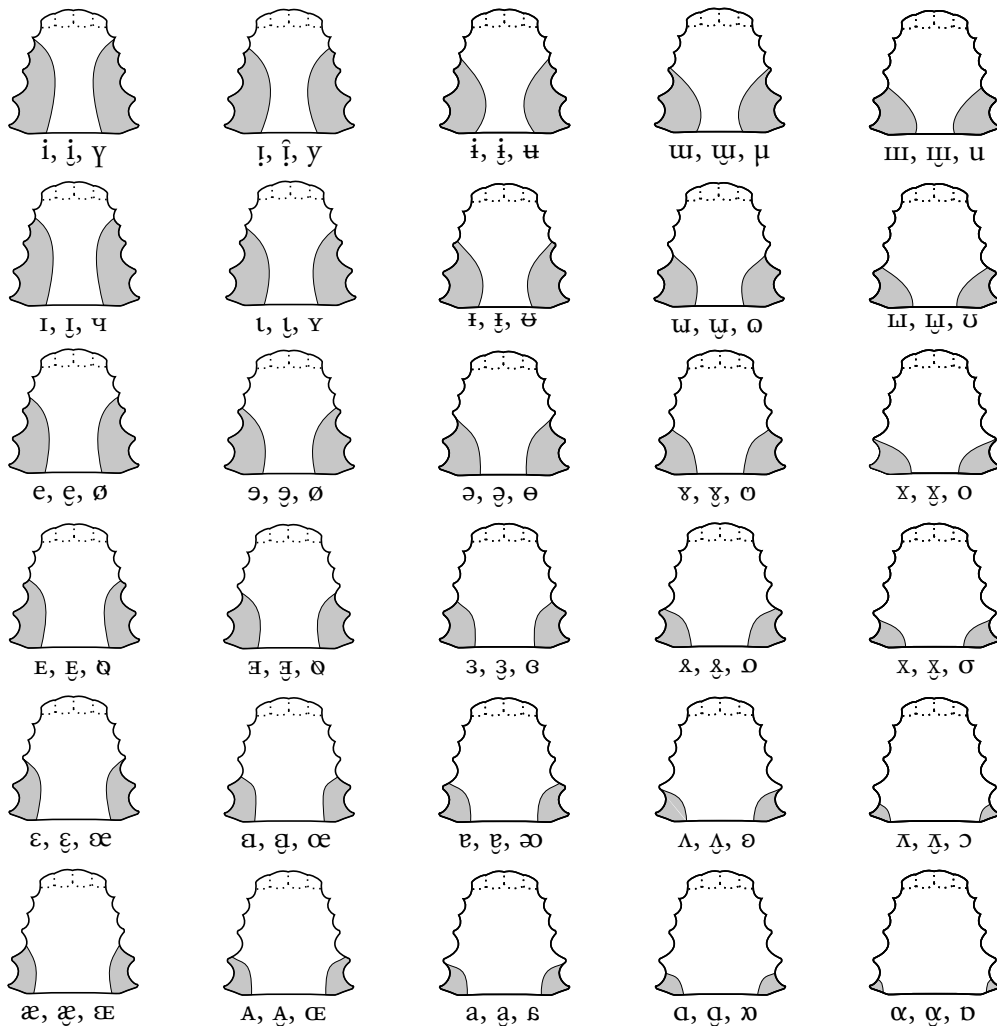


5.3. In addition, fig 5.2-5 will complete our general view, by providing all possible vocoids (both unrounded and rounded), again in *orograms* containing a miniature *vocogram*, representing differences and subtle nuances better.

fig 5.2. All vocoids and their palatograms.



PALATOGRAMS



The Germanic languages have quite complex vowel inventories, due to the large number of elements and mainly because vowel length is phonemic. This is true especially in comparison with the vowel inventories of Romance languages – and even more so with a few (relatively) exotic ones, like Arabic or Japanese).

Therefore, it is not useless to have a more general outlook of how vocoids are produced, which is going to prove particularly useful when dealing with peculiar, marginal, or local pronunciations.

5.4. For vocoids, voice is the normal type, so much so because voicelessness is considered to be a ‘marked’ rare characteristic for vowels.

Some of all the vocoids shown are much more used than some others. However, it is better to show all of them.

5.5. In order to facilitate the necessary comparisons, which are an essential part of the *Natural Phonetics & Tonetics Method*, fig 5.6 shows the monophthongs and diphthongs of the neutral accents of British and American English.

They are presented in a simplified way, without their taxophones (but one can find all of them in our *English Pronunciation & Accents*). Note that the three white markers (in fig 5.6) stand for *unstressed* vocoids.

fig 5.3. Orograms of unrounded (or spread, or normal) vocoids.

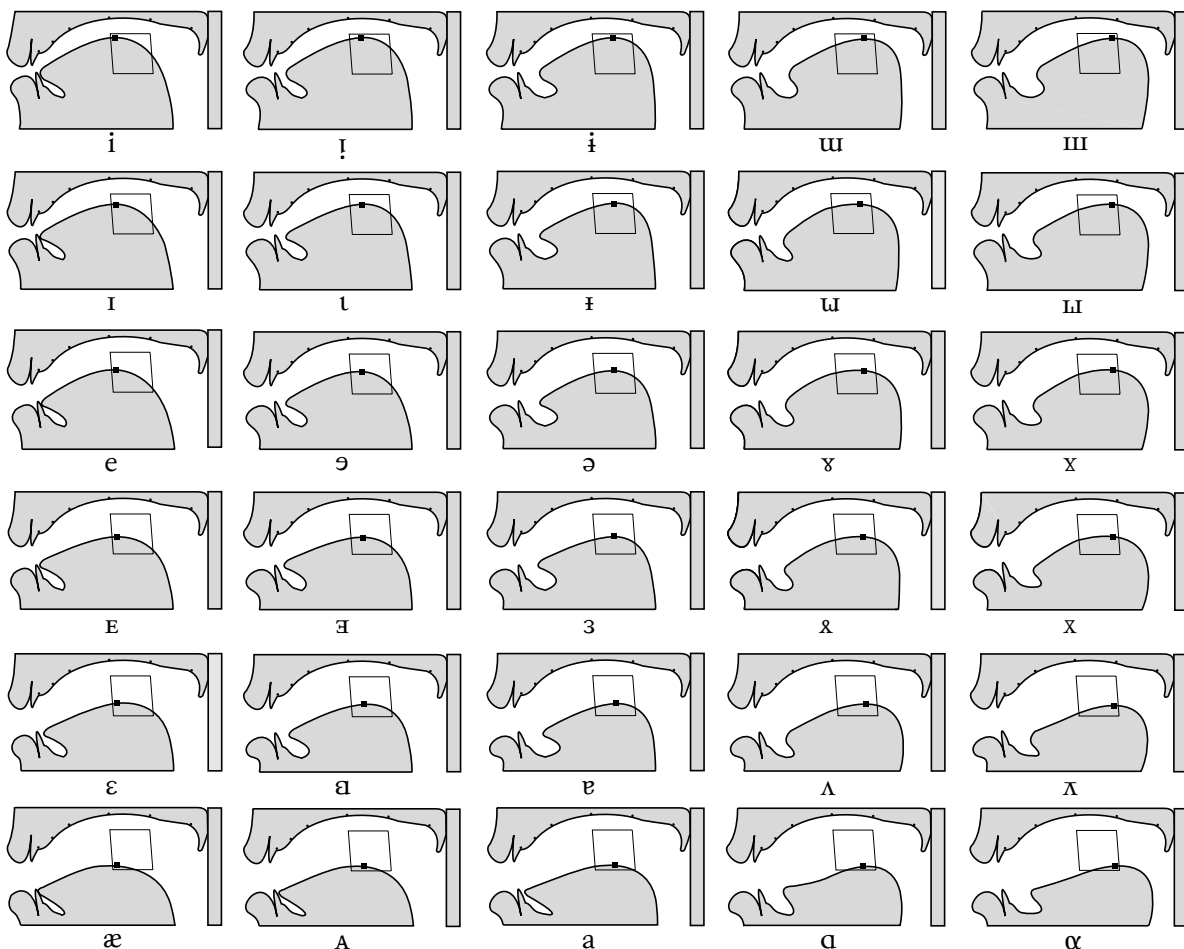


fig 5.4. Orograms of rounded vocoids.

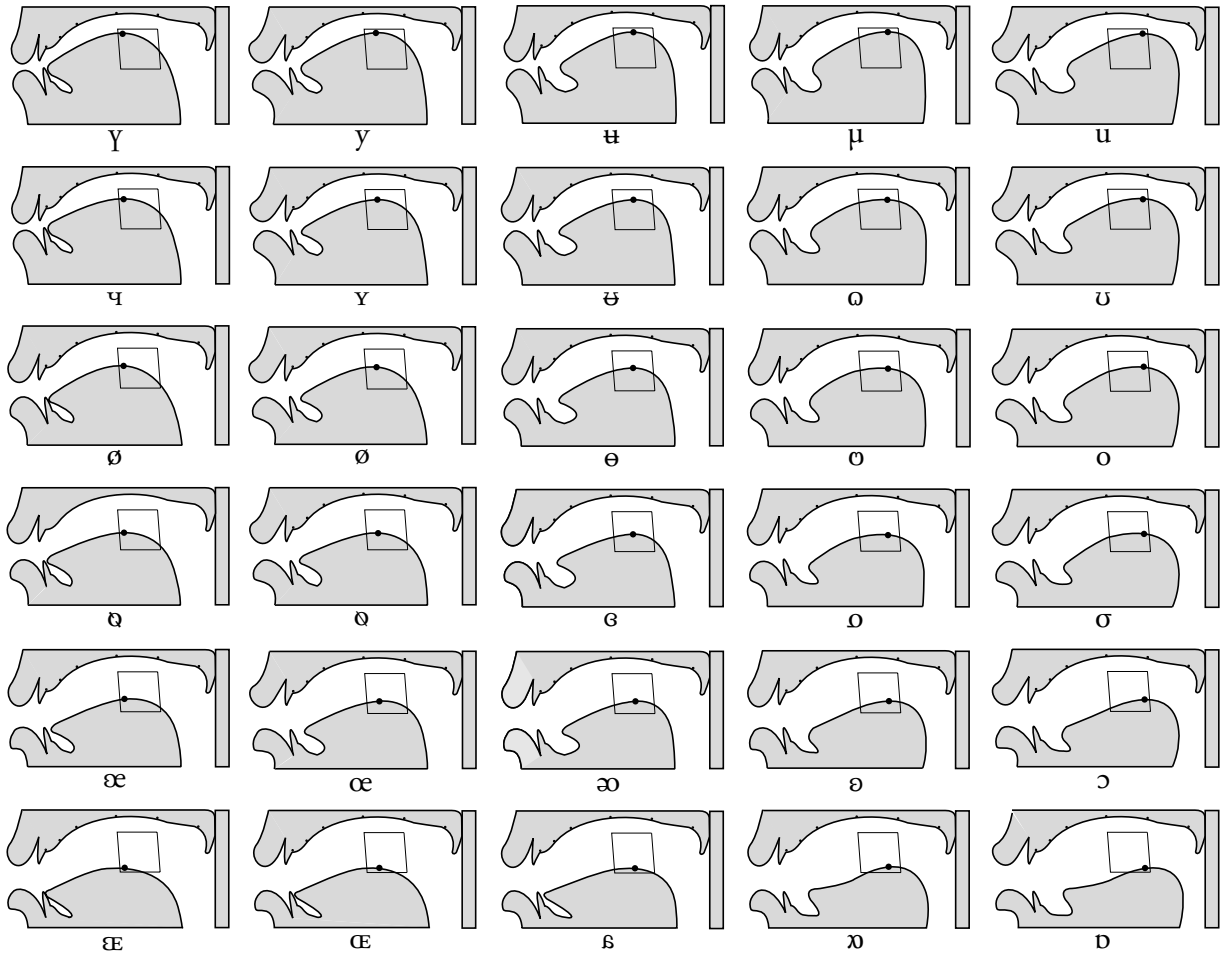


fig 5.5. Comparisons between vocoid lip positions (including different kinds of rounding).

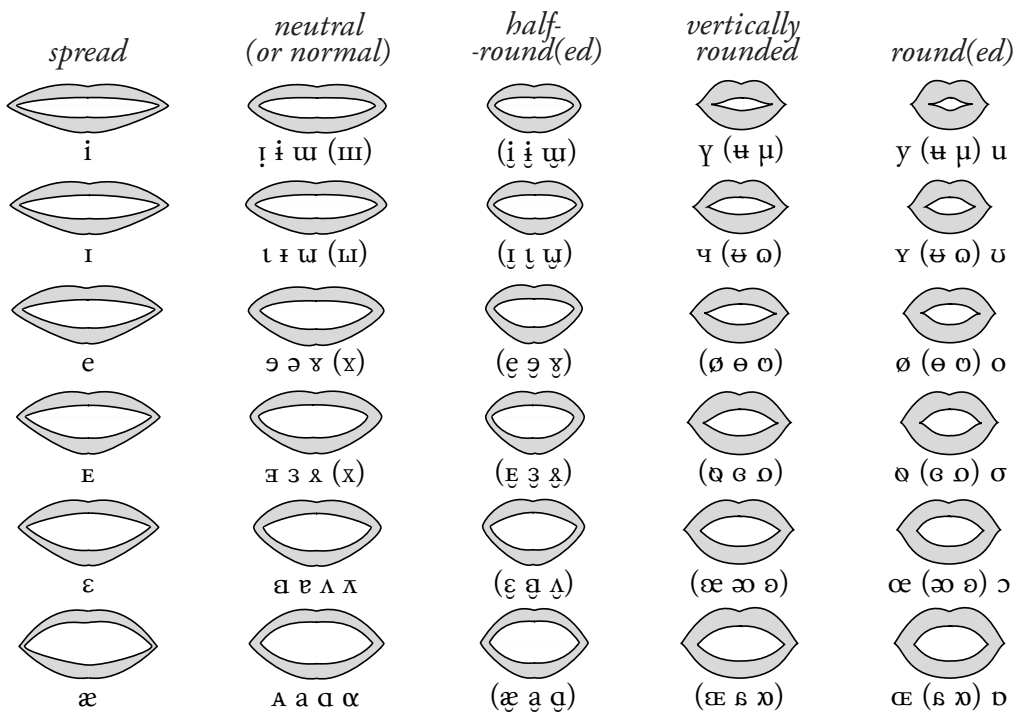


fig 5.6. The fundamental realizations of the neutral accents of British and American English.

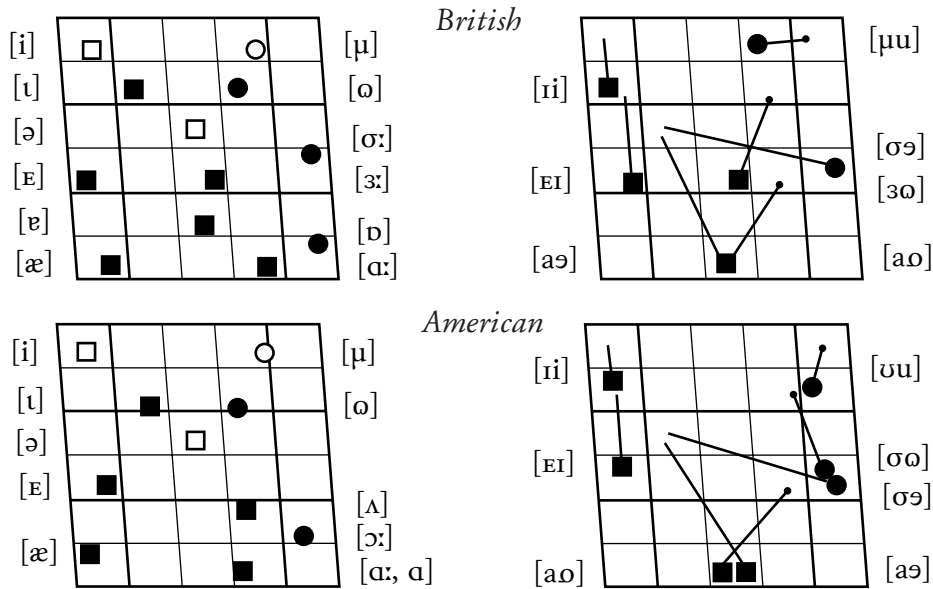
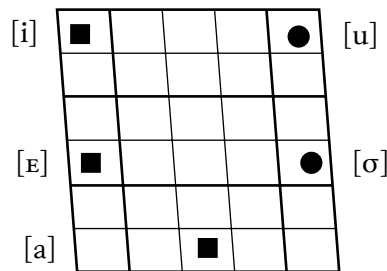


fig 5.7. The monophthongs of international Spanish, in stressed syllables.



5.6. Just to get a more general view of the use of vocograms, fig 5.7 shows the vocogram of a language with a remarkably simpler vowel inventory, such as Spanish, with only five monophthongs in stressed syllables – and diphthongs, combining some of the vowels with /-i, -u/. Of course, sequences as /ja, wa/ are no ‘diphthongs’ at all, being just the simple combination of a consonant with a vowel (not unlike /na, pa, sa, la/)! After all, *repetita iuvant...*



## The vowels & diphthongs of international Russian

5.7. International Russian pronunciation features *six* (not just five) vowel phonemes (as shown in fig 5.8.1-3): /i, e, a, σ, u, i/ realized as the following *eight* vocoids: [i], [e, ɛ], [a, ɐ], [σ], [u], [i̯]. Let us notice that [ɐ] occurs only unstressed, while [σ] is mostly stressed.

Russian also has a number of diphthongs, which are formed by adding [i] to the other elements: [ii], [ei, ɛi], [ai, ɐi], [σi], [ui], [i̯i], as shown in the second vocogram in fig 5.8.3. Thus, this is no real problem, while the diphthongs of English (or German) are not biphonemic (by joining two existing vowels), but monophonemic.

fig 5.8.1. International Russian vowels: orograms & labiograms.

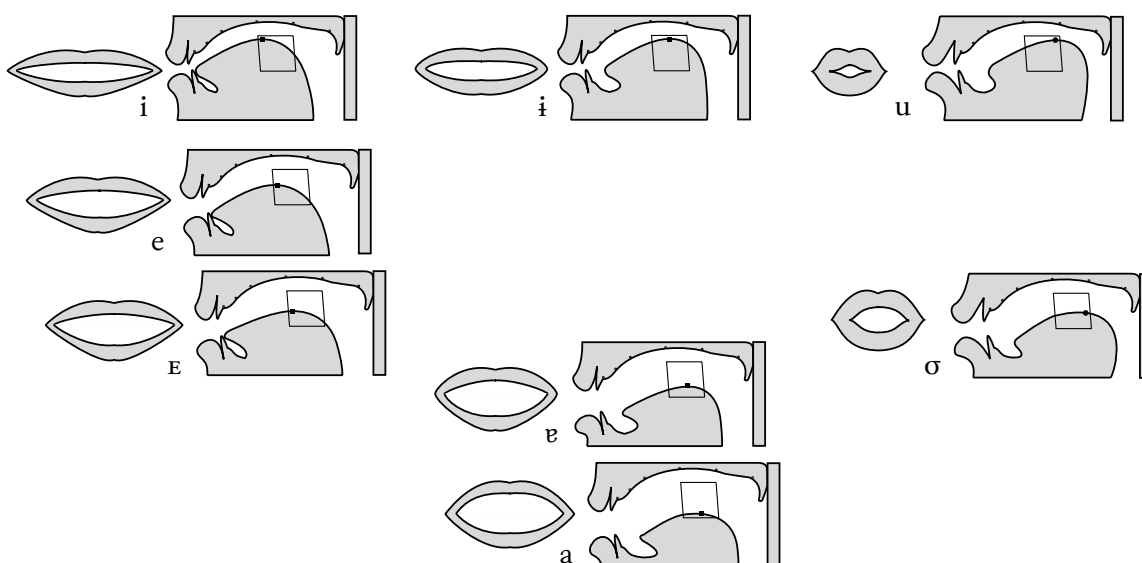


fig 5.8.2. International Russian vowels: palatograms.

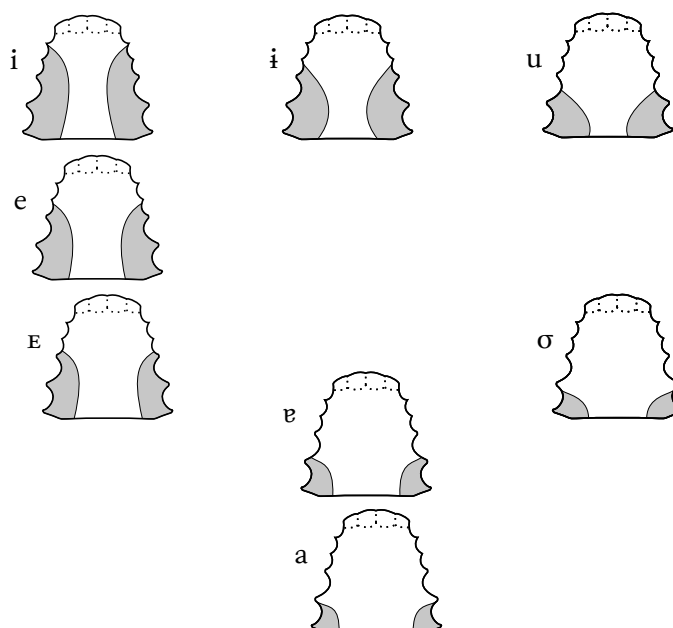
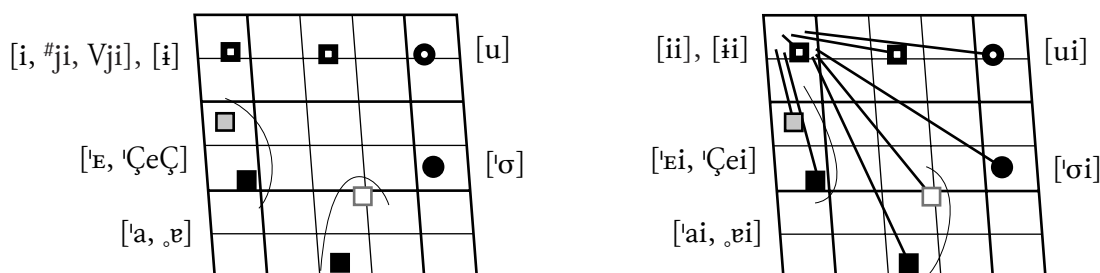


fig 5.8.3. International Russian vowels &amp; diphthongs.



International English has: /ii, eɪ, aɛ, aσ, σɛ, σω, uu/, realized exactly as [ii, eɪ, aɛ, aσ, σɛ, σω, uu], but neutral American (here given first when different) and British English have [ii, eɪ, aə, aɔ, σə, σɔ/ʒɔ, uu/uu]. They have to be considered monophonic because they vary incredibly in different (native) accents (cf LC's *English Pronunciation & Accents*). Just to give a few examples, let us consider some typical English regional accents (choosing only one possibility for each) for /ii, eɪ, aɛ, aσ, σɛ, σω, uu/: London [əi, aə, dɛ, ɛɪ, ɐɔ, oɪ, əɪ], Scotland [ii, ee, aɛ/ɛi, lɛ, ɔɪ, oo, uɪ].

5.8. We will, now, see some examples for all (international) Russian vowel phonemes. When native-like realizations are actually different, they will be added, especially for some taxophones.

For /i, ɛ, a, σ, u, i/, including two important taxophones: идти [i'tʲi], день [dɛn], нет [nɛt], рано [raɲɛ], города [gɔrɔ'da], дом [dɔm], буду [bu'du], крысы [krɪ'sɪ].

Examples for the diphthongs: кий [ci], синий [ʃi'ni], эй! [ɛi], копейка [kɔ'pɛi], май [mai], чай [tʃai], война [vɔi'na], аэроплан [ɛi'ɔpɫan], делайте [dɛ'ɛi'tʲi], бой [bɔi], зарёй [zɛ'ɔi], жуй! [ʒui], дюйм [dʲuim], уйти [u'i'tʲi], выплюйте! [vɪ'pɫu'i'tʲi], выйти [vɪ'i'tʲi], белый [bɛ'ɛi].

Russian can also have some diphthongs caused by juxtaposition, especially in loans, as in: каучук [kɔu'tʲuk], радио [ra'diɔ, ↑iσ], какао [kɔ'kaɔ, ↑aσ], шоу [ʃɔu] (also Шоу [ʃɔu], for *Shaw*), ноу-хау [nɔu'xau].

### The vowels & diphthongs of native-like international Russian

5.9. In addition, fig 5.8.4 shows the *native-like* version of Russian (while neutral, traditional, and mediatic pronunciations are fully described in § 10-15).

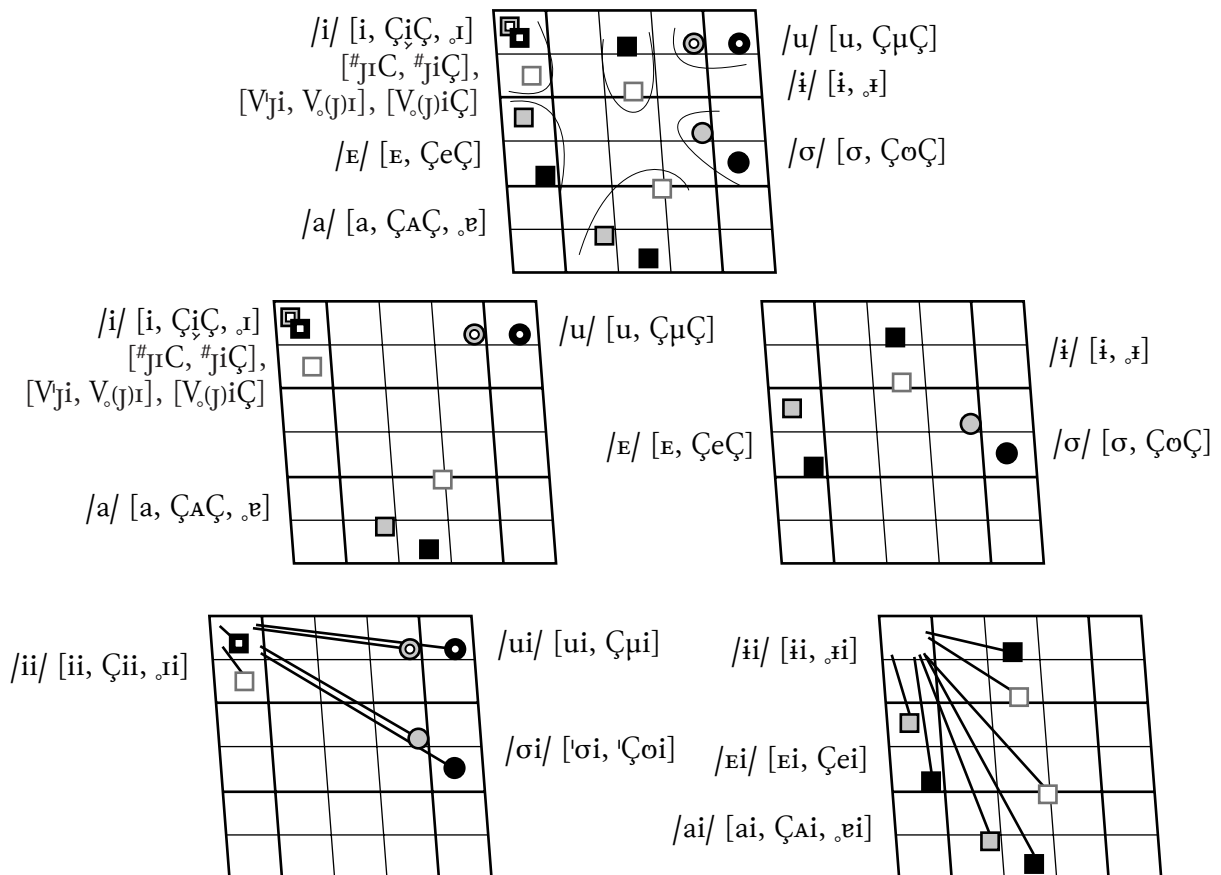
The use of (good) *transcriptions* is fundamental for the *natural phonetics method*. Once people succeed in overcoming initial perplexity (and, perhaps, mistrust), it is obvious that it is not an additional useless toil. On the contrary, it allows to free oneself from the noxious dependence on *spelling*, and to clearly separate and distinguish the two levels.

Obviously, the fundamental (and truly linguistic) reality is the phonic one, although a misleading feeling is still prevailing that the genuine language is the one ambiguously indicated by (artificial) spelling. After all, do not illiterate people speak, or do not they?

It is also appropriate to clearly indicate the length of Russian vowels, not to inadequately assign them foreign peculiarities. In fact, for simple vowels, in stressed free syllable, either internal or final, we have half-long vocoids, as some examples have already shown: да [ˈda], эпо́ха [iˈpɒxə], сын [ˈsɪn], язы́к [jɪˈzɪk], краси́ый [krasˈniː].

Consonant clusters can also have different divisions from other European languages, as, for instance, [ʃdɾ] (shown below, and further combinations, either initial or internal, as /Cl/ [Cɫ]).

fig 5.8.4. International native-like Russian vowels (first shown all together) & diphthongs.



It is fundamental to keep well in mind this fact, because Russian also has different length rules, as shown by the following examples: лампа [ʎampə], город [ˈgɔrɐt], луна [ʎuˈna], друг [dʀuk], певчий дрозд [ˈpɛʎʃiːd ˈrɔst].

5.10. Looking again at fig 5.8.4, let us consider the criteria we used to assign vowel taxophones: the first depends on the ‘interpalatal’ phonic context, representable as [ÇVCÇ, ÇVi] (the second concerns unstressed syllables: [◌\$]).

For the ‘interpalatal’ context, we do not have only /ÇeÇ, -i/ [ÇeÇ, -i], but also /ÇaÇ, -i/ [ÇaÇ, -i], /ÇoÇ, -i/ [ÇoÇ, -i], /ÇuÇ, -i/ [ÇuÇ, -i] (including /ÇiÇ, -i/ [ÇiÇ, Çii]), which will be clearer after having also seen another case that we are about to deal with).

But, first, let us observe that the phoneme /i/ forms an ‘interpalatal’ context only with official diphthongs: [ÇVi]. In other cases, there is a different situation, as loanwords illustrate well: пианист [pʀiˈnist], миллионер [ˌmʎlʎiˈnɛrɐ].

Going back to taxophones, to have a precise idea of how they behave, it is sufficient to consider the examples, which will follow. Let us notice that /ɛ/ [ɛ] is articulated fronter and higher in the vocogram, ie [e].

The same also happens for /a/ [a], /ɔ/ [ɔ], /u/ [u], /i/ [i] (look at the five grey markers). In the last case, we find a fronter and higher articulation, but only slightly: [iː] (the diacritic [ː] indicates the direction of this movement: ‘northwest’).

In the case of /u/ [u], there is an almost inexistent movement, but its advancement is clear. Let us attentively observe that the phoneme /i/ does not occur in this context, since it is never preceded by [Ç], although there is the diphthong /ii/.

Here are the examples (with [tʃV] for [tʃV]): кий [ˈcii], синий [ˈʃiːnii], эй! [ˈei], копейка [kɔˈpeika], май [ˈmai], чай [tʃaj], война [vɔiˈna], аэроплан [ɛiˈrɔpˈlan], делайте [dɛˈʎaitʃɪ], бой [ˈbɔi], зарёй [zɛˈrɔi], жуй! [ˈʒui], дюйм [dʒim], уйти [uiˈtʃi], выплюйте! [ˈvʎpˌʎuitʃɪ], выйти [vʎitʃɪ], белый [ˈbɛˈʎi].

5.11. The second case of additional taxophones for ‘native-like international’ Russian pronunciation concerns, as already said, unstressed syllables. In fact, looking at the first vocogram in fig 5.8.4, we can see three white markers, while in fig 5.8.3 there was only one: /ə/ [ə].

Thus, /i/ [ɪ] and /iː/ [iː] have to be added. They are always in unstressed syllables, with only one exception for /ÇiÇ/, even without stress, [ÇiÇ], because of the ‘interpalatal’ context: синий [ˈʃiːnii], делайте [dɛˈʎaitʃɪ], уйти [uiˈtʃi], выплюйте! [ˈvʎpˌʎuitʃɪ], выйти [vʎitʃɪ], белый [ˈbɛˈʎi]. Two more, from other sections: интонация [ɪntɔˈnatsɪjə], крысы [krʎsɪ].

### For phonemic and phonetic transcriptions of Russian

5.12. A Russian phonemic system, which may not be completely abstract and uselessly mentalist, necessarily has six vocalic phonemes: /i, e, a, o, u, ɨ/ (not only five, with a quick-change artist ‘/i/’). An even more useful transcription would also use (at least) three additional vowel symbols, [ɪ, ɛ, ɐ], to be used in unstressed syllables.

Furthermore, it should be essential to also accurately avoid using phonemic sequences like /Cj/, replaced by [Ç] (of course with specific symbols). Inevitably, sequences like /Ci/ would become [Çi], and [Çɪ], when unstressed phonemes are accepted, including /ɪ/. All this gives a far less enigmatic aspect in comparison with former more abstract transcriptions.

However, considering examples like *день, здесь, сделать, телевидение, о естестве*, in *canIPA* transcription of the modern neutral accent, we have: [ˈdʑɛɲ, zʰdʑɛʂ, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂ, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ, ɐjɨʂtʂɨstʲɨˈvʲɛ] [-tɕɨʂtʂʲɨˈvʲɛ]. In a transcription that indicates international pronunciation, we have: [ˈdʑɛɲ, zʰdʑɛʂ, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂ, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ, ɐjɨʂtʂʲɨˈvʲɛ] (or, if ‘native-like’, with only one difference: [-jɪ], in the fourth case).

5.13. Should we want to systematically use a phonemic transcription, instead of a more useful phonetic one, it would be preferable to use: /ˈdʑɛɲ, zʰdʑɛʂ, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂ, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ, jɨʂtʂʲɨˈvʲɛ/ rather than: ‘/ˈdʑɛɲj, zʰdʑɛʂj, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂj, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ, ajɨstʂʲɨˈvʲɛ/’.

Of course, it is more useful and realistic, but it almost doubles the number of the phonemic symbols. The other one shown is not ‘scandalous’, and decidedly better than ‘official things’ like *offIPA* ‘/ˈdʑɛɲj, zʰdʑɛʂj, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂj, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ, ajɨstʂʲɨˈvʲɛ/’, which become impossible to read without problems. In fact, it seems quite obvious that an excess of [j] complicates readability (not little, indeed, and risking psychic health).

‘Simple’ transcriptions like [ˈdʑɛɲ, zʰdʑɛʂ, zʰdʑɛʰtʂɨtʂ, tɕɨlʲiˈvʲiˈdʑɨnʲɪjɪ] should decidedly be avoided –even with the so much boasted [ˈ-ɨjɛ] (more mediatic than neutral) in the Kovalev’s dictionary, with ‘transcription’ in its newer editions– and [ajɨstʂʲɨˈvʲɛ].

Clearly –since no good ‘phonexorcists’ can be found– we are more than ever against even possible ‘Soviet-like’ things (from which the preceding ‘gem’) has arisen), like: *д’э́н’, з’д’э́с’, з’д’э́льт’, т’ил’ив’и́д’ин’ийи, айис’т’ис’т’в’э́*. Certainly nobody will miss the ‘circus show’ of smaller superscript characters in some other examples.

### Some remarks on ‘AvaneSoviet’ Russian vowels

5.14. These preliminary remarks are meant to be of help to those who ought to undergo certain readings by Avanesov (particularly 1972<sup>5</sup>, or others derived from his own ones) in order not to believe the same old Soviet tales (in this specific case, with no political, social, or humanitarian, reference), that still live on.

Concerning how to treat the vowels of Russian, let us carefully pass over cer-



But that is a clearly automatic and quite natural fact, which has no need at all to be shown. In fact, the timbre of  $\hat{\varepsilon}/\varepsilon^u$  is not at all closer. But just an auditive (or acoustic) transition is present, indeed. It would almost be like wanting to ‘transcribe’ in Spanish \*[swɛjɲo], instead of [swɛɲo] for *señor*.

5.17. And now, we begin a sadly amusing trip to... the circus. As a matter of fact, certain authors resort even to ‘exponential’ magic –be it noted expressly– in ‘scientific works’. Thus, we find so-called ‘symbols’ as:  $u^e$  /i/ [ɪ],  $v\iota^{\varepsilon}$  /i/ [ɪ],  $v^{\iota}$  /i/ [ɪ],  $e^u$  /#i/ [ɪ] (for unstressed initial  $\varepsilon$ ). However, given this scientifically inconsistent principle, other authors use  $v\iota^e$  for  $v\iota^{\varepsilon}$  /i/ [ɪ],  $u^{\varepsilon}$  for  $u^e$  /i/ [ɪ],  $\varepsilon^u$  for  $e^u$  /#i/ [ɪ], and  $e^{\iota}$  for  $v\iota^{\varepsilon}$  /i/ [ɪ].

Arguably, superscripts spread in further cases of transition: to or from [Ç], and to /i/. Thus, in addition, we find:  $a^u$  [aÇ, ai] (also rendered as  $a^{\cdot}$  – as only true magicians can do),  $o^u$  [oÇ, oi] (also as  $o^{\cdot}$ ), and  $y^u$  [uÇ, ui], too (obviously, as  $y^{\cdot}$ , as well). Somebody uses  $v\iota^{\cdot}$  or  $v\iota^u$  [iÇ, ii], too.

But that is not enough, yet: we also find (‘Hey, c’mon in, folks!’):  $^u a$  [Ça] (and  $\cdot a$ ),  $^u o$  [Ço] (and  $\cdot o$ ),  $^u y$  [Çu] (and  $\cdot y$ ), including  $j^{\cdot} a$ ,  $j^{\cdot} o$ ,  $j^{\cdot} y$  [ja, jɔ, ju]!

All these –with their usual, and purely acoustic, transitions– have no real timbre change, except a little in traditional and mediatic pronunciations. Thus, some authors, *cum grano salis*, at least unify ‘pre- and post-dotted symbols’, using  $\acute{a}$ ,  $\acute{o}$ ,  $\acute{y}$ .

In addition, we also find  $\ddot{a}$ ,  $\ddot{o}$ ,  $\ddot{y}$  (rendered as  $^u a^u$ ,  $^u o^u$ ,  $^u y^u$ , too), for ‘/ÇaÇ, ÇoÇ, ÇuÇ, Çai, Çoi, Çui/’. In fact, these have slightly different timbres in modern neutral pronunciation, too: [ÇaÇ, ÇoÇ, ÇuÇ, Çai, Çoi, Çui] (and a little more different in traditional neutral, and mediatic, pronunciations).

Occasionally, we can find some instances of  $^u e$  [jɛ, jeÇ],  $^u o$  [wɔ], which –in reality– is [ʊɔ] (with a *semi*approximant [ʊ], that occurs in  $y$  [ʊu] as well, in stressed syllables).

5.18. On the other hand, even though our authors do not mention it at all, we have a prevelar semiapproximant [ɣ], too. Still in stressed syllables, it occurs before /ɛ, a, i/: [ɣɛ, ɣa, ɣi]. Seeing that, sometimes –as very able professional circus people– they use  $^u e^{\varepsilon}$ , for [Çɛ(ɛ<sup>#</sup>)], at least to be consistent, they should also use  $e^{\varepsilon}$  (or  $\varepsilon^{\varepsilon}$ ), and  $a^{\varepsilon}$ ,  $o^{\varepsilon}$ , even before /C, #/. In fact, by emphasis, in neutral pronunciation, we regularly have: [ʰɛɛ, ʰaɛ, ʰσɛ]. Therefore, they might perhaps use  $^{\varepsilon} e$  (or, better,  $^{\varepsilon} \varepsilon$ ),  $^{\varepsilon} a$ ,  $^{\varepsilon} o$  for [ɣɛ, ɣa, ɣi] /ɛ, a, i/, too.

519. Those authors who are brave enough to free themselves from Soviet fake phonic symbols, and at least use *offIPA* symbols (rather imprecise and insufficient), can resort to ‘[i; e; ε; æ; a; ɐ; ɔ; ɯ; u; i]’, in stressed syllables. Or to ‘[ɪ, ɛ, ə]’, in unstressed syllables; while they oscillate between ‘[ɐ, a; ɪ, i; ɛ, i]’, in pre-stressed syllables.

These are *pretonic*, in the true sense of the word as stressed syllables, which –obviously– occur right in front of tonic and protonic syllables, *ie* stressed syllables in tunes and protunes).

Arguably, those authors may use some or all of the official symbols just seen, in

spite of their obvious limitations. But, at least, people are not obliged to look for some expert medium, in order to find solutions that... do not solve anything.

Some other authors use hybrid symbols, among which ‘[y]’ for /i/ stands certainly out (due to an unduly clear influence by transliteration; and they do so for some consonants, as well).

5.20. Even within *offIPA*, transcriptions as ‘[ɛ<sup>ə</sup>; a<sup>ə</sup>; ɔ<sup>ə</sup>, o<sup>ə</sup>]’ and ‘[e<sup>i</sup>; ɛ<sup>i</sup>; a<sup>i</sup>; ɔ<sup>i</sup>, o<sup>i</sup>]’ are unsuitable, for two good reasons. First of all, because a notation as ‘[V<sup>ə</sup>, Vi]’ is clearly excessive, since it indicates mere acoustic transitions to following phones. It is decidedly misleading, although the superscript is there just to suggest a tendency or coloring, rather than a real vocoid. However, it is decidedly misleading.

Secondly, such transcriptions are not suitable because, as we have already seen, their phonic reality is not ‘[V<sup>ə</sup>, Vi]’ (and, least of all, ‘[V<sup>ə</sup>, Vi]’). Rather, it is: [ɣi, ɣɛ, ɣa, ωσ, ωu] (and, in case, something more like ‘[ɣ<sup>i</sup>, ɣ<sup>ɛ</sup>, ɣ<sup>a</sup>, u<sup>σ</sup>, u<sup>u</sup>]’, where [ɣ, u] are consonantal –ie the semiapproximants [ɣ, ω], to be true– and stress is on the real vocoids there.

Thus, we actually have [ɣi, ɣɛ, ɣa, ωσ, ωu] (as just shown), ie [CV], not [VV], nor [VV]. As we have already seen above, in modern neutral pronunciation, only by emphasis, do we have [ɣ<sup>ɛ</sup>ɛ, ɣ<sup>a</sup>a, ω<sup>σ</sup>σ], but [ɣ<sup>i</sup>i, ɣ<sup>ɛ</sup>ɛ, ω<sup>u</sup>u], and [ɣ<sup>ɛ</sup>ɛɪɣ, ɣ<sup>a</sup>aɪɣ, ɣ<sup>σ</sup>σɣ]).

Equally unsuitable (and, frankly, horrible for the eyes) are transcriptions like: ‘[ie<sup>i</sup>; iɛ<sup>i</sup>; iæ<sup>i</sup>; ia<sup>i</sup>; iɔ<sup>i</sup>, io<sup>i</sup>; iə<sup>i</sup>; iu<sup>i</sup>, iɥ<sup>i</sup>]’ and ‘[iɛ<sup>ə</sup>; ia<sup>ə</sup>; iɔ<sup>ə</sup>, io<sup>ə</sup>; iu<sup>ə</sup>]’ or ‘[uɔ<sup>ə</sup>, uo<sup>ə</sup>; u<sup>u</sup>u<sup>ə</sup>]’, again because the second superscripts, [V<sup>ə</sup>], simply indicates the acoustic transition to [ɣ] or [C], which is perfectly automatic and natural.

The first superscript, [i<sup>V</sup>], on the other hand, just hints at the transition from [ɣ] (including [j]) to a following vocoid. That transition is clear and audible (and, of course, visible on the spectrograms), both for [j] and the other (palatalized) con-toids, [ɣ]. Thus, it must be explicitly indicated, as [jV] and [ɣV].

5.21. However, within *canIPA* symbols, instead, some use of superscripts does have a good reason, since it can conveniently show some peculiarities of the mediatic Russian accent (cf fig 15.4), where they actually stand for very short vocoids, not as mere automatic –and inevitable– acoustic transitions.

### Further considerations on phonemic and phonetic symbols for Russian

5.22. It is easy, and simple, and natural, to (convincingly) demonstrate that Russian has *six* vowel phonemes, /i, ɪ, u; ɛ, σ; a/, not just *five*, /i, ɛ, a, σ, u/. This language is famous for its numerous vowel taxophones, either in the neutral accent, or in the traditional or mediatic ones, with even more entities (as we will see below). So the actual Russian vowel inventory has two obvious groups /j)i, jɛ, ja, jσ, ju/ и, е, я, ё, ю, and /i, ɛ, a, σ, u/ ы, э, а, о, у. (Of course, /jV/ are not ‘diphthongs’, which would be /VV/, but normal /CV/ sequences.)



Native Russian speakers are naturally able to utter, even in isolation, and with no effort, these two phonemes, and the correspondent verbs, *икать* /'ikatj/, international [i'kætʃ], neutral [i'kɔtʃ], and *ыкать* /'ikatj/ international [i'kætʃ], neutral [ɨ'kɔtʃ], meaning 'to produce the phoneme...'

Other Slavic languages also have a sixth vowel phonemes (in a central or centralized position in the vocogram), too: /ɨ/ [ɨ] (Ukrainian, Belorussian, Polish), /ɤ/ [ɤ] (Bulgarian, Macedonian), and two Romance languages, spoken in close areas, as well: /i/ [i] (together with a seventh vowel, /ə/ [ə], Romanian, Moldavian).

As far as the Russian consonant phonemes and taxophones are concerned, it is also natural and easy to demonstrate that /Cj/ and /C/ (+ /i/) become [Ç] by perfectly normal assimilation, in all possible positions (initial, internal, or final). This is obvious, for a language like Russian, with many consonantal clusters, but it is no real problem at all.

5.23. The Soviet fairy tale (actually, almost a joke) –as someone might put it– that Russian has two series of consonant phonemes, 'hard' and 'soft', is phonically ungrounded. And the very limit of all this is when students are 'taught' that the 'soft' consonants change a subsequent vowel into a 'palatalized' one.

This is patently against the Russian alphabet, with the graphemes which we saw above. For once that spelling is not fully absurd, 'science' would overturn rather clear things, just for 'fun', one could say.

On the other hand, for communicative purposes, 'practical' (native) teachers 'explain' that only the apical consonants are normally changed into 'soft' sounds, when followed by *и, е, я, ё, ю* (presented as a 'typical Russian peculiarity'). Although this might somehow be sufficient to make a foreigner understood by native speakers, they are not even aware that what they actually utter are [Ç] taxophones (not '/Ç/' phonemes), also with front or back consonants.

However, in a phonetic transcription, of course, accurate phonetic symbols are used, [Ç], even if, from a phonemic point of view, we certainly have /Cj/. In fact, it would not be much convenient nor economical to use almost twice as many consonant phonemes than really necessary. The situation is clear and simple with 6 vowels and 19 consonants (and, of course, a number of /Cj/ and /jV/ sequences, in addition to more universal /CC/ clusters).

On the other hand, having whole correlations of /C/ and '/Ç/' for almost all Russian consonants would also entail an excessive effort on the part of children learning the language, with inevitable delays. But, happily, it is not so. Instead, it is more than logical (and phono-logical, too) that the basic consonants are /C/, with all their possible realizations, [C, Ç], including [Ç], in the appropriate contexts.

If not trained in phonetics (and phonemics), native speakers may find it rather difficult and complicated to utter in isolation a 'soft' consonant, unless they succeed in imagining an adequate context as /Cj, Ci/ (with /Cj/ + /V/, or + /C/, or + /#/).

5.24. However, native speakers certainly have instinctive awareness of their consonants in sequences with /j/ (as well as with a number of other /C/'s), rather

than a whole new series of ‘/Ç/’, for their actual [Ç]. This is a very useful device.

In fact, those speakers are even able to conceive and use /dz/ [d͡z], in loans such as джаз [d͡ʒas] ‘jazz’, or джип [d͡ʒip] ‘jeep’. Otherwise, without such an adaptation, any loan fully uttered in the Russian way (ie with ‘/dj/’) would be considered uneducated and popular, as [d͡ʒip]. Such a result depends on wrong and outdated graphemic ideas.

The seeming ‘nuisance’ of using vowel graphemes like я, е, ё, ю /ja, jɛ, jɔ, ju/ (instead of ‘ѡа, ѡэ, ѡо, ѡу’, or, a little more seriously, ‘ѣа, ѣэ, ѣо, ѣу’) allows us to clearly understand that the true (ie phonemic) Russian consonants are simply the non-palatalized ones. In fact, the whole series of [Ç] consonants naturally derives from phonemic /Cj/ sequences. On the other hand, in practical transcriptions, we certainly use [Ç] symbols to show actual pronunciation in a more useful way (as we have already said).

Should the Russian palatalized (or ‘soft’) taxophones really be phonemes, Russian speakers would –happily– have no difficulty at all either in using them in isolation, or –above all– in not using them when speaking foreign languages, with plain /C/ followed by /j/ or front vowels. As a matter of fact, in this way, Russian people could successfully avoid being laughed at for things like *visibility* [vɪzəbʲlʲɪtʲɪˈtʲɪ], uttered as [vʲɪzʲɪbʲiˈtʲɪtʲɪ].

5.25. The kind of transcription we use for international Russian is an excellent compromise solution between a very accurate phonetic transcription and a ‘pure’ phonemic transcription, rather abstract, though realistic, but much less suitable for teaching/learning purposes. Of course, we are talking about actual neutral pronunciation, or also traditional, or mediatic pronunciations, respectively, ③ 10-15, as we will soon see below.

However, for the sake of real science, we will now show the exact phonemic structure of Russian. Some people (and authors) think that its phonemic structure should use ‘clear’ symbols for all phones (and perhaps all taxophones), as if those were the real Russian phonemes. But such people mistake phonemics for phonetics (although they do not, generally, use fully satisfactory symbols).

In addition, as we said, it is highly surprising that most of those authors are not able to accept that Russian has six vowel phonemes (not only five). But, positing only five vowels with many useless ‘consonant phonemes’, as they do, means verging on the ridiculous either as fanaticism or even as incompetence. What they offer and suggest is something merely phonetic (though not sufficient), but with serious phonemic defectiveness.

5.26. Thus, a true essential phonemic inventory only has the following 19 phonemes: /m, n; p, b, t, d, k, g; ts; f, v, s, z, ʂ, zʂ; j, x; r, l/ [m, n; p, b, t, d, k, g; ts; f, v, s, z, ʂ, zʂ; j, ɣ; r, l]. Its most frequent /Cj/ sequences are: /mj, nj; pj, bj, tj, dj, kj, gj; fj, vj, sj, zj; xj; rj, lj/ [m̥, n̥; p̥, b̥, t̥, d̥, k̥, g̥, c, ʃ, ʒ, ʂ̥; ɣ̥; r̥, l̥], including the somehow questionable (as more abstract, though real) following two: /tsj, stsj/ [t͡s̥, s̥t͡s̥]. A sequence like /tjj/ [t͡s̥j], can also be used *xenophonemically* as [tsj, t̥s, t̥t͡s̥j]:



# 7. The consonants of international Russian

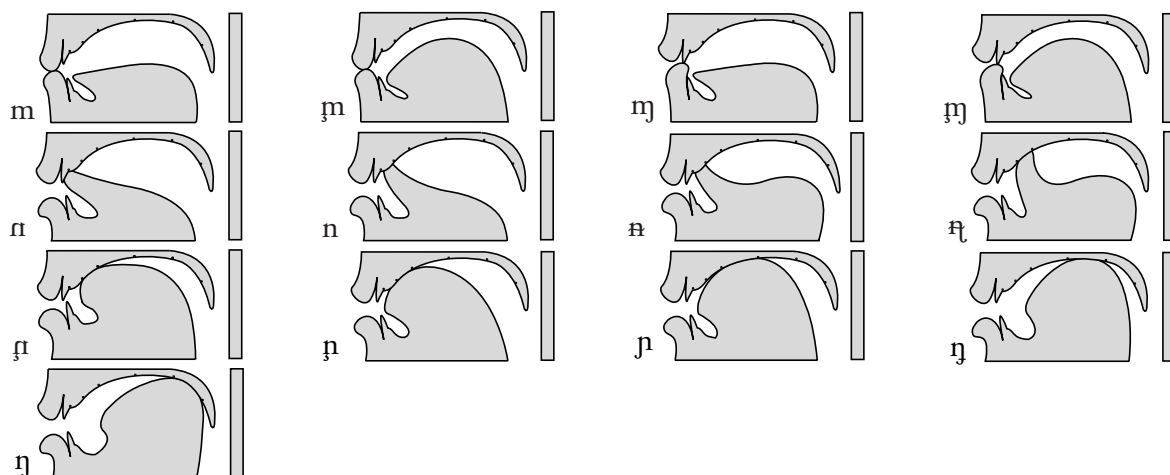
## Nasals (fig 7.1)

7.1.1. When the velum is lowered, the passage to the nasal cavity is opened, thus allowing expiratory air to escape from the nose. The result is the *nasal manner of articulation*, which is combined with a closure produced somewhere in the mouth (for the English nasal phonemes, /m, n, ŋ/, the places are: bilabial, alveolar, and velar, as in *man*, *king* [ˈmæːn, ˈkɪŋː]).

However, these articulations should certainly not be called ‘stops’ (which is the manner covered in next section), since nasal sounds are continuous, not momentary. In fact, notwithstanding the closure in the oral channel, air can continuously escape through the nose, and the sound can be prolonged as long as expiratory air remains available.

7.1.2. Russian has only two *nasal* phonemes, /m, n/: *мать* [ˈmatʃ], *том* [ˈtɔm], *нос* [ˈnɔs], *сон* [ˈsɔn]. But it has a number of *taxophones*, due to contextual assimilation, like in English. In addition, it has the corresponding palatalized variants, which are typical of Russian. Besides, the nasal phonemes are coarticulated to a following contoid, as the examples will show (in spite of the fact that they are still described –and even prescribed– without assimilation, which sounds as pedantic, or at least very formal, although not foreign).

fig 7.1. International Russian: nasal phonemes & taxophones.



Consider the following examples for the taxophones: ритм [ʃit̪m], он плачет [ɒnpʰat̪ʃit̪], мгла [mgʰa], амфора [ʼamʃərə], канва [kənʷa], он вешает [ɒŋʷiʃaʒit̪], концерт [kənʰtser̪t̪], странный [stʰannɨ], нрав [nʰraf], он ломает [ɒŋʰlɐmajit̪], он желает [ɒŋʒɛʰʃajit̪], кинжал [cinʒat̪], манго [ʰmaŋgɐ], конкретно [kənʰkʃetnɐ].

Here are examples of the palatalized variants (either taxophonetic or phonemic for /mj, nj/): имбирь [imʲbʲiɾ], меня [miʲna], семь [ʃem], семья [ʃimʲja], конверт [kənʷɐʁt̪], женщина [ʒɛŋʃinɐ], няня [ʲnaʲnɐ], конь [kɒŋ], песнь [ʲpɛʃŋ], раньше [ʰrapʃɨ], интимный [inʰtimnɨ], кандидат [kənʰʃidat̪], тонкий [tɒncii].

7.1.3. We know that /nC/ assimilation is quite natural (in Russian and other Slavic languages, too, in spite of different groundless opinions), although, especially in traditional pronunciation, there is a forced tendency to keep /n/ [n], mostly when the following consonants are very different articulatorily.

This can happen in words like канва [kənʷa], он плачет [ɒnpʰat̪ʃit̪], манго [ʰmaŋgɐ]. Most probably it depends on a kind of schooling more oriented towards spelling than real pronunciation, like in clusters of stops, instead, where assimilation would be quite inappropriate in Slavic languages.

Something quite different happens in Romance languages, which readily assimilate, except French, where /VnC/ sequences are marked in comparison with more typical /ṼC/ ones. Such assimilations are normal even in Portuguese, where phonemic /VNC/ sequences are [ṼNC], not ‘[ṼC]’ (nor ‘/ṼC/’)!

This is quite natural because in French /n/ is the non-marked nasal phoneme, while /m/ is the marked one. Thus, when /m/ is followed by (even very) different contoids, it remains unchanged, as some examples have shown – except if followed by /f, v/: [mf, mv].

For sequences with (more) similar places of articulation, instead, assimilation is certainly current, because speakers (and teachers) are not generally aware of the differences, as with /mf, mv/. So, they are not even tempted to violate the nature of their language.

In Italian, assimilation is generally stronger, so that, for instance, from Latin /pt, kt/, as in *septem, octo* [ʼseptɛ, ʼɔkto], we had /tt/ *sette, otto* [ʼsette, ʼɔtto] (and also *settanta, ottanta* [setʰanta, ottanta]). In Russian, stop assimilation is not allowed, in fact even in *отца* [ɒtʰsa], we do not have [tʰts], as we will see better in the discussion in § 7.8.

## Stops (fig 7.2)

7.2.1. For the *stop manner of articulation*, the velum is raised (as in all of the manners which will follow, of course, except for the nasals, just seen), while a firm closure occurs.

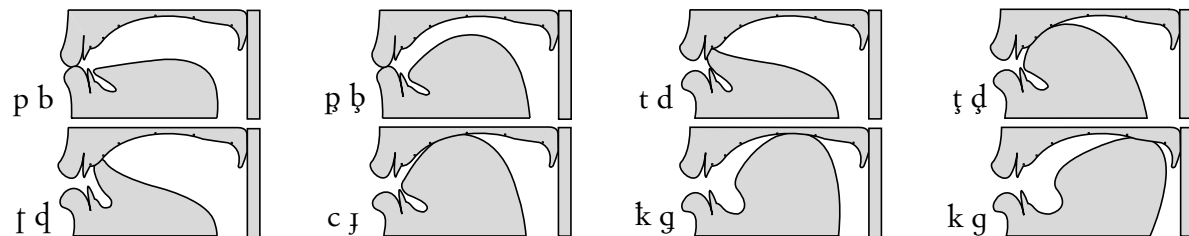
International Russian has three phonemically contrasting pairs: /p, b; t, d; k, g/. Unlike in English, the voiceless elements /p, t, k/ have no ‘aspiration’ at the beginning of stressed syllables, and the voiced ones remain fully voiced.

Examples: пар [ˈpaɾ], полип [pɐˈlʲip], бант [ˈbant], тон [ˈtɒn], дух [ˈduɕ], кот [ˈkɒt], лук [ˈlʲuk], гон [ˈɡɒn]. In addition, here are examples for the palatalized variants: петъ [ˈpɛɕ], пьёт [pʲjɒt], белка [ˈbɛɫkɐ], тюк [ˈtʲuk], батька [ˈbatʲkɐ], тьфу [ˈtʲfu], тля [ˈtʲla], тьма [ˈtʲma], день [ˈɕɛn], дня [ɕˈna], кит [ˈsit], ткёт [ˈtɕɒt], гибкий [ˈgʲipɕii], ноги [ˈnɒɟi] ‘feet’ (and [nɐˈɟi] ‘of the foot’).

And: миг [ˈmʲik], спутник [sˈputɲik], Рига [ˈrʲigɐ], анекдот [ɐnʲɪɕˈdɒt]. Notice that [k, ɟ] (occurring in tautosyllabic sequences /ik<sup>#</sup>, ik<sup>#</sup>, iɟ<sup>#</sup>C/) are articulated in an intermediate (prevelar) position between [k, ɟ] and [c, ɟʲ], which in English occur before front vowels or /j/, as in *cap*, *get* [ˈkʰæp, ˈɡɛɫ].

As can be seen, to ‘palatalize’ /p, b; t, d/ the dorsum is raised towards the palate – almost as for [j] – during the production of the normal articulation of the basic phones. Instead, for the ‘palatalized’ segments, the palatal stops are used, [c, ɟʲ]; thus, changing place of articulation, which is fronter.

fig 7.2. International Russian: stop phonemes & taxophones.



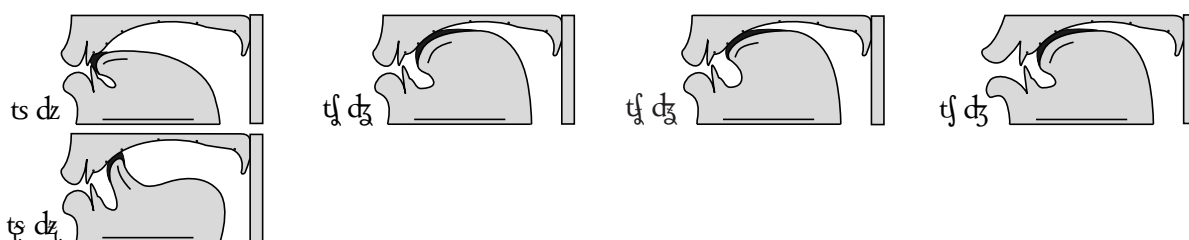
### Stop-strictives (or ‘affricates’ – fig 7.3)

7.3.1. English has just one (diphonic) pair of stopstrictive phonemes, /tʃ, dʒ/ [tʃ, dʒ] (British English): *church* [ˈtʃɜːtʃ], *judge* [dʒɛːdʒ]. Stopstrictives have a stop-like first half and a constrictive-like second half. And, of course, these two parts are homorganic – otherwise, one could not really speak of stopstrictives.

Consider, for instance, the *sequences* [ts, dz; tʃ, dʒ] (or, more accurately for French, [tʃ, dʒ]), such as, for example, *cats*, *heads* [ˈkʰæts, ˈhɛːdʒ], and French *patchouli*, *adjectif* [paʃˈʃuli, ˈadʒɛkˈtɪf], in comparison with (British) English *patchouli* [ˈpʰætʃ-əli, pʰəˈtʃhʊli] and *adjective* [ˈædʒ-ɪkˈtɪv].

Stopstrictives are unitary phones, or ‘sounds’. In fact, they have a total duration which is comparable to that of any other single phones, like [p, t, ɸ, k] or [f, s, ʃ, x], not like the sum of two of them (as in [ts, ps, ks, kx]).

fig 7.3. International Russian: stop-strictive phonemes (and possible variants).



Notice that, for segments, or phones, articulatory terms are preferable over auditory ones (and, of course, over acoustic ones, too), because they are much more adequate and clearer; as a matter of fact, generally, they are quite self-explanatory, if only they are accurate.

For this reason, we are happy to avoid the term ‘affricate’, in favor of a more descriptive and tangible (even verifiable) term, such as ‘prestopped constrictive’, which we will presently reduce to *stop-strictive*.

7.3.2. Russian has two stopstrictive phonemes, [ts, tʃ] (dental, and postalveo-palatal non-protruded, while in English the pair /tʃ, dʒ/ is protruded). Even in stressed syllables, they have no ‘aspiration’.

Examples: царь [ˈtʃaɾʲ], лицо [ˈlʲitʃo], отвести [ɐtʲvʲɪʂˈtʲi], час [ˈtʃas], хочу [xɐˈtʃu], луч [ˈlʲutʃ], точка [ˈtʃɔkə], член [tʃlʲɛn], отчего [ɐtʲtʃɪˈvʲo]. Both /ts/ and /tʃ/ are phonetically voiced before voiced diphonic consonants (different from [v], which is almost an approximant): плацдарм [pɫɛdʒˈdɑɾm], алчба [ɐlʲtʃˈbɑ], мяч за поле [ˈmʲaɕ zɐˈpɔlʲɪ].

### Constrictives (or ‘fricatives’ – fig 7.4)

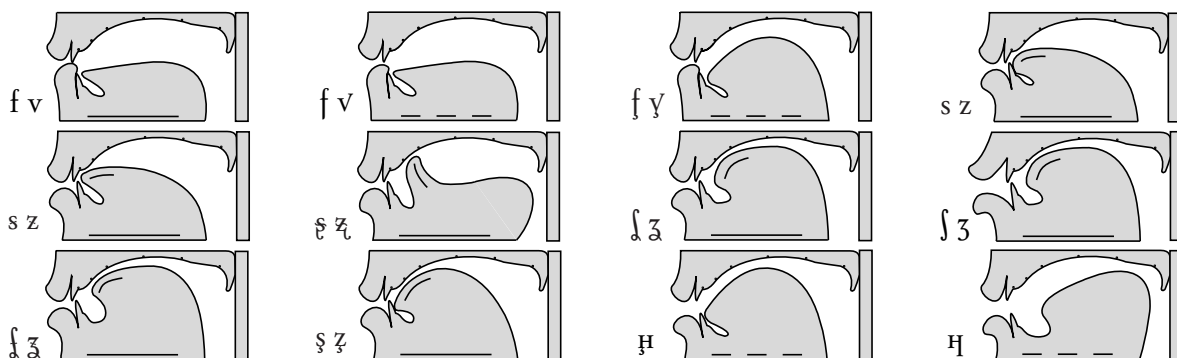
7.4.1. For the *constrictive manner of articulation*, the speaker brings the articulatory organs sufficiently close together that a noise of air friction is clearly audible, which however differs considerably in quality, depending upon the place of articulation.

For instance, English has four *diphonic pairs* of constrictives, ie [f, v; s, z; θ, ð; ʃ, ʒ], as in *five, seize, this thing, ash, rouge* [ˈfaɪv, ˈsriz, ðɪsˈθɪŋ, ˈæʃ, ˈruːʒ] (British English).

The term *constrictive* is clearer and more appropriate, since it is articulatory in nature, and therefore easier to put into concrete relationship with the production of the sounds in question. However, due to a sort of pernicious inertia, the term ‘fricative’ is still more common (the term is auditory, but semantically much less transparent).

7.4.2. The correct articulation of *constrictives* is also quite important in order to approach a genuine pronunciation of languages. English has /f, v; s, z; ʃ, ʒ/. Let us also notice that Russian /f, v/ are not full constrictives, but semi-constrictives, ie less noisy.

fig 7.4. International Russian: stop-strictives & taxophones (including English [f, v; ʃ, ʒ], for comparison).



Examples: за [ʰza], зев [ʰzɛf], зима [zi'maʰ], знать [z'natʰ], зов [ʰzɔf], зонт [ʰzɔnt], зрелый [z'ʁɛ'ʎi].

Let us compare: сад [ʰsat], зад [ʰzat], собор [sɐ'bɔɾ], забор [zɐ'bɔɾ], совет [sɐ'ʋɛt], завет [zɐ'ʋɛt], сев [ʰʂɛf], зев [ʰzɛf], сов [ʰsɔf], but зов [ʰzɔf], суп [ʰsup], зуб [ʰzup], суд [ʰsut], зуд [ʰzut]; весло [ʋis'ʎɔ], (ему) везло [ʋiz'ʎɔ], коса [kɐ'sa], коза [kɐ'za], раса [ra'sɛ], (два) раза [ra'zɛ].

Certain Russian speakers have dentalveolar [s, z], which are indicated only here (and fig 7.4), with possible oscillations. Besides, there are the palatalized taxophones: сеть [ʰʂɛʎ], осень [ʰɔ'ʂiɲ], всё [ʰʂɔ], весь [ʰʋɛʂ], зять [ʰzətʰ], озеро [ʰɔ'ziriɐ], просьба [p'ɾɔʂbɛ], сделать [z'ʂɛ'ʎɛʎ], изъять [iz'jətʰ].

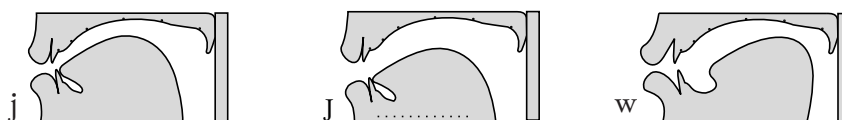
### Approximants (fig 7.5)

7.5. The *approximant manner of articulation* is distinguished from the *constrictive* manner in that the articulatory organs are less close together, and, as a result, they produce a less apparent noise. In fact, this noise is mostly heard only in voiceless approximants, while in voiced ones it is usually covered over by the voice produced by the vibration of the vocal folds.

English has three approximant phonemes /j, w, h/, as in *yes* [jɛs], *wet* [wɛt], *hat* [hæt]. Instead, international Russian has only one *approximant* phoneme: [j], (voiced) palatal, but it has a number of semi-approximants in native-like and neutral pronunciations, as we will see, not only for /j/, but also in other cases with no real correspondence to a true phoneme.

Here are some examples of /j/ [j]: я [ja], уютно [u'jutnɐ], твоё [tvɐ'jɔ], новая [nɔ'ʋɛjɐ], паи [pɐ'ji], война [ʋɔ'jinɐ], воин [ʋɔ'jin], в мае [v'majɪ], деление [dɛ'ʎɛɲi], знание [z'nɐɲi].

fig 7.5. International Russian: approximant phonemes (and a native-like semi-approximant variant in unstressed syllables for /j/ [ɲ]).



### Rhotics (fig 7.6)

7.6. International Russian has one phoneme of the 'trill' type, actually a tap, [ɾ], which is similar to Spanish *r* /ɾ/ [ɾ], as in *interpretar*, *caro* [in'tɛɾpɾɛ'tar, 'kaɾo], not as in *carro*, (*la*) *radio* ['karrɔ, (la)'ɾi:ɔ'djo]. A realization like [ɾ] is sufficient for a fairly acceptable and easily comprehensible pronunciation of Russian. Of course, its palatalized taxophone, [ɾʎ], must be added, including words in which we have [ɾʎ], not [ʎʎ], in addition to words with [ɾC], for /ɾjC/.

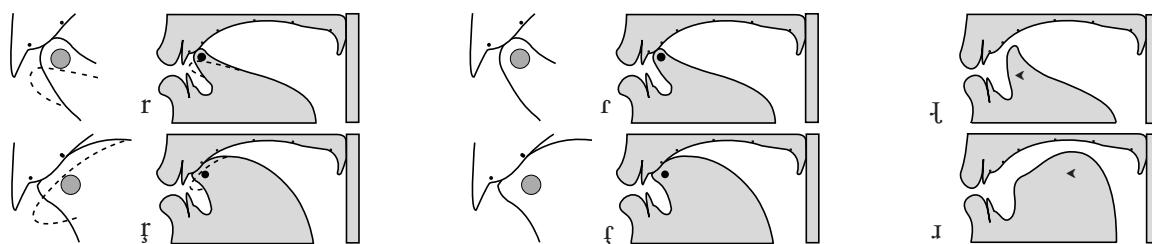
Examples: рот [ɾɔt], пора [pɐ'ra], хор [xɔɾ], рта [ɾ'ta], ржи [ɾ'ʂi], бобр [bɔɾ]



br], театр [tʲi'atr], портить [p'ortʲitʲ], марля [marlʲɔ]. And: речь [rʲetʲʃ], корень [k'osʲɪŋ], словарь [sʲlɐvʲarʲ], борьба [b'orʲba], зорька [z'orʲkɐ], крюк [k'ruk].

However, the English phoneme corresponding to *r* is quite different, and with American and British differences (cf fig 7.6): *red* [rɪp, ɹɪp], *carry* [k'hæɹɪ, -ɹɪ], *far* [fɑɹ, fɑ:], *smart* [smɑɹɪ, 'smɑɹɪ]. It is very important not to use these English realizations, and mostly not to reduce [r] to a zero phone, [∅].

fig 7.6. International Russian: /r/ phoneme & taxophones (with possible trills, [r, ɾ], mostly used in emphatic speech), including English /r/ for comparison: British [ɹ], American [ɹ].



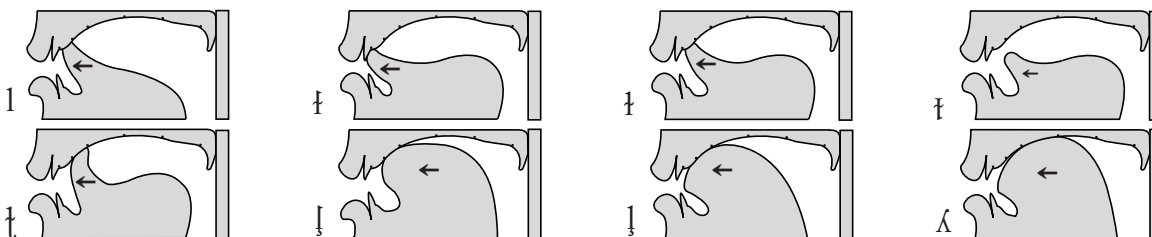
### Laterals (fig 7.6)

7.7. For the *lateral manner of articulation*, the tongue, while touching a point on the palatal vault, also contracts laterally, thereby permitting air to flow out by the sides of the tongue, for /l/ [l, l̥] (alveolar and velarized alveolar), as in English *lilt* [lɪl̥t], or [l, ɭ] (respectively, alveolar –again– and palatal), as in Castilian Spanish *la calle* [la'kaʎe], or as in Italian *figliola* [fiʎ'ɔ:la]. Some varieties of English have [l̥], or a semi-velarized [l̥] alveolar, even before vowels; there can even be a velarized semi-lateral [l̥], or the change into some (non-neutral) vocoids like [o], back-central higher-mid rounded, before consonants or pauses: *lilt* [l̥ɪl̥t, ɹɪl̥t, ɹɪoɹt]. In English, heterosyllabic /lj/ is [lj], as in *million* [mɪljən].

International Russian has only one *lateral* phoneme, /l/ [l̥], with its palatalized taxophone [l̥]. Certain speakers can have a velarized *dental* articulation (cf fig 7.7).

Examples: лук [l̥uk], акула [ɐ'kuɫɐ], мол [m'ol̥], солдат [sɐɫ'dat], волшебный [vɐɫʲɕɐbnɔ]; and люк [l̥uk], пучья [p'utʲɐ], моль [m'ol̥]; even before [tʃ] we have [l̥]: молча [m'ol̥tʃɐ] (but cf обольщать [ɐbɐɫʲʃʲatʲ], for /lj/).

fig 7.7. International Russian: lateral phoneme & taxophones [& English variants [l, l̥]].



### Considerations on some articulatory differences

7.8.1. We have already seen examples of the taxophones of /m, r, l/, and in particular those of /n/. Let us, now, consider some further peculiar sequences, with interesting taxophones: *отца* [ɐtʰtsaʰ], *Заходцы* [zɐʰɕottsi], *чадцы* [tʰɕattsɨ], *отзыв* [ʰɔdzɨf], *худший* [xʉtʂɨi], *от жены* [ɐdʰʒɛni], *отжить* [ɐdʰʒitʂ], *лётчик* [lʰɔtʂɨk]; *оттепель* [ʰottɕipɨ], *отсечь* [ɐtʂɛtʂ] (some speakers have [tʂ], instead of [tʂ]).

Notice that sequences phonemically formed by /t/ followed by grooved stop-strictives are realized as stop contoids, which are homorganic to the following contoids, but are *not* fully assimilated to them. In fact, these are slit stops, [t, d; t̥, d̥; t̥̥, d̥̥], not grooved ones as, for instance, in Italian *pozzo* [ˈpotsːtso], *rozzo* [ˈrodzːdzo] (or *faccio* [ˈfatʂːtʂo], *oggi* [ˈɔdʒːdʒi]).

These first unreleased parts of the Italian geminates are grooved as their released second parts are. Instead, in Italian *rotto* [ˈrotto], there is a slit for both [t]’s, but a groove for both [ts]’s. And it is absurd to claim that [tst̥, tʂt̥] are absurd transcriptions. In fact, they are [t̥st̥, t̥ʂt̥], just like [t̥t̥], or [ʂ̥ʂ̥], or [m̥m̥] (with unreleased first elements); certainly not anything like (truly absurdly) [t̥s̥t̥, t̥ʂ̥t̥, t̥t̥, ʂ̥ʂ̥, m̥m̥] (with released first elements).

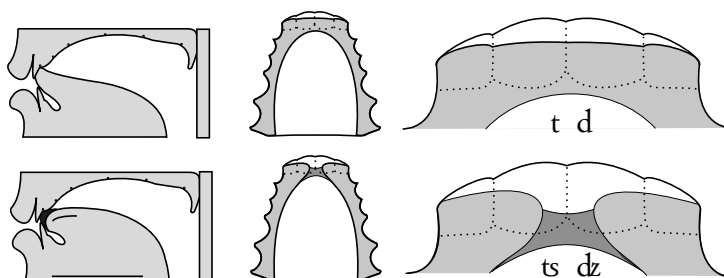
7.8.2. Let us add that the transitions from a preceding vocoid to even unreleased [t̥, ts̥, tʂ̥] are perceptibly different, if one listens to them carefully. Thus, there is no real reason for having to mark those contoids in a particular way (either with a diacritic, or with special symbols).

fig 7.8 shows the difference between the hold stage of [t, d] and [ts, dz]. The latter are clearly grooved, even during their stop stage. This is quite a natural fact, which is fairly easily perceived during the transition from a preceding vocoid to the contoid in question.

In fact, the groove is certainly not a kind of open pipe, as the orogram shows, since the curved line does not reach the apex. Besides, the actual contact by the apex is not exactly the same for [t] and [ts], as shown.

In earlier books we (ie LC) did not think it necessary to explain this quite natural fact. But, seeing how difficult it is to make people realize this obvious fact, fig 7.8 was drawn on purpose.

fig 7.8. Comparison between dental (slit) stops [t, d] and (grooved) stop-strictives [ts, dz]. Let us notice that the orogram of the latter pair shows that the sides of the tongue are raised, because of the groove.



The realization of /ts, dz/ as [ts, dz] (ie [[t<sub>s</sub>, d<sub>z</sub>]]) is a typical regional pronunciation of practically almost all Northern Italian native speakers. In fact, even if they either also speak their local dialect or only the deriving regional form of Italian, they do not realize the difference with true /ts, dz/ [ts, dz]. Also phoneticians seem not to be able to do so.

A similar thing happens to English native speakers (including phoneticians), when they confuse alveolar flaps, [ɾ], as in *Betty* [ˈbɛɪ], and taps, [ɾ], as in old-fashioned *Berry* [ˈbɛɪ] (or Spanish *caro* [ˈkaɾo], or Italian *caro* [ˈkaɾo]).

The same is true, when they confuse (and, practically, exchange) a postalveolar British-like [ɹ] and a prevelar American-like [ɹ], as in *Berry* [ˈbɛɹi] and [ˈbɛɪ], respectively (cf fig 7.6).

7.8.3. Even in Russian, we also find sequences similar to (neutral) Italian ones, ie with grooved first parts, when they correspond to ч /tʃ/ (which is grooved even when homorganically assimilated to a following contoid, and clearly different from the slit ones, as in *отца* [ɐtˈtsaʲ], seen above): *лучше* [ˈlʉtʃʂi], *Не плачь, Женя!* [nɛpˈtadʒ ʒɛˈnɛ].

In fact, when Russian speakers utter Italian words like *pazzo*, *pazzia*, which are [ˈpatsːso, patsˈtsiːa], they actually produce [ˈpʌttʂɐ, pɐtˈtsiɐ].

Should someone use *нет-с*, we would hear [nɛtʂ], which is different from both [tts] and [ts]! Let us also consider a case of marked non-assimilation, as in a word like *подъезд* [pɐdˈjɛst], in which /d/ is not influenced by the following /j/, as even spelling successfully shows. In fact, we have /d-j/ [dʲ], not /dj/ [dʲ].

## ‘Native-like international’ Russian consonants

7.9.1. Of course, a transcription of normal international Russian (ie not its native-like variant) could use fewer symbols, as it does for the vowels, which have only two additional taxophones (as in the table of fig 6.1).

This could be done especially for similar contoids (as it already does for /j/ [j, j]), such as [ɲ, ɲ; ɳ, ɳ; k, k; g, g; ʎ, ʎ; ʟ, ʟ], which are quite logically rather similar. But, exactly for this reason, they can certainly be of help, instead of creating problems.

Therefore, notice that all the taxophones included in the table of fig 7.9 might seem to be a complication, especially for foreigners. However, they certainly contribute to render pronunciation simpler and more natural.

7.9.2. Briefly, let us see the most important differences between the consonants of ‘international’ pronunciation, seen up to now, and those of ‘native-like international’ pronunciation. This presents fewer simplification and, of course, is closer to neutral pronunciation, given in ¶ 10-13.

In fact, in the table of fig 7.9, there are more contoids than those sufficient for simple international Russian (cf fig 6.1).

Let us start with [tʂ, dʂ], which occur before vowels, or finally, while [t, d] occur



## 10.

# Neutral pronunciation: vowels

10.1. In § 6-9 (modern) neutral Russian pronunciation will be described accurately, in order to refine one's own pronunciation of Russian, so that it may coincide with that of neutral native speakers.

Unfortunately, Russian spelling is clearly based on morphological principles, which decisively prefer lexical and grammatical structures (even diachronic!), instead of phonic ones. These last are considered in a more abstract way, more phonemically, but with a prevailing morphologic aspect.

However, Russian spelling presents rather 'spontaneously' vocalic and consonantal phonemics, right as 'naïve' speakers can perceive it. Not as 'sophisticated' linguists often do, with unfruitful complications.

In fact, Russian spelling basically uses *six vowel graphemes*, which correspond exactly to the real number of vowel phonemes: и, э, а, о, у, ы /i, e, a, o, u, i/. Obviously, е, я, ё, ю do not indicate 'vowels', but sequences of /j/ + /e, a, o, u/, realized as [j] or [ç] + [e, a, o, u] – or with 'interpalatal' vocoids, [e, a, o, u], which occur between [j, ç, i], including diphthongs, [Vi].

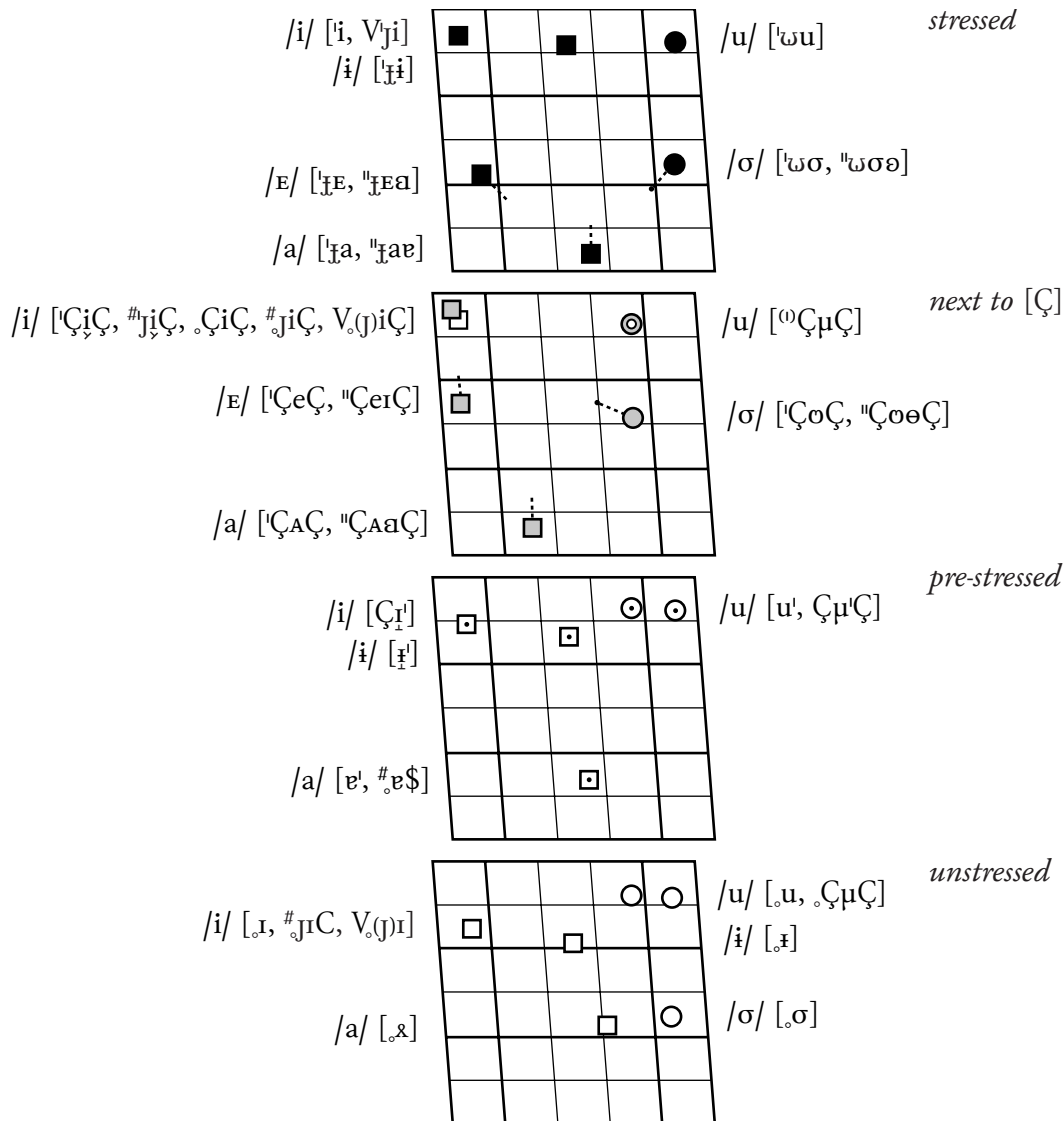
These *six vowel phonemes* (obviously, displayed in a phonic order), 22 *consonantal phonemes* would be sufficient (possibly including traditional [ʒ], nowadays replaced by [ʒ̣, ʒ̣̣]), against more than 30 –from 33 till 39– phonemes of other analyses. Thus, persisting in using only five vowels, both the whole phonemic inventory and the relation between pronunciation and spelling are uselessly complicated.

By comparing our phonemic system with all others, the choice is simple and even obvious. In fact, it seems to be more logical and natural to conclude by saying that Russian consonants have 'palatalized' taxophones. These are caused by /i, j/, rather than having to imagine some 'soft' consonants, which would make Russian speakers –automatically– produce some 'soft' vowels, while 'hard' consonants would make the speakers produce 'hard' vowels. All this, under the false pretext that 'Russian speakers are unable to produce a clear *i* [i] after *k* [k] (such a misbelief has been proven wrong so many times).

However, by this time, it is better to avoid using purely phonemic transcriptions. On the contrary, it is far better to use anything that can help to definitively seize the Russian phonic system. Therefore, it is always better to use more symbols rather than fewer. Obviously, this is even more important in more meticulous chapters.



fig 11.2. (Modern) Neutral Russian: vowels (by prosodic sets).



10.3. In stressed syllables, the six vowel phonemes are realized as indicated by the black markers in fig 10.1 (obviously, the black ones with a white center also correspond to unstressed contexts, which we will see afterwards): три [tʰi], эра [ɛɛʰ], как [kʰak], тот [tʷσt], ум [ʷum], быт [bʰit]. We also have: мех [ʰɛɛʰ], шаг [ʰʂak], жук [ʰʷuk].

While /i/ [i, i] remains unchanged (except in /ji/ [ji, jɪ], which also represents e in unstressed syllables), the most important element, instead, is the insertion of the prevelar semiapproximant [ɣ] before stressed [ɛ, a, i], and of the velar rounded semiapproximant [ʷ] before stressed [σ, u]. All of them are preceded by a consonant different from [j, tʃ, ʃ], and possible traditional [ʒʒ].

Thus, in stressed syllables, the vowels that are different from /i/ are realized as sequences of [ɣ] + [ɛ, a, i], or of [ʷ] + [σ, u].

Obviously, the semiapproximants [ɣ, ʷ] are less 'evident' than (full) approximants, such as the prevelar [j] (not included in fig 10.2, because it does not occur

in Russian), and the velar rounded approximant [w]. In English, [w] occurs in *wet* [ˈwɛt], *quit* [ˈkwɪt], but [ɣ, ɔ] are quite another thing, also in comparison with a phonic zero, [∅] (although ‘linguistically naïve’ Russian speakers may be convinced to hear exactly [∅]).

In Russian, we have: эра [ɛˈrɑ] (already seen), кант [ˈkɑnt], тот [ˈtɔt], уника́м [ˈʉnɪkɑm]. However, in unstressed syllables, the semiapproximant [ɣ, ɔ] do not occur, as we will see in examples to come.

It is important to also explain, from the start, the palatalizing function that the phonemes /i, j/ have on the consonants which precede them.

But we have to anticipate, here, the triple division of Russian consonants. In fact, there are ‘normal’ consonants, which can be *palatalized*: [m, m̟; n, n̟; r, r̟; ɫ, ɫ̟], [p, p̟; b, b̟; t, t̟; d, d̟; k, c; g, ɟ], [f, f̟; v, v̟; s, s̟; z, z̟; ɣ, ɣ̟].

Besides, there are true *palatal* consonants (with an actual palatal element): [j, j̟; t̟̟(j), d̟̟(j); ʃ̟̟(j), z̟̟(j)]. In addition, there are *non-palatal* consonants: [ts; ʃ̟, ʒ̟], which are never palatalized (in spite of spelling sequences like ⟨цш, ше, жь⟩: [ʃ̟ʃuˈ] шью).

We must always keep in mind, therefore, that ‘[tsi; ʃ̟i, ʒ̟i]’ do not occur any longer in contemporary Russian. They are substituted by [ˈtsɣ̟i, ˈtsɣ̟; ˈʃ̟ɣ̟i, ˈʃ̟ɣ̟; ˈʒ̟ɣ̟i, ˈʒ̟ɣ̟], in spite of historical spellings with ц, ш, ж followed by и, е, я, ё, ю, ь.

10.4. Let us look at fig 10.3-5 to well understand the role of the (semi)approximants they show, inspecting accurately fig 10.3.

fig 10.3. (Modern) Neutral Russian: vowels (preceded by approximant & semi-approximants).

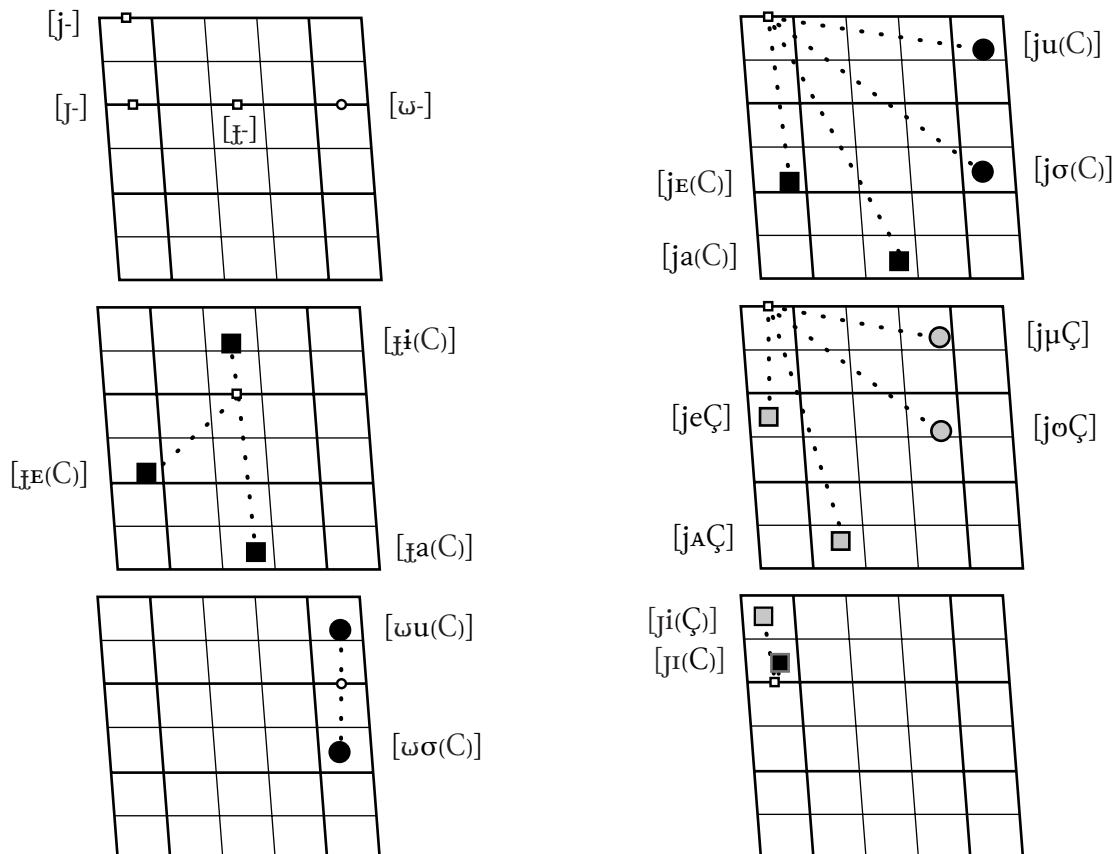




fig 10.4 shows first two approximants, [j, w] (respectively, palatal and velar rounded): English *yet* [ˈjɛt], *win* [ˈwɪn:], and Russian явный [ˈjavɲɪ].

The double arrows on the dorsum indicate that, tendentially, these are mobile contoids during their production, not static ones, like vocoids. In fact, the contoids are distinguished from [i, u] mostly because of this characteristic, in addition to a shorter emission. They could be indicated by means of [j̣, ẉ] (but it is not worthwhile).

The bottom row gives three semi-approximants [ɟ, ʝ, ɰ] (respectively, palatal, prevelar, and velar rounded). Continuing the parallel between [j, w] and [i, u], also [ɟ, ʝ, ɰ] correspond to [ɛ̣, ə̣, ɔ̣] (again, it is not worthwhile to use vowels with a diacritical sign).

Instead, fig 10.5 shows the five vocoids [i, ɛ, a, ɔ, u] which, in stressed syllables, are preceded by [ɟ, w]: [ˈɟi, ˈɟɛ, ˈɟa], [ˈwɔ, ˈwu]. In the corresponding orograms, we have superimposed the dotted line which refers to the dorsum during the production of [ɟ] or [w], as a starting point at the beginning of the production of the sequences [ˈɟi, ˈɟɛ, ˈɟa], [ˈwɔ, ˈwu].

fig 10.4. (Modern) Neutral Russian: (semi)approximants occurring before vowels – cf fig 10.3.

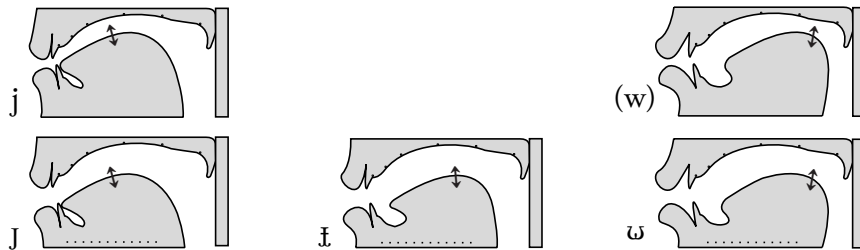


fig 10.5. (Modern) Neutral Russian: sequences of (semi)approximants and stressed vowels.

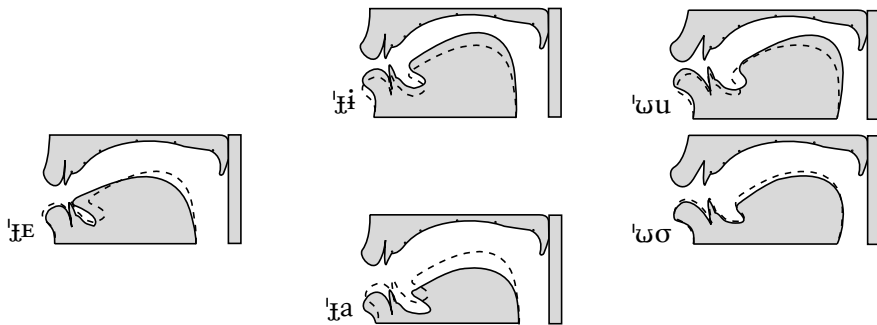
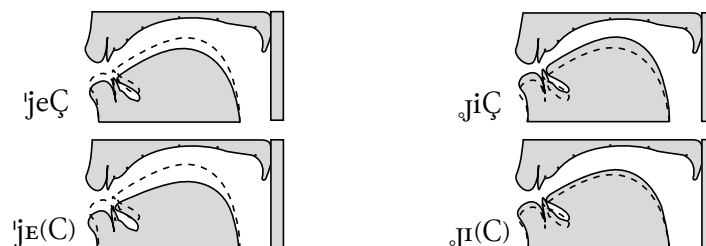


fig 10.6. (Modern) Neutral Russian: vowels in /ˈjɛ, ˈji/ sequences.



As can easily be seen, for [ʲɪ], passing from the contoid to the vocoid, the mandible and dorsum are raised: сын [sʲɪn], цирк [ʲɪrk]. For [ʲɛ], instead, there is a slight forward lowering (but certainly also the tongue-lamina position is important, since it distinguishes clearly the two phones, perceptively different): жест [ʲɛst], эра [ʲɛrɔ]. On the other hand, for [ʲa], there is a considerable general vertical lowering: да [dʲa], ад [ʲat].

Passing to the two back vocoids, for [ʲɔ], we have a slight lowering of the mandible, dorsum and lower lip: кот [kʲɔt], ось [ʲɔs]. Instead, for [ʲu], the mandible and dorsum are raised, in addition to the backing of the dorsum and a stronger lip rounding: тут [tʲut], ухо [ʲuxɔ].

10.5. Let see, now, fig 10.6, which shows, on the left, the stressed syllables [ʲeɕ, ʲe(C)]. As can be seen, the first one occurs in ‘interpalatal’ contexts, and, passing to the vocoid, it has some lowering of the dorsum and mandible, slightly more considerable for [ʲe(C)]: есть [ʲeʂtʲ], ест [ʲest].

On the right, instead, we see the corresponding unstressed situation again for е (and also я): [ʲiɕ, ʲi(C)] (but [#ʲiɕ, #ʲi(C)]). For both sequences, the mandible, dorsum and lower lip are raised, obviously more strongly for [i], which is higher: е-динный [jʲiɕiɲnʲi], естество [jʲistʲistʲvʲɔsʲ], ячeya [jʲiɕʲiʲa], язык [jʲiɕʲik], старая [stʲarʲɔjɔ], белое [bʲelʲɔjɔ], красивые [krʲɛʲsiɲvʲijɔ], известие [izʲvʲestʲijɔ].

10.6. Here are some examples, also for other contexts and combinations: мир [mʲirɕ], восемь [vʲɔsʲʲimʲ], небо [nʲebʲɔ], коньки [kɔɲʲki], рис [rʲis], зорька [zʲɔrʲkɔ], корь [kʲɔrʲ], лес [lʲes], большой [bʲelʲʲɔsʲi], соль [sʲɔlʲ], пел [pʲelʲ], топь [tʲɔpʲ], бюст [bʲust], тело [tʲelʲɔ], мать [mʲatʲ], тля [tʲlʲa], дети [dʲetʲɪ], две [dʲvʲe, dʲvʲe], длина [dʲlʲɪnʲɔ], кит [sit], маникюр [mʲɔɲʲisʲurʲ], ноги [nʲɔsʲʲi] (‘legs, feet’, or [nʲeʲʲi] ‘of the leg/foot’), финик [fʲinʲik], кровь [kʲrʲɔsʲ], весь [vʲesʲ], все [fʲʂe] (also всё [fʲʂɔ]) гусь [gʲusʲ], зима [zʲimʲɔ], тихий [tʲiʲɲii].

Obviously, also [tʲ, tʲʲV, dʲ] /tʲʲ/, [ʲ(ɔ)] /ʲ(ɔ)/ count as [ɕ]: (and traditional [zʲɔ] /zʲɔ/, as well): чек [tʲʲek], хочу [xʲɔtʲʲu], член [tʲʲlʲen], алчба [ɔlʲtʲʲbʲɔ], щит [ʲʂit], ищу [iʲʂʲu], товарищ [tʲevʲɔrʲiʲʂ(ɔ)].

The phoneme [zʲɔ] /zʲɔ/ is less important, and typical of an outdated and traditional kind of pronunciation: вожжи [vʲɔsʲzʲɪ], ежy [jezʲɔ]. More modern and more recommendable pronunciation has [zʲɔ] /zʲɔ/, in almost all words: [vʲɔsʲzʲɪ, jezʲɔ].

Let us observe that initial [j], or after a vowel, corresponds to [ɕ] par excellence (keeping well in mind that е, я, ё, ю count as [j]+[e, e], [j]+[a, a], [j]+[ɔ, o], [j]+[u, u]). In fact, they are simply [jV] sequences, certainly not ‘diphthongs’, since the only possible diphthongs, in natural phonetics, can just be [VV] – not even [VʲV] or [VʲV]): язык [jʲiɕʲik], ел [jeɕʲ], я [ja], ёж [jɔʲʂ], юг [juk], моя [mʲeʲja], союз [sʲeʲjus], двое [dʲvʲɔsʲʲi], новая [nʲɔsʲvʲɔjɔ], синее [ʲsiɲijɔ].

10.7. Five vowels, /i, e, a, o, u/, can occur between palatal(ized) contoids, [ɕ]. They are realized as closer <sup>or</sup> fronter, as shown by the grey markers, [i, e, a, o, u]

(fig 10.1): бить [bʲitʲ], ель [jɛ̞lʲ], пять [pʲatʲ], тётя [tʲɔtʲɤ], тюфяк [tʲɤfʲak].

Instead, /i/ does not occur either in this context, nor in word-initial position. But we find ə [ʰ.ɪ]: элемент [ɪlʲimɛnt] (or, in mediatic pronunciation, [ʰ.ə, ʰɪ]: [ə]lʲim-). Such a phenomenon originated the myth of the complementarity of [i, ɪ], thus gathered into a single phoneme ‘/i/’, with the false delusion about a ‘better’ phonemic system – when the opposite is true.

It is not easy to correct ‘diverted’ schooling, especially when official spelling is concerned (with all its problems, either well known or not) and ‘para-spelling’, used both in schools and in ‘scientific’ books, with phonemic ambitions (almost alchemic, with complex formulae and esoteric iconograms (which we will be careful not to report).

The first vocogram of fig 10.1 also gives three ‘potential’ phonetic diphthongs, [ɛa, aɐ, ɔə], which can replace [ɛ, a, ɔ] (with their ‘interpalatal’ variants, [ɛɪ, aɪ, ɔə]), for [ɛ, a, ɔ]), mostly in tunes, in free syllables, either final or internal: все [fʲʂɛ, fʲʂɛa], всё [fʲʂɔ, fʲʂɔə], эхо [ʲɛɤ, ʲɛaɤ], да [dʲɤa, dʲɤaɐ], атом [ʲaɤtɤm, ʲaɤtɤm], дети [dʲɛtʲɪ, dʲɛɪtʲɪ], дядя [dʲɤaɤɤ, dʲɤaɤɤ], дно [dʲnɔɔ, dʲnɔə], голос [gɔɔtʲɤs, gɔətʲɤs], тётя [tʲɔtʲɤ, tʲɔətʲɤ].

These diphthongs also occur for emphasis, then becoming even longer. So, in free syllables, we find [ɛa, ɛɪ; aɐ, aɪ; ɔə, ɔə]: все [fʲʂɛa], всё [fʲʂɔə], эхо [ʲɛɤaɤ], да [dʲɤaɐ], атом [ʲaɤtɤm], дети [dʲɛtʲɪ], дядя [dʲɤaɤɤ], дно [dʲnɔə], голос [gɔətʲɤs], тётя [tʲɔtʲɤ]. In checked syllables, [ɛa, ɛɪ; aɐ, aɪ; ɔə, ɔə]: нет! [nɛat], день [dʲɛɪn], пять! [pʲatʲ], дом! [dɔəm], Ёль [jɔə].

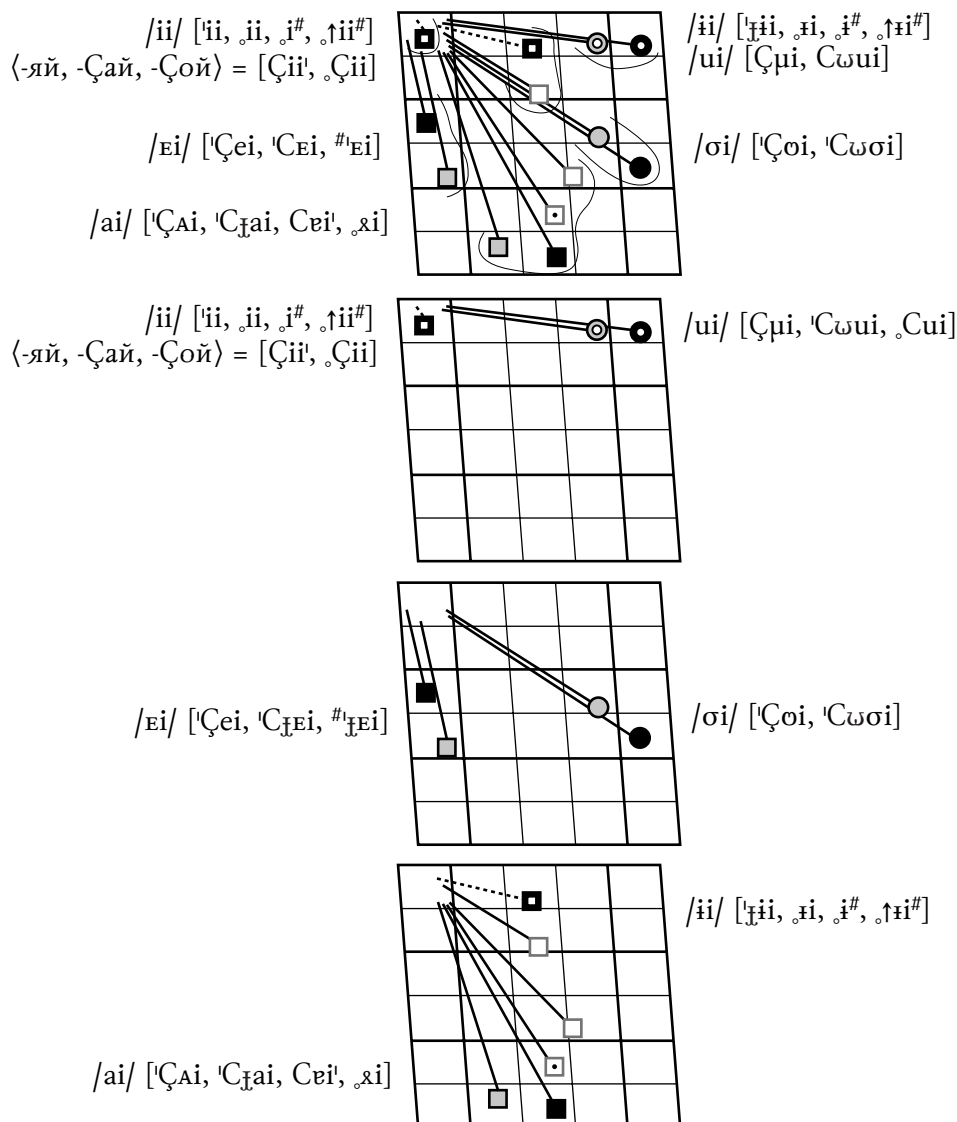
10.8. Russian also has some ‘official’ diphthongs (cf fig 10.7), with a high front second element /Vi/ [Vi]. Here are some examples in stressed syllables: кий [ciɪ], пейте [pɛɪtʲɪ], май [mɤai], чай [tʲɤai], бой [bɔɪ], зарёй [zɛɪɔɪ], дуйте [dʲuɪtʲɪ], дюйм [dʲɤɪm], выйду [vɤɪdu]. As can be seen, their spelling uses -й, for the diphthongs that grammar recognizes. We always have [Vi], even in unstressed syllables: улей [uɪliɪ], Чайковский [tʲɤiɪkɔɔfscii, tʲɤi-], тайга [tɛɪgɤa], делайте [dʲɛɪtʲɪtʲɪ], уйду [uɪdʲu], дюймовка [dʲɤɪmɔɔfkɤ], белый [bɛɪtʲɪ].

However, especially in loans, we find further diphthongs, as in: радио [raɤɤɪa, rɔɪɔ], Фауст [fɤaust], каучук [kɛuɤtʲɤk], какао [kɛkɤa, rɔɪɔ], ноу-хау [nɔuɤɤa], шоу [ʂɔu] (also Шоу [ʂɔu], for *Shaw*).

Surely, such purely graphic ill-defined ‘diphthongs’ as ии, ия, еи, ее, ае, ая, аю, ое, ые do not correspond to *phono-diphthongs*. In fact, they are true bisyllabic sequences [°VjV], with an unstressed last syllable and the preceding one either stressed or not): в Италии [vɪtʲɤaɪɪ] (in traditional pronunciation [vɪ-]), в России [vrɛʂɪɪ], лилия [lʲɪlʲɪjɤ], музей/-ее [muɤɛɪ] (cf музей [muɤɛɪ]), осеннее [ɔʂɛɪɪ], в мае [vɤaɪ], нерушимая [nɪɪuʂɪɪmɤjɤ], знаю [znɤaɪu], новое [nɔɔvɤɪ], южные [juɤɤnɪ].

In quick pronunciation, when at least one of the two [V] is /i/ [i, ɪ], rather regularly, [j] can be dropped, independently from the kind of structure it may have. However, normally, a possible semichrone [˙] remains: [vɪtʲɤaɪɪ, vrɛʂɪɪ, lʲɪlʲɪjɤ, muɤɛɪ] (cf музей [muɤɛɪ]) and [ɔʂɛɪɪ, vɤaɪ, nɔɔvɤɪ, juɤɤnɪ].

fig 10.7. (Modern) Neutral Russian: diphthongs (first, all together; afterwards, by couples).



As these last transcriptions show, also [-iʲ#] remains, without becoming [-iʲ#], as if they were true phonemic diphthongs (unless [-iʲ#] is followed, in a sentence, by [Ҙ] or [i, ʲ], thus, becoming, [-iʲ#], by assimilation): спелое яблоко [sʲpʲeʲʲɔʲjɔʲ ʲjabʲɫɔʲkɔʲ] ‘ripe apple’.

Obviously, also examples like the following are bisyllabic: мои [mɔʲjʲi], паук [pɔʲʲuk], поэт [pɔʲʲet], дуэль [duʲʲelʲ]. They would be bisyllabic even if uttered with no [j] (in quick pronunciation), or without [ʲ, ʲ] (in international pronunciation).

Let us add, instead, that the unstressed endings [ʲiʲ] -ий/-ей and [ʲeʲ] -ый (and -ий/-ей), in quick speech, in protunes (but not in tunes), tend to become monophthongs with [-i, -e], respectively: синий [ʲʂiʲnʲiʲ], синий платок [ʲʂiʲnʲiʲ pʲlɔʲtɔʲk] ‘blue handkerchief’; синей [ʲʂiʲnʲiʲ], синей скатерти [ʲʂiʲnʲiʲ skɔʲtʲɛʲrtʲi] ‘of the blue tablecloth’; мальи́й [mɔʲʲaʲʲiʲ], Мале́ый Театр [mɔʲʲaʲʲiʲ tʲɛʲatr, tʲɛʲatrʲ] ‘Small Theater’.

10.9. As for vowels in *unstressed syllables*, in addition to what some examples have already shown, in modern pronunciation we have (for ‘traditional’ and ‘mediatic’ pronunciations of  $\Phi$  10-11): [ɪ, ɪ, i̇] /i/ (including [̇i̇] – thus, /i/ is [i], when followed by [̇] or /i/, even in sentences, with no pause), [e', #̇e, ̇a] /a/, [u] /u/, [ɪ', ̇ɪ] /i̇/.

In the first vocogram of fig 10.1, the markers corresponding to [ɪ', ̇ɪ] (pretonic, or prestressed, that is immediately followed by a stressed syllable) have a small dot in their center and the corresponding symbols have adequate diacritics: in fact, they are higher than other [̇ɪ, ̇ɪ], because they are intermediate between [i̇, i̇] and [̇ɪ, ̇ɪ].

Here are some examples: часы [ṫʃɪ'sṫɪ], пяти [pɪ'ṫɪ], языка [jɪzɪ'k̇ʃa], обычай [e'ḃɪ'ṫɪ], ералаш [jɪrɛ'ṫʃaʃ], перемели [pɪ'ɪmɪ'l̇ɪ], электричество [ɪlɪk'ṫrɪ'ṫɪsṫv̇ʃ], поле [pɒl̇ɪ]; голова [gɒlɒv̇ʃa], авангард [e'vɛŋ'ġart, -ŋ'g-], красная [k'rɛ'sṅʃa]; урок [u'rɒk], дому [dɒṁu], сюда [ʃu'ḋʃa], сюсюкать [ʃu'ʃu'k̇ʃṫ]; цивилизация [tsɪvɪlɪ'żʃatṡɪʃa], жена [ʒ̇ɪ'ṅʃa], дыры [ḋɪ'ṙɪ].

For я in unstressed syllable (also for a preceded by [̇]), it is important to explain that neutral pronunciation has only /i/. In addition, there is a transversal use of [ɜ, ə], which is definitely non-neutral (or even [ɜ, e] /a/), occurring either in traditional or mediatic pronunciation (also for neutral speakers, one way or another!).

This can happen either within lexemes or in inflected forms with consonantal ending grammemes (я+C, ̇a+C, due to undue influence by forms with the ending grammeme -я#, with /ja/ [̇ʃa, j̇a]). Let us reassert that the pronoun я never reduces to /i/, differently from для (preposition), which can even become [ḋl̇ɪ, ḋl̇ɪ'̇].

Thus, we have: пятно [pɪ'ṫnɒ], прят-, прят-, язык [jɪ'żɪk, j̇z-, j̇z-], языки [jɪzɪ'cɪ, j̇z-, j̇z-], поглядел [pɒgl̇ɪ'ḋʃɛ, j̇ɔ-, j̇ɔ-], начат [ṅʃa'ṫɪt, j̇ṫz, j̇ṫz], обычай [e'ḃɪ'ṫɪ, j̇ṫzɪ, j̇ṫzɪ], кормят [kɒr'mɪt, j̇ṁz, j̇ṁz], детям [ḋʃɛ'ṫɪm, j̇ṫzm, j̇ṫzm], занял [żɪ'ṅɪ, j̇ż, j̇ż], без пяти пять [bɪ'spɪ'ṫɪ 'ṗʃ, j̇ɛsṗɪ'ṫɪ 'ṗʃ, j̇ṗɔ'ṫɪ]. Let us also notice the variants for -ик: спутник [s'pʉṫnɪk, j̇ṅz, j̇ṅz].

‘Normal’ traditional pronunciation, for e', я', ̇a' (pretonic or prestressed), has ‘/e/’ [ɛ', ə'̇], which corresponds to modern pronunciation (or, simply, neutral pronunciation) with /i/ [ɪ, i̇]: без пяти пять <sup>t</sup>[bɪ'sṗɪ'ṫɪ 'ṗʃ], as it also happens in: берёза [ḃɪ'ɔ'ż] <sup>t</sup>[ḃɔ-]. Such a phenomenon is called еканье [j̇ɛ'k̇ʃɪ] (traditional: <sup>t</sup>[j̇-ɪ̇]).

For vowel sequences that include /a/, generally, the use of [e] is extended: воображать [vɒɛb-ɛ'ʒ̇ʃaṫ], наугад [nɛu'ġat], по одному [pɒɛdṅɒṁu], на островах [nɛɛstṙɛ'v̇ʃaŋ], у одного [u'ɛdṅɒṁu], соучаствовал [sɛu'ṫʃas(t)v̇ʃv̇ʃṫ], соответствовать [sɛɛ'ṫʃɛts(t)v̇ʃv̇ʃṫ].

# 11.

## Neutral pronunciation: consonants

11.1. Let us notice that diphonic consonants do not occur before pauses or unvoiced consonants. In fact, they necessarily become unvoiced: боб [bʷɔp], мозг [mʷɔsk], трубки [trʷɔpɕi], в саду [fsə'dʷu].

In addition, unvoiced consonants can not occur before diphonic voiced consonants (/v/ is somehow particular, as it functions almost as an approximant, thus non-diphonic, cf § 12.8-13): сбыть [z'bɣtɕ], с горы [zɡɐ'rɣ].

The only articulations that can occur in devoiced contexts, without losing their voiceness, are sonants (or sonorants). In general, they are partially devoiced before unvoiced consonants or before a pause.

However, they usually become unvoiced phones, between unvoiced consonants and pauses, unless they become intense ('syllabic'). In this case, they are voiced or half-voiced (always depending on phonic contexts): жир [ʒɣr], рта [rʷtɣa], карта [kɣartɣa], бобр [bʷɔbɐ, bʷɔbʷɐ], Днепр [ɕ'nepr, ɕ'neprɐ].

The table of fig 11.1 gives the consonant articulations of Russian. They are necessary for an adequate pronunciation of that language. Instead, fig 11.2-8 show the orograms, gathered by articulation manners. They provide all necessary contoids for the (modern) neutral pronunciation of Russian. They are also present in the table of fig 11.1.

fig 11.1. (Modern) Neutral Russian: consonants.

bilabial	bilabio-palatal	labiodental	labiodentopalatal	dental	bilabio-alveolar	labio-alveolar	alveolar	alveolar-velar	postalveo-palatal	postalveo-velar	bilabio-prepalatal	labio-prepalatal	prepalatal	palatal	prevelar	velar	velar rounded	laryngeal
[m] m	[ɸ] [ɸ]	[ɱ] [ɱ]	[ɲ]	[n]	[ɱ] [ɱ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]	[ɲ] [ɲ]
p b	[ɸ ɸ]			t d							[t ɕ]	[c j]			[k ɡ]	k ɡ		
		f v	[f ɸ]	ts [dʒ]				ɕ [dʒ]			[tɕ dʒ]							
				s z				ʃ [z]	ʃ̣ [ẓ]		[ɕ ʒ]							
														j				[h]
							[r] r				[ɕ ʒ]			[j]	[ɕ]	[ʷ]		
							[ʃ] ʃ				[ɕ ʒ]			[ɕ]				

The same figures also contain the orograms of the English articulations that differ from the Russian ones, only for some nuances (to be carefully checked), in particular: [k, g] (prevelar) before front vowels or [j], instead of [c, ɟ] (palatal); [tʃ, dʒ; ʃ, ʒ], all with lip protrusion, rather than without or with different articulations; [f, v] constrictive, instead of semi-constrictive.

### Nasals (fig 11.2)

11.2. By rights, Russian has only two nasal phonemes, /m, n/, with a number of taxophones, mostly for the second one, including palatalized variants. Thus: /m/ [m, m̥, m̄, m̄̃] and /n/ [n, n̥, n̄, n̄̃, ɲ, ɲ̥, ɲ̄, ɲ̄̃, ɲ̥̃, ɲ̄̃̃]. In addition, we can use [ɱ, ɱ̥, ɱ̄; ɳ, ɳ̥], for a less assimilated kind of coarticulation, which keeps a front tongue contact –alveolar/prepalatal– while adding secondary articulations, with no full contacts: bilabial, labiodental, velar).

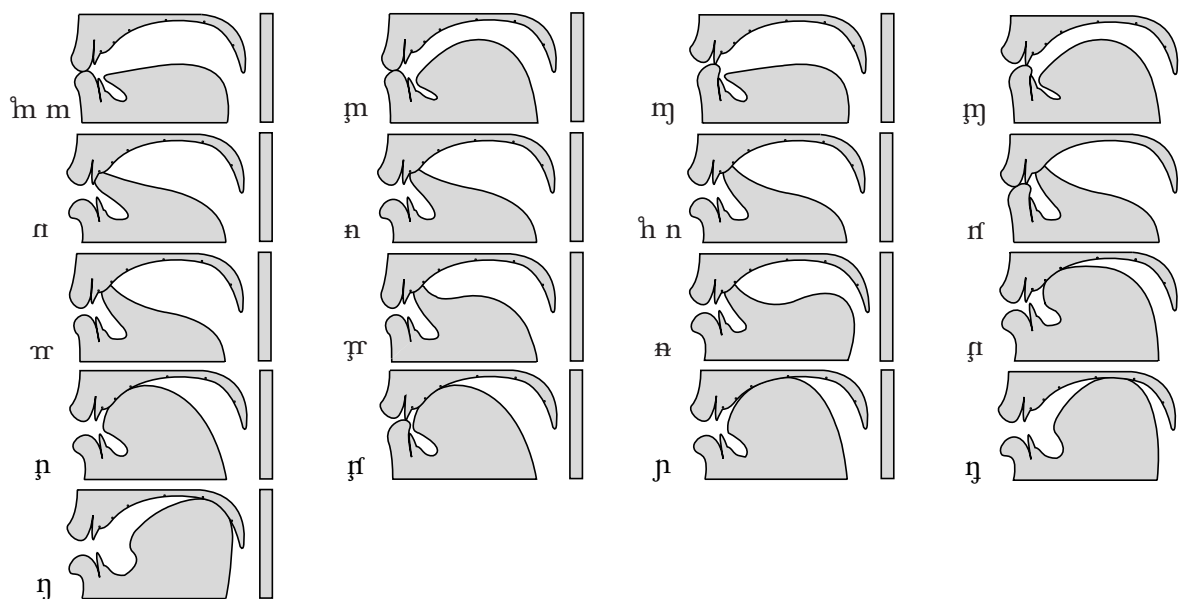
For /m/: мама [m̄ʃa'm̄x̄], лампа [l̄ʃa'm̄p̄x̄], норм [n̄ʷoɾm̄], ритм [r̄it̄m̄, r̄it̄m̄̃], рифм [r̄if̄m̄, r̄if̄m̄̃], мной [m̄n̄ʷoi], мха [m̄x̄ʃa'], мгла [m̄ḡl̄ʃa'], миг [m̄ik], мять [m̄at̄ʃ], семь [ʃe'm̄], имбирь [im'bir̄], амвон [e'm̄v̄ʷoŋ], амфора [ʃa'm̄f̄ɔɾx̄].

Besides, /m/ can occur before heterorganic consonants: мгла [m̄ḡl̄ʃa'], мной [m̄n̄ʷoi], мха [m̄x̄ʃa']. However, for 'm̄j' and 'm̄+i', we regularly have [m̄]: мир [m̄ir̄], семь [ʃe'm̄] (already seen).

For /n/: он берёт [oŋ b̄er̄ɔt̄, oŋ b̄-], канва [k̄eŋv̄a', -ɲ̄v̄-], анфас [eŋ'f̄as, eŋ-], нос [n̄ʷos], контора [k̄eŋ't̄ʷoɾt̄e], нрав [n̄'r̄ʃaf], команде [k̄e'm̄ʃaɾd̄ʒi], нить [n̄it̄ʃ], конь [k̄ʷoŋ̃], бензин [b̄eŋ'z̄in̄], барабанщик [b̄aɾe'b̄ʃaŋ'ʃik], кинжал [s̄iŋ'ʒ̄ʃaʃ], раньше [r̄ʃaŋ'ʒ̄ʃe], тонкий [t̄ʷoŋ'ʃ̄i: -ŋ̄s-; -ŋ̄k̄i, -ŋ̄k̄i], банк [b̄ʃaŋ'k̄, -ŋ̄k̄], песнь [p̄eʃ̄h̄, p̄eʃ̄ŋ̄].

Thus, /n̄C, n̄#C/ are regularly assimilated. Also 'n̄j' become [ŋ], which keeps

fig 11.2. (Modern) Neutral Russian: nasal consonants.



its phonetic autonomy (belonging to a phonemic sequence, with distinctive validity), without becoming neutralized before other consonants.

But we have to state, as some examples have shown, that –mainly for graphic reasons (especially in less colloquial and more traditional pronunciation)– a complex coarticulated pronunciation is widespread, with partial assimilation. Thus, we have [ɱb, ɱv, ɱc, ɱk] &c, as an attempt to keep ‘[nb, nv, ɲc, ɲk]’ &c.

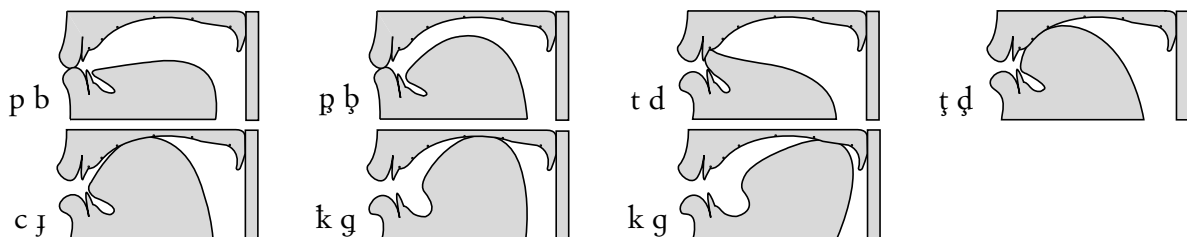
Speakers oscillate very much, in such cases. However, should someone want to emphasize a kind of pronunciation with heterorganic [nC], spelling might make use of нъ, at least inside words (in spite of etymology). But, it is difficult to convince people to accept useful and practical things.

### Stops (fig 11.3)

11.3. There are three diphonic pairs, whose elements do not oppose distinctively before a pause or a (voiced or voiceless) consonant: /p, b; t, d; k, g/ [p, p̚, b, b̚; t, t̚, t̚ʃ, d, d̚, d̚ʃ; k, c, g, ɟ]. The normal articulation of ‘palatalized’ /t, d/ is *prepalatal* and stop-strictive, but stop before homorganic consonants (or alike; sometimes, [t̚] can also occur before pauses).

Examples: пот [ˈpɔt], лоб [ˈlɔb], печь [ˈpɛt̚ʃ], толь [ˈtɔlʲ], голубь [ˈgɔlʊb̚], быт [ˈbʲɪt], об этом [ɐˈbʲɛt̚ɪm], бить [ˈbʲɪt̚ʃ]; трут [ˈtrʊt], отца [ɐˈt̚ʃʲa], тку [ˈtku], вид [ˈvʲɪd], тьма [t̚ʃˈm̚a], тьфу! [t̚ʃˈfu], петля [pɛt̚ʲˈl̚j̚a, pɪt-, ˈpɛt̚ʲ-ɫ̚j̚a], работник [rɐˈbɔt̚ɲɪk], отчёт [ɐˈt̚ʃɛt̚], дуб [ˈdʊb], тот же [ˈtɔtd̚ʃɛ], день [ˈdɛɲ], дня [ˈd̚ɲa], подле [ˈpɔd̚ʃl̚ɪ], дверь [d̚vɛr̚, d̚ʲ-], как [k̚ak], пакт [ˈp̚akt], лёг [ˈl̚ɔk], к этому [k̚ɛt̚ɪmu], киоскёр [kʲɛsˈcʲɔr̚], гибкий [ˈɟɪpsʲɪ], год [ˈgɔt], гнуть [ˈɡnʊt̚ʃ], ноги [nɐˈɟɪ].

fig 11.3. (Modern) Neutral Russian: stop consonants.



### Stop-strictives (or ‘affricates’, fig 11.4)

11.4. Russian has two stop-strictive phonemes, which are voiceless, /t̚ʃ, d̚ʃ/. But there are four realizations, by voice assimilation (in addition to the palatalized variants of /t, d/, [t̚ʃ, d̚ʃ], already seen in § 11.3).

Besides, before stressed vowels, other than /i/, /t̚ʃ/ is [t̚ʃʲ]: цикл [ˈt̚ʃɪk̚l̚, ˈt̚ʃʲɪk̚l̚], отец [ɐˈt̚ʃɛt̚s], братца [br̚ɪt̚ʃat̚s̚], плацдарм [p̚l̚ɛd̚z̚ˈd̚ʃarm̚]; учитель [uˈt̚ʃʲɪt̚ʃʲɪ], час [ˈt̚ʃas], плечо [p̚l̚ʲɪt̚ʃɔ], луч [ˈl̚ʊt̚ʃ], член [t̚ʃʲl̚ɛn], начдив [nɐd̚z̚ˈd̚ʃɪf].





щада  $m$ [pɐʃʲaˈdɐ]  $t$ [pɐʃʲ-], борщ  $m$ [ˈbɔʃɕ]  $t$ [-ʃɕ]. The possible sequence [ʃɕ] is different and normal, as in: с чем [ʃʲɛm; ʃʲɕɛm].

### Approximants (fig 11.6)

11.6. Russian has the typical palatal approximant /j/, which is realized as a true approximant before stressed vowels, [jV]. The same occurs in initial position in a rhythm group before vowels, either stressed or unstressed, [#jV].

However, it is realized as a palatal semi-approximant, between (either stressed or not) vowels and an unstressed one, [V<sub>0</sub>jV]. After consonants, the sequence is transformed into a ‘palatalized’ consonant, [Cʲ] (cf § 6.3-4): мои [mɐʲjɪ], ять [jAtɕ], явить [jɪʲvʲɪtɕ], Маяковский [mɐjɪˈkɔʃɕsci], большая [bɐʲʃʲɪˈaʲjɐ].

For emphasis, or for precision, we can have [j] → [j̥] (semi-constrictive) and, respectively, [j̥] → [j]. However, it is more important to notice that, in non-slow speech, normally, /ijV, Vji/ sequences are realized as [iV, Vi]: армия [ʲarʲmʲjɐ, -mʲɐ], мои [mɐʲjɪ, mɐʲi].

It may happen that in /VjV/ [VjV] sequences (with no /i/), it is not easy to perceive [j] well, mainly when speaking quickly: большая [bɐʲʃʲɪˈaʲjɐ, -aʲjɐ] (mostly in protunes).

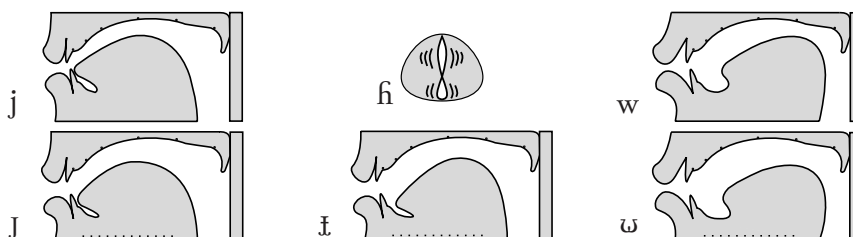
11.7. In Russian spelling, we also find ш, ж, ц (due to outdated graphic situations) even followed by е, я, ё, ю, и (and by ь, as well). But, in such cases, nowadays, those vowels correspond to /ɛ, a, ɔ, u, i/ (generally, ё is only used in dictionaries and teaching books): цех [ʲtɕɛx], шёлк [ʲʂɔʲʎk], парашют [pɐʲrɐʃʲɔʲut], цирк [ʲtɕɪrk], жить [ʲʒʲɪtɕ], ложь [ʲʎɔʲʂ].

However, those consonantal elements may be followed by [j] (and, in spelling, also ь occurs). [j] precedes vowels: шьёт [ʲʂʲjɔt], шью [ʲʂʲju], ложью [ʲʎɔʲʂju].

In addition, the palatal approximant can also occur after [Cʲ], and it may also have distinctive power: сырѐ [sɪʲrʲjɔ], пью [pʲju], дьявол [dʲjɐˈvɔʲʎ], вьют [vʲjut], Ильич [ɪʲlʲjɪtɕ]. [ɕj, ʒj] can also be found, but indicated by ь (although not systematically, as in съѐжиться, put at the end of this section): съехать [ɕʲjɛˈxɐtɕ], изьять [ɪzʲjɐtɕ].

The same happens for [Cʲj]: чья [tɕʲja] (cf чад [tɕʲat] and ишу [ɪʲʂju]). Let us also observe that [j̥] is a different case, since it is inserted after [tɕ, ʃ] in stressed syllables. Its difference can also be noted because of its different syllabic structure).

fig 11.6. (Modern) Neutral Russian: (semi)approximant consonants.



Normally, [ɭj, ɲj] sequences are realized as [ɭj, ɲj] (although they may also remain [ɭj, ɲj], which are sufficiently different from plain [ɭ, ɲ]): лёт [ɭjɔt] ‘he/she pores’ (cf [ɭɔt] either for лёд ‘ice’, or лёт ‘flight’), лью [ɭju], враньё [vrɐɲjɔ], свинья [svʲɪɲja] (cf коня [kɐɲa]).

There are also cases where that [C] remains separated and unaffected by [j] that follows: объехать [ɐbʲjɛɲɔɤ], съёжиться [sʲjɔɤʒʲɪtsɔ], двухъярусный [dʲvuxʲjɐrusnɨ], трансевропейский [trɐɲsʲjɪvrɐpejskʲi], межъярусный [mɛʒʲjɐrusnɨ] (indicated by ь, which can also occur between [ɤ, ʒ] and [j], as shown by some examples already seen). Notice that [ʲ] is intermediate between [ɭ] and [ɭj], mostly used in lexical compounds.

In more general phonemic transcriptions, with /Cj/ instead of /Cʲ/, it would be necessary and sufficient to add a hyphen in a phonemic transcription (as spelling makes use of ь), if a stress symbol is not present.

Lastly, in modern Russian, we also have [ɦ, ɣ] for the ‘/h/’ *phonostyleme* in exclamations (and onomatopoeias): ага! [ɐɦɤa, ɐɣɤa] ‘a’ha!’.

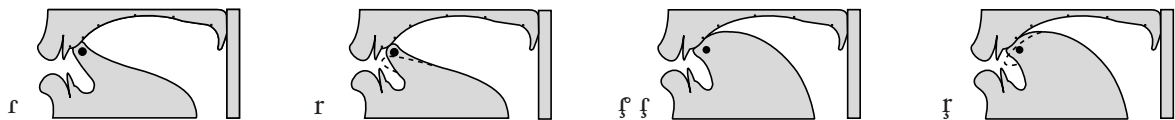
We have already seen the typical and characteristic semi-approximants [ɭ, ɤ, ɔ] (although not phonemic, cf § 10.4-6 and § 11.6).

### Rhotics (fig 11.7)

11.8. For this articulation manner, in Russian, we find two *taps*: alveolar [r] and prepalatal [ɣ] (with a *single* contact between the tongue and the alveoli or the prepalate, respectively). For emphasis, or when speaking slowly and clearly, as in teaching, it is possible to use *trill* variants, [r, ɣ] (with two, or even three, quick contacts).

Nevertheless, for a good pronunciation, they are not necessary. Instead, it is more important to respect normal devoicing (cf § 8.8-13): рад [rɤat], парк [pɣɤk], Пётр [pɔtɐ, pɔtɣɤ], рис [rʲɪs], ряд [rɤat], фонарь [fɔnɣɤɣ], сентябрь [ɤɲɤɤɣɤɣ, ɤɲɤɤɣɤɣ], вихрь [vʲɪɲɣɤ, vʲɪɲɣɤ], образ [ɔɔb-rɤs], адрес [ɤad-ɣɪs].

fig 11.7. (Modern) Neutral Russian: consonants.



### Laterals (fig 11.8)

11.9. Passing to the lateral articulation manner, we find the typical [ɭ], velarized alveolar, which is alveolar with velar coarticulation, produced by raising the tongue postdorsum.

Furthermore, [ɭ] becomes velarized dental, [ɭ], by assimilation, in front of [t, d;

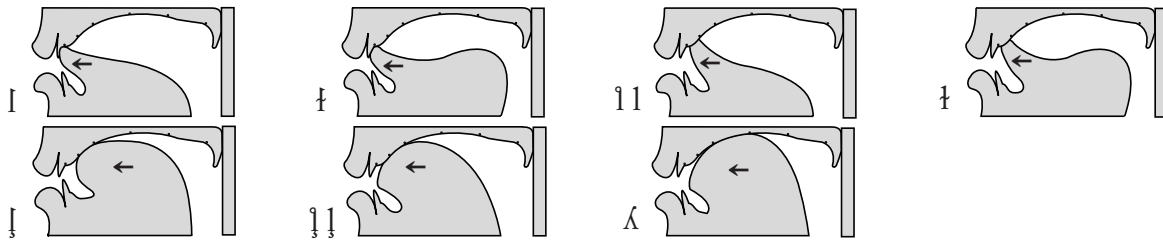
ts; s, z]: солдат [sɐtˈdʲat], ложки [ˈlʲɔʒkɨ], слово [sˈlʌvɔ], дул [ˈdʌuɫ], игл [ˈiɡɫ, ˈiɡɫ̚], смысл [sˈmɨsɫ, sˈmɨsɫ̚].

Certain speakers may use, in all contexts, [ɫ] the velarized *dental* or *dentialveolar* phones, instead of an *alveolar* one), not only before dental articulations.

But we also have a prepalatal lateral, [ɭ], still independently from devoicing (cf § 12.8-13): лица [ˈlʲitsɤ], жаль [ˈʒɤɫʲ], только [ˈtɔɫkɤ], пальма [ˈpɤɫmɤ], рубль [ˈrʌbɫ̚, ˈrʌbɫ̚̚], мысль [ˈmɨsɫ̚, ˈmɨsɫ̚̚], пол-литра [pɔɫˈlʲit-rɤ] (here, lexical composition is stronger than phonemics, since л+л remain separated, [ɫ̚], instead of amalgamating into [ɭ]).

Furthermore, there is a palatal taxophone, [ɭ], which occurs before heterosyllabic [j]: почтальон [ˌpɤɫˈtɤɫʲjɔn], льют [ɫʲjut].

fig 11.8. (Modern) Neutral Russian: consonants.



## 12. Neutral pronunciation: structures

12.1. In this section, we will mainly deal with differences between Russian phonic structure and spelling. Inevitably, there are surprises, because pronunciation continually changes, while spelling remains unchanged, except for official reforms. In any case, reforms are always insufficient and partial, as those by Peter the Great (1708-1710), the Academy of Sciences (1735, 1738, 1758), and Lenin (Ленин [lʲɛnʲɪn] 1917).

We will also deal with some different distributions of various phonemes, in the formation of Russian words.

12.2. Normal *phonic syllabication*, in Russian (although not absolute), considers even sequences of one [C] + [И] (*sonant*, ie nasal, rhotic, or lateral) to be heterosyllabic, as we will certainly see. (Here, ‘И’ has nothing to do with cyrillic ‘И’: И. It is only the general symbol of sonant contoids.)

Obviously, in [СИ] Russian clusters, this also happens with ‘palatalized’ consonants. Thus, with [ɾ, ʃ; ʎ, ʝ] (beside with [m, ɱ; n, ɲ]), when they are preceded by [C, ʃ] (either ‘normal’ or ‘palatalized’ consonants), provided they are *simple*: пакля [pʰak-ʎʌ], утро [ʉut-ɾʌ], охра [ʉoɕɰ-ɾʌ], токмо [ʉoɕk-mɐ], вечно [ʉetɕ-nʌ].

With sonants, this heterosyllabic division takes place all the same, even when the two semiapproximant contoids [ɣ, ω] are present. We have to use them for native kinds of pronunciation before stressed vowels (although we did not do so for international pronunciation): квадрат [kvɛdʰɾʌt], хлыст [ɰʎʝɪst], каплун [kɛpʰʉɔɲ], лавровый [ʎɛvʰɾʉɔʋɰɪ].

However, we find a more regular syllabication, if these sequences are preceded by another consonant, as in автострада [ʌf-tɛs-ʉɾʌ-dʌ], Александра [ɛ-ʎɪkʰsʌp-dɾʌ]. With other consonantal clusters, it is not so: Москва [mɐskʰvʌ].

The palatalized sonant contoids [ɱ, ɲ, ʃ, ʝ] followed by [j] are also heterosyllabic: семья [ɕɰmʲjʌ], враньё [vɾɛpʲjɔ, -ɲjɔ], бульон [buʎjɔɲ, buʎjɔɲ], зверьё [zʎɪɾjɔ]. Otherwise, [j] and the other approximants, [ɣ, ɣ, ω], are not separated from the contoid that precedes them (except when ь is present, as we saw).

This may not seem to be strange within words. But, perhaps, putting the stress symbol between consonants, in word-initial position, at least, might seem strange: три [ʉɾi], спор [sʰɾɔɕɰ], твёрдый [ʉʋɔɾdɰɪ], страх [sʉɾʌɰ], сплав [sʰɾʌf] – or [sʉɾʌɰ, sʰɾʌf], depending on actual contexts. However, if we consider carefully, not single

words, but the sentences where they are, everything becomes logical (almost) spontaneously.

On the other hand, if we listen attentively, such syllabifications are confirmed, generally, in the most real accents (in spite of opposite phonemic opinions). Therefore: цвѣтной сплав [tsʲɪt'nɔsɪsp'ɫʲaf], и краткое [ɪk'rʲat'kʲɪ]. Regarding graphic and phonic geminates, we have, for instance: Ан-на, phonically [ɫʲan'nʲa].

12.3. Russian has particular *phoneme clusters*, obviously, as for instance: водка [vɔtkʲa], где [g'dʒe], свадьба [s'vʲadʒbʲa], ткач [t'kʲatʲɕ], обпачкать [ɐp'pʲatʲkʲatʲɕ], птица [p'tʲɪ'tsʲa], пятно [pɪt'nɔʃ], спутник [s'pʲutɲɪk], петля [pɪt'ɫʲa, pɪt-, 'pɛt-ɫʲa], подмётка [pɔd'mɔtkʲa], стель [s'tʲɛp], ткнуть [tk'nɔutʲɕ], джут [dʒʲut], будка [bʲutkʲa], Тверь [t'vɛf; tʲv], тля [t'ɫʲa], две [d'vɛ; dʒ'vɛ], дня [d'ɲa].

More examples: кверху [k'vɛrɕɪ], шкура [ʃ'kʲuɪrʲa], класть [k'ɫʲastʲɕ], Кяхта [c'jahtʲa], ткёт [t'cʲot], вскоре [fs'kʲoʃ'vɪ], втянуть [ftʲɪ'nɪutʲɕ], портфель [pɔrt'fɛɫ], ввёл [v'vɔɫ], вьёт [v'jot], к югу [c'ju'gu, 'kju-], книга [k'nɪ'gʲa], взгляд [vz'gɫʲat].

In traditional pronunciation, the palatalization of /k, g/ also includes examples like the last two: книга <sup>m</sup>[k'nɪ'gʲa] <sup>t</sup>[c'ɲi-], взгляд <sup>m</sup>[vz'gɫʲat] <sup>t</sup>[-ɫʲat].

Further examples: сразу [s'rʲɪʲazu], справа [s'prʲɪʲavʲa], завтра [z'vʲatrʲa], зрачок [zrɛ'tʲɔk], всякий [fʲsʲa'cɪi], съел [s'jɛɫ], взять [v'zʲatʲɕ], злиться [z'ɫʲɪtsʲɕ], сделать [z'dʒɛ'tʲɕ], друзья [druʒ'ja], шью [ʃ'ju], отшагать [ɔtʃɛ'gʲatʲɕ], ждать [ʒ'dʒatʲɕ], ждёт [ʒ'dʒot], сжать [sʒ'jʲatʲɕ].

More: тщетно [tʲtʲɛtnʲa], хлѣстче [ɫʲɫʲɔʃtʲɕ], из шёлка [ɪʃ'ʃɔɫ'kʲa], стихи [ʃtʲɪ'ɲɪ], хвост [ɫʲvɔst], расцвет [rɔst'vɛt], член [tʲɫʲɛn], копчѣный [kɔp'tʲɔɲnɪ], чрезмерно [tʲʃɪz'mɛnʲa], отчего [ɔtʲtʲɪ'vɔʃ], тьма [tʲmʲa].

Still further examples: мгла [m'gɫʲa], мной [m'nɔsɪ], младший [m'ɫʲatʲʃɪ], мнение [m'ɲɛ'ɲɪ], мщение [m'ɫʲɛ'ɲɪ], мрамор [m'rʲamɔr], мчатся [m'ɫʲjatsʲɕ], реализм [rɛ'ɫʲɪzɪm, rɛ'ɫʲɪzɪm], диафрагм [dʒɪɛf'rʲagɪm, -rʲagɪm], ведьм [vɛdʒɪm, vɛ'dʒɪm], драхм [d'rʲaɫɪm, d'rʲaɫɪm], месяц [mɛ'ʃɪts], впрямь [fr'jam].

And: казнь [kʲazɲ, 'kʲazɲ], песнь [pɛʃɲ, 'pɛʃɲ], лба [ɫ'ba], лгать [ɫ'gʲatʲɕ], игл [ɪ'gɫʲ, 'ɪ'gɫʲ], рыхла [rʲɪɫɫʲ, 'rʲɪɫɫʲ], бледный [bɫ'ɛdnɪ], шляпа [ʃɫʲa'pʲa], рта [ɫ'ɫʲa], ржи [rʲʒɪ], рвение [r'vɛ'ɲɪ], негр [nɛ'gr, 'nɛ'gr], вперѣд [fprɪ'ʃot], рьяность [r'ja'nʲɕtsʲ], внутрь [v'nɔutʲɕ, v'nɔut'ɫʲ].

Let us end with: [fsp'ɫɛk'nɔutʲɕ] всплакнуть.

12.4. Generally, in Russian (but not necessarily, as for instance in quick speech), stops and stopstrictives in *heterorganic sequences* have audible solutions, [C<sub>\*</sub>C], while those in *homorganic sequences* have non-audible ones, [C'C]. Only here we will use the adequate diacritics): коробка [kɛ'rɔsp'kʲa], птица [p'ɫʲɪ'tsʲa], купцу [kup'ɫʲɔu], отпуск [ɫʲot'pusk], ткач [t'kʲatʲɕ], щётка [ʃ'jot'kʲa], отгадка [ɔd'gʲat'kʲa], свадьба [s'vʲadʒ'bx], всегда [fʲɪ'g'dʲa], где [g'dʒe], подмётка [pɔd'mɔtkʲa], затмение [zɛt'mɛ'ɲɪ], гибнуть [ɫʲɪb'nɪutʲɕ], книга [k'nɪ'gʲa], седьмой [sɪdʒ'mɔsɪ], дверь [d'vɛf, dʒ'vɛf], когда [kɔ'g'dʲa], тѣк бы [tʲɕɔ'gbɪ].

More: пятно [pɪt'nɔʃ], бедный [bɛd'nɪ], воротник [vɔrɔt'ɲɪk], петля [pɪt'ɫʲa, pɪt-, 'pɛt'ɫʲa], футляр [fut'ɫʲar]. And: обпачкать [ɐp'pʲatʲkʲatʲɕ], оттуда [ɔt'tɔu-

dʒ], отца [ɐʲtʲsʲɑʲ], оттянул [ɐʲtʲsʲʲɪnʲʉʉʲ], отсюда [ɐʲtʲsʲʲuʲdʒ] (also [ɐʲtʲsʲuʲ-], and [ɐʲtʲsuʲ-], too), отчего [ɐʲtʲʃʲɪʲʉʉʲ] (phonemic geminates –and similar homorganic sequences– are realized as phonic geminates with a limited duration of the second element: [[C<sup>C</sup>]]).

12.5. In addition to /ts, tʃ/ [ts, dz; tʃ(j), dʒ], there are *sequences* like [ts, dz; tʃ, dʒ] (but, generally, [ts, dz] become /ts/ ([ts] and [dz]), except in composition, especially with prefixes): отсылаю [ɐʲtsʲʲtʃɑʲju], подслушал [pɒʲtsʲʲʉʉʲʃʲɑʲʃʲ], надсмотр [nɒʲtsʲʲmʉʉʲtʃʲ, -ʲmʉʉʲtʃʲ], отзыв [ʲʉʉʲdʒʲf], подзаголовок [pɒʲdzʲdʒɐʲʉʉʲʉʉʲk], надзор [nɒʲdʒʲʉʉʲ], отшельник [ɐʲtʃʲʃʲɛʲɪʲnʲɪk], обветшалый [ɐʲbʲvʲɪtʃʲʲɑʲʲɪʲ], поджигать [pɒʲdʒʲʃʲʲgʲɑʲtʃʲ], тот же [ʲtʉʉʲdʒʲʃʲ], джунгли [dʒʲʃʲʉʉʲŋɡʲɪ].

More: городской [gɒʲɐʲtsʲʲkʉʉʲ, -tsʲkʲ-], советский [sɐʲʉʉʲtsʲʲciʲ, -tsʲ-], купаться [kuʲpɒʲʲɑʲtsʲʲ, -ʲɑʲtsʲʲ], детство [dʒɛʲtʲstʲʲ, -tʲstʲ-] (only in careful pronunciation, we can find the last variants shown, with [ts], mostly by graphic influence). Let us notice the differences between [ʲ, ʲʲ, ʲʲ], in: вёл [ʲʉʉʲʃʲ], ввёл [ʲʲʉʉʲʃʲ], в ёлку [vʲʲʉʉʲʃʲkuʲ, ʲʉʉʲ-].

This last one, [ʲʲ], can easily become [ʲ] – but they may remain distinct, in careful speech, especially if (more) traditional.

12.6. Nowadays, by influence of basic forms with non-palatalizing ending, like лампа [ʲʃʲɑʲmpɒʲ], бомба [ʲbʉʉʲmʉʉʲ], we also have лампе [ʲʃʲɑʲmpɪ], бомбе [ʲbʉʉʲmʉʉʲɪ]. Traditional pronunciation had [ʲʃʲɑʲmpɪ, ʲbʉʉʲmʉʉʲɪ].

In any case, usually, we have: имбирь [ɪmʲbʲiʲʃʲ], амбиция [ɐmʲbʲiʲʲtsʲʲjɒʲ].

12.7. Consonantic *gemination* is phonemic, even if limited and realized as simple phonic lengthenings, in quicker pronunciation, unless it is felt to be important to maintain a difference (in the last two examples, [n] corresponds to нн): шить [ʃʲʃʲʲtʃʲ], and сшить [sʃʲʃʲʲtʃʲ], or подержанный [pɒʲdʒɛʲʃʲʲɪnʲɪ], and поддержанный [pɒʲdʒʲdʒɛʲʃʲʲɪnʲɪ].

Such a lengthening occurs only in word-initial position (even after a pause) or between vowels: в феврале [ʲʃʲʲɪvʲ-ʲɐʲʃʲɛʲ], сослать [sʲsʲʲʲtʃʲ], изжога [ɪʃʲʲʉʉʲʉʉʲgɒʲ], сжать [sʃʲʲʲtʃʲ], жужжать [ʒʉʉʲʲʲtʃʲ], данные [dʲʃʲʲɑʲnʲnʲɪ], отопель [ʲʉʉʲʉʉʲʲɪpʲɪʲ], забудьте [zɐʲʲbʉʉʲʉʉʲʲɪ], отдельный [ɐdʒʲʲdʒɛʲʲnʲɪ], отдых [ʲʉʉʲdʒʲʲɪ]. Let us also notice масс [mʲʃʲʲɑʲsʲʲʲ].

For /ʃʲ(ʃʲ)/ [ʃʲ(ʃʲ)], we have: щит [ʃʲʃʲʲɪt], ищу [ɪʃʲʲʃʲuʲ], борщ [ʲbʉʉʲʃʲʲ], товарищ [tɐʲʲvʲʲɑʲ-ʲʃʲʲ(ʃʲ)]. So: after a consonant, it is short; if final after a vowel, it is also short (or slightly geminated).

## Voicing degrees

12.8. As some examples have shown, the voiced diphonic consonantal phonemes are replaced by the correspondent voiceless ones, before a pause, or before voiceless consonants: друг [dʲrʉʉʲuk], водка [ʲvʉʉʲʉʉʲkɒʲ], без колебаний [ʲbʲɪʃʲkɒʲɪʲbʲɑʲnʲɪʲ].

On the contrary, the voiceless phonemes are replaced by the correspondent voiced ones (or by voiced *phones*, in case of /ts, tʃ/ [dz, dʒ]), before a voiced diphon-

ic consonant: анекдот [ɐnɪg'dɔt], Афганистан [ɐvɢɔnɪs'tʃɔn], к дому [g'dɔm-  
mu], отец был [ɐ'tʃɛdzbɪtʃ].

However, *v* /*v*/ alone is not sufficient to make a preceding voiceless consonant to become voiced. In fact, it has to be followed by a voiced diphonic consonant (like /z, d, g/ and palatalized variants): от взгляда [ɐdv'zɢla'dɔ] (but от власти [ɐt-  
v'ʃɔstʃɪ]), к вдове [gvdɐ'vɛ] (but к внуку [kv'nɔu'ku], к вам [k'vʃam]).

The only voiced consonants that occur before a pause, or before voiceless consonants, are the Russian sonants, [m, n, r, l] and their palatalized versions, even if partially devoiced, unless they are preceded by voiceless consonants. In such cases, they become completely devoiced; but only partially if they are intense, or 'syllabic': там [tʃam], смотр [s'mɔstɐ, s'mɔstɪ̯], темп [tʃɛmp], льстить [lʃtʃɪtʃ].

Let us insist that this devoicing is not complete –and it need not be– if the preceding consonant is voiced. The important thing is that, before a pause, no kind of [ə] should be uttered. Thus, phonation has to be stopped before the consonant hold is completed.

Another –rather useful– expedient to indicate this fact could be to use the diacritic for 'non-release' [̚], in order to avoid adding a non-phonemic vocoid, [ə]. This happens by actually stopping any articulation. But, among native speakers, it is less frequent.

12.9. Even *unstressed* vowels (between voiceless consonants or between them and a pause) can become devoiced, but less frequently than consonants, and mostly in quick speech. Therefore, we will show them only here (and only with partial devoicing): выставка [vʃɪstʃfka, -tʃfka], потому что [pɔtɐ'mɔuʃtɔ, pɔtɐ-], девушек [dʒɛ'vuʃʃk].

This also happens for /i/ й in diphthongs, before a pause (even if preceded by a voiced vowel, rather than a voiceless consonant). The same is also true of vowels only followed by voiceless consonants: зимний [zɪmɲi̯], череп [tʃɛrɪp]. This also happens in stressed syllables (before a pause): музей [mu'zei̯], трамвай [trɐm'vaj̯].

12.10. Let us observe that voiced diphonic contoids –[b, b̥; d, d̥, dʒ; ʝ, g; v, v̥; z, z̥; ʒ̥]– become voiceless (even in consonant clusters), if followed by a pause: гроб [g'rɔp], остров [ɔstɪrɔf], плуг [p'lɔuk], муж [mɔuʃ], мороз [mɐ'rɔs], мозг [mɔsk], гвоздь [g'vɔstʃ], поезд [pɔstɪʃ].

The same happens before voiceless contoids: робко [rɔpko], лавка [lʃafka], ногти [nɔktʃɪ], редко [rɛtkɔ], ложка [lɔʃkɔ], резко [rɛskɔ], просьба [prɔszbɔ], отгонять [ɐdɢɐ'natʃ], отдал [ɔsdɔdɔ], также [tʃɔqʒɪ], вокзал [vɛg'zʃɔtʃ].

Voiceless contoids remain voiceless before voiced sonants –[m, m̥; n, n̥; r, r̥; l, l̥]– including [j, j̥] /j/, and before [v, v̥] (which behave as sonants, as if they were approximants, [ʊ, ʊ̥]): слава [s'lʃavɔ], смена [s'mɛnɔ], свет [s'vɛt], книга [knɪ'ɢɔ], съестъ [s'jɛstʃ], квас [k'vʃas], право [p'rʃavɔ].

12.11. In the *combination* of words, or of rhythm groups, the diphonic contoids which became voiceless, because word-final, remain voiceless even before voiced contoids: обед готов [ɐ'bɛt ɢɐ'tɔf], столб дыма [s'tɔstɪp dɪ'mɔ].





ˈdʒetʂ], двор [dˈvɔɪr].

Voicing assimilation is also regular in clusters beginning with ‘voiceless graphemes’: сдача [zˈdʒaˈtʃɔ]. The same happens inside words: должность [ˈdɔɪtʃnɔʂtʂ], трудный [ˈtrɔɪdnɪ], колхозный [kɐˈtʃɔznɪ].

## Simplifications

12.14. Graphically *geminate* consonants (and щ) are phonically short before pauses or consonants: грамм [gˈrɐam], ванн [ˈvɐn], джинн [dʒɪn], класс [kˈlɐs], плащ [pˈlɐʂ], программный [prɐɔˈgrɐmnɪ], русский [rɔɪscɪi], группа [gˈrupkɔ], мощный [ˈmɔɪʃnɪ].

In lexemes, graphically geminate consonants can be realized as slightly geminated contoids [CC] (between vowels): ассонанс [ɐsˈnɐns], ванна [ˈvɐnːnɔ], касса [ˈkɐsːsɔ], тонна [ˈtɔnːnɔ].

More often, however, graphically geminate consonants are pronounced short: аттестат [ɐtʂɪstˈtɐt], баллон [bɐˈlɔn], бассейн [bɐˈʂɛjn], грамматика [grɐˈmɐtʂɪkɔ], дрессировка [dʂɪsɪrɔˈfkɔ], иллюзия [ɪˈlʏzɪjɔ], коллектив [kɔlˈkʲɪktʂɪf], миллиметр [mɪlɪˈmɛtʂ, ˈmɛtʂ], оккупация [ɐkɔpˈtɐtʂɪjɔ], параллель [ˈpɐrɐˈlɛlʲ], перрон [pɪrɔn], режиссёр [rɛʒɪˈsɔr], теннис [ˈtɛnɪs], территория [tɛrɪˈtɔrɪjɔ], троллейбус [trɐˈlɛibus], эссенция [ɪˈsɛntʂɪjɔ], эффект [ɪˈfɛkt].

12.15. In *half-quick speech*, unstressed syllables are reduced (in particular non-initial pre-stressed and non-final post-stressed ones), especially in contact with [r, ʃ, t, l]: помолодел [pɔˈmɔlɐˈdɛl, pɔˈmɔlɐ-, pɔˈmɔlɐ-], молодожёны [mɔlɔˈdʒɔɪnɔ, mɔlɔˈdʒɐ-, mɔlɔˈdʒɐ-], похоронить [pɔˈxɔrɔnɪtʂ, pɔˈxɔrɐ-, pɔˈxɔrɐ-], караулить [kɔrɐˈwɔlɪtʂ, kɔrɔˈwɔ-, kɔrɔˈwɔ-], карантин [kɔrɐˈntɪn, kɔrɐˈn-, kɔrɐˈn-], парикмахер [pɐrɪkˈmɐʃɪr, pɪˈrk-, pɪˈrk-], таракан [tɐrɐˈkɐn, tɐrɐ-, tɐrɐ-], молокосос [mɔlɔˈkɔsɔs, mɔlɔˈkɐ-, mɔlɔˈkɐ-], голосовать [gɔlɔˈsɔvɐtʂ, gɔlɔˈsɐ-, gɔlɔˈsɐ-], парашютист [pɐrɐʂɪˈtɪst, pɐrɐʂɪ-, pɐrɐʂɪ-], белесоватый [bɛlɛˈsɔvɐtɪ, bɛlɛˈsɐ-, bɛlɛˈsɐ-].

Others: молоко [mɔlɔˈkɔɪ, mɔlɐˈ-], хорошо [xɔrɔˈʂɔɪ, xɔrɐˈ-], дороговатый [dɔrɔˈgɔvɐtɪ, dɔrɔˈgɐ-, dɔrɔˈgɐ-], зеленоватый [zɪlɔˈnɛvɐtɪ, zɪlɔˈnɐ-, zɪlɔˈnɐ-], передовой [pɪrɔˈdɔvɔɪ, pɪrɔˈdɐ-, pɪrɔˈdɐ-], перевернуть [pɪrɔˈvɛrɔnɔtʂ, pɪrɔˈvɛrɔ-, pɪrɔˈvɛrɔ-], административный [ɐdˈmɪnɪstrɐˈtɪvɪnɪ, ɪnɪsɪ-, ɪnɪsɪ-], инициатива [ɪnɪtɪɐˈtɪvɔ, ɪnɪtsɪɐ-, ɪnɪtsɪɐ-], инициал [ɪnɪtɪɐˈtɪ, ɪnɪtsɪ-, ɪnɪtsɪ-].

More: щиколотка [ʃɪˈkɔlɔtkɔ, ɔˈtkɔ, ɔˈtkɔ], судорога [ˈsɔɪdɔrɔgɔ, ˈdɔrɔgɔ, ˈdɔrɔgɔ], притолока [pɪˈtɔlɔkɔ, ˈtɔlɔkɔ, ˈtɔlɔkɔ], жаворонок [ʒɐˈvɔrɔnɔk, ˈvɔrɔnɔk, ˈvɔrɔnɔk], холодно [ˈxɔlɔdnɔ, ˈsɔdnɔ, ˈsɔdnɔ], сделала [zˈdʒɛlɔlɔ, ˈɛlɔ, ˈɛlɔ, ˈɛlɔ, zˈdʒɛ-], обязательство [ɐbɪˈzɐtʂɪˈstɔ, ˈtʂɪstɔ, ˈtʂɪstɔ, ˈtʂɪstɔ, ˈatʂstɔ], достаточно [dɐstˈtɔtʃnɔ, ˈtʃattʃnɔ, ˈtʃatʃnɔ], минуточка [mɪnɔˈtʃkɔ, ˈnɔuttʃkɔ, ˈnɔuttʃkɔ], нового [ˈnɔvɔ, ˈvɔ, ˈvɔ], всовывать [ˈfɔsɔˈvɐtʂ, ˈvɐtʂ, ˈvɐtʂ], счастливого [ʃɪˈsɪlɔvɔ, ˈɪvɔ, ˈɪvɔ; ˈʃɪ-], наклеиваться [nɔkɪˈlɔvɐtsɔ, ˈsɔvɐ-, ˈsɔvɐ-], зашпаковать [zɐʃpɐkɪˈsɔvɐtʂ, ˈvɐtʂ, ˈvɐtʂ], царствовать [ˈtʂɐrɔstvɔ, ˈstvɔ, ˈstvɔ].



нович [pʲɛʲaʲvʲi ɫʲɪʲvʲɛʲaʲnɔxʲvʲiʲtʲɕ, -vʲi ɫɪ-, -vʲi ɫi-, -vʲɛʲaʲnʲɕ, 'pʲɛʲaʲtʲ vʲɛʲaʲnʲɕ] (notice carefully their transitional articulatory compromises).

12.19. Currently (ie not in slow and precise speech, but quicker and colloquial), /jɪ/ –e, я– is reduced to /i/: ему [jɪ'mʊu, ɪ-], ежи [jɪ'ʒʲi, ɪ-], являются [jɪvʲɫatsʲɔx, ɪvʲɫatsʲɔx, ɪvʲɫatsʲ(ɔ)x], неестественно. [nʲiɪjɪʂʲtʲɛstʲɪnʲɔx, nʲiɪ'tʲɛsʲɪnʲɔx; -'tʲɛʂʲtʲɪ-]

Generally, /ijV/ → /iV/ (cf § 11.6): вития [vʲi'tʲɪjɔ, -'tʲɪɔ, -'tʲɪɔ], армия [ɫɛʲaʲmʲiɔ, -mʲiɔ, -mʲiɔ], приютиться [pʲɪjʊtʲɪtsʲɔx, pʲɪjʊ-], приятнее [pʲɪjɔtʲɪnʲi, pʲɪjɔtʲɪnʲi], житие [ʒʲi'tʲɪjɛ, -tʲɪjɛ], бытию [bʲɪ'tʲɪjʊ, bʲɪ'tʲɪjʊ].

Furthermore, still currently, we have [ʃɔjɪ] → [ʃɔjɪ, ʃɔɪ] and [iiCV] → [iCV] (although considered rather uneducated): перьевой [pʲɪʲɛʲvʲɔjɪ, pʲɪʲɛʲvʲɔjɪ], бычачьих [bʲɪ'tʲɕɔjɪ-ʲɪɕ, -a'tʲɕɪɪ], казнью ['kɔʲzʲnʲɔ-ju, 'kɔʲzʲnʲɔ-ju, 'kɔʲzʲnʲɔ, 'kɔʲzʲnʲɔ], любовью [ɫʊ'bʊɔʲɕʲɔ-ju, -'bʊɔʲɕʲɔ], швейцар [ʂvʲiɪ'tʲɕɛʲaʲɕ, ʂvʲiɪ-, ʂvʲiɪ-], действительно [dʒʲiɪstʲɪvʲi'tʲɪɪɪnʲɔx, dʒʲiɪstʲɪ-; dʒʲiɪʂʲtʲɪ-; dʒʲiɪʂʲtʲɪ-].

For *prepositions* + /jV/, we also have /θV/: в его доме [vʲjɪ'vʊɔ 'dʊɔʲmʲi, vʲɪ'vʊɔ], с японцами [sʲjɪ'pʊɔnʲɔtsɔxʲmʲi, sʲjɪ'pʊɔnʲɔ-]. However, by now, pronunciations like the following are rather widespread: [vʲjɪ'vʊɔ 'dʊɔʲmʲi, ʂjɪ'pʊɔnʲɔtsɔxʲmʲi], even: к югу [ʲcʲjʊ-gʊ], instead of <sup>t</sup>[kʲjʊ-gʊ]. Also notice ничего [nʲi'tʲɕjɪ'vʊɔ, -'vʊɔ, -'vʊɔ].

12.20. In *traditional pronunciation*, /<sup>#</sup>i/ ⟨и-⟩ preceded, in sentences, by a consonant (different from /ʲɕ, ʂ, ʃ/ ч, щ, ть...), becomes /i/ (less systematically with /k, g, x/, so we also find [k, g, ɲ] (prevelar) + [i, ɪ]). However, in modern pronunciation, we have /i/, with [c, ʃ, ɲ] (palatal) + [i, ɪ].

Thus: смех и горе <sup>n</sup>[sʲmɛxʲ ɪ'gʊɔʲɕɪ] <sup>t</sup>[sʲmɛxʲ ɪ'gʊɔʲɕɪ, ɪ-], к Игорю <sup>n</sup>[ʲcʲi'gɔxʲɪ] <sup>t</sup>[kʲɕɪ-, 'kʲɕɪ-], дым идёт <sup>n</sup>[dʲɪmʲi 'dʒɔt] <sup>t</sup>[-mʲi], от Ивлиева <sup>n</sup>[ɔ'tʲjɪvʲɪjɪvʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[a'tʲɪv-], кот и повар <sup>n</sup>[kʲɔʲvɔtʲi 'pʊɔʲvɔxʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[-tʲi], он издох бы <sup>n</sup>[ɔʲnʲi'z'dʊɔʲɕbʲɪ] <sup>t</sup>[ɔʲnʲi'z-], с Иваном <sup>n</sup>[ʂɪvʲɛʲaʲnʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[sɪ-], к Ивану <sup>n</sup>[cʲi'vʲɛʲaʲnʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[kɪ-, kɪ-], товарищ Иван <sup>n</sup>[tɛ'vʲɛʲaʲɕɪ ɪ'vʲɛʲaʲnʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[-ʂɕɪ-].

Traditionally, Италия, ie *Italia* 'Italy' is realized likewise, so that, also for *Alitalia* (ie *Ali* 'Wings' + *Italia*), we have: <sup>t</sup>[-ɫɪ-, -ɫɪ-] rather than <sup>n</sup>[-ɫɪ-].

Still in traditional pronunciation, also /<sup>#</sup>i/ [ɪ] ə- preceded, in sentences, by a consonant (different from /ʲɕ, ʂ, ʃ/ ч, щ, ть...), becomes /i/ [ɪ].

However, in (modern) neutral pronunciation, we decidedly have only /i/ [ɪ] (and, mainly in mediatic pronunciation, /i/ [ɪ]), both in absolute initial position, and with a preceding word-final consonant, [C<sup>#</sup>]: от элеватора <sup>n</sup>[ɔ'tʲɪʲɪvʲɛʲaʲtɔxʲɔ, ɔtɪ-] <sup>t</sup>[ɔ'tʲɪʲɪʲɪ-, ɔtɪʲɪ-] <sup>m</sup>[ɔ'tʲɪʲɪʲɪ-].

Respectively, in absolute initial position, we find: элеватор <sup>n</sup>[ɪ'ɪʲvʲɛʲaʲtɔxʲɔ] <sup>t</sup>[ɪʲɪʲɪ-, ɪʲɪʲɪ-] <sup>m</sup>[ɪʲɪʲɪ-], эпоха <sup>n</sup>[ɪ'pʊɔʲɕɔ] <sup>t</sup>[ɪ-] <sup>m</sup>[ɪ-].

For the non-autochthonous Эйзенштейн, we have: [ɪzʲiɪnʲɕtʲɛɪnʲɔ, ɪɪ-]; and с Эйзенштейном [sʲɪzʲiɪnʲɕtʲɛɪnʲɔ, ʂiɪzʲ-].

# 14.

## Comparisons between pronunciations: neutral and traditional

14.0. This chapter helps to know and recognize the peculiar differences between (modern) *neutral* pronunciation and *traditional* (neutral). Obviously, we do not pretend that people actively learn these peculiarities, but that they may be able to recognize and classify them, when they happen to hear them from native speakers.

Besides, not to complicate too much the text and its reading, we do not always provide examples for all the versions that we are dealing with. The readers will certainly be able to complete the task.

There is an undeniably poor general knowledge about Russian pronunciation, both among native speakers and foreigners, although we are referring mainly to ‘experts’. Furthermore, there are both different methods for describing, transcribing, and evaluating, and different applications and criteria.

As we have already told in advance, even official ‘model’ speakers (also broadcasting company members), oscillate between more or less neutral or traditional (and mediatic) pronunciations. Probably, this also depends on lack of specific information, for convenient comparisons and choices, also considering the kind of ‘transcription’ we find in (even official and ‘scientific’) handbooks and dictionaries (ie a simple and banal graphemic ‘respelling’ – in a word, ‘Soviet graphonics’).

However, what we have described (in § 10-13) is legitimately (modern) *neutral* Russian pronunciation, which is more and more establishing and spreading. In fact, it is also less distant from spelling.

We are going to report the differences which are more typical of *traditional* pronunciation, in accordance with the ‘old Moscow pronunciation’. That was acquired orally, including its ‘strange’ exceptions, which made it different –in some respects– from that of Saint Petersburg, which is generally closer to spelling, but not in a banal and slavish way.

14.1. The peculiarities of traditional pronunciation concern mainly its *vowels*, and to a lesser degree consonants and intonation (as we will indicate). On the other hand, the peculiarities of mediatic pronunciation turn out to regard the consonants, in addition to vowels and intonation.

As far as *consonants* are concerned, we will use their orograms, in order to highlight articulatory differences, guiding us with different symbols. Since there are fewer consonantal differences, in comparison with (modern) neutral pronunciation,



The phoneme /зз/ [зз] is more typical of traditional pronunciation than of the neutral one. This phoneme occurs in few words, and only inside a lexeme): жжёт <sup>t</sup>[ʒʒjot] <sup>n</sup>[ʒʒʲɔt], езжу <sup>t</sup>[ʒeʒʒɔ] <sup>n</sup>[ʒeʒʒʲu], уезжать <sup>t</sup>[ʲɔʒʒʒjɐtʂ] <sup>n</sup>[ʲɔʒʒʲjɐtʂ], позже <sup>t</sup>[ʲɔʒʒʒɐ] <sup>n</sup>[ʲɔʒʒʲɐ].

For the derivatives of дождь <sup>t</sup>[dɔʒdʲ] <sup>n</sup>[dɔʒ, dɔʒʲtʂ], we have: дождик <sup>t</sup>[dɔʒzɪk] <sup>n</sup>[dɔʒʲdʒɪk], дожди <sup>t</sup>[dɔʒʒi] <sup>n</sup>[dɔʒʲdʒi], дождём <sup>t</sup>[dɔʒʒjɔm] <sup>n</sup>[dɔʒʲdʒɔm].

14.3. Let us pass, now, to fig 14.2-3, with the vocograms of traditional pronunciation, which have to be carefully compared with fig 5.8.3 (international pronunciation), fig 5.8.4 (native-like international) and Ф 10.1 (neutral).

We can immediately notice (as some transcribed examples have already shown) that, in ‘interpalatal’ contexts, traditional pronunciation has some clearly fronter and closer vocalic articulations (cf fig 14.2, even if their symbols [i, e] are the same, but they stand for [iʲ, eʲ]): бить [ʲbʲɪtʂ], ель [ʲjɛʲ], пять [ʲpʲɐtʂ], тётя [ʲtʂɵʲtʂɐ], люди [ʲlʲudʲɪ], тюфяк [ʲtʂɵʲʲak].

Traditional pronunciation presents –although no longer systematically– the phenomenon called *ekan'e* ([ʲjɛˈkɐnʲ] еканье), which has the double phonemic sequence <sup>t</sup>/jɛ, ʒɛ/, also with unstressed tachophones, that do not become /i/: <sup>t</sup>[ʲjɛ, ʒɛ, ʲʒɛʒ, ʒɛʲ, ʒɛʒʲ, ʒɛʲ]. For instance: леса <sup>t</sup>[ʲɛʲsʲɐ] ‘scaffold’ (cf лиса <sup>t</sup>[ʲiʲsʲɐ] ‘fox’), предать <sup>t</sup>[ʲpʲɛʲdʲɐtʂ] ‘to betray’ (cf придать <sup>t</sup>[ʲpʲɪdʲɐtʂ] ‘to add’), частота <sup>t</sup>[ʲtʂʲɐstʲɐtʲɐ] ‘frequency’ (cf чистота <sup>t</sup>[ʲtʂʲɪstʲɐtʲɐ] ‘cleanness’).

fig 14.2. Traditional (Neutral) Russian: vowels.

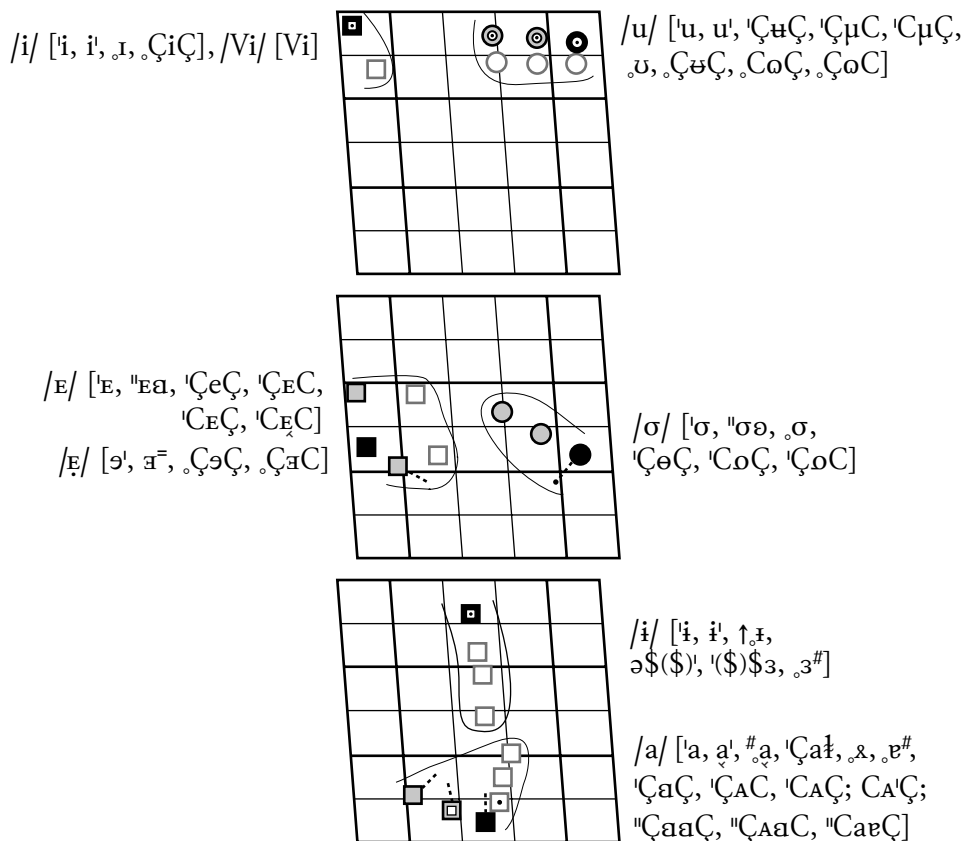
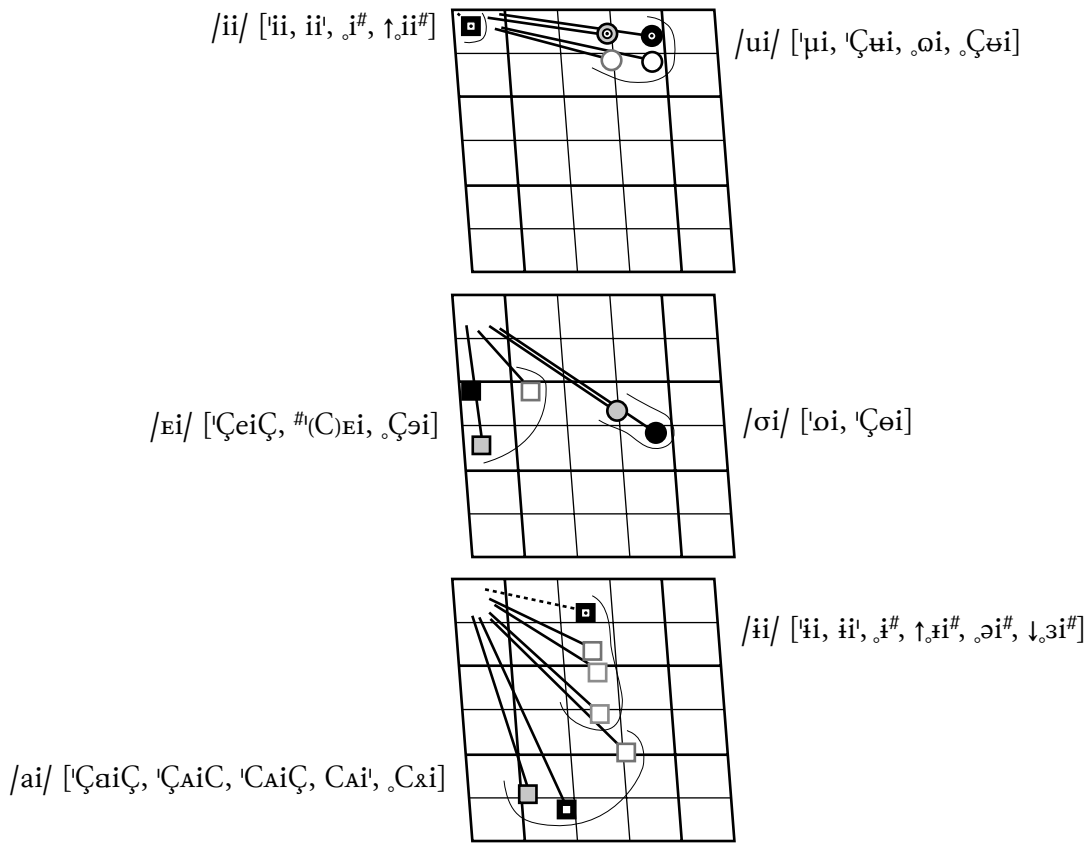


fig 14.3. Traditional (Neutral) Russian: diphthongs.



Furthermore: еканье  $^t$ [ʲeˈkʲɔnʲɛ], кладей  $^t$ [kˈlɔdʲɛj], спелое  $^t$ [sˈpɛlʲɔjɛ] (but not for -ая: старая  $^t$ [sˈtʲarʲajɛ]), несy  $^t$ [nɛˈsɔw], семена  $^t$ [sɛmʲɛnʲɔ], язык  $^t$ [jɔˈzɨk], пять  $^t$ [pʲɛˈtʲɔk], пяти  $^t$ [pʲɛˈtʲɔj], часы  $^t$ [tʲɔˈsɨʲ], площадь  $^t$ [pʲlɔˈʃʲɪtʲɔ].

Let us also observe: сегодня  $^n$ [sɛˈgɔdnʲɔ]  $^t$ [sʲiˈvɔdʲnʲɔ] and a different treatment in сегодня вечером  $^n$ [sɛˈgɔdnʲɔ vɛˈtʲɛrɔm]  $^t$ [sʲiˈvɔdʲnʲɔ vɛˈtʲɛrɔm].

14.4. Here are some examples with the ending -e: поле  $^n$ [ˈpɔlʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔlʲɔ], море  $^n$ [ˈmɔrʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔrʲɔ], вече  $^n$ [vɛˈtʲɔ]  $^t$ [-tʲɔ], жилище  $^n$ [ʒʲɪlʲiʃtʲɔ]  $^t$ [ʒʲɪlʲiʃtʲɔ], здание  $^n$ [zˈdʲɔːnʲɪʃtʲɔ]  $^t$ [zˈdʲɔːnʲɪʃtʲɔ]; синего  $^n$ [sʲɪnʲɪˈnɔ]  $^t$ [-nɔvɛ], синему  $^n$ [sʲɪnʲɪmʉ]  $^t$ [-nɔmɔ], в синем  $^n$ [fʲsʲɪnʲɪm]  $^t$ [-nɔm]; злое  $^n$ [zˈlɔʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔrʲɔ] (cf злой  $^n$ [zˈlɔʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔj]), злые  $^n$ [zˈtʲɔj]  $^t$ [zˈtʲɔjɛ], такое  $^n$ [tʲɔˈkɔʲɔ]  $^t$ [tʲɔˈkɔʲɔ], такие  $^n$ [tʲɔˈcʲɪj]  $^t$ [tʲɔˈcʲɪjɛ], лебяжье  $^n$ [lʲɪbʲɔˈʒʲɪj]  $^t$ [-bʲɔˈʒʲɪjɛ], волчье  $^n$ [vɔˈtʲɔʃʲɪj]  $^t$ [-tʲɔʃʲɪjɛ]; двое  $^n$ [dˈvɔʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔrʲɔ], трое  $^n$ [trɔʲɔ]  $^t$ [-ɔrʲɔ]; смелее  $^n$ [smʲɪlʲɛj]  $^t$ [smʲɪlʲɛjɛ], вернее  $^n$ [vʲɪrʲnɛj]  $^t$ [vʲɪrʲnɛjɛ].

Also with -ем, -ев, -ес: учителем  $^n$ [uˈtʲɪtʲɪlʲɛm]  $^t$ [uˈtʲɪtʲɪlʲɛm], плачем  $^n$ [pʲlɔˈtʲɔm]  $^t$ [pʲlɔˈtʲɔm], жилищем  $^n$ [ʒʲɪlʲiʃtʲɛm]  $^t$ [ʒʲɪlʲiʃtʲɛm], медведем  $^n$ [mʲɪdʲvɛˈdʲzɛm]  $^t$ [mʲɪdʲvɛˈdʲzɛm], братьев  $^n$ [brʲɔˈtʲɔjɛf]  $^t$ [brʲɔˈtʲɔjɛf], шильев  $^n$ [ʃʲɪlʲɛjɛf]  $^t$ [ʃʲɪlʲɛjɛf], вынес  $^t$ [vʲɪnɛs]  $^n$ [-nɪs]. And with -ями/-ами: каплями  $^n$ [kʲɔpʲlʲɪjɪm]  $^t$ [-jɪjɪm], медведями  $^n$ [mʲɪdʲvɛˈdʲzɪjɪm]  $^t$ [mʲɪdʲvɛˈdʲzɪjɪm], тучами  $^n$ [tʲɔuˈtʲɔjɪm]  $^t$ [tʲɔuˈtʲɔjɪm], рощами  $^n$ [rɔʃtʲɔjɪm]  $^t$ [-ɔʃtʲɔjɪm].

Obviously, by considering modern neutral pronunciation and spelling, when listening to speakers who use the vocoid [ɛʰ], it could seem to be logical to assign



it to /i/. But, now, we know well what it is about.

More than a few examples have already shown that if stressed /a, σ, u/ are preceded or followed by a palatalizing phone (instead of being both preceded and followed by palatalizing phones), they have intermediate realizations between the interpalatal ones, [ʼa, ʼə, ʼu], and the non-interpalatal, [ʼa, ʼσ, ʼu], ie [ʼa, ʼσ, ʼμ]: *вяс* [ʼvʲas], *жаль* [ʼʒʲalʲ], *ёж* [ʼjəʒ], *вонь* [ʼvɔnʲ], *люк* [ʼlʲuk], *гусь* [ʼgʊsʲ].

Besides, notice that for /u/ (contrary to neutral use, which has only two high vowels, [u, μ], even in unstressed syllable) there are three different timbres [̘CuC, ̘CoC, ̘CoC, ̘CoC, ̘CoC] (in pretonic syllables, it has high taxophones, as in unstressed syllables): *уголок* [ʊgʌʲkɔk], *побеседуйте* [pɔbɛsɛdʊɪtʲɛ], *деревню* [dɛrɛvʲnʲu], *сляднoй* [slɛdʲnʲoɪ], *рука* [rukʲa], *сюда* [ʒʉdʲa], *чутьё* [tʲuʲtʲo].

Let us only add that /e/, in non-interpalatal contexts, is realized in the lower and backer part in its box in the vocogram, [eː]: *эра* [ʲɛrʲe], *бэ* [ʲbɛrʲ].

14.5. *fig 14.2* shows that for unrounded high pretonic /i, i/, traditional pronunciation has a closer realization than the modern one. Rounded /u/ is opener, in all unstressed positions, except –again– in the pretonic one (cf *fig 14.2*): /iʲ, iʲ, uʲ/ <sup>t</sup>[iʲ, iʲ, uʲ] <sup>n</sup>[ɪ, ɪ, u]: *абрикос* <sup>t</sup>[ɛbɪrʲikɔs] <sup>n</sup>[ɪ-], *быки* <sup>t</sup>[bʲiʲci] <sup>n</sup>[bɛ-], *уже* <sup>t</sup>[uʲʒʲɛrʲ] <sup>n</sup>[uʲʒʲɛrʲ]. Pretonic /aʲ/ is <sup>t</sup>[aʲ] <sup>n</sup>[ɛ]: *уголок* <sup>t</sup>[ʊgʌʲkɔk] <sup>n</sup>[uʲgʌʲkɔk].

We have already seen, and with examples, that traditional pronunciation also has, more typically, /eʲ/ [əʲ] for pretonic e, я (including ча, ща, but not for и, which has /iʲ/ [iʲ]). In neutral pronunciation, they all have /i/ [ɪ, iʲ]: *делить* <sup>t</sup>[dɛʲlʲitʲ] <sup>n</sup>[dɛʲlʲitʲ], *нести* <sup>t</sup>[nɛʲstʲi] <sup>n</sup>[nɪʲstʲi], *трясти* <sup>t</sup>[trɛʲstʲi] <sup>n</sup>[trɪʲstʲi], *часы* <sup>t</sup>[tʲʂɛʲstʲi] <sup>n</sup>[tʲʂɪʲstʲi].

Let us reconsider, then, *лиса* <sup>t</sup>[lʲiʲsʲa] <sup>n</sup>[lʲɪʲsʲa] and *леса* <sup>t</sup>[lʲɛʲsʲa] <sup>n</sup>[lʲɪʲsʲa]. In the context /C\_/, only one other (modern) neutral phoneme occurs, /u/ [u, μ]: *сюда* <sup>t</sup>[ʒʉdʲa] <sup>n</sup>[ʒʉdʲa], *любить* <sup>t</sup>[lʲuʲbʲitʲ] <sup>n</sup>[lʲɪʲbʲitʲ].

In traditional pronunciation, for e<sup>#</sup>, after /ʒ, ʒ; ts/, we find /e<sup>#</sup>/ <sup>t</sup>[ɛ<sup>#</sup>]: *лучше* <sup>n</sup>[ʲʌwʉtʲʒ] <sup>t</sup>[ʲʌwʉtʲʒ], *хуже* <sup>n</sup>[xʉwʉtʲʒ] <sup>t</sup>[xʉwʉtʲʒ], *солнце* <sup>n</sup>[sɔwʉtʲʒ] <sup>t</sup>[sɔwʉtʲʒ].

14.6. Adjectives ending in -кий, -гий, -хий, in traditional pronunciation have /ii/ [ɪi], but also [zi] (usually rendered with /əj/, as if it were /ai/ [xi], although it is slightly different, cf *fig 8.1*). They are preceded by [k, g, ŋ], instead of the neutral realization with /ii/ [cii, jii, ŋii] (according to spelling): *звонкий* <sup>t</sup>[zʲvɔŋkʲi, -kzi, -ŋk-] <sup>n</sup>[zʲvɔŋkʲi, -ŋkʲi], *строгий* <sup>t</sup>[strɔgʲi, -gzi] <sup>n</sup>[strɔgʲi, -gzi], *тихий* <sup>t</sup>[tʲɪxʲi, -xzi] <sup>n</sup>[tʲɪxʲi, -xzi].

Nowadays, such traditional pronunciation sounds non-neutral, or lofty and outdated. The verbs in -ивать also have this treatment: *помалкивать* <sup>t</sup>[pʌmʌkʲɪvʌtʲ] <sup>n</sup>[pʌmʌkʲɪvʌtʲ], *натягивать* <sup>t</sup>[natʲɪgʲɪvʌtʲ] <sup>n</sup>[natʲɪgʲɪvʌtʲ], *помахивать* <sup>t</sup>[pʌmʌxʲɪvʌtʲ] <sup>n</sup>[pʌmʌxʲɪvʌtʲ].

For unstressed endings with -Вь, neutral pronunciation has -ий /ii/ [ii], -ей /ii/ [ii], -ый /ii/ [ɪi], -ой /ai/ [xi]. Traditional pronunciation has /ei/ [əi] for -ей, and /əi/ [ɪi, əi, ɔzi] for -ый, often described as neutralization of both the first two (and in modern neutral pronunciation it is like that, /ii/ [ii]) and of the second two (but, we have: <sup>n</sup>[ɪi] <sup>t</sup>[ɪi, əi, ɔzi] vs <sup>n</sup>[xi]): *синий* [ʲsʲɪnʲi], *улей* <sup>n</sup>[ʉwʉʲii] <sup>t</sup>[ʉwʉʲii], *трудный* <sup>n</sup>[trʉdʲnʲi] <sup>t</sup>[trʉdʲnʲi, -əi, -nzi], *трудной* [trʉdʲnʲi].

Neutral pronunciation, for pretonic ша, жа, ца (in case, also with о), has /Ca/ [Cɐ], while traditional pronunciation has /Ci/ [Ci] (which is nowadays old-fashioned): шаги <sup>n</sup>[ʂɐ'ʂi] <sup>t</sup>[ʂi-], жара <sup>n</sup>[ʒɐ'rʂa] <sup>t</sup>[ʒi-], двадцати <sup>n</sup>[dɪvʌts'ɐ'tʂi] <sup>t</sup>[-ts'ɐ'tʂi].

However, some words are still frequently pronounced with a kind of traditional pronunciation even by tendentially modern speakers: жакёт, жасмин, жавэль, бешамэль, лошадей (even if postonic: двáдцать, трéдцать).

14.7. Among greater differences with spelling, for traditional pronunciation, we find the unstressed verbal endings -ят, -ящий, which have /u/ (nowadays rightly considered lofty or non-neutral) instead of neutral pronunciation, with /iC(V)#/: ходят <sup>t</sup>[ˈxɔɔ'dʒɔt] <sup>n</sup>[ˈxɔɔ'dʒɪt], строящий <sup>t</sup>[strɔɔ'ɔjʂ'ɕii] <sup>n</sup>[strɔɔ'ɔjʂii].

Another traditional pronunciation by now non-neutral, which can be heard (this time with an exchanged timbre), concerns forms like добрую <sup>t</sup>[ˈdɔɔb-rɔɔ] ↓-ɔɔ], синюю <sup>t</sup>[ˈʂi'nɐɔ] ↓-iɔ], думающий <sup>t</sup>[ˈdɔɔ'mʌjʂ'ɕii].

Traditional pronunciation, in addition to commoner timbres, has (non-pretonic initial) <sup>t</sup>[a] for /<sup>#</sup>a/ <sup>n</sup>[ɐ] and (final) <sup>t</sup>[ɐ] for /a<sup>#</sup>/ <sup>n</sup>[ɔ]: одного <sup>t</sup>[adna'vɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[ɐdne-], поздно <sup>t</sup>[ˈpɔɔznɐ] <sup>n</sup>[-nɔ].

14.8. As we have seen, in Russian (even neutral), by voicing assimilation, we find [ɣ] (voiced semi-constrictive) for /ɣ/: он издох бы <sup>n</sup>[ɔnɪz'dɔɔɔbɪ] <sup>t</sup>[ɔnɪz-] (for this combination of [C<sup>#</sup>ɪ], the compromise [ɔnɪz-] is also possible).

In some particular words, traditional pronunciation also has: Бога <sup>t</sup>[ˈbɔɔ'ɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈbɔɔ'ɔɔ], господь <sup>t</sup>[ˈɔɔs'pɔɔtɕ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈɔɔs'pɔɔtɕ], бюстгальтер <sup>t</sup>[ˈbɔɔz'ɔɔtɕɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈbɔɔz'ɔɔtɕɪ] (furthermore, with a true palatal constrictive, we find /gi/ <sup>t</sup>[jɔ] 'gɐ/): о Боге <sup>t</sup>[a'bɔɔ'ɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[ɐ'bɔɔ'ɔɔ]).

The same happens for the following forms, which still may persist even in neutral pronunciation: Бог <sup>t</sup>[ˈbɔɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[-ɣ, -k], Господи! <sup>t</sup>[ˈɔɔs'pɔɔdɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ɣ-, 'g-]. Soon enough, [ɣ], for /g/, is bound to disappear completely (followed by /ʒʒ/ → /ʒʒ, ʒd/ [ʒʒ, ʒd], as already seen).

For the preposition к, followed by г-, we have: к городу <sup>t</sup>[k'ɔɔ'ɔɔrɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[k'ɔɔ'ɔɔrɔɔ]. Lastly, even in neutral pronunciation, we have [h, ɣ] for the *phonostyleme* 'h/' in exclamations (and onomatopoeias): ага! [ɐ'hɔɔ, ɐ'ɔɔ] 'a'ha/.

In traditional pronunciation, /k, g/ are [ɣ, ɣ] before stops: тогда <sup>t</sup>[tɔɔ'dɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[tɔɔ'dɔɔ], кто <sup>t</sup>[k'ɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[k'ɔɔ], к кому <sup>t</sup>[k'kɔɔ'mɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[k'kɔɔ]. For -г-, before the ending -кий, and its derivatives, we have [c, k; ɣ, ɣ]: мягкий <sup>t</sup>[ˈmʌkɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈmʌcɪ], мягкому <sup>t</sup>[ˈmʌkɪmɔɔ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈmʌkɪmɔɔ], мягче <sup>t</sup>[ˈmʌkɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈmʌkɪ], лёгкий <sup>t</sup>[ˈlɔɔkɪ] ↑-ɪ, ↓-zɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈlɔɔcɪ], легче <sup>t</sup>[ˈlɔɔkɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈlɔɔkɪ]. But [k] will prevail, even if it is often still considered rather non-neutral.

In fact, for instance, for тягчайший, we already find [tɕɪk'tɕɪjɪʂɪ, ↓tɕɪɣ-], and for отягчить, [ɔtɕɪk'tɕɪtɕ, ↓ɣtɕɪ-]. In гт, кк sequences, we have: когти <sup>t</sup>[k'kɔɔtɕɪ] <sup>n</sup>[-kɔɔtɕɪ], ногти <sup>t</sup>[n'kɔɔtɕɪ] <sup>n</sup>[-kɔɔtɕɪ], дётя <sup>t</sup>[ˈdɔɔtɕɪ] <sup>n</sup>[ˈdɔɔkɔɔtɕɪ].

The pronoun что is always [ʂ'tɔɔ], as in its compounds, except in нечто [ˈnɐtɕ-tɔɔ]; while ничто can have two pronunciations: [nɪʂ'tɔɔ; nɪtɕ'tɔɔ]. Besides, ч is /ʂ/ in feminin patronymic: Вера Ильинична [ˈvɐrɪɪlɪ'jɪnɪʂnɔɔ], and in: конечно [kɔɔ-

нѣсно], нарочно [nɛ'ɾɔsɔʃnɔ], скучный [s'kʉɔʃnɛ], яичница [jɪ'jɪʃnɪtsɔ].

The graphic sequence чн stands for /ʃn/, in traditional pronunciation of common words; in neutral pronunciation, it stands for /tʃn/, even if, some words have both pronunciations. However, generally we have: булочная <sup>n</sup>[ˈbʉuˌtʃɔnɔjɔ] <sup>t</sup>[ˈtʃɔʃnɔjɛ], лавочник <sup>n</sup>[ˈlɔvɔtʃnɪk] <sup>t</sup>[ˈtʃ-, -ʃn-], молочный <sup>n</sup>[mɛˈtʉɔtʃnɛ] <sup>t</sup>[mɔˈtʉɔʃnɛi, ʃ-ni, ʃ-zɪ].

14.9. In traditional pronunciation, the consonants that precede 'soft' consonants have stronger palatalization than in neutral pronunciation: затмение <sup>t</sup>[zɔtʃmɛnɪjɔ] <sup>n</sup>[zɛt-, -nɪjɪ], скорбь <sup>t</sup>[s'kʉɔɔʃp] <sup>n</sup>[s'kʉɔɔʃp], черти <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃtʃɪ] <sup>n</sup>[tʃɛʃtʃɪ].

More: девки <sup>t</sup>[dʒɛʃkɪ] <sup>n</sup>[dʒɛʃkɪ], дверь <sup>t</sup>[dʒ'vɛʃ] <sup>n</sup>[d'vɛ-], тмин <sup>t</sup>[tʃ'mɪn] <sup>n</sup>[t'mɪn], Дмитрий <sup>t</sup>[dʒ'mɪt-ʃii] <sup>n</sup>[d'm-], смена <sup>t</sup>[s'mɛ'nɛ] <sup>n</sup>[s'mɛ'nɔ], смерть <sup>t</sup>[s'mɛʃtʃ] <sup>n</sup>[s'mɛʃtʃ], спина <sup>t</sup>[s'pɪ'nɔ] <sup>n</sup>[s'pɪ-], сфера <sup>t</sup>[s'ʃɛ'rɛ] <sup>n</sup>[s'ʃɛ'rɔ], свет <sup>t</sup>[s'vɛt] <sup>n</sup>[s'vɛt], книга <sup>t</sup>[k'nɪ'gɛ] <sup>n</sup>[k'nɪ'gɔ], при социализме <sup>t</sup>[pɪsɔtʃɪɔlɪz'mɛ] <sup>n</sup>[pɛ'lɪz'mɪ].

A widespread pronunciation with generalized palatalization is certainly not neutral: коммунизм <sup>t</sup>[kɔmɪ'nɪz'm] <sup>n</sup>[kɔmu-]. The palatalization of [t] by assimilation is not possible even in traditional pronunciation: молве <sup>t</sup>[mʉɔʃvɛ] <sup>n</sup>[tʃvɛ]. Palatalization is not possible even by gemination: пол-литра <sup>t</sup>[pʉɔʃlɪt-rɛ] <sup>n</sup>[tʃlɪt-rɔ].

Traditional palatalization is more frequent inside words than at their beginning: насвинячить <sup>t</sup>[nɔʃvɪ'nɔtʃɪtʃ] <sup>n</sup>[nɔʃvɪ'nɔtʃɪtʃ], свинья <sup>t</sup>[s'vɪ'nʃɔ] <sup>n</sup>[s'vɪ'nʃɔ].

Furthermore, palatalization by assimilation is normal, even in neutral pronunciation, for homorganic phonemes (except /t, r/) even if realizations without palatalization are becoming more frequent: шесть [ʃɛʃtʃ, -stʃ], коснеть [kɛʃnɛtʃ, -s'n-], стель [s'tʃɛp, s'tʃ-], здесь [z'dʒɛʃ, z'dʒ-], смести [s'mɪstʃɪ, s'mɪstʃɪ].

For heterorganic phonemes, indirect palatalization is no longer current: избе <sup>n</sup>[ɪz'ʉɛ] <sup>t</sup>[ɪz'ʉɛ], размять <sup>n</sup>[rɛz'mɔtʃ] <sup>t</sup>[rɔz'mɔtʃ], смех <sup>n</sup>[s'mɛx] <sup>t</sup>[s'mɛx]. When necessary, even spelling shows it: резьбе [ʃɪz'ʉɛ], возьми <sup>n</sup>[vɔz'mɪ] <sup>t</sup>[vɔz-], тесьме <sup>n</sup>[tʃɪs'mɛ] <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃ-].

14.10. Let us notice the differences between modern and traditional pronunciation, concerning /rʃ/: термин <sup>n</sup>[tʃɛʃmɪn] <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃmɪn], терпит <sup>n</sup>[tʃɪʃpɪt] <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃ-], Сербия <sup>n</sup>[sɛʃbɪjɔ] <sup>t</sup>[sɛʃbɪjɛ], верфь <sup>n</sup>[vɛʃʃ] <sup>t</sup>[vɛʃʃ], черви <sup>n</sup>[tʃɛʃvɪ] <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃvɪ], терние <sup>n</sup>[tʃɛʃnɪjɪ] <sup>t</sup>[tʃɛʃnɪjɔ], сердце <sup>n</sup>[uʃɛʃdʒɪjɪ] <sup>t</sup>[uʃɛʃdʒɪjɔ], жердь <sup>n</sup>[ʒɛʃtʃ] <sup>t</sup>[ʒɛʃtʃ], стерлядь <sup>n</sup>[s'tʃɛʃlɪtʃ] <sup>t</sup>[s'tʃɛʃlɪtʃ], версия <sup>n</sup>[vɛʃsɪjɔ] <sup>t</sup>[vɛʃsɪjɛ], сверзился <sup>n</sup>[s'vɛʃzɪʃsɔ] <sup>t</sup>[s'vɛʃzɪʃsɔ], коммерческий <sup>n</sup>[kɛ'mɛʃtʃɪʃsɪi] <sup>t</sup>[kɛ'mɛʃtʃɪʃsɪi].

Even in traditional pronunciation, as in the neutral one, we have [rʃ] after [CV] (with non-front vowels): партия <sup>n</sup>[pɔʃtʃɪjɔ] <sup>t</sup>[pɔ-], ордер <sup>n</sup>[ɔʃdɛʃr] <sup>t</sup>[ɔ-], дурне <sup>n</sup>[dʉurɪnɪ] <sup>t</sup>[dʉ-], марля <sup>n</sup>[mɔʃɔ] <sup>t</sup>[mɔ-], курсе <sup>n</sup>[kʉurʃɪ] <sup>t</sup>[kʉ-]. The same happens after unstressed vowels (even if front ones): вертеть <sup>n</sup>[vɪʃtʃɛtʃ] <sup>t</sup>[vɪʃ-], сервиз <sup>n</sup>[sɪʃvɪs] <sup>t</sup>[sɪʃ-], верзила <sup>n</sup>[vɪʃzɪ'lɔ] <sup>t</sup>[vɪʃzɪ'lɔ], зернистый <sup>n</sup>[zɪʃnɪstɪi] <sup>t</sup>[zɪʃ-].

Consonants + [ʃ] are not palatalized: время [vɛʃɛ'mɔ], фреска [fɛʃɛskɔ], портрет [pɔʃtʃɛt], хандрить [xɛn'dʃɪtʃ], презрит [pɛʃɪz'ɪt].

Traditional pronunciation, for the reflexive ending in -ся, -сь, has [s] (not [ʃ]),

except in gerunds with stress on their final syllable: боясь <sup>t</sup>[ba'jʌʂ] <sup>n</sup>[bɐ'jʌʂ] (against собираясь <sup>t</sup>[sɔɪ'ʂɪ'ɪʌ'jʌʂ] <sup>n</sup>[-'ʂɪ'ɪʌ-]). In neutral pronunciation, instead, reflexives have [ʂ], except for third persons (in -тся) and infinitives (in -ться) with /-tʂa-, -tʂa/: несётся [nɪ'ʂɔtʂʌ], кладутся [klɐ'dʊtʂʌ], учиться [u'ʂɪtʂʌ].

In particular, front lingual consonants undergo 'palatalization' by assimilation, even in neutral pronunciation: мостик [mɔʂʂɪk], лесник [lɪʂ'ɲɪk], уздечка [uz'dʒetʂkɔ], работник [rɐ'bɔʂʂɲɪk], одни [ɐd'ɲɪ], банщик [bɐ'ɲɪʂɪk].

Both pronunciations are possible, before [j], after [t, r], or in prefixes, or in word-initial position (palatalization is more traditional): петля <sup>n</sup>[pɪt'ɭʌ, pɪʂ-, 'pɐʂ-ɭʌ] <sup>t</sup>[pɐʂ-ɭʌ, 'pɐʂ-ɭɐ], ослик <sup>n</sup>[ʊsɔɪk, -ʂɪ] <sup>t</sup>[ʊsɔɪ-], толстяк <sup>n</sup>[tɐʂ'tʂʌk, -ʂʂɪ] <sup>t</sup>[tɐʂ'tʂʌk], мёрзнет [mɔrʂnɪt, -ʂɲ-], стена <sup>n</sup>[stɪ'ɲʌ, ʂʂɪ] <sup>t</sup>[ʂʂɪ-], здесь [z'dʒɐʂ, z'dʒɪ-], снег [s'ɲɐk, ʂ'ɲ-], растирать <sup>n</sup>[rɐstɪ'rɪʌtʂ, -ʂʂɪ-] <sup>t</sup>[-ʂʂɪ'rɪʌtʂ], <sup>n</sup>[pɐd'ɲɔs, -d'ɲ-] поднёс <sup>t</sup>[pɐd'ɲɔs].

14.11. The pronouns их, им, ими are regularly [i'ɲ, i'ɲ, i'ɲ; 'ɪm, 'ɪm, 'ɪm; 'ɪmɪ, 'ɪmɪ, 'ɪmɪ], while traditionally they had exceptional pronunciations (for #и) with /ji/, by analogy with его [jɪ'vɔʂ], ему [jɪ'mɔʊ] (but, by now, it is non-neutral or lofty).

Traditional pronunciation strongly defended that C#и was /C#i/: в Италию <sup>t</sup>[vɪ'tʂʌ'ɪjɔ], к Ире <sup>t</sup>[kɪ'ɪ'ɪ], and distinguished them from Виталию <sup>t</sup>[vɪ'tʂʌ'ɪjɔ], Кире <sup>t</sup>[kɪ'ɪ]. However, native speakers, spontaneously, render things natural, by eliminating affectations, so that nowadays 'palatalized' pronunciation prevails decidedly for both pairs of examples, surely also due to spelling.

Therefore, all this further demonstrates that Russian really has *six vowel phonemes*, even suggested by spelling (with the only problem of reductions in unstressed syllables, complicated by historical changes).

Purists (obviously!) keep on considering non-neutral this spontaneous pronunciation. Certainly, they shall change their mind, soon.

14.12. Official spelling keeps a number of letters which do not correspond (any longer) to actual sounds. The commoner case regards т, д between other consonants: местный [mɐs'ɲɪ], участник [u'ʂɪʌʂɲɪk], шестьсот [ʂɪs'vɔt], туристский [tu'ɪsɪsɪi, -stɪsɪi], крестца [krɪs'tʂʌ], под уздцы [pɔdʊstʂɪ], голландцы [gɐ'ɲʌɲtʂɪ], сердце [ʂɐ'ɲtʂɪ], сердчишко [ʂɪ'ɲɪʂkɔ], поздно [pɔʂɔznɔ], праздник [p'rɪʂʌzɲɪk], счастливчик [ʂʂɪs'ɪlɪ'ʂɪk, ʂʂɪʂ-], совестливый [sɔsɔ'vɪsɪ'ɪvɪ, -vɪʂ-], гигантский [jɪ'gɪʌɲsɪi; -ɲtss-], голландский [gɐ'ɲʌɲsɪi; -ɲtɪsɪi], голландка [gɐ'ɲʌɲkɔ, -ɲkɔ, -ɲtkɔ], шотландка [ʂɐ'tʂʌɲkɔ, -ɲkɔ].

But, now, in certain words, the written consonants are being realized: бездна [bɐz(d)ɲɔ], звёздный [z'vɔz(d)ɲɪ], костлявый [kɔs(t)'ɭʌ'vɪ, -ʂ(t)'ɭ-], постлать [pɔs(t)'ɭʌtʂ], известка [ɪz'vɔs(t)kɔ], мостки [mɔs(t)'ci], поездка [pɐ'jɐs(t)kɔ], жёсткий [ʂ'vɔs(t)ɪi].

In other words, there is correspondence between spelling and pronunciation: студентка [stu'dʒɐntkɔ], официантка [ɐfɪtsɪ'ʌntkɔ].

Further particular cases: солнце [sɔʂɲtʂɪ], чувство [ʂ'ʂɪstʂʌ], тысяча [tʂɪ'ʂɪtʂɔ, 'tʂɪ'ʂɪtʂɔ, 'tʂɪstʂɔ, 'tʂɪʂɔ], сейчас [ʂɪ'tʂʌs, ʂɪ'tʂʌs, ʂ'ɲʌs, ʂʌs] /sɪ'tʂʌs/ (meaning 'now, immediately'), пожалуйста [pɐ'ʂʌ'ɭʌstɔ, pɐ'ʂʌ'ɪstɔ, pɐ'ʂʌ'ɪstɔ, pɐ'ʂʌ'ɪstɔ, pɐ'ʂʌ'ɪstɔ].

bʒaʎstʂ] /pɐʒalustɐ, -l(i)stɐ/, здравствуйте [z'drʒastvuitɕi, z'drʒastuitɕi, z'drʒasɕtɕi, z'drʒaɕtɕi, z'drʒaɕtɕ, z'draɕtɕ, zaɕtɕ, zɐɕtɕ, zʌɕtɕ].

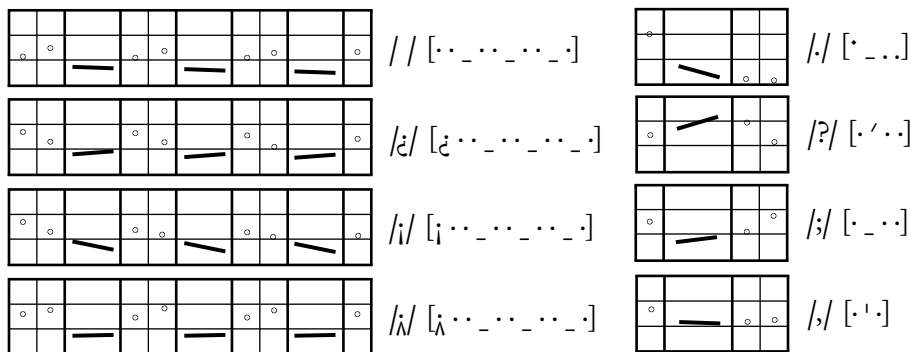
As a useful reminder, and as an exercise (therefore, in our examples, we only write the accents), we can say that  $\tau \rightarrow [\emptyset]$  in the following graphic sequences  $\sigma\tau$ ,  $\sigma\tau\delta$ ,  $\sigma\tau\lambda$ ,  $\sigma\tau\eta$ ,  $\sigma\tau\varsigma$ ,  $\sigma\tau\sigma\kappa$  (this last one is /sk/): *шестьдесят*, *невестка*, *счастливый*, *шестна́дцать*, *извѣстный*, *шестьсо́т* /ɕi'sot/, *тури́стский*;  $\delta \rightarrow [\emptyset]$  in  $\sigma\delta\kappa$ ,  $\sigma\delta\eta$ : *поѐздка*, *пра́здник*, *по́здно*.

Besides, the sequences  $\tau\varsigma$ ,  $\delta\varsigma$  correspond to /ts/, in the pronominal ending -т(ь)ся: *смеётся* [smi'jɔtsʲɔ], *смеяться* [smi'jatsʲɔ]. The same when  $\tau$ ,  $\delta$  are followed by the endings -ский, -ство, -ствие: *детский* [dʒɛtsɕi], *отсутствие* [ɔt'sɔutstɕi], *производство* [prɔjiz'vɔststɕɔ], *следствие* [sʲɛtstɕi, sʲɛtstɕi].

Lastly, in the genitive endings -ого and -его,  $\tau$  stands for /v/: *белого* [bɛ'ʎvɔ], *его* [jɪ'vɔ]. So, the strangeness of *сего́дня* [ɕi'vɔɕɔɗɔ] 'today' (= 'of this day') is only seeming.

14.13. fig 14.4 shows the tonograms of traditional pronunciation. They have to be attentively compared with all the others already seen, including English:  $\mathfrak{G}$  8,  $\mathfrak{G}$  13,  $\mathfrak{G}$  15. The marked tunes will be evident (with semi-high conclusive pretonic) and low protonic syllables.

fig 14.4. Traditional (Neutral) Russian: intonation.



# 15. Comparisons between pronunciations: neutral and mediatic

15.1. *Mediatic* pronunciation is something newer: it appeared more recently, being freer to manifest itself, but not necessarily better. It may also share some peculiarities with traditional pronunciation, although it also has some correspondences with (modern) neutral pronunciation: after all, it is the 'same' language.

However, it is not even a regional pronunciation, although it may have some correspondences with regional or uneducated pronunciations. We are dealing with a kind of pronunciation with oscillations between various possibilities, as already said, which is mainly used by people who did not succeed in acquiring neutral pronunciation, even if they work in (official) broadcasting.

Even teaching recordings, although specifically done for pronunciation, more or less frequently, present such oscillations.

fig 15.1. Mediatic Russian: some consonants, including labialized & velarized ones.

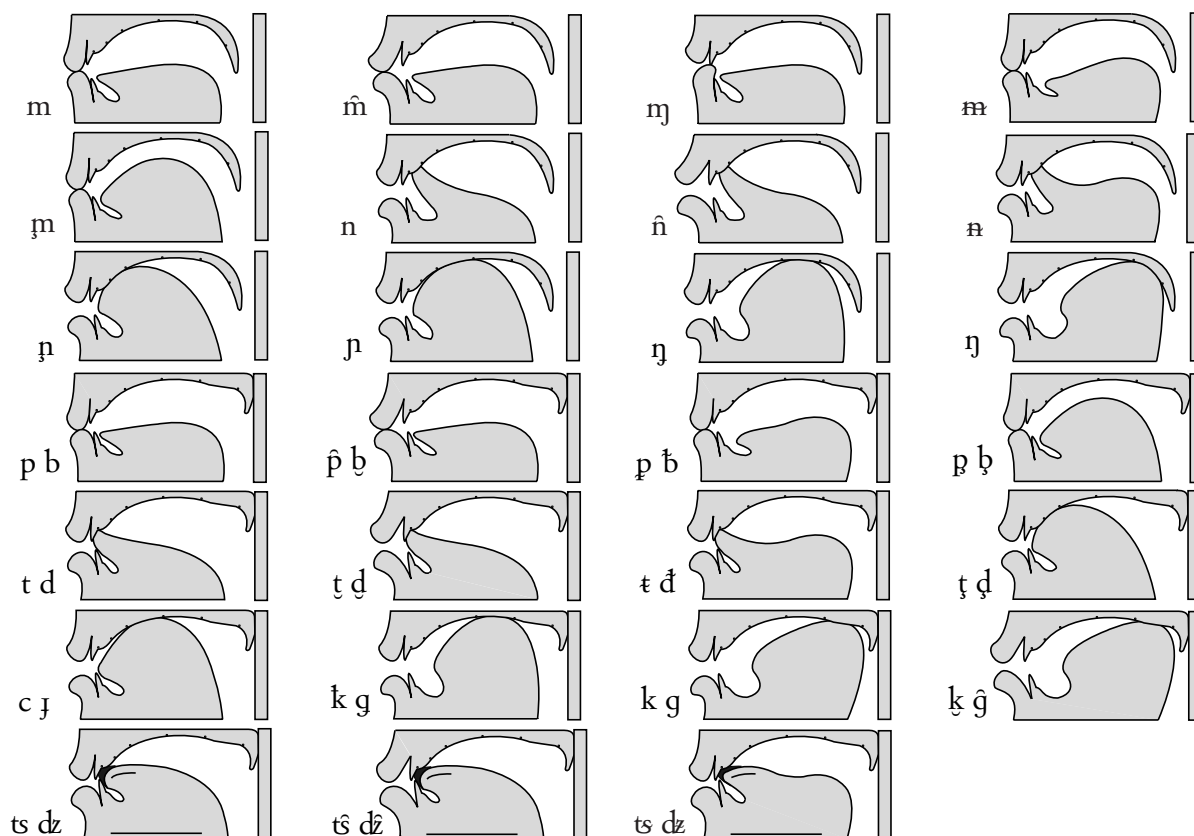
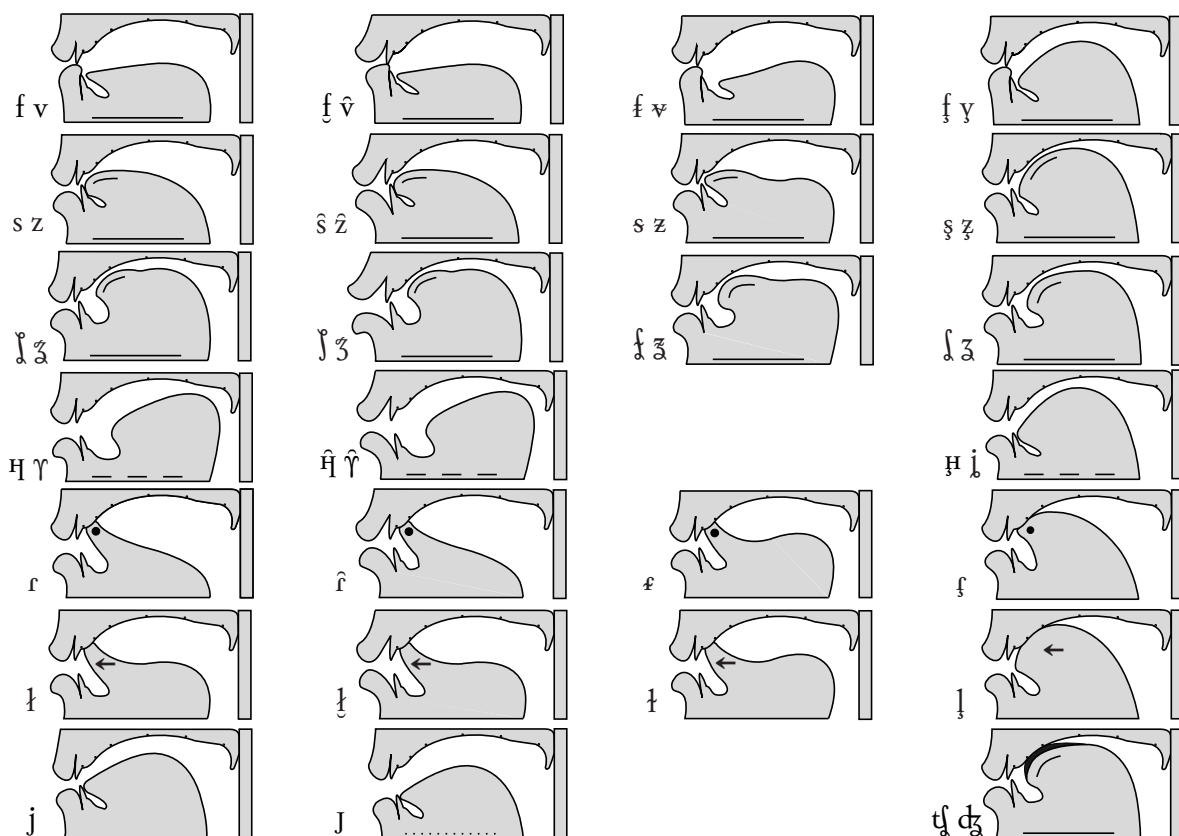


fig 15.2. Mediatic Russian: other consonants, including labialized &amp; velarized ones.



Thus, mediatic pronunciation is not absolutely positive, although it is more used than the very neutral one, or even more than the traditional one. In fact, since it does not require strong commitment or diligence, it is easier to achieve (by native speakers).

For this reason, a growing number of Russian-speaking people (and of ‘Sovietized people’, too) use it. They may also consider it to be a real neutral pronunciation, since it also include some current peculiarities both of Moscow and Saint Petersburg (but different from neutral ones), with variants and oscillations.

Let us add that mediatic pronunciation prefers not to shorten geminate consonants, which remain [CC] instead of [C<sup>C</sup>]. Or else, it reduces them completely, even between vowels (except [ʃʃ, ʒʒ]): данные [ˈdʌnnəjɐ, ˈdʌˈnəjɐ], отдельный [ɫdˈdɛlˈnəi, ɫdˈdɛlˌ-, ɫˈdɛlˌ-].

Besides, it prefers keeping sonant consonants voiced, even in final position, or if followed by voiceless contoid: лень [ˈlɛn̩], мир [ˈmʲɪr], дул [ˈdʌl̩].

15.2. In addition, as far as consonants are concerned, Russian mediatic pronunciation, from an auditive point of view, may give the impression of being less peculiar, even if more variable and less stable. But, from an articulatory point of view, it requires more combined nuances.

In fact, although in unstressed syllables it generally presents more normal contoids, in stressed syllables, it merges into single phones the peculiarities which are





От: цукат [t͡sʊˈkat], цех [t͡sɛx], это [t͡ɛtɫ], лицо [lʲit͡so], плацдарм [pɫadzˈdarm], ров [rʊf], фаза [fʌzɫ], фон [fɔn], кровь [kʲrʊf], внук [vˈnuk], вынул [vʲɤˈnul], вуз [vʲus], вид [vʲit], сразу [sʲɤˈrazʊ], сад [sʌt], сон [sɔn], семья [sʲem], знак [zˈnak], назад [nɫˈzat], зов [zʊf].

More: взять [vʲzɪt͡], нож [nɔʃ], шина [ʃʲɪnɫ], шёлк [ʃɔlk], ищу [ɪʃʲʊ, ɪʃʲʊ], ждать [zʲɪˈdat͡], жаль [zʲal], жёны [zʲoˈnʲɪ], позже [pʲozʲzʲɪ, pʲozʲzʲɪ], мох [mɔx], хата [xʌtɫ], холод [xʲoˈlɔt͡], петухи [pʲetʊxʲi].

Lastly: жир [zʲɪr], рад [rʌt], рот [rʊt], рис [rʲis], лгать [lˈgɪt͡], лампа [lʌmpɫ], лук [lʲuk], лес [lʲes]; юг [juk], чёрная [t͡ʃʊrnʲɪɫ], алчба [lʌt͡ʃbɫ].

Mediatic pronunciation (like traditional pronunciation) also presents very fronted vocoids in interpalatal position: бить [bʲit͡], ель [jel], пять [pʲat͡], тётя [tʲɵˈtʲɪɫ], люди [lʲʉˈdʲɪ], тюфяк [tʲʉˈfʲak].

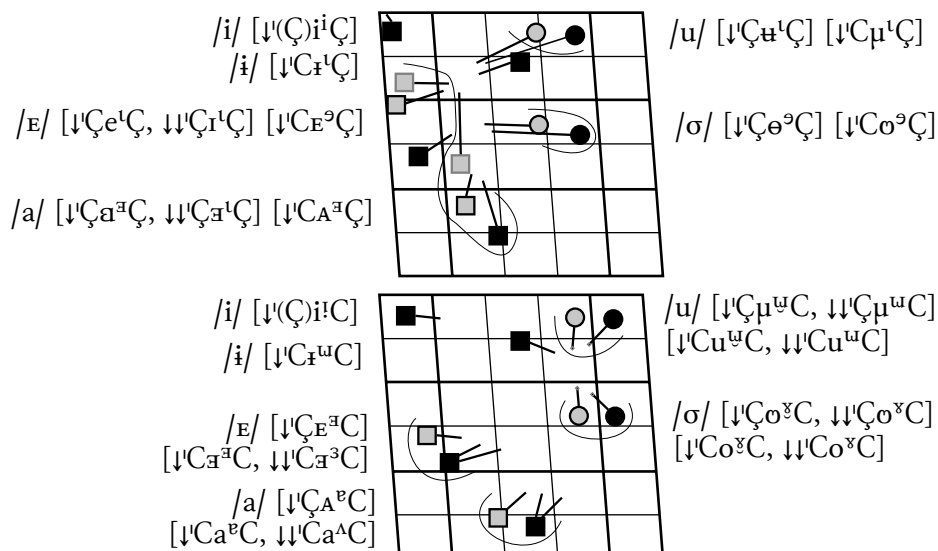
15.4. Let us add fig 15.4, since more marked mediatic pronunciation presents an interesting peculiarity regarding vowels in stressed syllables. In fact, they are narrow diphthongs with rather weak second elements (however, present), which we show only here.

Besides, they have different realizations depending on the kind of contoid which follows them: [ç] or [C]). Anyway, they are always different from true phonemic diphthongs (and from diphthongs produced by juxtaposing vocalic elements).

The first vocogram in fig 15.4 shows the results of [Vç]: лить [lʲit͡ʃ], книги [knʲiˈt͡ʃɫ], ель [jel], дети [dʲet͡ʃɫ], эти [et͡ʃɫ], цель [t͡ʃɛˈl], мать [mʌt͡ʃɫ], пятью [pʲɪˈt͡ʃjʊ, pʲɪˈt͡ʃjʊ], жаль [zʲal], матери [mʌˈt͡ʃɪ], лётчик [lʲɵˈt͡ʃʲɪk, lʲɵˈt͡ʃʲɪk], в доме [vˈdʊmɛ], тюль [tʲʉˈlʲɪ], путь [pʲʉˈt͡ʃɫ], люди [lʲʉˈdʲɪ], улица [ulʲɪˈt͡ʃɫɫ], рыть [rʲɪˈt͡ʃɫ], дыня [dʲɪˈnʲɪɫ].

The second vocogram in fig 15.4 gives the results of [VC]: кит [kʲit], пиво [pʲiˈvɫ], ем [jem], дело [dʲelʌ], цел [t͡ʃɛˈl], это [et͡ɫ], вяз [vʲɪˈz], тяга [t͡jɪˈgɫ].

fig 15.4. Mediatic Russian: vowel variants.



[↓ʰaʷɢɫ], шаг [↓ʰaʷk, ↓↓ʰaʷk], мама [↓ʰaʷmɫ, ↓↓ʰaʷmɫ], дом [↓dɔʷm, ↓↓dɔʷm], ворон [↓vɔʷɣɫɫɫ, ↓↓vɔʷɣɫɫɫ], ёрш [↓jɔʷɣʃ, ↓↓jɔʷɣʃ], небо [↓nɔʷbɫ, ↓↓nɔʷbɫ], тут [↓tuʷt, ↓↓tuʷt], дуба [↓dʉʷbɫ], люк [↓lʉʷk, ↓↓lʉʷk], тюнер [↓tʉʷnɛɣ, ↓↓tʉʷnɛɣ], дым [↓dʰɪʷm], тыла [↓tʰɪʷɫɫ].

15.5. For unstressed endings, with -Vй, neutral pronunciation has -ий /ii/ [ii], -ей /ei/ [ei], -ый /ii/ [ii], -ой /oi/ [oi]. Mediatic pronunciation has -ей [ei] ‘/ei/’ (and, usually, also -ый [ei] ‘/ei/’), often described as neutralization of the first two (as it actually is in modern neutral pronunciation) and even of the second two (but, we have: <sup>n</sup>[ii] <sup>m</sup>[ei] vs <sup>n/m</sup>[oi], respectively): синий [ʃiʳii], улей <sup>n</sup>[ʉuʰii] <sup>m</sup>[ʉʰii], трудный <sup>n</sup>[trʉudnii] <sup>m</sup>[trʉudni].

15.6. Neutral pronunciation has /i, #ji, Vji/ for e (in unstressed syllables) and /i/ for #э (in initial position). In all these cases, mediatic pronunciation can have, strengthened by spelling, [э, э', э҃] /e/ (also /i/ ↓[ɪ, ɔ] for #э).

Examples: этаж <sup>m</sup>[ɛtʰaʃ, ↑ɫ, ↓ɫ] <sup>n</sup>[ɪtʰaʃ], берёза <sup>m</sup>[bɛʳɔzɫ] <sup>n</sup>[bʲiʳɔzɫ], бережён-ный <sup>m</sup>[bɛʳɛʒɔnɛi] <sup>n</sup>[bʲiʳɛʒɔnɛi], семена <sup>m</sup>[sɛmɛnɛ] <sup>n</sup>[sʲimɛ-], перемели <sup>m</sup>[pɛʳɛmɛli] <sup>n</sup>[pʲiʳimɛ-], берег <sup>m</sup>[bɛʳɛk] <sup>n</sup>[ɪk], обязательна <sup>m</sup>[ɔbzɛʲatʲɛʲnɫ] <sup>n</sup>[ɔbzʲatʲɛʲnɫ], вытереть <sup>m</sup>[vʲɪtɛʳɛtʲ] <sup>n</sup>[vʲɪtʲɛʳɛtʲ], море <sup>m</sup>[mɔʳɛ] <sup>n</sup>[mʉʳɪ], поле <sup>m</sup>[pɔʲlɛ] <sup>n</sup>[pʉʲɫ].

Obviously, for unstressed и, even if word-initial, we regularly have <sup>m</sup>[i, i'] <sup>n</sup>[ɪ, ɪ']: идти <sup>m</sup>[ɪtʲi] <sup>n</sup>[ɪtʲi], извините! <sup>m</sup>[ɪzvʲɪnʲɪtʲɛ] <sup>n</sup>[ɪzvʲɪnʲɪtʲɪ].

Mediatic pronunciation, for Vи /Vji/, also presents forms like: мои <sup>m</sup>[mɔji, mɔ'i] <sup>n</sup>[mɔji] /maj/, &c.

Furthermore, it also has frequent reduction of /Vji#/ to [Vjɫ, Vɛ] (for -Vi, including [Vjɛ, Vɛ] for -Ve), also /Vja#/ [Vjɛ, Vɛ] (for -Vя): музеи [mʉzɛjɫ, -zɛɛ], спокойнее [sprɔkɔjnɛɛ, -ɛɛ, -nɛɛ], быстрее [bʲɪstʲɛjɛ, -ɛɛ], трамваем [trɫɫmʲa-jɛm, -ɛɛm], аудитории [ɔdʲɪtɔjɫ, -jɫ, -jɛɛ], новое [nɔvɛjɛ, -zɛɛ], новая [nɔvɛjɫ, -zɛɛ], до свидания [dɔsvʲɪdʲɛnʲɫ, -nɛɛ, -nɛɛ].

As some transcriptions have already shown, for /#σ, #u/, we find more rounded taphones, [ɔ, ɔ; ɫ, ɫ] (cf ҃ 23): оба [ɔbɫ], ось [ɔʃ], ум [ɫm], гусь [gʉʃ].

15.7. For /i/, neutral pronunciation has [i], while mediatic pronunciation also has opener variants, [ɛ, ↓ɛ] (this last one is less recommendable): бытовой <sup>m</sup>[bɛtɫ-ʉoi] <sup>n</sup>[bʲɪtɛʲvɔsi], выходить <sup>m</sup>[vɔxɫɫɫɫ] <sup>n</sup>[vʲɪxɛʲdʒɪtʲɫ], вымыл <sup>m</sup>[vʲɪmɫ] [vʲɪmɫ] <sup>n</sup>, опыты <sup>m</sup>[ɔpɛtɛ] <sup>n</sup>[ʉɔpɫɫɫ], животное <sup>m</sup>[ʒʲɪvɔtnɛjɫ] <sup>n</sup>[ʒʲɪvɔtnɛjɫ].

As we have already said, these timbres of /i/ [ɛ, ↓ɛ] are similar enough to that of /a/ [ɛɫ, ɛ] (the last one occurs in contact with bilabial, and velar or velarized contoids). So, it is easy to consider them to be the same sound, and declare their neutralization.

However, usually, there is a difference, especially if we consider their variants, all the more so that actual confusions are few, even in spelling, except resounding cases of native speakers poorly educated, or of foreigners phonically untrained.

15.8. For /u/, mediatic pronunciation has [ʊ, u<sup>#</sup>, ↓o<sup>#</sup>, ʊ̯ʊ̯]: кувыркаться <sup>m</sup>[kʊvərkatstsʌ] <sup>n</sup>[kuv̯ɪ̯r̯kʲatsʊ̯], суматоха <sup>m</sup>[sʊmʌtʊoʰɤ] <sup>n</sup>[sumɐ'tʊoʰɤ], замужем <sup>m</sup>[zʌmʊzəm] <sup>n</sup>[zʲʌ'muʒ̯ɪ̯m̯], коммюнике <sup>m</sup>[kʊm̯jʊni'sɐ] <sup>n</sup>[k̯ɤ,m̯jʊni'sɐ], имеющийся <sup>m</sup>[i'meʲjʊ̯t̯ɕi̯iʂʌ, ʲi̯i̯] <sup>n</sup>[i'meʲjʊ̯t̯ɕi̯iʂʌ], сюда <sup>m</sup>[ʂʊ'dʲʌ] <sup>n</sup>[ʂu'dʲʌ].

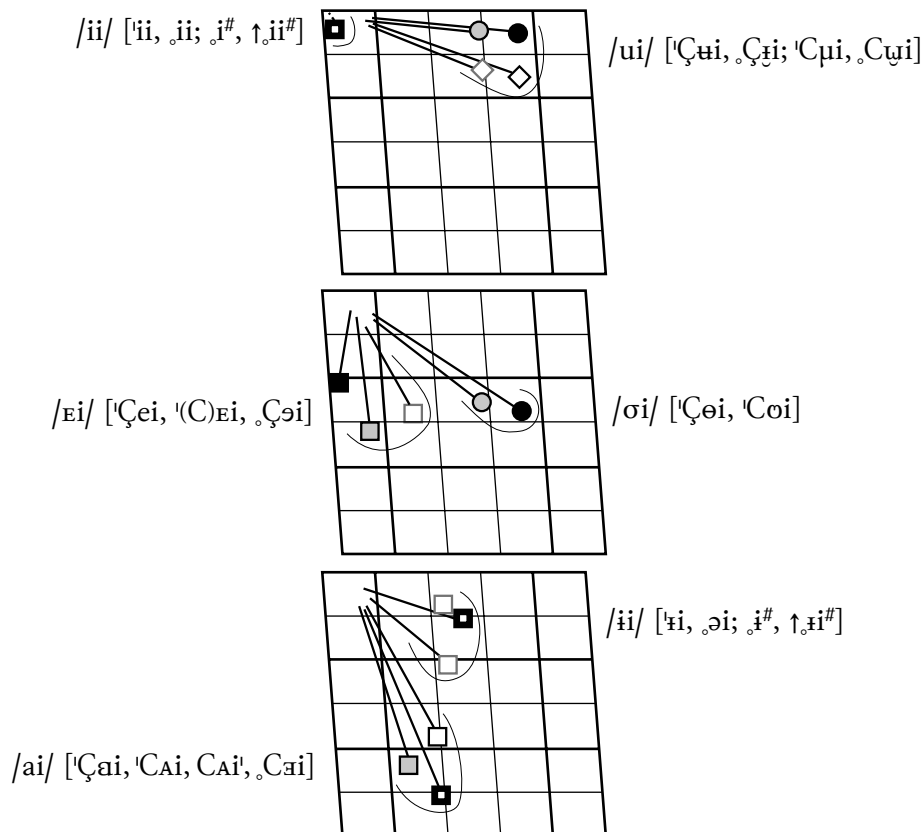
Neutral pronunciation, for pretonic ша, жа, ца (in case, also with о), has /Ca/ [Cɐ], while traditional pronunciation has /Ci/ [Cɪ] (by now outdated): шаги <sup>n</sup>[ʂɐ'jɪ] <sup>t</sup>[ʂɪ-], жара <sup>n</sup>[ʒɐ'rʲʌ] <sup>t</sup>[ʒɪ-], двадцати <sup>n</sup>[dʲvʌtsʊɐ'tɕi] <sup>t</sup>[-tsʊɪ'tɕi].

However, certain words are still frequently pronounced with traditional pronunciation, even by tendentially modern speakers: жакéт, жасмíн, жавéль, бешамéль, лошаде́й (even if post-tonic: двáдцать, трéдцать).

In general, for such sequences, a compromise mediatic pronunciation is possible, with [ɜ, ə] for /i/: шаги <sup>n</sup>[ʂɐ'jɪ] <sup>m</sup>[ʲɤ-, ʲɜ-, ʲə-], жара <sup>n</sup>[ʒɐ'rʲʌ] <sup>m</sup>[ʒʌ'rʲʌ, ʒɜ-, ʒə-], двадцати <sup>n</sup>[dʲvʌtsʊɐ'tɕi] <sup>m</sup>[dʲvʌtsʊɐ'tɕi-, -ɜ-, -ə-]. It is also the same for pretonic ше, же, це (even with -o); but, in neutral pronunciation, we have /i/ = [ɪ]: шептáть [ʂɪp'tʲʌtɕ], жéна [ʒɪ'nʲʌ], цéна [tsɪ'nʲʌ].

15.9. fig 15.5 shows the diphthongs (with taxophones).

fig 15.5. Mediatic Russian: diphthongs.



15.10. Let us add, for information and useful comparisons, some *terminations*, with some colloquial reductions. They also include some mediatic or traditional phonotactic deviations, with some phonemes exchanged (here we also use /ʲ, ʲ/):

- аю /<sup>l</sup>ajju/ <sup>n</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajju], <sup>m</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajɥ, ↓<sup>l</sup>ajɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajɔ]
- аю /-ajju/ <sup>n</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajju], <sup>m</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajɥ, ↓<sup>l</sup>ajɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajɔ, -ajɔ] + /-ijju/
- юю /-juju/ <sup>n</sup>[-juju], <sup>m</sup>[-juɥ, -juɥ, ↓juɔ] + /-jijju/, <sup>t</sup>[-juɔ, -jijɔ] + /-jijju/
- ает /<sup>l</sup>ajit/ <sup>n</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajit], <sup>m</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajit, ↓<sup>l</sup>ajit], <sup>t</sup>[-<sup>l</sup>ajit]
- ает /-ajit/ <sup>n</sup>[-ajit], <sup>m</sup>[-ajit, ↓ajit], /-ajit, -ajit/ <sup>t</sup>[-ajit, ↓ajit] + /-ijit/
- айте /-ajiti/ <sup>n</sup>[-ajiti], <sup>m</sup>[-ajiti, ↓ajiti] + /-ijiti/, <sup>t</sup>[-ajiti, ↓ajiti] + /-ijiti/
- ая /-aja/ <sup>n</sup>[-aja], <sup>m</sup>[-ajɥ, ↓ajɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-ajɔ]
- ая, -Çая /-Çija/ <sup>n</sup>[-Çija, -Çia], <sup>m</sup>[-Çijɥ, -Çiɥ, ↓Çia], <sup>t</sup>[-Çijɔ, -Çiɔ, ↓Çə]
- ый /-iji/ <sup>n</sup>[-iji], <sup>m</sup>[-ijɥ, ↓ijɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-ijɔ]
- ый /-ii/ <sup>n</sup>[-ii], <sup>m</sup>[-ii, ↑ii], <sup>t</sup>[-ii, ↓ii, ↓↓zi, ↑ii]
- ий /-iji/ <sup>n</sup>[-iji], <sup>m</sup>[-ijɥ, -ii], <sup>t</sup>[-ijɥ, -ii]
- ий /-ii/ <sup>n</sup>[-ii], <sup>m</sup>[-ii, ↑ii]
- к-г-х+ий /-k-g-ɥ-ii/ <sup>n</sup>[-c-ɥ-ii], /-k-g-ɥ-ii, -k-g-ɥ-ii/ <sup>m</sup>[-c-ɥ+ii, ↑ii; -k-g-ɥ-i, ↓zi, ↑ii; ], /-k-g-ɥ-ii, -k-g-ɥ-ii/, <sup>t</sup>[-k-g-ɥ-i, -əi, ↑ii; -c-ɥ+ii, ↑ii]
- ция /-tsija/ <sup>n</sup>[-tsija], <sup>m</sup>[-tsijɥ, ↓tsia], <sup>t</sup>[-tsijɔ, ↓tsə]
- ать /-at/ <sup>n</sup>[-at], <sup>m</sup>[-atɥ] + /-et/
- ать (*numerals*) /-Cat/ <sup>n</sup>[-atɥ], <sup>m</sup>[-atɥ, -əɥ] + /-Cet/ <sup>t</sup>[-atɥ] + /-Cit/
- ять (*numerals*) /-Çit/ <sup>n</sup>[-itɥ], <sup>m</sup>[-itɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-əɥ] + /-Çet/
- ят (*numerals*) /-Çit/ <sup>n</sup>[-it], <sup>m</sup>[-it], <sup>t</sup>[-it] + /-Çet/
- ятся /-Ç-j+itsa/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], /-itsa, -a/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, -z, ↓θɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-etsa, -i, -a, -u/ [-ɥ, -z, -ɥ, ↓ɔ-]
- ят /-Ç-j+it/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], /-it, -at/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, -z, ↓θɥ], /-et, -it, -at, -ut/ <sup>t</sup>[-ɥ, -z, -ɥ, ↓ɔ-]
- ях /-Ç-j+iɥ/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], /-iɥ, -aɥ/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, -z, ↓θɥ], /-eɥ, -iɥ, -aɥ/ <sup>t</sup>[-ɥ, -z, -ɥ]
- ям /-Ç-j+im/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], /-im, -am/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, -z, ↓θɥ], /-em, -im, -am/ <sup>t</sup>[-ɥ, -z, -ɥ]
- ями /-Ç-j+imi/ <sup>n</sup>[-imi], /-i, -a/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, -z, ↓θɥ], /-e, -i/ <sup>t</sup>[-ə, -z]
- я /-Ç-j+a/ <sup>n</sup>[-ɥ], <sup>m</sup>[-e, ↓θɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-e]
- я Ç- /ja<sup>#</sup>Ç-, ja<sup>#</sup>Ç-/ <sup>n</sup>[ja-, ljɐ-, Vjɐ-], <sup>t/m</sup>[ja-, ljɐ-, Vjɐ-]
- Ви /-Vji/ <sup>n</sup>[-Vji, -Vi], <sup>m</sup>[-Vji, -Vi, ↓Və]
- е /-Ç-ji/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], <sup>m</sup>[-i, ↓θɥ], <sup>t</sup>[-ɥ]
- Ve /-Vji/ <sup>n</sup>[-Vji, -Vi], <sup>m</sup>[-Vji, -Vi, ↓Və], <sup>t</sup>[-Vji, -Vi, ↓Vjɐ]
- е- /ji-/ <sup>n</sup>[[ji-, jɥ-, iÇ-], <sup>m</sup>[[jɥ-, jɥ-, iÇ-], <sup>t</sup>[[ji-, jɥ-, iÇ-]
- е- /Çi-/ <sup>n</sup>[[Çi-, iÇ-], <sup>m</sup>[[Çi-, iÇ-], <sup>t</sup>[[Çi-, iÇ-]
- э /i-/ <sup>n</sup>[-i], /i-, i-/ <sup>m</sup>[-i, ə], <sup>t</sup>[-i/ [-i]
- С э- /C<sup>#</sup>i-/ <sup>n</sup>[[Çi-, ÇiÇ-], /C<sup>#</sup>i-, C<sup>#</sup>i-/ <sup>m</sup>[[Çi-, iÇ-, Çə-, Çə-], /C<sup>#</sup>i-, C<sup>#</sup>i-/ <sup>t</sup>[[Çə-, Çi-, Çi-, ÇiÇ-]
- Сэ- /Ci-/ <sup>n</sup>[[Ci-], <sup>m</sup>[[Ci-]

15.11. To complete our comparisons of different pronunciations, we also provide fig 15.6, which shows mediatic *tonograms*. As always, they should be seen carefully together with all others provided in preceding chapters: 8, 13, 14.

fig 15.6. Mediatic Russian: intonation.



# 16.

## Regional accents

### General introduction

16.01. Map 16.0 shows the main administrative divisions of the vast territory belonging to present-day Russia, extending from eastern Europe to northeastern Asia.

fig 16.0. Map of Russian administrative main divisions.

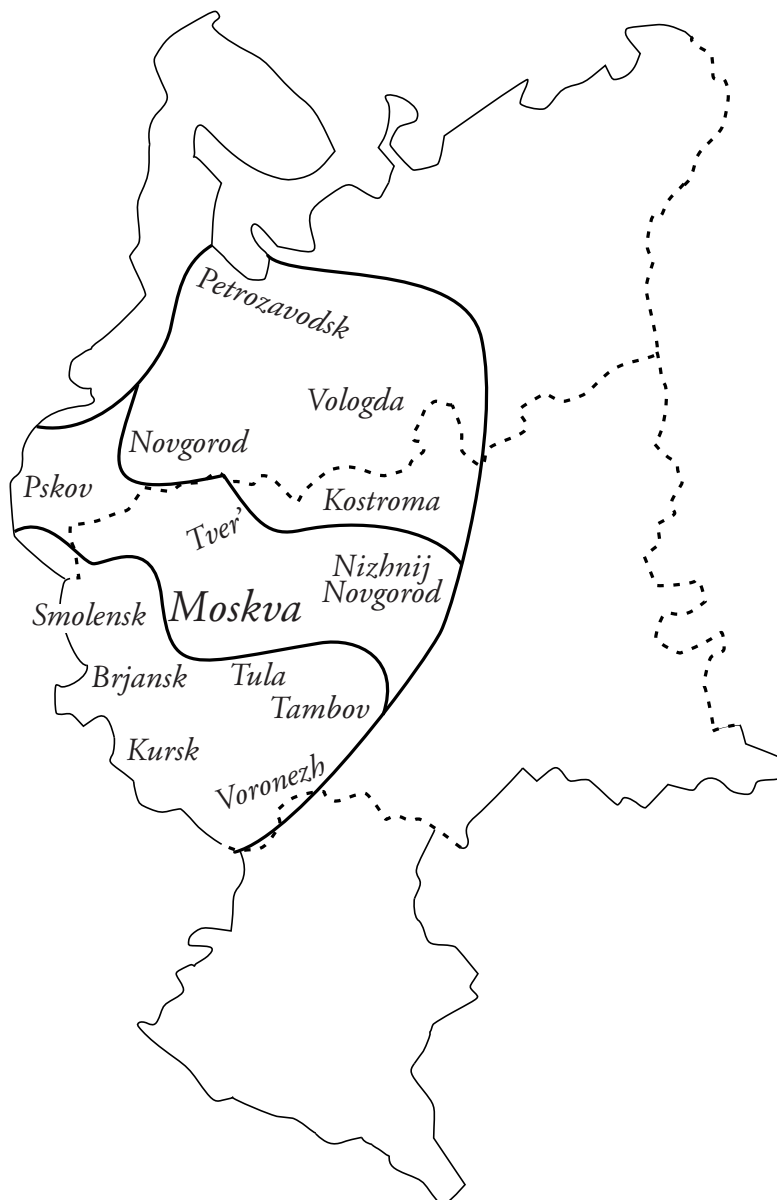


16.02. Map 16.1 shows the dialectal situation of European Russia in the years around 1950. The midwestern part of the territory was divided by Soviet dialectologists into three parts, with native speakers. The central one, including Moscow, gave origin to the official pattern of the pronunciation of Russian.

It is a compromise between the typical northern and southern patterns, which have precise characteristics that determined the kinds of Russian pronunciation recognized as belonging to these areas, as we will see soon.

The Russian language was brought outside the three areas shown in map 16.1 not only by native speakers belonging to them but also by several others, mostly

fig 16.1. Map of European Russian original dialects.



from Ukraine and Belarus. These last ones spoke cognate languages in addition to forms of Russian that they were compelled to acquire. The same happened when Saint Petersburg was founded in 1703, with people who were brought there, whether willingly or not, from other parts of (European) Russia.

This practice was already well established around 1400-1500, when the highly irresponsible trend to expansion by most major European powers began, using their far from democratic ways, as history sadly testifies. Also the megalomaniac Russian leaders transported and deported, beyond the Ural Mountains, slaves and condemned persons, together with unscrupulous wheeler dealers, and... teachers.

16.03. Therefore, the Russian language was brought to the eastern parts of actual European Russia and northern Asia. Thus, outside the restricted area shown

fig 16.2. Map of actual European Russian accents, with place names. It includes militarily re-occupied Kabardino-Balkaria and Chechnia, after brief illusions of freedom.



in map 16.1, it is not possible to find original Russian residents, like the populations who used to live there since ancient times, through generations.

The current Russian speakers are descendants of immigrants, who arrived there centuries ago. But they are not the original peoples, like those who still may remain in those vast areas, especially in the country.

All this means that most Russian speakers have no really inherited local accents, unless we consider the mingled ones brought there by their own ancestors, in more or less recent times. Therefore, it is not really possible to find actual traditional accents derived from local dialects. This is why there are considerably very large areas where we can find kinds of Russian accents, which are not very different from one another, having quite similar characteristics.



16.04. But, of course, this does not mean that Russian has no regional accents, as we will show in the following chapters of this book. Thus, map 16.2 shows the

fig 16.3. Russian regional accents.

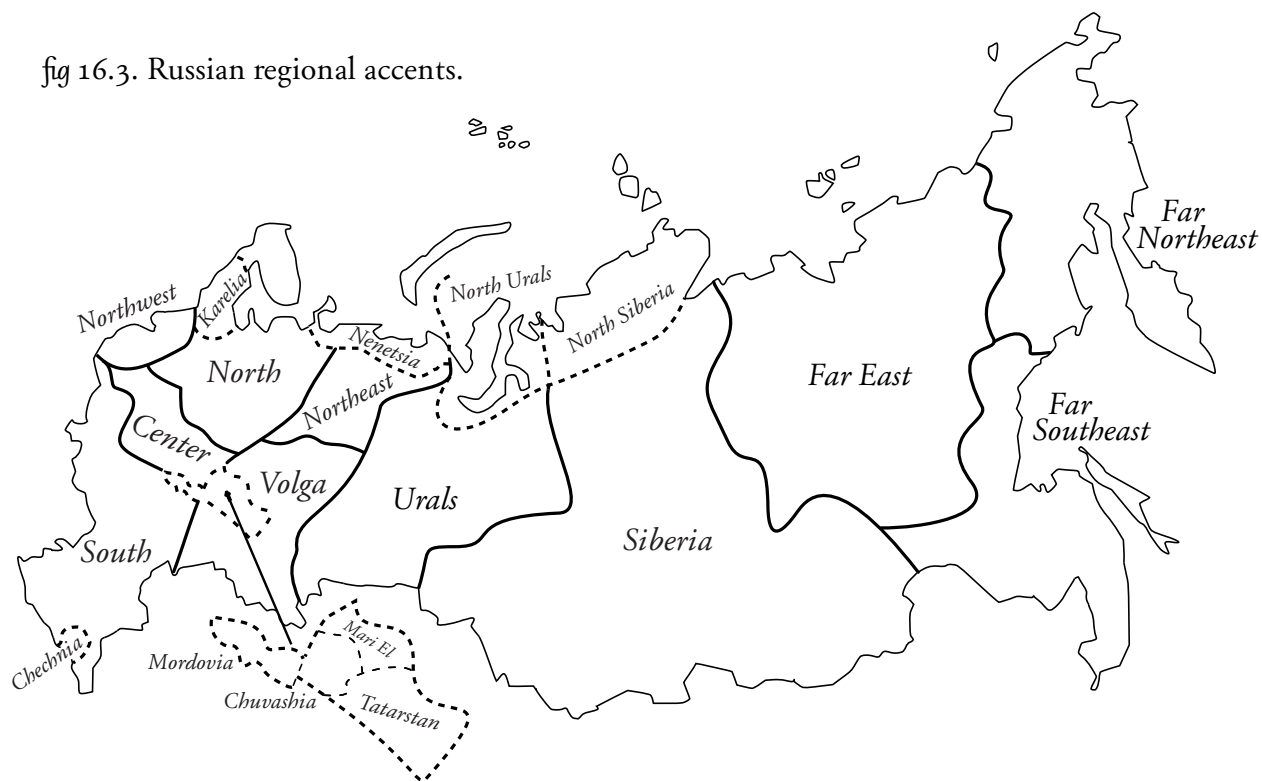


fig 16.4. Map of Russian accents found in Asia, with place names.



pronunciation situation that we found in European Russia. By carefully comparing it with map 16.1, things are certainly clearer.

In addition, map 16.3 shows the accent situation from European to Asiatic Russia, while map 16.4 highlights what can be found in Asia. Of course, in rural areas, there may still be segregated people, who may have no real command of Russian, not only in Asia.

### Some necessary preliminary remarks

16.05. As we will see, outside the area shown in fig 16.2, where the current modern accents of Russian have been formed, a kind of previous 'norm' has also contributed to the formation of the regional accents in eastern European Russia and Asia.

The main characteristic lies in what is known as *екане*, *ekan'e*, [jɛ'kanʲ]. This means that unstressed *e* does not become /i/, but remains /ɛ/, which we indicate as /ɛ/ [ɛ, e, ə]. For instance in *передать* [pɛ'datʲ, pɛə-] (and in the very word itself: [jɛ'kanʲɛ, -ɛ]). This is an older kind of pronunciation, also belonging to the regional accent of Saint Petersburg, which sometimes was presented as a neutral accent.

That realization contrasts with that of a word like *придать* [pri'datʲ], while in modern neutral Russian both words are pronounced alike: [pri'datʲ]. In fact, this is a comparatively newer kind of pronunciation, called *икане*, *ikan'e*, [i'kanʲ].

16.06. *Ekan'e* can also occur for unstressed (not word final) *я*: *частота* [tʃɛstə'taʲ], against *чистота* [tʃistə'taʲ], for example. Again, both words are alike in the (modern) neutral accent of Russian: [tʃistə'tʃaʲ]. *Чайковский* is also pronounced likewise: [tʃɛi'kɔʃsciʲ, tʃɛ-], instead of neutral [tʃii'kɔʃsciʲ, tʃi-].

More rarely, especially the Russian accents used by some bilingual speakers outside the Russian territory, can even exhibit *якане*, *jakan'e*, [ja'kanʲ]. This can happen when words like *частота* or *Чайковский* are realized as [tʃɛstə'taʲ] and [tʃɛi'kɔʃsciʲ].

Alongside with *ikan'e*, there is another (more) recent neutral characteristic called *акане*, *akan'e*, [a'kanʲ]. It consists in reducing unstressed *o* to /a/ [ɐ], as in *молоко* [mɔ'ləkɔ], or *хорошо* [xɔrɔ'ʂɔ].

Regional accents which do not apply *akan'e*, more typically the broadest northern ones, use a further characteristic, called *окане*, *okan'e*, [ɔ'kanʲ]. It consists in not reducing unstressed *o* to /a/ [ɐ], but keeping it as /ɔ/, which we indicate as /ɔ/ [ɔ, o]. Thus, they can exhibit pronunciations like *молоко* [mɔ'ləkɔ], or *хорошо* [xɔrɔ'ʂɔ].

It is important not to think that this may be a kind of vowel harmony, due to the stressed /ɔ/, as examples like *дома* [dɔ'ma], *ходить* [xɔ'dʲitʲ], or *небо* [nɛ'bɔ] demonstrate. In northern accents, they may certainly be [dɔ'ma], *ходить* [xɔ'dʲitʲ], and *небо* [nɛ'bɔ].

16.07. Further real communication problems, for regional accents, can surely be caused by palatalized consonants, [ç]. In fact, instead of true palatalized contoids, they can be realized as sequences like [Cj], especially before vocoids, or even as simple [C], not only before front vocoids (where misunderstanding is less likely). Both

realizations are also possible before contoids, or silence, ie pauses, more riskily.

Of course, such renderings, especially [C], are quite different from the expected neutral ones. Besides, they actually complicate communication.

Furthermore, in certain regional accents, the timbres of the vocoids in /CVC/ and /CVi/ sequences may change little, or not at all.

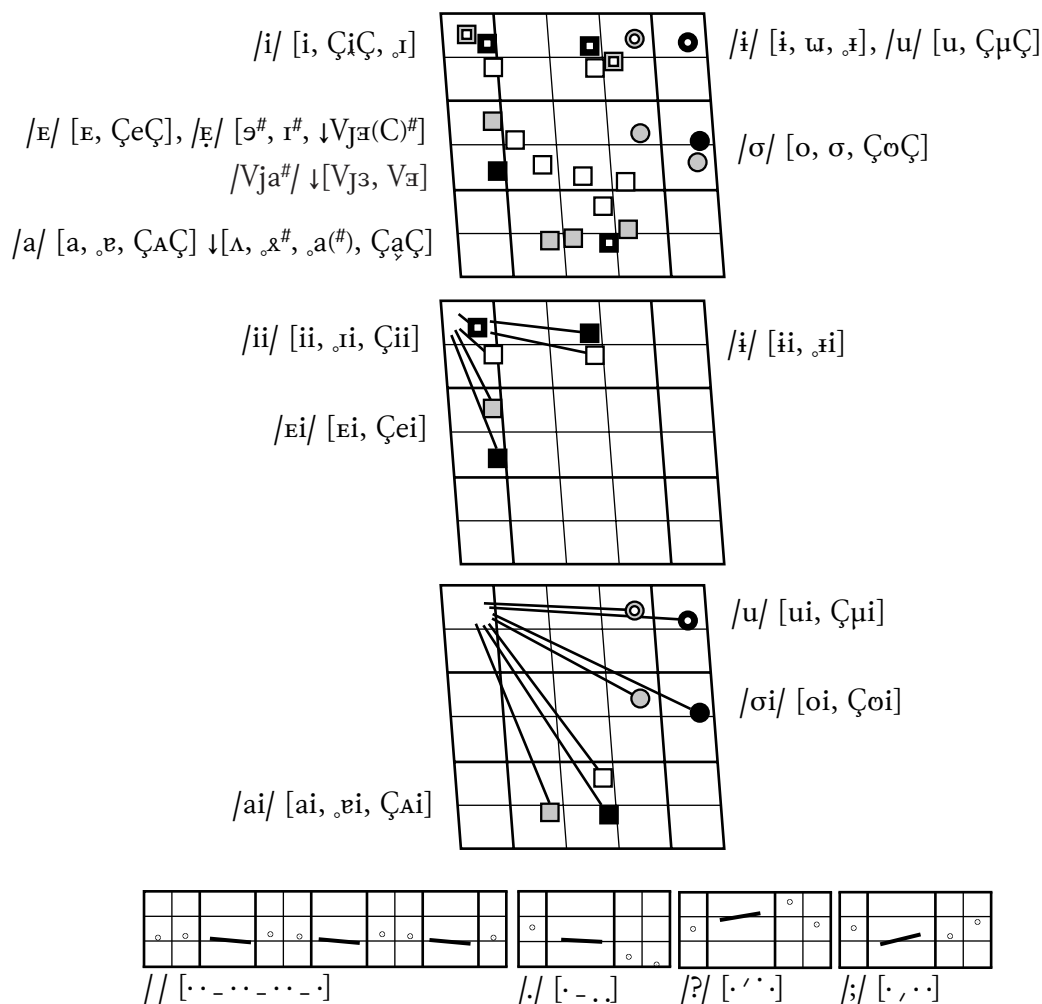
Since the behavior of modern Russian /ts, ʃ, z, ʒ/ phonemes is quite peculiar, both functionally and articulatorily, they can inevitably constitute a real communication problem for many regional accents. Not only because /ts, ʃ, z/ are never followed by /i/ (nowadays), but also because a contrast between /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ is not common in many languages, which generally have only one kind of /ʒ/, mainly realized as [ʒ, ʒ̥].

Central Russia: Moscow

16.4. The vowels and intonation patterns of this accent are shown in fig 16.4. It has /ɛ̄/ [ɐ̄<sup>#</sup>, ɪ<sup>#</sup>, VJɛ(C)<sup>#</sup>] and /ā/ [VJɛ<sup>#</sup>, Vɛ<sup>#</sup>]. In addition, it can also have /a/ [Λ, ÇaÇ, ə<sup>#</sup>, ə<sup>a</sup>(<sup>#</sup>)], and /V̄/ [V̄<sup>#</sup>] (seminalized). All these peculiarities are more typical of the Moscow conurbation than of the rest of the area shown in fig 16.2.

As for the *consonants*, let us consider mainly /ɣ, z/ [ɣ̂, ẑ; ɣ̃, z̃; ɣ̄, z̄; ɣ̅, z̅]; [ʃ̂, ʒ̂] rather than [ʃ̃, ʒ̃], and /zz/ [ẑẑ]; [t̂, d̂; t̃, d̃], [c, ʃ; k̂, ɡ̂]; /v/ [v̂, ʋ̂; ṽ, ʋ̃]; /r/ [r̂, ʀ̂; ʀ̃, ʀ̃]. In addition, we also find [Cω, Ç; Cɣ, Ç]. Practically never /k'tσ, t̃'tσ/ but /ɣ'tσ, ɣ̃'tσ/ for κτο, что (the latter being, now, current neutral Russian).

fig 16.4. Moscow accent: vowels, diphthongs, and intonation patterns.

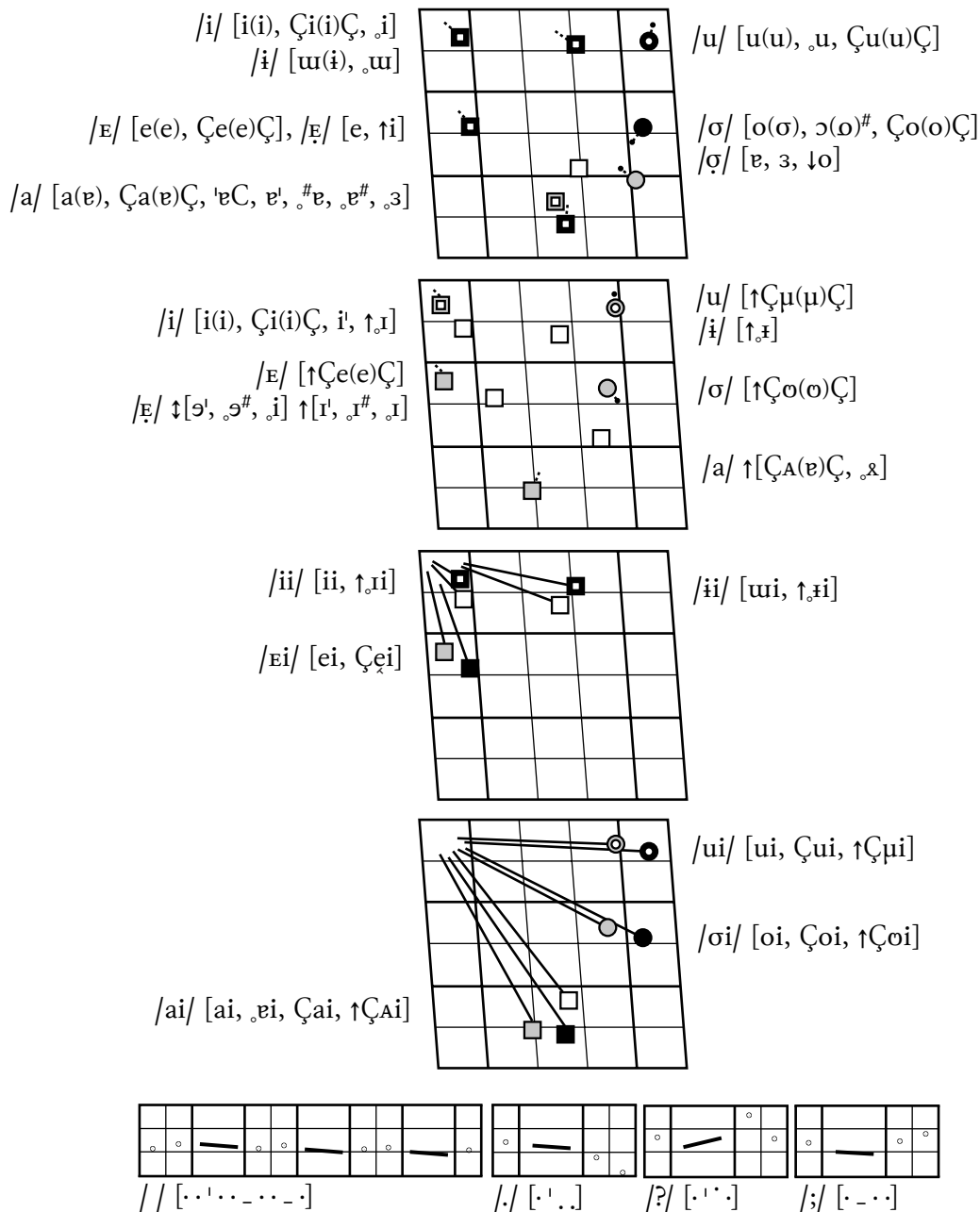


### Northwestern Russia: Saint Petersburg

16.5.1. For this accent, which sometimes was presented as neutral, we will be more complete, to also show how any other sections can certainly be expanded. Furthermore, a number of examples could be usefully added, adapting them from those given in  $\mathcal{G}$  5,  $\mathcal{G}$  7,  $\mathcal{G}$  10-12,  $\mathcal{G}$  14-15.

Thus, the Russian pronunciation found in Saint Petersburg is shown in *fig 16.5*. The first vocogram gives the basic vowel inventory, which has monotimbric diphthongs ([ii, ee, uu]), or narrow ones ([aɐ, oɔ, uɨ]), in stressed free internal syllables ( $^{\uparrow}V^{\#}$  /  $^{\uparrow}VV^{\#}$ ); but often [ɐC].

*fig 16.5*. Saint Petersburg accent: vowels, diphthongs, and intonation patterns.



In unstressed syllables we have /i, i, u/ [i, u, u], /ɛ/ [e] (including *ekan'e* in pre-stressed or unstressed final position, /ɛ/ [e, e<sup>#</sup>]: о Петербурге [ɐpʲɪtʃɛr'burʲɛ]); and /σ/ [ɐ, ɛ, ↓o]; /a/ [ɐ', e<sup>#</sup>, e<sup>#</sup>, ə] (ie [ɐ] in pre-stressed, or unstressed absolutely initial, or unstressed final position, but [ə] in unstressed internal position). In addition, /<sup>#</sup>jɛ, #jɛ/ and /Vjɛ, Vjɛ/ can behave as /<sup>#</sup>ɛ, #ɛ/ and /Vɛ, Vɛ/ (or ↑<sup>#</sup>jɛ, #jɛ; Vjɛ, Vjɛ/). Notice that /ɛ/, stands for *ekan'e* realizations. In words ending in unstressed -ия, we find either [iɐ] or [↓ie], as well, and frequently /VjV<sup>#</sup>/ [VV].

Arguably, the diphthongs are a combination of these phon(em)es with /-i/: [ii, wi, ui; ei, oi; ai, ei, zi] (basic accent, with appropriate adjustments for the more typical one).

The second vocogram shows these same realizations, but with added taxophones. Notice those occurring in interpalatalized contexts (/↑Ç-Ç/, given in grey, in particular [A, o, u]); also unstressed /i/ [↑i] (even if pre-stressed or final), /i/ [↑i], and typical /ɛ/ [↑ɐ', ə<sup>#</sup>, ə], but ↑[ɪ', ɪ<sup>#</sup>, ɪ]. For completely unstressed /a/, we find [↑ɛ], in addition to [ɐ] in the 'stronger' contexts already seen above.

16.5.2. As for the *consonants*, let us notice that generally no approximant, [ɣ, ω], occurs after non-palatal(ized) contoids, but that before stressed /σ, u/, labialized or velarized contoids may occur ([C] ↑[Ç, Ç]) in the typical accent, more or less as in mediatic Russian pronunciation (cf Ç 15) while, in a lighter accent, plain contoids are usual ([C]). Before stressed /i, a/ we generally find [C, ↑C].

Also before /i/ we can find plain contoids ([C]) for front or back consonant phonemes in lighter accents, but palatalized ones ([Ç]) in more typical accents, even in lighter accents, before apical ('central') consonants. In both kinds of accent, we have palatalized taxophones with /jɛ, jɛ/.

Regularly, adjectives in -кий have [kii, ↑cii], as in (modern) neutral pronunciation – with [cii], against traditional [kɛi] (similarly for -гий, -хий, of course). However, we often find [C] in /Ci, Cj<sup>#</sup>/. In addition, we find /Clj, Cnj/ [Ç], [Çn].

Thus, we find the following series [m, n; p, b; t, d; k, g; k, g; ts, dz; f, v; s, z; ʃ, tʃ, ʒ, ↑ʒ; ɲ; r; l], [m, n; p, b; t, d; c, ɟ; tʃ, dz; tʃ, dz; f, v; s, z; ʃ, tʃ; ʒ, ↑ʒ; ɲ; j; ʃ; l, l]; and (often subjectively judged to be 'better' phones) ↑[m̂, n̂; p̂, b̂; t̂, d̂; k̂, ɡ̂; t̂ŝ, dẑ; f̂, v̂; ŝ, ẑ; ʃ̂, t̂ʃ̂, ʒ̂, ↑ʒ̂; ɲ̂; r̂; l̂], ↑[m̂, n̂; p̂, b̂; t̂, d̂; t̂ŝ, dẑ; f̂, v̂; ŝ, ẑ; ʃ̂, ʒ̂; ɛ̂; l̂].

In addition, let us notice that the endings -сь, -ся and -тся have [ʃ, tʃ]; сч, зч, щ have [ʃtʃ, tʃtʃ] rather than [ʃʃ], while intervocalic /tʃ/ can frequently be [tʃ, tʃ]; зж [ʒʒ, ↑ʒʒ]; щн, чн tend to be [ʒn, tʃn], respectively, and что, кто, никто [tʃ'to, k'to, nikt'o] (in addition to ↑[ʃto, ɲto, nɪɲ'to]).

Usually, consonant clusters tend not to be reduced: щтн, щтк, щтл; тск, стск; здн; while, word-final [m; p, b; f, v] can typically be ↓[m; p, b; f, v]. [ÇÇ] clusters, are less frequent than usually; and /stj<sup>#</sup>, znj<sup>#</sup>/ tend to become one single phone, [ʃ] (since /-Cj<sup>#</sup>/ become /∅/). Before front vowels or /j/, we can typically find /ts/ [tʃ, ↑ts]: об итальянце [ɐbitalʲɪɲtʃɛ, ↑ntsɪ].

The *intonation* patterns are shown in the tonograms.

# 17. Post-Soviet country accents

Maps 17.0.1-2 show the areas of eastern Europe and southwestern Asia, where formerly Sovietized nations lie. Those peoples were obliged to speak Russian,

fig 17.0.1. Europe.



mainly unwillingly (as they are now free to declare), and pronouncing it with their peculiar accents, which we will describe in this chapter. Thus, Russian was learnt through both imposition and spelling. Certainly not the best way to learn a foreign language.

Besides, these maps also show the languages which are spoken in such countries. The phonopses showing the pronunciation of those very languages can be found in 17 & 19 of LC's book *Natural Phonetics & Tonetics*.

fig 17.o.2. Southwestern Asia.

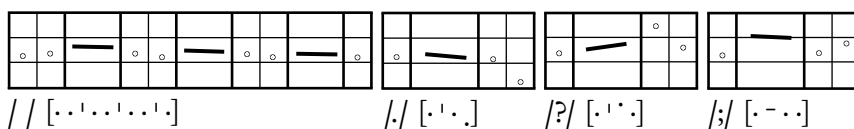
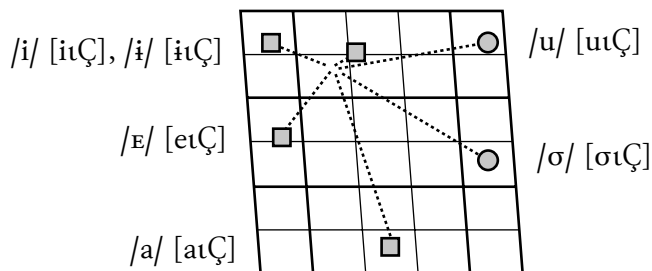
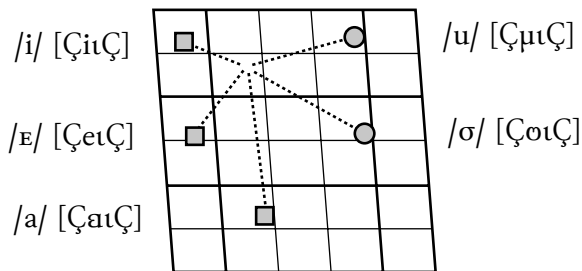
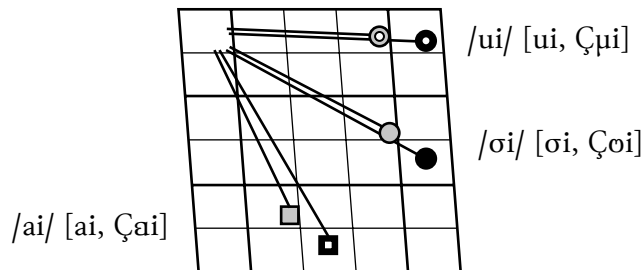
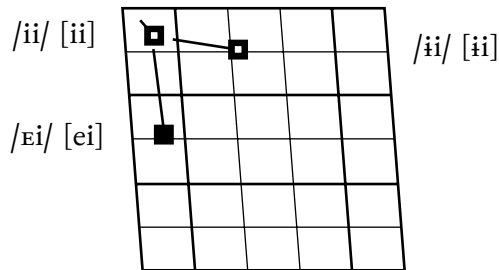
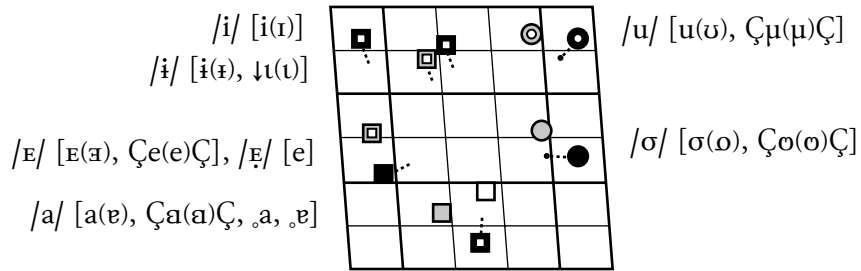




### Ukraine

17.1. The vowels and intonation patterns of this accent are shown in fig 17.1. It has four raised and fronted taxophones occurring between [Ç]; vowel length, in stressed

fig 17.1. Ukraine accent: vowels, diphthongs, and intonation patterns.



syllables, is invariably [VV], as shown, whatever the context, even in checked syllables by more than one consonant. In addition, more typically, vowels in stressed syllables checked by [Ç] are [ViÇ] or [VV(ɪ)Ç].

As for the *consonants*, we find [Ç] realized as [Cj], with possible prepalatal variants, [ɲ, tʃ, dʃ, ʂ, zʃ, ʃ, ʎ], but also with occasional /Cj<sup>#</sup>/ [ɹC], in opposition to plain consonants, realized as [C, Cɣ, Cω]. In addition, we have /f, v/ [f, v; ɸ, β; ɸ, β], /s, z/ [ʃ, ʒ; ʂ, ʒ]; /ʎ/ [ʎ, ʎɣ, ʎtʃ, ʂ<sup>(#)</sup>]; /tʃ/ [tʃ, tʃɣ]; /l/ [l, l, l] and frequently [ɹ<sup>#</sup>, ɹ<sup>#</sup>, u<sup>#</sup>, ɹC, ɹC, uC], in opposition to [l, λ, l]. Besides, in [Çk, Çg] sequences, we often have [Çc, Çj], while, in broader accents, we can have /g/ [ɥ, h].

Voiced diphonic consonants, when final or before voiceless consonants, remain voiced (or are only partially devoiced, or fully devoiced only in milder accents); at any rate, sequences of diphonic consonants undergo voicing assimilation to the second element, especially within words.

## 18.

# Foreign accents of Russian and pronunciation teaching methods

18.1. This short chapter deals with the Soviet (now Russian, but without improvements) method of teaching Russian pronunciation. In fact, its essence is *listen and repeat!* and... *liisten and repeeat!!*, and... *liiisten and repeeeat!!!* It closely resembles the 'method' of communist China.

Thus, learners unsystematically acquire a number of phones, both vocalic and consonantal, which, somehow, are added to the phones of the (regional) accent of their own languages.

Of course, the 'bombarded' learners try to do their best with all those piled up phones. However, they use them haphazardly: sometimes they succeed in using the right ones, or something close to them. So, at first, the learners seem to have (perfectly) grasped the phonic structure of Russian.

18.2. Nevertheless, after a few sentences (if not just after a few words more), some phones of their mother-tongue accent suddenly appear, mixed together with some expected ones. Unfortunately, even the proper taxophones (as, for instance, those of interpalatalized contexts) appear, but often in wrong contexts, and vice versa.

In addition, spelling plays nasty tricks on unlucky learners. In fact, old *ekan'e* habits are strengthened by the way words are written and even by too many native teachers, who still use them. Often, such teachers think it useful to highlight morphological differences, especially for grammemes.

Also я (or the grapheme а preceded by [Ç] /Cj/) continually misleads, as for the common and frequently used word язык [jɪ'zɪk], which is reduced to ↓[jɪ'zɪk, jɪ'zɪk] (or to [j-] with any other vocoid comprised in the cells within the area shown in the last vocogram of fig 18.1), or better to [jɪ'zɪk, jɪ'zɪk]. Any occasional and cursory observations, provided in books or by teachers, do not generally win over spelling.

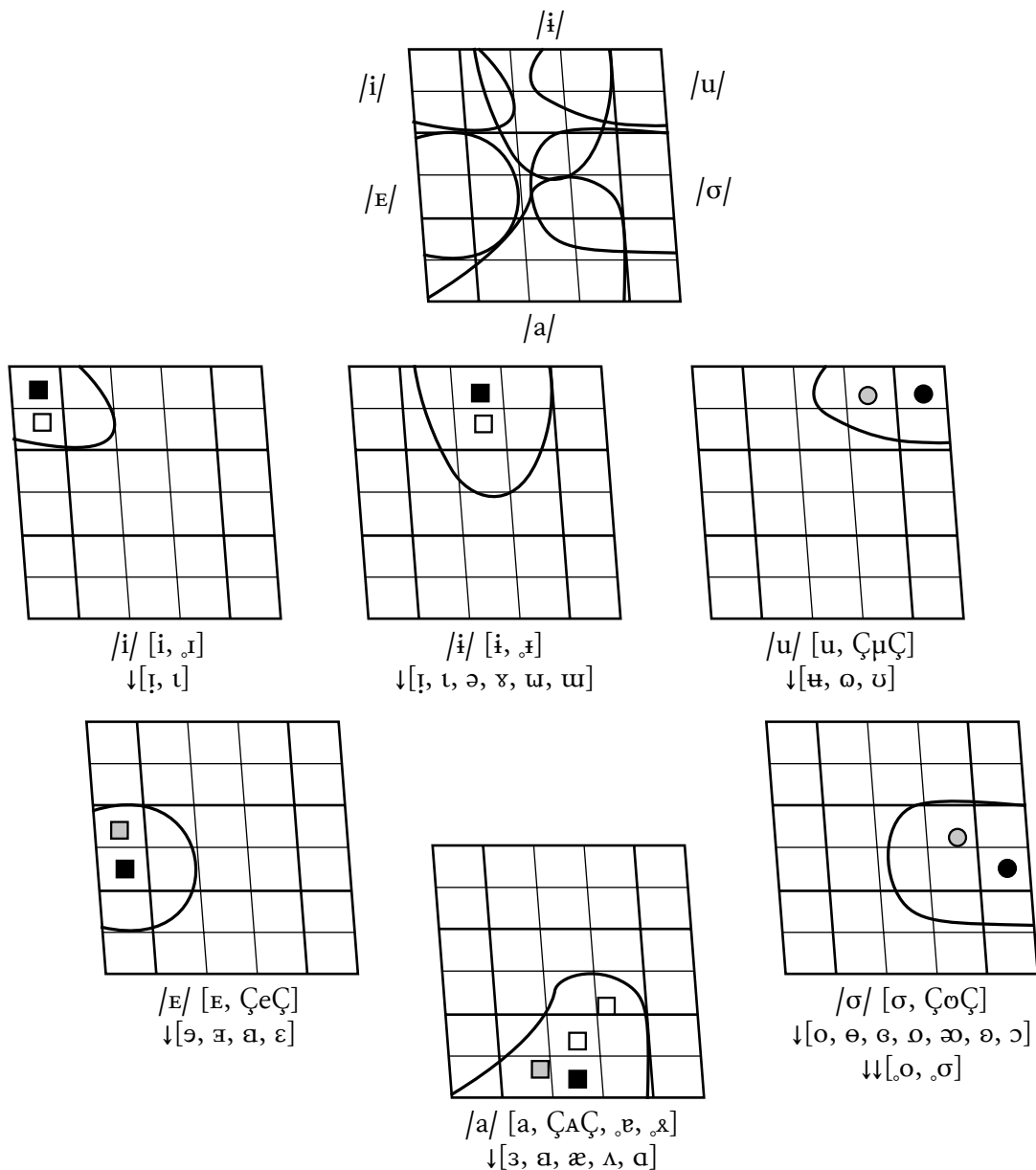
18.3. Now, let us have a careful look at fig 18.1, which resembles a quadrilateral found in the Net, which is derived from fig 26 on p. 55 of Trofimov & Jones's book (see Bibliography). However, those two figures also include, in the /ɛ/ phoneme, the unstressed taxophone of the /i/ phoneme, [ɪ]. But this is a mistake, because such [ɪ] represents an *unstressed* collocation belonging to the Cyrillic grapheme е.

The figure found in the net also comprises, in the same /ɛ/ phoneme, [ə], which is a taxophone of /i/, belonging to the older kind of Russian pronunciation.

18.4. Going back to our vocogram (in fig 18.1), notice that, after a global sight, the six vowel phonemes are given separately. The six vocograms generically show the taxophones which are needed in the native-like international pronunciation of Russian. They are part of the six larger areas, which include the most frequent realizations of the six phonemes by different foreign learners.

As said, curiously enough, these areas are similar to those in the figure(s) discussed above. However, they, actually, comprise most realizations by different foreign speakers, according to their own phonic systems. But, as already stated, they also include actual Russian taxophones, which are either correctly or incorrectly used (see fig 5.2 for the collocation of our *canIPA* symbols).

fig 18.1. International native-like Russian: the areas involved in the realization of the six vowel phonemes & their taxophones.



18.5. Of course, foreigners who have learned better tend to use more the native-like international vocoids shown, or at least those of simpler international Russian. This one is mainly shared with a number of European and Asian accents outside the original core area of the Russian dialects shown in fig 16.1. Eight vocoids are sufficient for a convincing pronunciation, provided it is coherent enough: [i], [e, ɛ], [a, ɐ], [σ], [u], [ɨ].

However, usually, most foreigners unwittingly alternate between their own personal phones and the Russian ones, producing different performances. Thus, there are different degrees of understanding, more or less satisfactory, also due to different lexical and morphologic & syntactic abilities.

18.6. Keeping distinct /i/ and /ɨ/ is usually a problematic and oscillating matter for most foreigners, in spite of spelling (with its undeniable dilemmas), especially for those foreigners who have no phoneme between /i/ and /u/ (apart from possible /y/, which has nothing to do with Cyrillic y).

So, oscillations between /i/ and /ɨ/ (and vice versa) are quite common. In addition, for stressed /ɨ/, we often find [ɨ] or [i] (or an intermediate [ɨ̃]) preceded by some approximants. In worst cases, such approximants are [w, w], which are too precise, and excessive for Russian.

A little better can be [ɹ], or somewhat better [ɹɨ]. While [ɹɨ, ɹɨ] could be almost appropriate, the correct [ɨ̃] is rather rare. For stressed /a/, the typical [ɨ̃a] is practically unused by foreigners.

18.7. Another (bigger) problem regards the grapheme o, which many foreigners (although fewer than for e) realize, according to spelling, as /σ/ even in more or less frequent unstressed syllables, where it stands for (unstressed) /a/.

In stressed syllables, /σ/ can have 'committed' realizations with preceding [w-, w-], followed by some 'choice' of vocoids between those shown in fig 18.1. But these are excessive for Russian, which has [ɹ-] before /u, σ/.

18.8. As for the *consonants*, the main problem for foreigners consists in how to realize [Ç]. Generally, even at advanced levels of practice in speaking Russian, [Ç] consonants are substituted by [Cj, Cj], mostly before vowels. In fact, before consonants or pauses, their (always oscillating) realizations tend to be simply [C], rather than rarer [Cj, Cj]. In such contexts, real [Ç] are extremely rare, but they are not more favored before vowels. In addition, many foreigners also use [CiV] sequences for [ÇV].

18.9. Even for non-palatalized consonants things are not better. In fact, their 'preferred' realizations are simply plain [C]. Only occasionally, and oscillating, can we find something like [C, Ç].

The phonemes /ɣ, ɣ/ are particularly problematic, and tend to be realized as the more similar (or less different) phonemes of the speakers' languages (and personal variants). In addition, the phoneme /ɣ/ should be realized differently from /ɣ/, al-

though many languages do not have such an opposition. Thus, very many foreigners do not distinguish them.

18.10. The precise timbre of /r, l/ should not be important for simple communication, provided they are somehow different from their palatalized versions, if present. So, [ɫ] may not be absolutely necessary. However, uvular or velar *r*'s are certainly not fit for Russian, although some native speaker do have some kind of 'back' *r*. This means that, communicatively, the precise quality of *r* is not very important.

Other consonants should be realized in a similar way to Russian use. However, sequences of different diphonic consonants, instead of assimilating the Russian way for voicing, remain as they are written. In final position, before a pause, voiced diphonic consonants, for many foreigners remain fully, or partially, voiced, differently from what happens in Russian.

18.11. The Soviet/Russian pronunciation method also has some effects on *intonation* learning. Of course, poorer learners do not change their personal and regional patterns, in the least. Thus, they keep on speaking Russian (and other languages, as well) systematically as if speaking to their fellow countrymen.

Those among them who have absorbed the 'Soviet method' better just unsystematically add two changes to their original patterns. As fig 18.2 shows, these two 'improvements' consist in alternately adding just a tonetic raise on the prestressed syllable in conclusive tunes, /./ [ˈ\$-\$], and lowering to the mid tone the ending syllable of their interrogative tune, /?/ [-.\$.\$].

18.12. This can produce an auditory effect similar, but certainly not identical, to the real Russian patterns. In fact, all the rest remains unchanged as when speaking their regional mother-tongue language.

Their protunes, and suspensive tune (/;/), do not usually change at all, while their conclusive and interrogative tunes are modified by just adding the two changes seen above – cf fig 18.2. Actually, all the blank syllables in the tonograms stand for any correspondent syllables in the typical speech of any foreigners.

18.13. The supposed 'magic' consists, then, in uttering a higher syllable before the stressed one in the conclusive tune, and in adding a lowering (to the mid tone, sometimes even a little lower) by deforming their habitual tonetic movements.

Thus, for instance, an interrogative tune like [.\$\$.]\$ (which is one of the most widespread in the world) becomes something like [.\$\$.]\$.

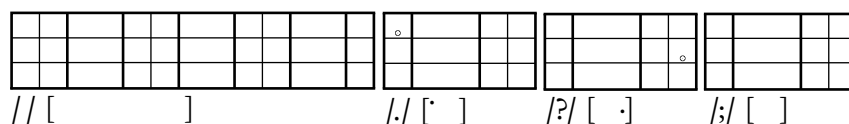
Likewise, a tune like [.\$\$.]\$ (which is the other most common type in the world) either remains substantially unchanged or becomes something like [.\$\$.]\$ (or [.\$\$.]\$).

18.14. Again, at first, this effect may sound rather convincing, but it is not actually so. In fact, a number of native Russian speakers may find it monotonous, if not even offensive.

Of course, the phonetic and tonetic method can certainly be of real help, by showing exactly the intonation patterns of both (neutral) Russian and those of any different learners.

Thus, accurate comparisons will show even the more or less tiny differences. Once these are shown and known, it is easier to acquire the desired patterns, of course with appropriate training sessions.

fig 18.2. Non-native Russian: artificially induced modifications on original foreign patterns.



18.15. It is sad to have to admit that the ‘Soviet phonetic method’ has proved to be unsuccessful, in spite of time and energies spent, notwithstanding some favorable –not fully qualified– opinions.

# 23. Orogram collection

All contoids dealt with in the book are shown here, including three palatograms shown at the end of fig 23.8, and four overrounded vocoids, given just below, fig 23.1.

fig 23.1. Special overrounded vocoids.

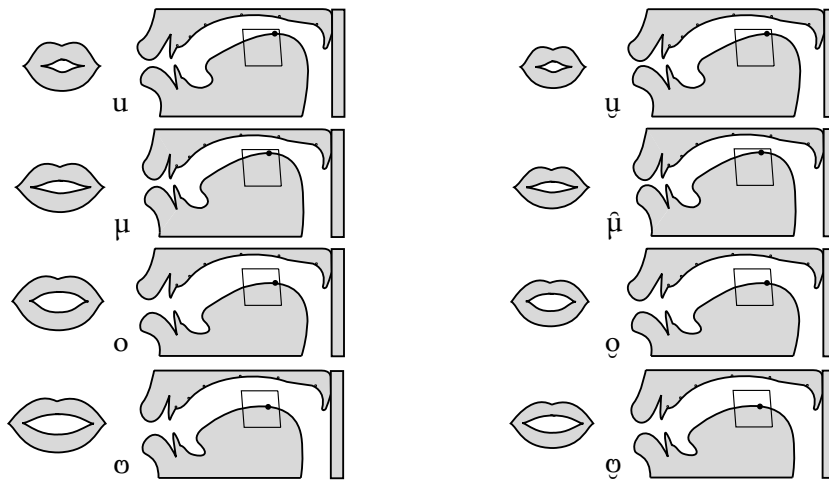
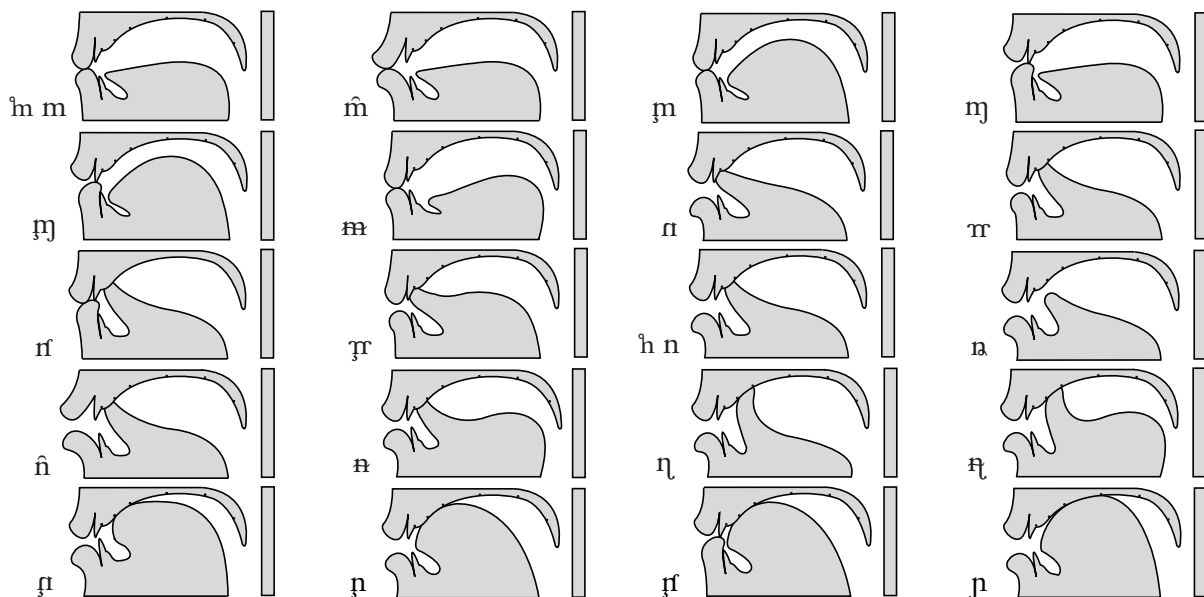


fig 23.2. Nasals & seminasals.





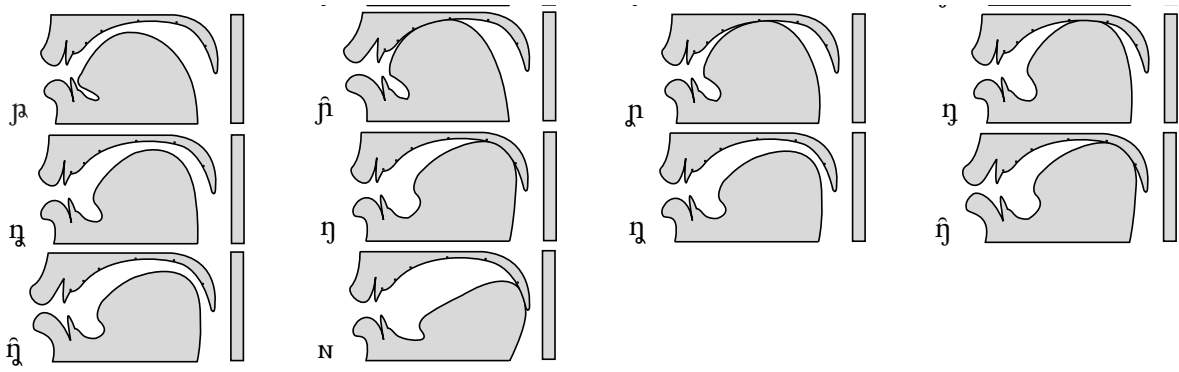


fig 23.3. Stops & some slightly different ones.

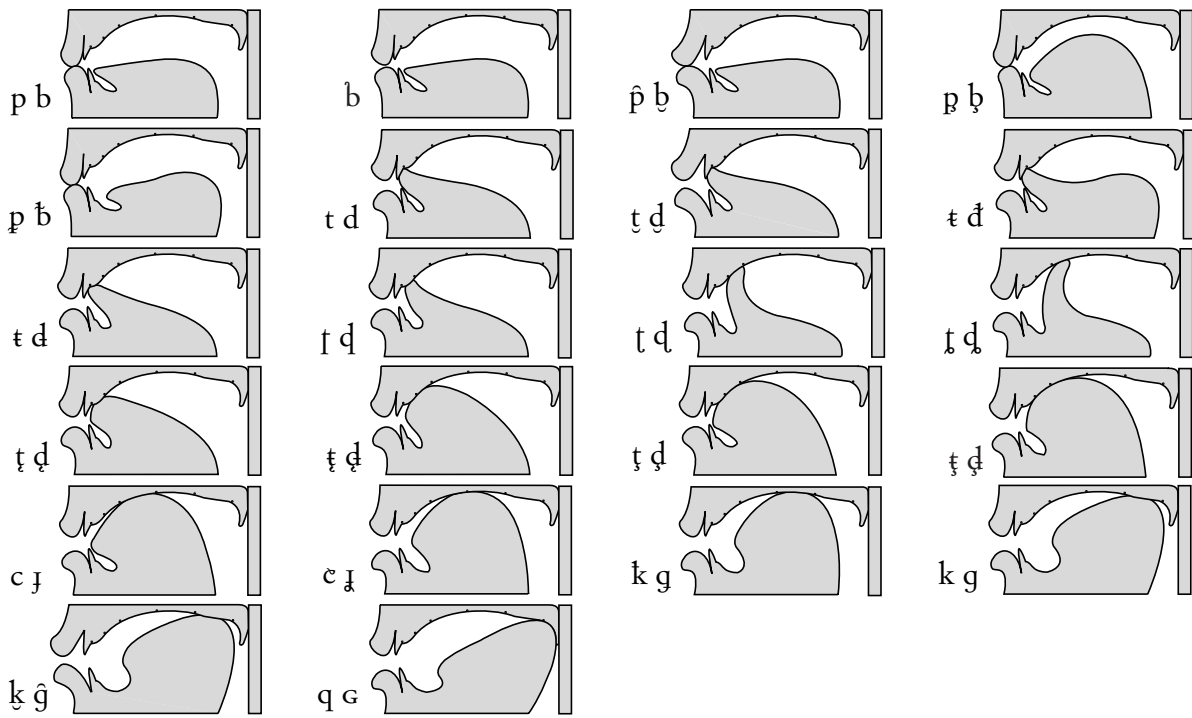
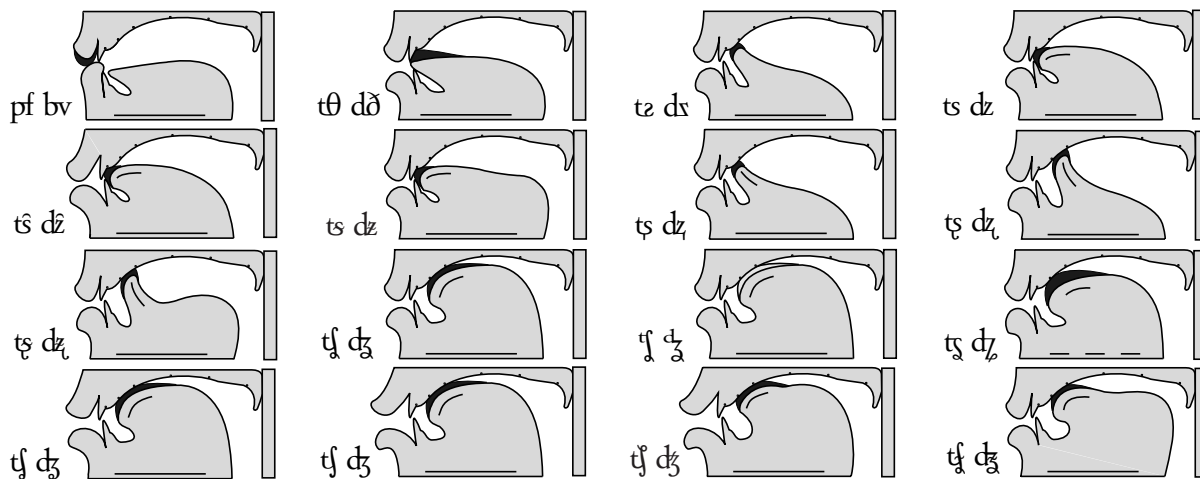


fig 23.4. Stop-strictives (or 'affricates') & semi-stop-strictives.







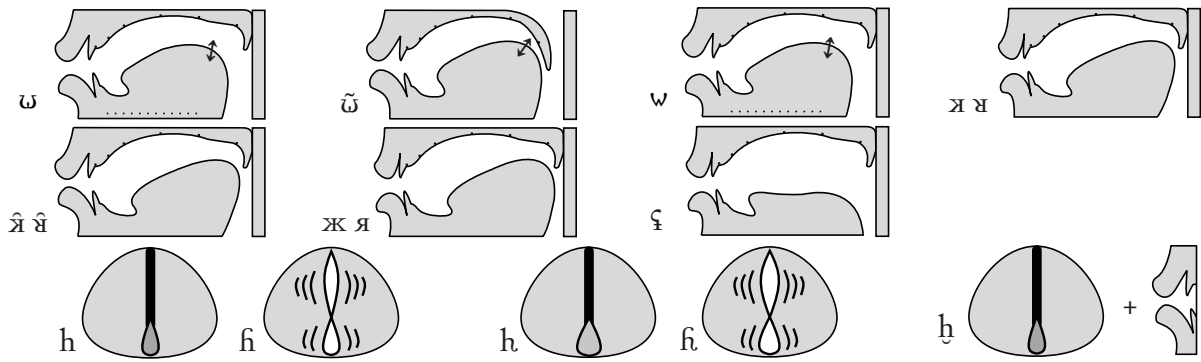


fig 23.7. Rhotics: trills, taps, flaps, &c.

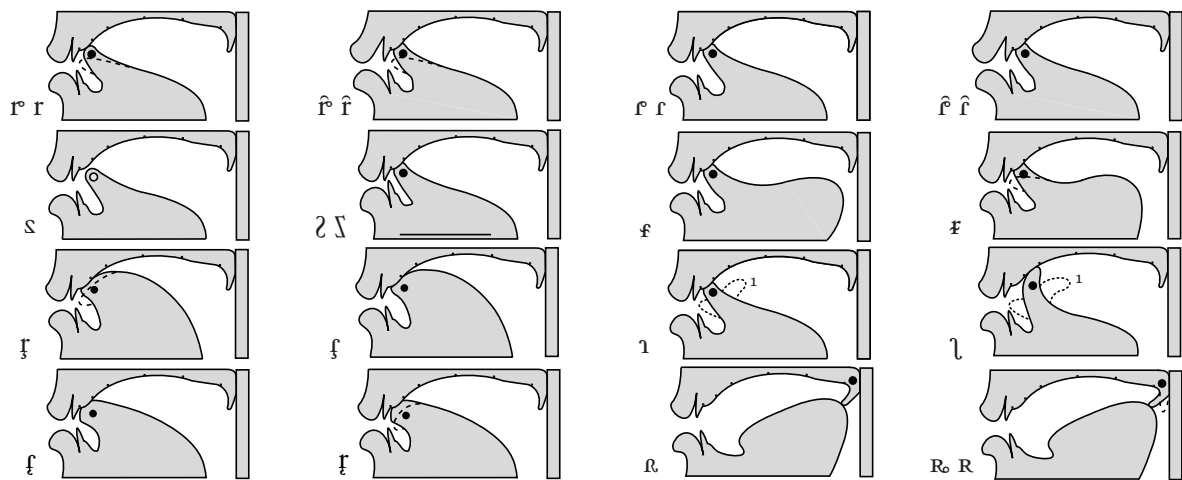


fig 23.8. Laterals & semi-laterals, &c.

