

## Chapter 4 : English vowels.

Vowels more than consonant that creates a difference in accents in the English language.

but in Arabic the consonants give more rise to differences in accents. Ex: /eS/ /eS/

Examples: Fast → f(ə)st, f(ɛ)st

class → kl(ə)s, kl(ɛ)s

dot.com → d(ɔ)t k(ɔ)m, d(ə)t k(ə)m → the difference

either → (ɪ)ð(ɪ), (i)ð(i)

stone → st(ə)n, st(ɔ)n

phone → f(ə)n, f(ɔ)n

is in vowels.

In the English language we have some authoritative dictionary (British) that give us good Standard Pronunciation.

The names of some dictionaries (British):

1. English Pronouncing Dictionary (EPD)

2. Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (LPD)

3. Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English (ODPCE)

The names of American dictionaries:

1. Webster's Dictionary.

\* In England standard good pronunciation is usually refers to Received Pronunciation (RP), reflects

1) it is the accents of Royal family, Ex: the Queen, the King.

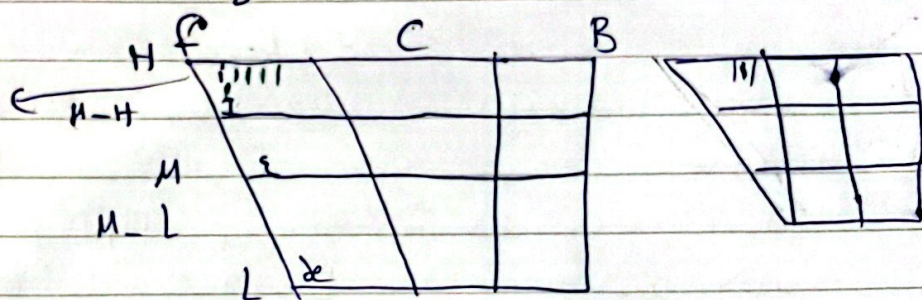
2) BBC

\* In America we have Standard American English → so in America there is nobody that people look up to.

## The differences between consonants and vowels:-

1. Consonants can be voiceless and voiced, however all vowels are voiced.
2. All vowels are oral, but consonants can be oral like /L, t/ and nasal like /m, n, ŋ/.
3. In the production of vowels there is a free air passage such as /e, i, ɔɪ/ but in the production of consonants there is usually some kind of air constriction.
4. There is no definite tongue position
5. There is no definite tongue height
6. There are no definite boundaries between the different vowels.

→ So the position of the tongue isn't really definite for everybody, but we care about is



(the auditory feature of vowel) as speakers and listeners.

→ some vowel higher than others so some vowel up and some vowel down

## The differences in pronunciation between American and British English:-

US

UK

+ /ɪ/

- /ɪ/ → delete /ɪ/

/ɑ/

/ɒ/

/ɔr/

/ɔr/

/ɛl/

/ɑ: /

/u/

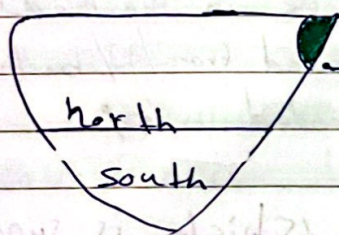
/ju/ → doesn't apply to all words  
Ex. Prɒdʒʊs → UK  
Prɒdʒɪs → US

the /ɪ/ is deleted

Author Er: dsjum → uk  
dsun → us

us uk  
eɪ ʔɪ → b: fɛɪ s bɜ:k or f ʔɪ s bɜ:k  
ʔɪ ʌɪ

\* we can hear (uk) sounds in the American east coast because the british influence on the American East Coast can be traced back to colonial times. many early settlers were from England so the british accent had a big impact on region's dialect.



→ In new England area including new York and new Jersey (the east coast), these 2 states can still have the british variants.

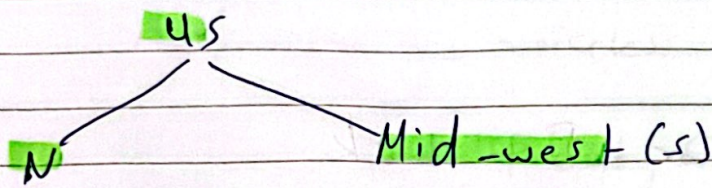
\* there are some basic differences in America itself. ↳ the accents in the north is more prestigious (elegant) than the accent in the south.



→ In the south this area called (Mid-west)

In the mid-west, the accent has some features to it like vowel length

\* Some of the differences in America itself: (us)

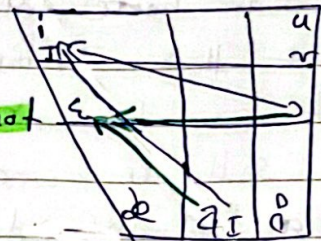


ʌɪ → ɛɛ Ex: Fʌɪv → Fɛɛv

ɔɪ → ɔɛ Ex: bɔɪ → bɔɛ

u → it is actually rounded but in the Mid-west back rounded vowels are not rounded

ʊ → not rounded in south (Mid-west).



Examples: boots / bɔʊts / → very rounded because it's lightest back vowel.

Fruits / fɹʊts /  
good / gʊd /  
would / wʊd /

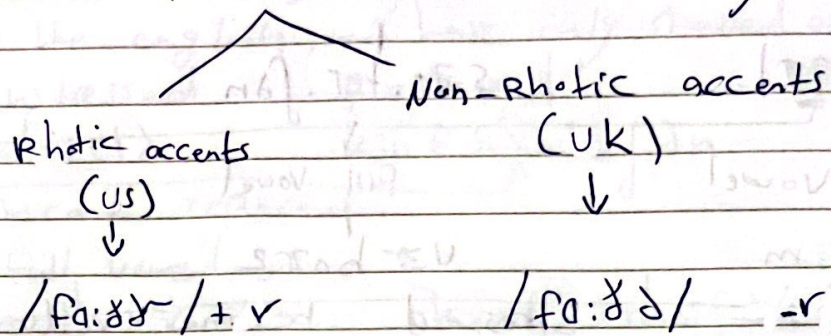
people in the mid-west started from /ʌɪ/ but ended in /ɛɛ/

→ so these sounds which is supposed to be rounded but unrounded in the (Mid-west).

\* Back vowels in general which include /u, ʊ, ɔ/ → these are more back in American English than British meaning that the tongue takes a more back position than they are in British English.

\* Some diphthongs do not actually a sound as they do in the north because they are still diphthongs, however we pronounce them more like monophthongs /u, ʊ, ɔ/ → are not as far back in British as they are in America English.

\* **Rhotacization**: different forms of /ɹ/ sound → coloring of /r/.  
(**Rhotic Vowels**).



Examples: heart /hɑ:ɹt/ (US), birth /bɜ:ɹθ/ → these are **rhotic vowels** because they have the /ɹ/ sound.  
 matter /mætɹ/ but in England they produce them as /hɑ:t/, /bɜ:θ/, /mæt/ (no /ɹ/ sound) → **non-rhotic**

\* **Vowels occur in three different kinds of syllables**:

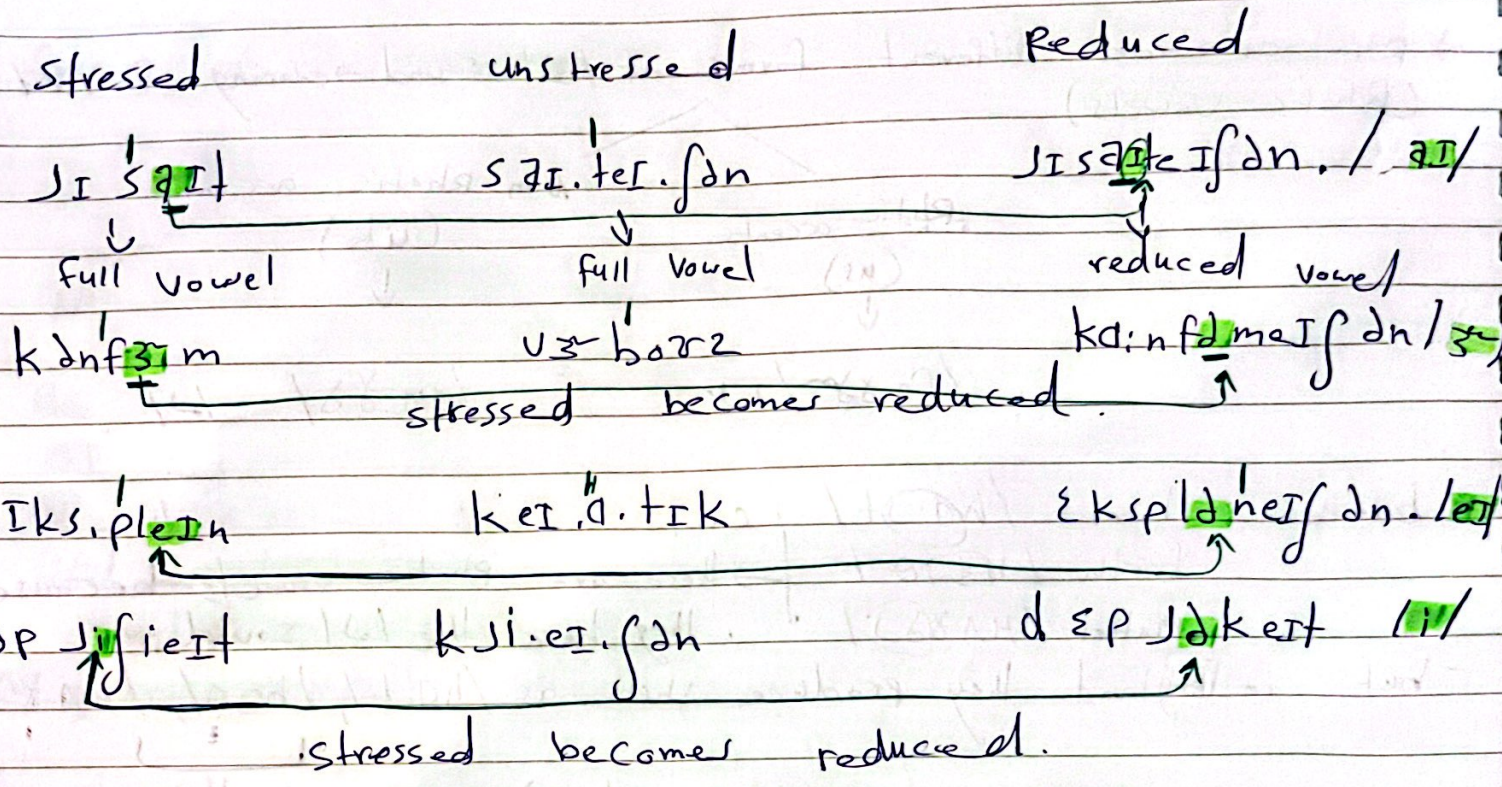
1. **stressed** → vowels are usually longer than other syllables, more tense.
2. **unstressed** → vowels are shorter than the stressed.
3. **Reduced**: very short, and we used in reduced the /ɪ/ or /I/.

Examples: /eɪ/ → explain /ɪks.pleɪn/ } the /eɪ/ became /ɪ/.  
 explanation /ɪks.pleɪn.ɪ.ʃən/ }

/əɪ/ → decide /dɪs.aɪd/ } decision /dɪs.ɪʒən/.

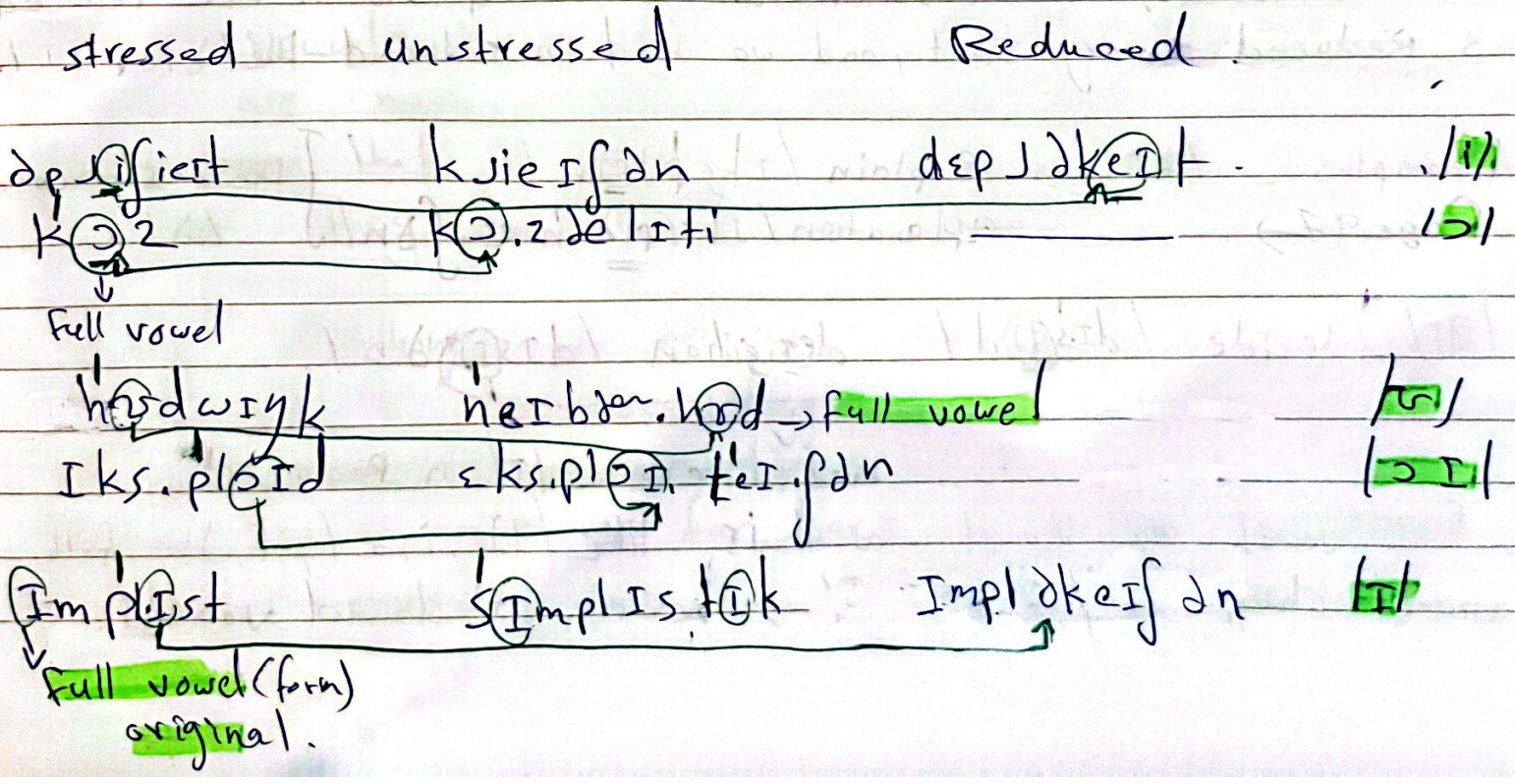
the /əɪ/ becomes /ɪ/ in reduced.

→ **Full vowel**: any vowel as it is like /eɪ, i, æ/, if the full vowel changes to /ɪ/ or /I/ → become **Reduced vowels**.



\*not all vowels can have reduced sound.  
 → sometimes the /ɪ/ can be original like /dɪsɑːtɪd/.

\*Table 4.2 page 105:-



note: In vowels /ɒ, ʊ, ɪ/ they are do not have a reduced form in the English, we have only stressed and unstressed.

stressed	unstressed	reduced	
kɒnfɪˈt	ɪmˈbɪeld	kɒnfɪˈɪnterfəʊn	/ɪ/
↓	↓	↑	
full vowel	full vowel.	become reduced.	

kɒnfɪˈt	vɜːbɔːz	kɒnfɪˈɪnterfəʊn	/ɪ/
↑		↑	

kɒmˈpjʊt	kɒmpjuteɪfəʊn	sɜːkjʊˈdɪd	/jʊ/
↑		↑	

so the /jʊ/ becomes /jʊd/.

\* stressed syllables are the longest of all vowels and full and any syllable with a vowel can't be stressed.  
 → when we have stressed and unstressed we have the same form of verb and the vowels remains the same but it is longer in the stressed.

\* when we talk about vowels we really have 2 major forms of vowels:

1. **Tense**: are usually longer than lax vowels and when we study tense and lax → we need to look at the kind of syllable in which they occur

2. **Lax**

and we have 2 kinds of syllables:

1. **open syllables**: a syllables that ending with a vowel

Ex: go, tru

2. **closed syllables**: a syllables that ending with consonant

Ex: run, suck

go /gəʊ/ two /tuː/

open syllables because they are ending with vowels.

such /sʌʃ/ both /boʊ/

they are closed syllables because they are ending with consonant.

\* Lax vowels occur in closed syllables only, however tense vowels occur in both (closed and open).

/æ/ lax vowel because it is impossible to find any word that end with /æ/ because /æ/ is lax vowel and lax vowels occur in closed syllable. Ex: /mæ/ , /bæ/.

Examples: sea /siː/ boy /bɔɪ/ so /sə/ → all of these end with vowels (open). so these vowels are tense.

buy /baɪ/ day /deɪ/ idea /aɪdɪə/ → they are open syllables, and they are tense vowels.

Four /fɔː/ hat /hæt/ speak /spiːk/ bed /bed/ → they are closed syllables because they end with consonant and so these words can be either tense or lax vowels.

\* Tense vowels are all the time longer than lax vowels.



How many syllable in the word open?

2 syllables → open → we have 1 open syllable.

How many syllable in the word syllables?

3 syllables → sillables → and we have 2 open syllables.

Examples: 1) Historic → historick → 3 syllables → we have 2 closed syllables

2) differences → differences → 4 syllables → we have 2 open syllables.

3) symbolized → symbolized → 3 syllables → we have 1 open syllable

4) Confrontation → confrontation → 4 syllables.

↳ we have 3 closed syllables and 1 open syllable.

\* A syllable is a word or a part of a word that must have a vowel as it's nucleus, such as cat → it is word that stand itself

Cat /kæt/

hat /hæt/

tongue /tʌŋ/

or part of a word, for example: syllable /sɪ.lə.bəl/

Table 4.3 Page 106: (Tense and Lax vowels).

Tense vowels	Lax vowels	closed syllable	open syllable	syllable closed by [r]	syllable closed by [ŋ]	syllable closed by
i		beat	bee	beer		cleash
	ɪ	bit			sing	wish
eɪ		bait	bay			
	ɛ	bet		bare	length	fresh
oʊ		boat	low	(boar)		
	ʊ	good				Push

Tense vowels    lax vowels    closed syllables    open syllables    syllables closed by [r]    syllables closed by [y]    syllables closed by [ʃ]

ʌ		bo <u>o</u> t	bo <u>o</u>	tau <u>o</u>		
	ɔ/ɪ	bu <u>ʌ</u>		bu <u>ʌ</u>	hu <u>ŋ</u>	cr <u>ʌ</u> ʃ
aɪ		bi <u>te</u>	bu <u>y</u>	fi <u>re</u>		
ɔɪ		voi <u>ɪ</u> d	bo <u>y</u>	(ca <u>ɪ</u> t)		
ju		cu <u>fe</u>	cu <u>e</u>	pu <u>re</u>		
ɜ				bi <u>rd</u>		
	ɛ			ha <u>rry</u>	ha <u>ŋ</u>	spl <u>a</u> ʃ
ɑ:		fa <u>th</u> er				
	ɒ			hea <u>r</u> t	lo <u>ŋ</u>	wa <u>t</u> ʃ
ɔ				do <u>or</u>		
ɜr				hou <u>r</u>		

\* Syllables closed by [r], syllables closed by [y], and syllable closed by [ʃ] → there are restrictions when it comes to vowels in relation to these sounds, so not all vowels occur before of sounds [r], [y], [ʃ].

\* Notes of Table 4.3:

(leʌʃ) → it is between two brackets, because it is the only English word where /l/ precedes the /ʃ/ and there are no other word in English where /l/ precedes /ʃ/ and /l/ never occur before [y] in the English language.

/ɪ/ → lax vowels, it is only occurs in closed syllable like hit, bit, and they can't find /ɪ/ in any open syllable in the English language.

/ɪ/ → occurs only before [y] and [ʃ].

All *ing* in the English language → /ɪŋ/ it occurs before [j]:  
and /ɪ/ before [ʃ] like fish, wish.

\* here /hɪ/ → us  
/hɪd/ → uk.

American English tends to lengthen the /ɪ/ → here /hi/.

\* why /eɪ/ is tense vowel?

↳ because all diphthongs are tense,  
and /eɪ/ doesn't occur of any of them, so it doesn't  
occur before [r], [j] and [ʃ].

Example: bird → we don't say /berd/ → we say /bɜːrd/,  
because /eɪ/ doesn't occur before [r].

\* /ɜː/ is a lax vowel and it is occur before all of  
them → before [r], [j] and [ʃ].

Example: bare, length, fresh.

/ɔːr/ → tense vowel, because it is diphthong and  
because it is tense then it occurs on closed and  
open syllables.

\* (boar) → it is the only English word in which /ɔːr/  
occurs before [r] → /bɔːr/ that's why it is between the  
brackets, and because in the English language /ɔːr/ does  
occur so this is an exception.

→ /ɔːr/ as a vowel doesn't occur of any of them  
doesn't occur before [j] and [ʃ].

\* /ʌ/ it is **lax vowel** → occurs only before [ʃ].

Example: push /pʊʃ/

\* /u/ it is **tense vowel** → and /u/ occurs before /ʃ/ like four /fɔː/ and your /jʊə/ but it **doesn't occur before [ɹ] nor [ʃ]**.

\* /ɪ/ → both of them are **lax** and they occur before the sound [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ]

\* /ɪ/ → **tense vowel** because it is a **diphthong**. so diphthong occur before closed and open syllable. Example: fire /fɪə/ , tired /tɪəd/. but doesn't occur before [ɹ] and [ʃ]

\* /ɔɪ/ → not a lax vowel, it is **tense** because it is **diphthong**, so it's occur in closed and open syllables. (coir) → it is the **only word** in english language where /ɔɪ/ comes before [r] so /ɔɪ/ doesn't occur of any of them [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ].

\* /jʊ/ → **tense vowel** because it's diphthong and /jʊ/ occurs only before [r].

/ɜː/ → **tense vowel** and it's **occur before [r] only**.  
Ex: bird /bɜːd/.

/e/ → occurs before all of them [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ].  
Ex: hedge /hedʒ/, hedge /hedʒi/, split /splɪt/.

/ɑ:/ → tense vowel, and it's occur before [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ]

/ɒ/ and /ɔ/ → occurs before of all of them.

Ex: watch, heart, long, beach, wash.

/ɔ/ → occurs before the 3 sounds [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ].

Ex: door /dɔːr/.

/ɑː/ → tense vowel, and it is occurs only before [r].

Ex: hour /aʊər/.

Note: Not all vowels occur before of [r], [ɹ] and [ʃ].

### \*English vowel Allophones:

□ other things being equal, a given vowel is longest in an open syllable, next longest in a syllable closed by a voiced consonant, and shortest in a syllable closed by a voiceless consonant.

↳ Ex: sea /si:/

seed /siːd/ → it has a longer vowel because followed by voiced

seat /siːt/ → it has a shortest vowel (voiceless).

→ /siː/ because it is an open syllable, it has the longest

vowel → so we used diacritic symbol to indicate length

/siː/ → vowels in open syllables are the longest and next a syllable closed by a voiced and the shortest in the syllable closed by a voiceless.

Another Example: /saɪt/ → longest.

/saɪt/ → VD

/saɪt/ → VL → shortest.

[2] Other things being equal, vowels are longer in stressed syllables.

↳ Ex: implicit → vowels are longest in stressed syllables

[3] other things being equal, vowels are longest in monosyllabic words, next longest in words with two syllables, and shortest in words with more than two syllables.

↳ Ex: spid → one syllable, ends with closed syllable  
spi:di → two syllable → we have only open syllables.

spi:di.li → three syllable → open syllables.

So in spid → the vowel is the longest, and it is shorter in two syllables and shortest in three syllables.

Another Example: style /stɑ:ɪl/ → 1 syllable → the longest vowel

stylish /stɑ:ɪlɪʃ/ → 2 syllables → bit shorter

stylishly /stɑ:ɪlɪʃli/ → 3 syllables → shortest

[4] A reduced vowel may be voiceless after a voiceless stop (and before a voiceless stop) → ( devoiced vowel ).

/ɪ/ schwa → always a reduced vowel.

In general all vowels are voiced.

Example: /təʔ tɔ: / → the /ɪ/ between /t/ and /k/, and /p/ and /t/

/təʔ tɔ: /

→ when the schwa ɪ occurs between two voiceless stops like /p, t, k/ then the /ɪ/ become voiceless. However for other native speakers, Ex: /təʔ tɔ: /

/təʔ tɔ: / → the first sound is the important

so if the sound before the /ɪ/ is voiceless then the /ɪ/ become voiceless, the second sound is not important

so the /s/ and /m/ → not important.

5 Vowels are nasalized in syllables closed by a nasal consonant

↳ Ex: fun /fʌ̃n/ }  
foam /fə̃m/ } → they are preceded by vowels, so  
sing /sɪ̃ŋ/ } automatically the vowels become nasalized

6 Vowels are retracted before syllable final [t]

↳ Ex: head /hɛd/

heat /hi:t/ } it has velarized [ɫ]

like as a vowel becomes retracted (velarized), becomes more back, the [i] which is a front vowel becomes back, because the [ɫ] retracts them.

\* velarized → means back.

\* Civilize /sɪvɪlaɪz/ → full vowel.

civilization /sɪvɪlaɪzɪʃən/ → uk.

Full vowel ↙ reduced vowel ↘

American tend to keep [aɪ] even though British people tend to produce it to [ɪ] or [ɪ].

/sɪvɪlaɪzɪʃən/ → us.

Full vowel ↙ reduced vowel ↘

Reduced /sɪdʒɪst/ → uk. 2 syllables, we have one open syllable and one closed syllable.

but in America they tend to delete [jɪ]

so /sɪdʒɪst/ → us

jɪ → u

#### 4 Exercises Page 113 :-

I. Transcribe the sentences as recorded by the British and American speakers.

1. I've called several times, but never found you there.  
aɪv kɔld severl taɪmz, bʌt, never found ju ðeə

2. Someone, somewhere wants a letter from you.  
sʌmwʌn, sʌmwɛz, wʌnts ə lɛtə fɹɒm ju.

3. We were away a year ago.  
wi wɜz əweɪ ə jɪə əgəʊ.

4. We all heard a yellow lion roar.  
wi ɔl hɜd ə jɛləʊ laɪən rəʊ.

5. What did you say before that?  
wʌt dɪd ju seɪ bɪfɔr ðæt?

6. Never kill a snake with your bare hands.  
never kil ə sneɪk wɪð juɹ beɪd hændz.

7. It's easy to tell the depth of a well.  
ɪt ɪz ɪzi tu tel ðə deɪθ əv ə wel.

8. I enjoy the simple life.  
aɪ endʒɪ ðə sɪmpəl laɪf.