How to Create an Accent Without Really Trying

Selena Lee Ausmann Moreno

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How to Create an Accent Without Really Trying

By
Selena Lee Ausmann Moreno

An Honors Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation from the Western Oregon University Honors Program

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Abstract

This project will explore the creation of a fictitious accent, similar in process and results to Constructed Languages or Conlangs, as they have been termed and the documentation of the process by using methods typically employed by linguists like Nick Farmer and David J. Peterson in creating their Conlangs, such as Belter from the dystopian science fiction show The Expanse and Dothraki from the high fantasy series Game of Thrones. Belter serves as an excellent example of my end goal: while it is its own conlang, it has three different levels with each becoming increasingly affected, with the lightest affectation coming across as an accent that, on television, does not necessitate subtitles for its audience. Nick Farmer built the language by pulling from several languages and their structures and phonologies instead of starting from scratch and creating his own. Following this idea, I will create a sound system that will borrow from existing languages and are able to be “plugged in” and substituted for sounds in the “Standard American Dialect.” From that, I will create a step by step workbook in the style of David Allen Stern’s Acting with an Accent Series to guide other people with a working knowledge in the International Phonetic Alphabet in successfully being able to adopt the accent.

My purpose with this project is twofold. The first to produce a fully functioning accent that can be replicated and distinguishable from other real-world accents. The second is to demonstrate how multiple distant cultures can come together into one
product. Similar to the Belter Conlang created by Nick Farmer for a fictitious demographic to show their diverse and far flung roots, my accent will act as a possible destination as people and accents become more interconnected and explore the intentional and unintentional effects of blending dialects.
Introduction

The performing arts has been a focal point of my life for the last ten years. Starting with poorly done Shakespeare in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as a 4th grader and playing violin, I’ve been consumed with the desire to perform and use art as a way to relate to others’ experiences. Throughout my academic life, there has never been a period more than a few months where I have not worked on every production possible in some capacity, whether it was acting, directing, house or stage managing. I have sought outside opportunities through Broadway Rose Theatre’s Technical Internship program to further my understanding of technical theatre and have worked in many areas of theatre in my time at Western Oregon University. For better or worse, the majority of my short life has hinged on theatre and learning the inner working of how a production is mounted and

For most instances of theatre, we are creating with some sort of pre-existing source to aid us in the process, usually in the form of a script. However traditional this approach is, it is not mandatory. My recent work in devising a show in the spring of 2018 (*Why Cross Chaos*) was aided by Louis Feullade’s serial films entitled “Les Vampires,” from which the cast, who doubled as the writers, pulled elements from and recontextualized into a new piece of entertainment. This process ignited my desire to create new work beyond typical work within a play, but the desire to create something entirely new, in this case a new accent.
At Western Oregon University, there are two classes called Stage Speech I and II that are required to earn the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Actor Training. Between the two classes, the class is introduced to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), taught how to analyze speech from a technical standpoint and applied it to text for sound changes in different accents. As a student I had more fun figuring out the puzzle of accents than I have in any other class.

As I continue in my pursuit of theater as a career, the value of versatility will no doubt continue to make itself known as a vital tool in my arsenal when pursuing professional work. The ability to become comfortable with and understand how accents work by creating one will simplify the learning process as I continue to curate knowledge and create characters hailing from parts of the world other than the Pacific Northwest of the United States. Being able to replicate an accent is one thing, but understanding how they come about from a technical standpoint adds a deeper level of understanding for the character and their background.

When it comes to flushing out a world and the intricacies that go into it, I consider it to be one of the most interesting parts of the creative process to me is the creation of a language. As a child who grew up not necessarily familiar with the idea of constructed languages like Klingon and Elvish, but aware of their existence, I always thought to myself, “How do you create a language? You can't do that! Where would you even start? How do you decide which word means apple and which word
means pear?” I’ve always been interested in how things form whether that is a country or company or a piece of music that seemingly comes out of nothing and becomes something. This creative aspect is what drew me to be a participant in the field of theater.

Growing up, the ability to create something that might not necessarily be real or true but is nevertheless created and exists. So when one day I fell down the rabbit hole of YouTube videos, specifically WIRED’s playlist of Technique Critiques videos wherein experts watch scenes from television and media pertaining to their professional field and give their thoughts and critiques on whether it is realistic, whether it could happen and what they are doing wrong. My favorite video was “Accent Expert Breaks Down 6 Fictional Languages From Film & TV” with linguist Erik Singer and he began talking about it and just talking about it and I was really interested so when it came time for me to think of a project that I might want to do of course wanted to do something creative with my time but I didn't want to create an entirely different language and this is when I stumbled upon an article that took a look at the television show The Expanse has use of the constructed language Belter. Now this conlang was different because it had varying degrees of affectation, the most affected being the Conlang in its full form but the lowest level being an English-speaking dialect. As I did more research on the subject, I found that this was born out of art and utility. The showrunners wanted to give the language of their futuristic
science fiction world a distinct sound, but they wanted to not have to rely on
subtitles (probably because they are often a deterrent when audience’s see them on
screen.) This got me thinking about how you would go about combining different
languages with different phonemic structure and detail to create a cohesive dialect
that indicates the integration of different cultures that have come together and have
had to adapt to the different aspects of each other’s culture, who’s children grow up
not only with their parent’s way of speaking, but with the speaking of their peers
who would undoubtedly pick up traits that people their own would use, making it
part of their own way of speaking. This creates a type of pidgin/creole, not a
language, but a different form of communication. All of this got me wanting to
experiment with combining dialects from different continents to see if it could be
melded together into one distinct English speaking dialect as if from a community
where different culture have come together and had significant influence on the
children of the culture who would grow up in a much more linguistically diverse
environment than they would if they stayed to their own families and culture.
Before I get into the nitty gritty of analyzing my source dialects and compiling their parts into my own sound system, I should probably explain what I will be looking at. I will start by examining the point of resonance for each dialect. The point of resonance is where sound appears to be reverberating in the mouth. It may sound nebulous, but without changing the point of resonance when changing dialects, there is a very high chance of producing a “bad accent.” Another semi-related aspect of dialect work is Oral Posture, or how you engage, utilize tension and position your articulators. A dialect’s oral posture is how much its sound changes come out of; therefore we can understand that organically occurring dialects are not made up of proscriptive posture and points of focus.
Above is a diagram of the articulators, which are important not only because they are how humans produce speech, but knowing them helps in the understanding of how to make different sounds and adjust your own speech. In our brief explanation of the articulators, we will start with the front of the mouth. The lips are the forward-most articulators, used in the production of labial plosives as in the words “gun” and “bane”. They are also used in fricative found in words like “over” and “off.” This leads us into the next set of articulators, the teeth. The previously stated sounds, “over” and “off” are labial dental sounds, produced in combination of the teeth and the lips. For the next few articulators, I ask you to make the following underlined sounds: thought, sound, ship. Notice how your tongue moves in your mouth as you form these sounds, shifting slightly back. The front of your tongue is moving from the teeth (th) to the alveolar ridge (s), to the post alveolar (sh). Moving further back, make the following underlined sound: can. This sound involved the back of the tongue creating a plosive with the velar, velum, or soft palate at the back of the mouth.

One other very important articulator is the tongue. The tongue is separated into four different parts: the tip, the blade, the middle and the back/root. The tip is the very frontmost part of the tongue, the blade is the front inch or so of the tongue. The middle is exactly the majority of the tongue in the center with the root being where the tongue connects to the mouth.
Choosing My Source Dialects

When thinking about what dialects I wanted to pull from in the creation of my constructed dialect, I knew I wanted to get as many different sounds as possible. So I wanted to stay away from languages with similar roots, even going to different continents for most of my choices. From the very start, I wanted to include Asiatic dialect that is distinct and Japan’s history as an isolated nation lent itself as a perfect option as a source.

Next, I originally wanted to utilize a native Swahili speaker’s English dialect, but upon researching the right dialect, I decided to switch to an East African English dialect with focus on Kenya, as it had more resources to dig into and audio sources to analyze. The fact that there are so many recordings of people with East African English dialect is important because I am unfamiliar with the dialect, so I need as many first hand recordings as possible, so I’m not going off of pure hearsay and supposition.

For my last two dialect sources, I desperately wanted to pull from a Gaelic language and a Latin language. So I decided on Scottish for my Gaelic sourced dialect, partially because I am less comfortable with this dialect and want to improve on it for personal gain. I also have easy access to a stage version of this dialect, which gives me a frame for creating my own eventual workbook and how to prescribe the sound changes I make into an acceptable form. This is part of the reason I chose
Italian as my last accent source. Italian and Scottish both come from the same Indo-European Language branch, but where Scottish comes from the Celtic sub-branch whereas Italian comes from the Italic sub-branch. Italian also has a very strong and distinct lilt that could influence the constructed dialect in a fun way, though it may be at war with the internal lilt of the Scottish dialect. Either way, I knew that mixing the two drastically different European dialects would be challenging and fun.
Breakdown of Dialects

With the East African English dialect, the point of resonance is located in the high back of the mouth, around the middle of the soft palate.

Consonants in the East African English dialect are similar to that of the Standard American dialect, but of course there are differences that separate the two dialects. First sound change we will be focusing on is the tendency of /l/ as in “will” to move towards /r/ as in the word “raise”. Next is the distinguishing factors of this dialect is actually a set of sounds, /tʃ/, /ʃ/, /s/, and /dʒ/, /ʒ/, /z/. Each of the preceding sounds are unvoiced and voiced pairs respectively, yet they tend to merge in the East African English dialect, meaning that the voiced and unvoiced sounds can be used interchangeably with each other without changing the meaning of the word. By this, we can infer that these are linguistically irrelevant sounds in the East African English dialect. That is not to say that the sounds could be omitted from the dialect without being missed, but they do not change the meaning of the word.

Similar to how the above voiced and unvoiced consonants have almost merged and do not signify different meanings when used, there are vowels that act much the same. The vowel sound as in “with” and “bean” merge towards each other towards a point between the high and mid part of the front of the mouth. This also occurs in the vowels present in the word sets “book” and “soup”, “all” and “boat,” and “at,” “of,” and “father.”
Finally, every dialect has certain idiosyncrasies that distinguish them from others, differences that do not pertain to sound changes or oral posture and points of focus. One of these significant idiosyncrasies in the East African English dialect is that speakers tend to give all syllables equal stress, so that the word “contain” while stressed only on the second syllable in the Standard American dialect, receives stress on both syllables.

The Japanese dialect’s point of focus is in the low back of the mouth, right at the top of the throat and is often described as having a low throaty sound. According to “A Japanese Accent,” the dialect is produced with a mostly closed mouth and it helps to visualize the mouth as a slit style letter box.

The consonants of the Japanese English dialect that distinguish it as a dialect are as follows: the sounds signified by the symbols /p,t,k/ as all slightly aspirated, meaning that they are accompanied by a puff of air as they are produced. Additionally, the bilabial plosive signified by /b/ turns into a bilabial fricative and the velar plosive /g/ turns into the velar fricative denoted in IPA with [ɣ]. Lastly for the significant consonant changes produced in the Japanese English dialect in the movement of the lateral approximate as denoted by the character /l/ to the alveolar/postalveolar approximate denoted by /ɾ/.

The Scottish dialect’s point of focus is located in the front of the mouth, behind the lower front teeth. Accessing this particular point of focus is helped along by temporarily overworking the jaw and slightly lifting the tongue to make room for the
vibrations of the dialect. In doing this, there are a number of sound changes that develop naturally out of the change in resonance that contribute to the structure of the dialect.

One of the sound changes that begins to grow out of the resonance is the shift from /ʊ/ as in the vowel present in the word “book,” to /u/ as in the vowel present in the word “soup.” The diphthong /au/ also shifts towards /u/ as well. “R” sounds are all generally produced with a hint of a trill, whether it is the pure consonant sound, or the “r” coloring. There are several other vowel changes that are important in the Scottish dialect, but they grow out of an internal lilt in the dialect, both of which are not significant in the constructed dialect, so we will leave it be and move on.

There are two extremely significant consonant changes in the Scottish dialect, the first of which is /t/ as in “tall” becomes a glottal stop, denoted by /ʔ/ when it is in the medial and final position of a word, such as in the case of the words “that” and “better.” The second significant consonant changing in this particular dialect is the conversion of /ŋ/ as in the ending of the word “ring” to /n/, the ending of the word “rain.”

Finally, we move to the last source dialect of this project: Italian. The Italian dialect’s point of focus for resonance is located behind the top front teeth.

The vowels in the words “see” and “in” (denoted by /i/ and /I/) both become produced as /I/. Also, the diphthong responsible for producing the vowel in “say,”
and the vowels present in “bed,” both become the vowel in “bed” /e/. Same as the vowel in “book” becomes the vowel in “soup” in the Scottish dialect, the same happens in this one. Additionally, the vowels of “sow” and “saw” /ou, ɔ /become the shortened version of the what we know as “the ‘o’ sound” /o,/ a sound not commonly used in Standard American Speech. Regardless, it is the non-diphthong version of the sound produced in the closed-mid back. The last of the significant vowel changes in this dialect is the change from the vowels of “of” and “and” to the low open back vowel of “arm.”

The significant changes in the consonants of the dialects are found in the sounds /d,t,θ,ð,z,ss/. These changes occur in a few interconnected ways, first with the plosives /t,d/ (which are the consonants in the word “tad” respectively) being produced with the tongue on the edge of the upper front teeth. The other change is the dental fricatives /θ,ð/, present as the end sound of “with” and the beginning sound of “that,” becoming the plosives /t/ and /d/ respectively. The last major consonant change is the shift from the voiced fricative of the consonant in “zoo” denoted by /z/ to the unvoiced fricative of the consonant in “so,” denoted by /s/.

Finally, there are some idiosyncrasies that are just simply present in the Italian dialect that distinguish it from others. The first is the occasional dropping of the final consonant in a word, such as changing “thinking” to thinking.” This is not advised to
be used heavily, as it can make speech unintelligible very easily. There is also a pitch glide upward on stressed syllables of important words followed by an abrupt drop.
Creating the Sound System

While going over the breakdown of my sources' accents and trying to decide which sounds I could blend together to create a distinct dialect, I started by setting out some parameters. I had to take elements from all the languages, I could not leave out one of the source dialects. This was to add in a crafting element to the project, but also so that I could make sure I was not simply taking everything from one dialect and creating a bad mimicry of the original.

The challenge of creating an accent from pulling sounds from existing standardized dialects and not having an original language whose sound changes are obvious when the speaker flips into English is that I often have to fight against what feels and sounds normal to my brain. This project forces me to make decisions for myself, because I do not have to adhere exactly to any one sound system, which was both freeing and intimidating.

One of the big challenges in creating a new sound system from four pre-existing ones is figuring out what to do with the vowels. And not in the sense of the English alphabet “A,E,I,O,U (and sometimes “Y”).” In IPA, there are many more vowels than the five English speakers would recognize, not to mention the diphthongs that would be lumped together with pure vowel sounds. For me, the difficulty is carefully choosing which vowel to change so as to not completely distort the words beyond recognition.
Working the Dialect

I have come up with a very simple set of sounds that I want to use as the basis for my dialect which I have listed above. I have applied these to the first paragraph of the text “Comma Gets a Cure.” When I did this, I ran into the first of my practical problems with the dialect. By having /i/ to tend toward /I/ I did not consider the effect it would have on the surrounding sounds. However, as I vocalize my changes, I found myself falling into a habit of “tapping” my ‘r’s when they are followed by /I/ at the end of words like “happy” and “veterinary”. This tapping is a feature of Received Pronunciation, which features /i/ moving towards /I/ at the end of words. I worry about how this will come across in my dialect: will it make it feel like it originates from a country that had been colonized by the British Empire?

Another quirk I found in my working of the dialect is that in wanting to aspirate my /p,t,k/ sounds, I have been giving unintentional stress to the syllables that have these sounds in them. I do not view this as a negative product of my working but it does make the flow of the sentences feel disjointed. To fix this I can either lessen the focus I am putting on the aspiration, stop the aspiration or just force it to fit and flow smoothly. The last option might be the easiest and the hardest to do because 1) I wouldn’t have to really change anything, but 2) I would have to rewire my brain to not identify the jerkiness as something to watch out for but also use repetition and practice to make the sounds work in my head. After consideration, I made the
decision to still include the aspiration of the aforementioned consonants, but to lessen the emphasis.

During my first pass of working the dialect, I reviewed my source videos and audio files and it seems that I made a decision that hindered me more than helped me. The majority of the sound changes that I chose for my dialect exist in the East African English dialect, which would be the reason that I ran into a wall with how my dialect sounds like something that already exists and, worse, sounds like I am mimicking an African region.

After taking time to consider and consulting with my advisor, I decided to change the point of resonance from the East African English to the Scottish resonance behind the lower teeth. The hard part about this in terms of execution is that there are sounds changes that naturally grow out of this point of focus that creep their way into my constructed dialect without being formalized choices, but rather byproducts of multiple changes occurring at the same time.

Upon discovering these similar elements from my source dialects to the resulting dialect, I made the choice to make several changes to my project. Firstly, I decided to shift the point of focus from the high back of the East African English dialect to that of the Scottish dialect, which is located behind the lower front teeth. While this fixes the problem of having a dialect too close to the East African English dialect, it is tricky because it lends itself to highlighting the Scottish aspects of the
dialect. After consulting with my advisor and listening back to audio recordings of myself implementing the sound changes, I decided to keep these changes with the caveat of intentionally avoiding the sound changes that naturally grow out of the point of focus, such as the harsh “r” sound so common.
Guide to Producing the Constructed Dialect

Resonance-

When beginning to learn the constructed dialect, it is important to first focus on the change of resonance. This can be done by visualizing energy being focused at the particular point of focus. In our case, we are using the Scottish Dialect’s point of focus, located just behind the lower teeth in the front of the mouth. I find this point by producing the fricative /v/, using this to create a vibrating point in the mouth that is and moving the buzzing down to the desired point. I also find it helpful to speak in the Scottish dialect briefly to help find this point and then let go of the sound changes unique to the dialect.

Vowels-

1. ʊ > u / book>soup

   Exercises to practice the ʊ > u sound change.

   Take care with this sound change to not change vowels in the mid back of the mouth such as Schaws. If necessary, fall back on using the vowel from “book” to identify the proper vowel to change

   A.   Book, Would, Flood, Good

   B.   I understood the book about the woods.

2. /i , I />/ I/

   Exercises to practice the /i , I />/ I/ sound change.
The vowels as in the words “see” and “win” converge into the single vowel sound /I/ as in “win.”

A. **see, king, busy, the**

B. **In the absence of wheat, we will stay busy.**

3. /æ & æ & α/ blend to /α/

Exercises to practice the /æ & æ & α/ blend to /α/

Vowel in apple and “above” blend down and back to /α/ as in “father.” This need not happen always, but the tendency towards the low back sound should be present if not fully executed.

A. **Apple, Andrew, rather, ask**

B. **In drafting the annual report, ask no one.**

**Consonants—**

1. /p, t, k/ are slightly aspirated

These plosives are intentionally slightly harsher/pronounced than in standard American English. A minor emphasis on the syllables with these plosives is to be expected but not amplified beyond what is instructed.

A. **Kiss, tame, pay**

B. **A kinder person would teach instead taunt.**

2. /l/ > /r/
This one will trip your tongue up not only because the two sounds are formed similarly, but your ears will fight you to maintain the lateral approximate. This will turn some words into near homophones, such as “late” and “rate.”

A. Fall, ball, wilt, like

B. Will liked to follow the leader

3. \( \eta > n \)

Exercises to practice the \( \eta > n \) sound changes

This sound change seems to be the dropping of the “g” from the ends of words with “ing” but the mechanics of the change are more than that. Instead of raising the back of the tongue to meet the velar at the back of the mouth, place the front of the tongue on the Alveolar ridge. This produces the desired “n” sound as in “net” rather than ending of “ring”

A. Fixing, walking, looking

B. Texting while driving will make you need towing.
Reflection

There is so much that I could say about this project, the first of which being that I was in over my head several times and had to backtrack for a while before I could continue and make any kind of meaningful progress. As is the case in many parts of my life, my own hesitations got in my way too often and made me frustrated to the point of not caring anymore.

I enjoyed this endeavor, though I will be the first to admit that it is nowhere near complete. I think that I will continue coming back to this project in my free time over the next few years and continue improving in and making changes, possibly taking the process and using different source dialects to make a new version of this project. Much of my passion for this project was snuffed out by having it looming over me as something that I had to do, so I hope that I can return to it with renewed passion and find the joy I originally had in the process.

In any subsequent pass at this experiment I would reduce the number of source dialects down to two that are completely unrelated and work from there, adding in new dialects as I felt like it and compare the results. I think this would allow me to understand the individual effect that each sound change was having on the new dialect and more efficiently use them.
Transcripts

In Appendix B, I have included a handwritten transcription in the International Phonetic Alphabet of how I pronounce the text entitled “Comma Gets a Cure,” a text sample commonly used to analyze differences in dialects as it contains nearly all of the sounds used in the English language. I chose to write the transcription by hand so that there would be no formatting errors in the editing of this document it is important to note that IPA transcriptions can vary from person to person, not only in how they speak but in how they write the sounds. Many people will use different symbols for a sound because it is easier for them to understand later because, at the end of the day, a transcription is mostly used by the person who did transcribing. The transcription in Appendix B is a representation of how I do transcriptions and is indicative of how I speak the text with a Pacific Northwest regional accent.

In Appendix C I have included a second transcription of the dialect I have created applied to the exact same text, “Comma Gets a Cure.” This is to show via phonetics the specific technical differences between my natural dialect and the one I have created for the purposes of this project. A side by side comparison of these two transcripts will quickly reveal the differences in the sound system between my natural English-speaking dialect and the one I have constructed.
Glossary

**Accent** - a distinctive mode of pronunciation of a language, especially one associated with a particular nation, locality, or social class

**Alveolar** - relating to or denoting the bony ridge that contains the sockets of the upper teeth

**Articulators** - any of the vocal organs above the larynx, including the tongue, lips, teeth, and hard palate

**Conlang** - Constructed Language

**Consonant** - a basic speech sound in which the breath is at least partly obstructed and which can be combined with a vowel to form a syllable

**Creole** - a mother tongue formed from the contact of two languages through an earlier pidgin stage

**Dialect** - a particular form of a language which is peculiar to a specific region or social group

**Diphthong** - a sound formed by the combination of two vowels in a single syllable, in which the sound begins as one vowel and moves toward another

**Hard Palate** - the bony front part of the palate

**IPA** - International Phonetic Alphabet

**Oral Posture** - the shape of the inside of the mouth and throat

**Pidgin** - an incomplete system of communication

**Point of Resonance/Focus** - imaginary placement of energy in the mouth
**Soft Palate** - soft tissue constituting the back of the roof of the mouth. Also: Velum, Velar

**Vowel** - a speech sound which is produced by comparatively open configuration of the vocal tract, with vibration of the vocal cords but without audible friction, and which is a unit of the sound system of a language that forms the nucleus of a syllable
## Appendix A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Resonance</th>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th>Idiosyncrasies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAfE</td>
<td>• Front middle of hard palate</td>
<td>Vowels tend to merge:</td>
<td>○ /r/ = /l/</td>
<td>○ Final consonants are dropped when there are 2 or more in a sequence [neks] next [han] hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ I &amp; i</td>
<td>○ /tʃ/, /ʃ/, /sl/, and /dʒ/, /ʒ/, /lz/ are not clearly distinguished</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ u &amp; ʊ</td>
<td>○ /θ/, /ð/ tend toward /d/, /l/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ ou &amp; ɔ</td>
<td>○ /æ &amp; ʌ &amp; ø:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ /r/ = /l/</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>• Back of mouth near the top of the throat</td>
<td>○ /p, t, k/ are slightly aspirated</td>
<td>○ “Liquid u” after Alveolars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [u]&gt; ŭ</td>
<td>○ /b/ &gt; bilabial fricative [β]</td>
<td>○ Spoken with a Closed mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [e]&gt;ɤ</td>
<td>○ /ɡ/ &gt; velar fricative [ɣ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [o]&gt;ɔ</td>
<td>○ /l/ &gt;/r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [a] &gt;ã</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>• Behind Bottom front teeth</td>
<td>○ ø &gt; u / book&gt;soup</td>
<td>○ t &gt; glottal stop (in medial.final ts)</td>
<td>• Internal vowel lilt on sustained vowel sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ ao &gt; u / grows out of the resonance</td>
<td>○ η &gt; n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ “R” hint of a trill or double tap with the tip of the tongue, varying on where the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ [e]&gt;[ɛ]</td>
<td>○ t &gt; glottal stop (in medial.final ts)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [e] &gt;[ɛ]</td>
<td>○ η &gt; n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>○ [i]&gt;[ɛ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [I]&gt;[ɛ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>• Behind top front teeth</td>
<td>• 1, 1&gt;l</td>
<td>• d, t produced via tongue on upper front teeth edge</td>
<td>• Occasional dropping of final consonant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ei, ʒ &gt; e diphthong still exists though</td>
<td>• 0, 0&gt;d,t</td>
<td>• Upward pitch glide on stressed syllable of important word followed by pitch drop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• U, u &gt; u</td>
<td>• z &gt; s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ou, ə &gt; o</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ø, æ&gt; ø</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
wol hir zu st hir jen fuj
see u peh ri waz u vetri neh ri
na s hu hae bin war ky deili
at en owd zu in ef di krid
ristrikt év y se kri t ceh ri
sov siri waz veji hapi tu staat
é nu joh at ei superb pauvit
praktis in jaw thé skwecá nié sa duk
surt takwér šat cem ir. é waz méj
niž jé fô hör and méj tu hör
lair king i viin sov an hör föst mériny
si felt stjestr si eit a boul en pah midy
lekt hör seliv in y mér jör and walt
hör féis in a hör jir
flis da get pilt op her kit and he did
for work wen si got seer see was e
wee min we e wus westing fore how ze wumini
giev seer de an afish be ter from ze vet
se let ter implaid got si xeni my kud bi
se fari yu e eere from ye fut and maiz
be ziz wits waz sapphire bi koz ndemali
ju wud ovdli eakspekt tusi it in ea dag zor eir
govt seer waz sentiment soor gis mood
hoo fil saji for sa hurted baird
bi for lang zat itsi gas big an tu search around se
afis lark a lunatik with mail in ensemite cair
mor de gusiz ovdnd meeari healis sin kept
Kaling kame kame wif sedje aet wez an
Od tso'is fuq e neqme kame wez etajy aed hude
seve had e difunnt at die foqip si haad

dzenbi storiky se gusir luwata bok wie haqin

den sijg e tun tu hoo faknali si administad i. Ase

hoo esqo wo' nab futaik in now tain se gus

bigun tu taqo sox sedje waz eiky tu hoo bid

In tu kame reed giur hoo e zilbik. Ini bai wos

seve had ma'naged tu beqo so gus si waip

hoo of wip e diz ti reid hoo in hoo jip sid

Den sedje kapladm se vete daiz nor ses almooost

i.midi qhitli si remembod ezn ip ektiv

fildmint tae as kwai. oed hoo tu me. za' avd
e i lat ev medisin sega wolend katx iiii
kloa ev tait mint mist bi ekspensiv aii iiii
fiiiv door sikr taams ze kast ev peni simin ii
kant impedon pejiw san metb lit misii
henai siin eii mibin eii leisim eot iit woz
eii feii pux eii eii kii
Appendix C

weh hi'įz a' st'ęłį'mį' lę' ju
se'kųę pe'į' lwe' e' ve' lńe'ńe'yį
nę's hų' had bın we'kın de'li
at' a nı' oudl zu' in e'i di'zų' tįd
di'stı'ąń e'kə te'ę'su'ńt'jų'
sų' jį wę'į' hapi tu' st'ąń
ə' nu jı' at' ē'į' su'ąb pu'ąvıt'
pi'ak' tı'is in ni'ę'į sk'we'ńę'tę' ē'i duk'ı
st'ąń ti'ą' wą' ąat' cę'ń. ē' wę' mę' tų
ni'ę'į fę'ąhą' wand bę'ą ti' hą'
lų'kų' ē' in sų' an hą' fą'st' mi'ąńi'ın
sį' fę'į' st'ąńt' si'čį' a bō'łą' ev po'ą'ų'
t'sę'kt' hą' self in ą mi'ę' tą' and wą'į'
hą' fe'į' in a hą'į'
Kilig kama kama mitse kwa ethwa zin
Od tshis funa ene kama woz etshag em hudu
sot Il wond tshik omo funa tu tsope kwe bob
sehwe had e difren at die teki si kaad
dzenihi shuomin se Gusto lonwes bob we ha pem
Zer seyig e tun tu hof faimadi si admiinstaad i.Ase
hwe efalei we nab futari in now tain se gua
bigam tu tshik sov sehre wav exal tu hofad
Uin tu kamo xond gwe hwe ci binaoing bebo wens
sehre had maozed tu bekho se gua si wapf
hwe fwe wea klao wend bess hof tu hwe wits ciad
Ser sehre kenteem se yeto da zin nov ci bimaast
Imadiiti si rembo end 2 fectiv
bili mint tset tsh. kuwa, ond kwe tu meya ivi
This article briefly describes how linguist Nick Farmer and accent coach Eric Armstrong worked together to create a language and accent for the television show The Expanse called “Belter” and how it was the mashup of six different languages and varying degrees in the accents depending on the social standing of each character. The conlang discussed is designed to change the moment you think you may have identified one of its root languages. Essentially, this is what I will be trying to do, sans the new language part. The great thing is that this article confirms that I will more than likely be able to achieve my goal in creating a fictional accent, but it also indicates there is going to be a lot of fine tuning if I want it to be intelligible. It’s a reminder to make sure I am not making the accent crazy and stuffed full of phonemes that are unfamiliar to English speakers, who are most likely going to be the majority of people who access this finished product by simple virtue of me writing in English. Like Dreyfuss discusses in the article, Farmer had to go through a few different versions of the language, ranging from a full-on language to the accent version that we see when the show airs without subtitles.


This article is a guide book and history lesson of conlangs written by one of the foremost linguists in the field. Peterson is responsible for many well-known conlangs across modern media and offers tools to introduce language creation with examples from existing languages. Going to an individual so successful in this field gives me access to firsthand accounts of constructions and execution. In addition to a firsthand look at conlang creation, this resource gives me an easy to analyze glossary and dictionary that will be helpful in searching through other resources while being able to employ discipline specific terminology and examples. I can be assured in using this text as a go to resource because it is written by a professional conlanger and was also used in a recent intro to linguistics class as a resource/guide. Peterson provides examples in the form of case studies, with Dothraki as a prime example, and searching for the
appropriate sound profile that fits with what the authors of the idea of the language had created for the language he had essentially hired Peterson to flesh out for television and for a performance. This is helpful because it is the creator being forced to work within a certain set of parameters (such as having limited one’s self to phonemes from four languages) and goes through the process of having to methodically sort through different phoneme and seeing which ones are at odds with one another and which ones will more easily fit together.

Ragnarsson, Hermann Ingi. “East African English: Linguistic Feature and Background.”

*University of Iceland*, 2011.


This article offers an explanation and insight as to how and why languages borrow from and influence each other, including the changes that occur to accents when people from other cultures are integrated into another society. Using this historical resource will give me knowledge on the logic behind languages borrowing from one another. Hopefully, with help of this article, the changes I make in my constructed accent are made based on logical process and not at random.


This book was widely regarded as the manual to proper English speaking, featuring the Mid-Atlantic Dialect. This dialect was a combination of Standard American Speech and Received Pronunciation British. This was not a naturally
occurring accent, but rather a consciously acquired accent meant to project status, a key feature of it being that no one would be able to speak it unless educated to do so. In short, the Mid-Atlantic Dialect is an early constructed accent to create a favorable perception of the people using it, which is not so far from my thesis goal.

“Speech Accent Archive.” *Speech Accent Archive*, accent.gmu.edu/.


“WALS Online -.” *WALS Online -, wals.info/.*