

The difference in pronunciation in Northern English dialects in comparison with the Southern is drastic. This fact is often attributed by the scientists to the assumption that the former are much closer to the original, ancient forms of the English language – and many features of RP are just the result of later transformations.

The most prominent phonetic, morphological and lexical features of Northern dialects are:

The so-called “foot–strut split” is not observed in Northern English. Words such as *stud* [stʊd], *up* [ʊp], *cup* [cʊp], *nudge* [nʊdʒ], etc. are pronounced with rounded lips and [ʊ] in place of [ʌ] pronounced with a more neutral lips’ position, so they would rhyme with *stood* [stʊd], *book* [bʊk], *shook* [ʃʊk]. This has resulted in some Southerners describing Northern England as “Oop North” [ʊp nɔːθ].

The “trap–bath split” is not observed, either, so words like *math* [ma^hθ], *path* [pa^hθ], *class* [klas], *ask* [ask] are pronounced with [a] in place of [ɑː]. Yet there are a few words in the “bath set” like *calf* [kɑːf], *master* [ˈmɑːstə(r)] which are still pronounced with [ɑː] in many Northern English accents which differs from [æ] in their Northern American counterparts.

Definite article reduction, an abbreviated form of the word *the*, is observed in speech in Yorkshire and neighbouring counties. This is often wrongly understood as simply omitting *the* or reducing it to *t*, yet in reality it’s a complex phonetic process of combining of an unreleased and therefore inaudible [t] sound, produced simultaneously with a glottal stop, such as in *the police* [^l ? pəˈliːs].

There are some differences involving intonation patterns. Many northern English speakers have noticeable rises in their intonation, so to other speakers of English they would sound perpetually sarcastic or surprised. However, this depends on the pitch height and the rises themselves.

Besides, the Northern English lexis includes some distinctive words which are less frequently used in the South, or are unique altogether. The examples are: *lad* / *lassie* for *young man* / *young woman*, *chuffed* for *pleased*, *delighted*, *flattered* (*Chuffed t’bits* would stand for *I’m extremely pleased*), *ozzy* for *hospital*, *newtons* for *teeth*, *trabs* for *shoes*, *salfords* for *socks*, *paggered* for *tired*, *clammed* for *extremely hungry*. There are many instances of using *love* as a form of address regardless of one’s age and gender. The lexical peculiarities also include some unique indefinite pronouns: *owt* (*anything*), *summat* (*something*) and *nowt* (*naught* or *nothing*).

A. ИВЧЕНКО

LEXICAL AND PHONETIC FEATURES OF LIVERPOOL ENGLISH

Liverpool English, or Merseyside English, is an accent and a dialect of English, found primarily in the county of Merseyside. It is very often referred to as Scouse. The Scouse accent is one of the most recognizable accents in the UK –

Liverpool is historically part of Lancashire, but there have been lots of influences from places like Scotland, Ireland and lots of other English dialects. That was particularly true in the 19th century, when growth really drove immigration to the city. The major influence comes from the influx of Irish and Welsh into the city. The mixing of these different accents and dialects fused together to create the unique Scouse sound.

Here are some of the distinctive features of the Scouse pronunciation.

Consonant sounds:

1. In short words ending /t/ like IT, THAT, NOT the final /t/ can be [h]: *You're not that good you know! You what?*

2. When /k/ appears in the end of a syllable in Scouse, it can be pronounced as a fricative [x] KICK, ROCK, BACKGROUND, BLOKE.

3. When you say a Scouse *r* it's pronounced as a voiced tap [ɾ] RING, ARROW, FERRY, RIVAL – the tongue-tip touches the roof of the mouth behind the teeth very quickly: *It's rubbish! And very wrong of Rachel to write that.*

4. The *th* sounds can be pronounced as a dental [t̪] and [d̪] in Scouse: THINK, THEATRE, THOSE, BOTHER instead of dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/: *I think that's their brother.*

5. G-dropping in *ing* endings: WORKIN', HAPPENIN'.

6. A lot of Scouse speakers DROP ALL THEIR 'H'S': HOUSE, HORRIBLE, HAPPY.

Vowel sounds:

1) Like other Northern English accents, /ʌ/ IS NOT USED AT ALL, SO FUN, SHUT, BLOOD, SON are made with /ʊ/.

2) Scouse doesn't have the trap-bath split, so words like BATH, STAFF, MASTER and GLASS are pronounced with short /a/ instead of a long [a:].

Speaking with a Scouse accent is a fairly recent trend, up until the mid 19th century Liverpoolians spoke pretty much the same as their Lancastrian neighbours, and traces of the Lancashire sound can still be heard in the accent of older residents.

Liverpool has its own impenetrable language “backslang”, a linguistic ploy that splits words, rendering them incomprehensible to the uninitiated, following phrases and words being an example: *It's absolutely baltic in here! (It's really cold in here!); Boss tha! (Great!); lass (woman); lad, la, lid, felle (man); arl fella (father); g'wed (go ahead); the hozzy (the hospital); bizzies (the police); abar (about); scran (food).*

The Scouse dialect is still developing, teenagers speak very differently to their grandparents, in part taking bits of Estuary English prevalent on television and radio.