

THE SOUNDS OF  
AFRIKAANS

J. F. SWANEPOEL

439.3615

SWA

THE SOUNDS OF AFRIKAANS

THE  
SOUNDS OF AFRIKAANS

THEIR DIALECTIC VARIATIONS AND THE  
DIFFICULTIES WHICH THEY PRESENT TO  
THE ENGLISHMAN

BY

J. F. SWANEPOEL, B.A.

INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, CAPE PROVINCE

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO. LTD.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4

NEW YORK, TORONTO

CALCUTTA, BOMBAY AND MADRAS

1927

## INTRODUCTION

THIS little treatise is an expansion on more scientific lines of an article entitled "The Sounds of Afrikaans," which appeared in the *Education Gazette* of August, 1925.

There is such a great need in our Training Institutions for a book of this nature that I cannot resist the temptation of placing before the public the data which I was able to collect from every corner of the Cape Province.

Sooner or later Afrikaans Phonetics will have to be studied as a scientific subject by our student teachers, and I fondly hope that the results of my linguistic research here summarised will at least smooth the way for those who are interested in this important subject.

I have made free use of the following books :

JONES : "The Pronunciation of English."

RIPMAN : "The Sounds of English."

NOËL ARMPFIELD : "Phonetics."

I am also indebted to my many teacher friends who supplied me with data, and encouraged me to carry on my research under many adverse circumstances.

That this little book will stimulate further research is the fond hope of its author.

J. F. S.

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. PHONETIC SYMBOLS . . . . .	1
II. SPEECH ORGANS . . . . .	3
III. VOWELS AND CONSONANTS . . . . .	8
IV. CLASSIFICATION OF VOWELS . . . . .	11
V. DIPHTHONGS . . . . .	40
VI. CONSONANTS . . . . .	48
VII. GENERAL TENDENCIES . . . . .	74

# THE SOUNDS OF AFRIKAANS

## I. PHONETIC SYMBOLS

A LANGUAGE consists of a limited number of sounds which are combined in various ways to form words, phrases, and sentences. The Science of Phonetics deals, in the first place, with the analysis and synthesis of these sounds. It is primarily concerned with the number of distinct elementary sounds of which the language is composed and with the grouping of these sounds so as to form words, phrases, and sentences.

The ordinary alphabet is defective because the number of letters is considerably smaller than the number of sounds these letters have to represent. Thus, in the two words *geweld* and *lering* there are three totally different vowel sounds all represented by the same letter *e*. In order to overcome this difficulty phoneticians have invented an alphabet which is based on the policy of *one symbol for one sound and vice versa*. The letters of the ordinary alphabet are employed as far as possible, and additional symbols are added to represent the remaining sounds.

The following list of symbols will be employed

in the chapters that follow. They are those recognised by the International Phonetic Association :—

[u]	as in	<i>boek</i>
[o]	„	<i>loop</i>
[ɔ]	„	<i>pot</i>
[a]	„	<i>lat</i>
[ə]	„	<i>pit</i>
[y]	„	<i>muur</i>
[i]	„	<i>mier</i>
[ϕ]	„	<i>deur</i>
[e]	„	<i>leer</i>
[œ]	„	<i>krul</i>
[ɛ]	„	<i>veld</i>
[p]	„	<i>pit</i>
[b]	„	<i>boek</i>
[t]	„	<i>tien</i>
[d]	„	<i>dien</i>
[c]	„	<i>tjalie</i>
[k]	„	<i>kan</i>
[g]	„	<i>berge</i>
[f]	„	<i>van</i>
[v]	„	<i>wat</i>
[s]	„	<i>sal</i>
[ʃ]	„	<i>sjef</i>
[j]	„	<i>jaar</i>
[χ]	„	<i>geld</i>
[h]	„	<i>hond</i>
[m]	„	<i>man</i>
[n]	„	<i>naam</i>
[ŋ]	„	<i>hondjie</i>
[ŋ]	„	<i>bang</i>
[r]	„	<i>raam</i>
[l]	„	<i>loop</i>
[ʔ]	„	the glottal stop
[~]	=nasalised sound, e.g. [ã̃].	
>	becomes or which becomes.	
[·]	indicates vowel of medium length, e.g. [y·].	
[:]	indicates vowel of full length, e.g. [a:].	

The following symbols, also employed, represent either dialectic sounds or English sounds :

[ç] as in German *ich*

[R] „ *raam* (the uvular or throat-r)

[ɪ] English “ vowel murmur ” (usually omitted)

[Δ] as in English *but*

[tʃ] „ „ *church*

[z] „ „ *zeal*

[ʒ] „ „ *pleasure*

[ʒ̥] dialectic form of [g]

m̥, n̥, ɸ, etc., voiceless form of *m, n, r*, etc., respectively.

## II. SPEECH ORGANS

BEFORE proceeding to the analysis of the sounds of Afrikaans and their classification, it is necessary to make a close study of the organs by which these sounds are produced and of the manner in which they are produced. The diagram will illustrate the chief of these.

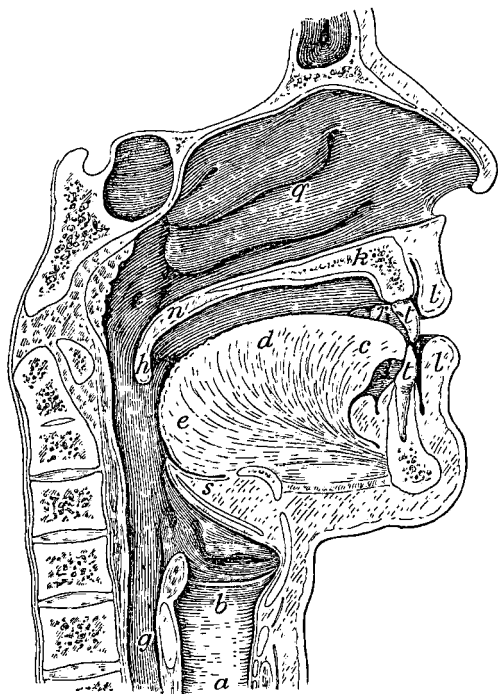
The lungs (not shown in the diagram) may be regarded as the immediate cause of human speech. They are situated in the chest or diaphragm, which is capable of expanding or contracting according to the amount of air which is inhaled or exhaled. This process of inhaling or exhaling air is popularly known as *breathing*, which is an important factor in the production of speech.

*a.* The *windpipe* is a tube that leads from the lungs to the throat and that terminates in the larynx.

*b.* The *larynx* is an extremely complicated



contrivance of which the most important feature is the vocal chords or lips which lie side by side,



- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| a. The windpipe.                           | h. The uvula.                |
| b. The larynx containing the vocal chords. | n. The velum or soft palate. |
| g. The gullet or food passage.             | k. The hard palate.          |
| s. The epiglottis.                         | r. The teeth-ridge.          |
| e. The back-tongue.                        | l. The lips.                 |
| d. The front-tongue.                       | t. The teeth.                |
| c. The blade (including the tip).          | q. The nasal cavity.         |

from back to front, and which the normal human being has under perfect control. The open space between these chords is called the *glottis*. The

extent to which this glottis is opened or closed has an important bearing on the modification of sounds. The current of air from the lungs passes through the glottis and the resulting sounds vary according to the size of the glottis and the position of the vocal chords. Thus, *holding the breath, coughing, clearing the throat, etc.*, are all closely connected with the shape and size of the glottis at the time of their production.

This brings us to our first classification of sounds.

If the vocal chords are brought close together so as to touch lightly, the current of air from the lungs causes them to vibrate and the resulting sounds are said to be *voiced*. Sounds not accompanied by this vibration are said to be *breathed* or *voiceless*. The difference between these two kinds of sounds can be tested in various ways. If the finger is placed on the point of the larynx the vibration of the vocal chords can be felt when a voiced sound is produced ; if the ears are stopped or the hand is placed on the head the pronunciation of a voiced sound will produce a buzzing sound in the head. It will be found that all the vowels are voiced :

	<i>Voiced Sounds</i>	<i>Voiceless Sounds</i>
<i>Vowels :</i>	u	—
	o	—
	ɔ	—
	a	—
	ə	—
	y	—
	i	—
	ɸ	—
	e	—
	œ	—
	ɛ	—

<i>Voiced Sounds</i>	<i>Voiceless Sounds</i>
<i>Consonants :</i> b	p
d	t
(ʒ)	c
g	k
v	f
(z)	s
(ʒ)	ʃ
j	(ç)
—	χ
m	(m̥)
n	(n̥)
ɲ	(ɲ̥)
ŋ	(ŋ̥)
r	(r̥)
l	(l̥)

In this list the symbols enclosed in brackets ( ) represent either foreign or dialectic sounds or rare sounds.

It will be noticed that the voiced and voiceless consonants usually arrange themselves in pairs. In theory every voiced consonant has a voiceless equivalent and *vice versa*.

*g.* The gullet is simply the passage through which the food is conducted. It is not uncommon, however, to find a refractory crumb or drop of water attempting to force an entrance into the windpipe. The result is that uncomfortable feeling known as *choking*.

*s.* The epiglottis is a flap which serves as a covering to prevent foreign matter from entering the windpipe.

*e, d, & c.* The tongue is an extremely mobile mass, capable of rapid movements in various directions. The division into back, front, and blade is convenient, but indicates no exact lines of

demarcation. This organ is a most important factor in the modification of speech sounds; so much so, that the word *tongue* has come to be used synonymously with the word *language*.

*h & n.* The uvula is the name given to the lower portion of the velum or soft palate, which is a movable flap between the mouth and nose passages. Normally, the air current or breath passes through the mouth or nose or through both, but by raising the velum the passage through the nose can be shut off and the breath forced to pass through the mouth. The sounds uttered in this way are said to be *nasalised*. It will be noticed that this is really a misnomer and that the popular phrase, *talking through the nose*, is the reverse of the truth. People who suffer from adenoids (a growth behind the velum) or a bad cold in the head, lose the use of the nasal canal and *talk through the mouth*.

*k & r.* The hard palate and the teeth-ridge together constitute the roof of the mouth. People born without a palate cannot produce clear distinct speech sounds.

*l.* The lips play such an important part in the modification of speech sounds that deaf people are often able to follow a conversation by watching the lips of the speakers. This is known as *lip-reading*.

*t.* The teeth, like the palate, are immovable. The loss of a couple of front teeth or a set of false teeth will often change a person's manner of speaking.

*q.* The nasal cavity is the passage through the nose. Any obstruction of this passage will produce a nasal effect.

## III. VOWELS AND CONSONANTS

SPEECH sounds fall more or less naturally into two classes. These we may call *vowels* and *consonants*. A vowel may be defined as a voiced sound which is allowed to pass through the mouth or nose (or through both mouth and nose) without any audible obstruction of the breath or air current. A consonant is a voiced or voiceless sound which requires a stopping of the breath, a sudden release and the consequent explosion. But all the consonants are not explosions. Some are the outcome of friction.

We can classify both vowels and consonants: (a) according to the *place where* they are produced, and (b) according to the *manner* in which they are produced.

If we classify the vowels according to the place where they are produced, we can distinguish three main groups :

1. *Back* : [u], [o], [ɔ], [ɑ]
2. *Mixed* : [ə]
3. *Front* : [y], [i], [ɛ], [e], [æ], [ɛ]

Classified according to the manner in which they are produced, four groups are obtained :

1. *Close* : [u], [y], [i]
2. *Half-close* : [o], [ɔ], [e]
3. *Half-open* : [ə], [ɛ]
4. *Open* : [ɑ], [ɔ], [æ]

The consonants classified according to place of production fall into six groups :

1. *Labial* : [p], [b], [w], [m]
2. *Labio-dental* : [f], [v]

3. *Dental* : [t], [d], [s], [ʃ], [n], [r], [l]
4. *Palatal* : (ç), (ʒ), [ç], [j], [ɲ]
5. *Velar* : [k], [g], [χ], [ŋ]
6. *Glottal* : [ʔ], [h]

Classified according to the manner of production they fall into five groups :

1. *Plosive* : [p], [b], [t], [d], [c], (ʒ), [k], [g], [ʔ]
2. *Fricative* : (w), [f], [v], [s], [ʃ], (ç), [j], [χ]
3. *Nasal* : [m], [n], [ɲ], [ŋ]
4. *Rolled* : [r]
5. *Lateral* : [l]

Vowels are also classified as *rounded* and *spread* or *unrounded*. The rounded vowel is pronounced with the lips protruded and in a rounded position. The spread vowel is uttered with the lips in a spread or unrounded position :

<i>Rounded</i>	<i>Spread</i>
[u]	—
[o]	—
[ɔ]	[a]
[y]	[i]
[ɸ]	[e]
[œ]	{ [ə] [ɛ]

There is another classification of vowels which must be considered. The basis of this classification is the *quantity* or *length* of vowels. By this length is meant the time occupied in uttering the sound. This time varies appreciably in different vowels. Thus, it takes longer to pronounce the word *laat* than it does to pronounce *lat*, and we say that the vowel in the former is *long* and the vowel in the latter is *short*. The following lists of words will

illustrate the way in which the length of vowels varies :

<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>
boer [bu:ɪr]	boek [buk]
hoog [ho:ɣ]	filosoof [filoso:f]
môre [mɔ:ɪrə]	lot [lɔt]
haar [ha:ɪr]	kat [kat]
—	pit [pət]
muur [my:ɪr]	nuut [nyt]
vier [fi:ɪr]	Piet [pit]
kleur [klɛ:ɪr]	Europa [ɛro:pa]
beer [be:ɪr]	teorie [teori]
brûe [brœ:ə]	krul [krœl]
lêer [le:ɪr]	wet [vət]

So far we have dealt with elementary sounds only and have avoided a type of vowel sound which is an important factor in the vocalisation of the language. This is the diphthong or double vowel sound. Two vowels are pronounced in the same syllable and in the same breath impulse. The first vowel retains the function of a vowel, but the second assumes the function of a consonant. The Afrikaans diphthongs are :

<i>Back :</i>	[ui]	as in koei [kui]
	[oi]	„ kooi [koi:] , ,
	[ɔi]	„ nôi [nɔi]
	[ai]	„ baie [baia]
	[ou]	„ houd [hout]
<i>Front :</i>	[ɛy]	„ huis [hɛys]
	[ei]	„ lei [lei]
	[e:ɛ]	„ leeu [le:ɛ]
	[au]	„ miau [miau]
	[ei]	„ hêi [hei]
	[iu]	„ benieud [bɛniut]

## IV. CLASSIFICATION OF VOWELS

	<i>Back</i>	<i>Mixed</i>	<i>Front</i>
Close	u		y i
Half-close	o		ø e
Half-open		ə	ɛ
Open	ɔ a	œ	

## VOWELS IN DETAIL

[u]	<i>Examples :</i>	boek [buk]
		hoe [hu]
		oes [us]
		loer [lu:r]

The close, back, rounded vowel. It has no spread equivalent. Theoretically it is identical with its English equivalent [u], but in actual speech one can detect a difference. The Englishman's pronunciation of the vowel in *boek* [buk], for example, is not quite as *tense* as the Afrikaner's.

[u] is usually a short vowel except when followed by *r* :

boer [bu:r]  
roer [ru:r]  
loer [lu:r]

Even when followed by *r* it is not always long as the following examples will show :

woer-woer [vurvur]  
oerwoud [urvout]  
oerang-oetang [uraŋutaŋ]  
koerant [kurant]



It is only in very deliberate speech that these vowels acquire length.

The Englishman finds great difficulty in pronouncing this sound correctly when it is followed by [r]. He converts the Afrikaans [r], which is a rolled sound, into the English standard *r*, which (unless it is followed by a vowel sound) is simply a "vowel murmur" [ɹ]. This has a diphthongised effect on the vowel and also reduces it to the half-close position :

loer [lu:r] > [lo:ə]  
 roer [ru:r] > [ro:ə]  
 voer [fu:r] > [fo:ə]  
 koer [ku:r] > [ko:ə]

The classic example is *Boer*, which through constant misuse has acquired the pronunciation [bo:ə] so firmly that it is almost regarded as standard speech. Even Afrikaners, when speaking English, pronounce *Boer War* as [bo:əwə:ɪ].

This diphthongised pronunciation is also noticeable to a less degree when the vowel is not followed by [r] :

hoe [hu] > [ho:ə]  
 doek [duk] > [do:ək]  
 soet [sut] > [so:ət]  
 roes [rus] > [ro:əs]

This may be due to a confusion of spelling, *e.g.* in *poet*.

The Afrikaner also has a strong tendency to diphthongise this vowel when it precedes [ç] :

soetjies [sucis] > [suicis]  
 goedjies [χucis] > [χuicis]  
 voetjies [fucis] > [fuicis]  
 hoetjies [hucis] > [huicis]

This tendency is probably related to the one which converts

vergoed [fərχut] into vergooi [fərχui]  
 vloed [flut] into vloei [flui]  
 verhoed [fərhut] into verhoei [fərhui]

This tendency is so pronounced that there are strong grounds for maintaining that these words should be spelled :

soeitjies  
 goeitjies

voeitjies  
 hoeitjies

The majority of Afrikanders uninfluenced by education or a knowledge of other languages are strongly inclined to nasalise their vowels. [u], however, is rarely nasalised in :

Woensdag [vunsdɑχ]  
 Poenskop [punsκɔp]

Very rarely does one hear :

[vũ:sdɑχ]  
 [pũ:skɔp]

The nasal tendency is stronger in :

skoengespe [skũ:χɛspə]  
 skoelapper [skũ:lɑpər]  
 skoensool [skũ:so:l]

Even in words where there is no [n] this nasalisation is sometimes heard in illiterate speech :

lusing > [lũ:səŋ]  
 moegheid > [mũ:χeit]  
 troewe > [trũ:və]  
 ploë > [plũ:ə]

is often unduly lengthened and consequently diphthongised :

loop > [lo:əp]  
 hoog > [ho:əχ]  
 boog > [bo:əχ]  
 spook > [spo:ək]

There also appears to be a universal inclination to diphthongise this vowel when it precedes [c] :

grootjie > [χro:ici]  
 pootjie > [po:ici]  
 lootjie > [lo:ici]  
 bootjie > [bo:ici]

Even when [ɲ] intervenes the tendency remains :

boontjie > [bo:iɲci]  
 toontjie > [to:iɲci]

The spelling *grootjie*, *lootjie*, *boontjie*, etc., seems to be justified on phonetic grounds.

The tendency to nasalise this vowel is stronger than in the case of [u] :

Adoons > [adõ:s]  
 skoonouers > [skõ:ouərs]  
 skoonmaak > [skõ:ma:k]  
 gewoonste > [χəvõ:stə]  
 skoonsuster > [skõ:sæstər]  
 boonste > [bõ:stə]

In very illiterate circles the nasal tendency is noticeable even where there is no *n* :

afdroë > [afdrõ:ə]  
 behoor > [bəhõ:r]  
 gelowe > [χəldõ:və]

The weakly accented vowel becomes [ə] :

kolonie > [kəlo:ni]  
 sosatie > [səsə:ti]

hipokonders > [hipəkøndərs]  
 bobotie > [bəbo:ti]  
 rosyn > [rəsein]

The pronunciation of this vowel appears to be arbitrary in certain newly-derived words :

sosatie > [sosa:ti] or [sɔsa:ti]  
 bobotie > [bobo:ti] or [bɔbo:ti]  
 totaal > [tota:l] or [tɔta:l]

The following dialectic pronunciations are also common :

totaal > [tuta:l]  
 soveel > [sɔfəl] or [sɔfəl]  
 notiesie > [nətisi] or [natysi]  
 soheentoe } > [sountu] or [so:intu]  
 soontoe }

[ɔ]

*Examples :* bok [bɔk]  
 môre [mɔ:rə]  
 mos [mɔs]  
 lot [lɔt]

Open, back, rounded vowel. Its rounded equivalent is [ɑ]. This becomes clear if one passes from the pronunciation of a word like *lot* to that of *lat*.

This vowel is usually short, but when followed by [r] it acquires at least half the length of the usual long vowels like [o] and [e] :

môre [mɔ.rə]  
 smôrens [smɔ.rɛ̃:s]  
 Faure [fɔ.rə]

But when it is followed by a double consonant,

even the influence of [r] is not sufficiently strong to lengthen the vowel :

dors [dɔrs]  
 mors [mɔrs]  
 sorg [sɔrχ]  
 borg [bɔrχ]

When nasalised it naturally becomes a long vowel :

ons > [õ:s]  
 gons > [χõ:s]  
 monster > [mõ:stər]  
 donse > [dõ:sə]

It is tenser than its English theoretical equivalent. Consequently there is a difference between the Englishman's pronunciation of a word like *lot* and that of the Afrikaner.

The same Afrikanders who habitually diphthongise [o] are also inclined to show this tendency in pronouncing [ɔ] :

sorg > [sɔ.ərχ]  
 borg > [bɔ.ərχ]  
 wors > [vɔ.ərs]  
 kos > [kɔ.əs]  
 lot > [lɔ.ət]

This naturally has a lengthening effect on the vowel, but the acquired length is not so marked as in the case of [o] which was a long vowel before the diphthong influence took effect.

The diphthong tendency is also marked when [ɔ] precedes [c], even when [ɹ] intervenes :

dotjie > [dɔici]  
 marmotjie > [marmɔici]  
 potjie > [pɔici]  
 klontjie > [klɔɪnci]  
 hondjie > [hɔɪnci]

From a phonetic point of view there appears to be every justification for the spelling :

doitjie                      poitjie                      hointjie

The nasal tendency is very strong in the pronunciation of this sound :

ons > [õ:ɪs]  
 donse > [dõ:ɪsə]  
 gons > [χõ:ɪs]  
 konfoor > [kõ:fo:r]  
 onaangenaam > [õ:ã:χənɑ:m]  
 ongeveer > [õ:χəfe:r]

In certain newly-derived words and also in certain compounds the nasal tendency is weaker. The following words, for example, are less regularly nasalised than those in the above list :

barons > [barəns]  
 ballons > [baləns]  
 sonskyn > [sənskein]  
 sonsondergang > [sənsəndərχɑŋ]

The weakly accented vowel easily becomes [ə] :

kombuis > [kəmbøys]  
 kommando > [kəmando]  
 kontant > [kəntant]  
 kordaat > [kərdɑ:t]  
 konyn > [kənein]  
 borduur > [bərdy:r]  
 stoffasie > [stəfɑ:si]  
 gordyn > [χərdein]

The following are also commonly heard :

tot > [tut]  
 onder > [undər]  
 kosyn > [kusein]  
 hierso > [hi:rsɑ] or [hi:rsɑ:  
 om > [o:m]  
 jolop > [jã:lɑp]

A very slight change in accent or in the consonant will effect an interchange of [ɔ] and [c]. This becomes clear by a comparison of the following pairs of words :

afgod [afχɔt]	afgode [afχo:də]
botter [bɔtər]	boter [bo:tər]
knôr [knɔr]	knoor [kno:r]
môre [mɔ.rə]	more [mo:rə]

[ɑ]

*Examples :* lat [lat]  
 laat [la:t]  
 kaas [ka:s]  
 nat [nat]

The back, unrounded, open vowel. Its rounded equivalent is [ɔ]. It may be either a short or a long vowel as the above list shows. It is not quite the same as its English theoretical equivalent [ɑ]. The Afrikaans [ɑ:] in a word like *vader* is tenser than the English [ɑ:] in a word like *father*, and this difference can easily be detected by the trained ear when the Englishman speaks Afrikaans.

Before [c], even when [p] intervenes, there is a strong tendency to diphthongise this vowel :

baadjie > [ba:ɪci]  
 badjie > [baɪci]  
 gaatjie > [χa:ɪci]  
 handjie > [haɪpci]

• Notice also

kwajong > [kra:ijɔŋ]

The spelling

baaidjie            baidjie            haindjie, etc.

seems to have phonetic justification.

The nasal tendency is very strong, as the following will show :

saans > [sã:ɪs]  
 Afrikans > [afrikã:ɪs]  
 aansoek > [ã:ɪsuk]  
 aans > [ã:ɪs]  
 aanlê > [ã:ɪle:ɪ]  
 aanvaar > [ã:ɪfa:ɪr]  
 gans > [χã:ɪs]  
 dans > [dã:ɪs]

The following compounds seem to demand clearer enunciation than that given by the nasalised vowel, and are therefore pronounced without nasalising in careful speech :

wanstalte > [vanstaltə]  
 waansin > [va:ɪnsən]  
 manskap > [manskap]  
 manshoed > [manshut]  
 manshemp > [manshɛmp]  
 manspersoon > [manspɛrsɔ:n]  
 manslag > [manslaχ]

In the following words the feeling of unity is greater and the vowel is usually nasalised :

Van Heerden > [fã:ɪhe:ɪrdən]  
 vanself > [fã:ɪsɛlf]  
 van voor > [fã:ɪfo:ɪr]  
 van agter > [fã:ɪɑχtər]

The difference between

gans [χã:ɪs] and gans [χans]

should be noticed. The latter is used in an expression like, *gans en al* [χansənəl].



The nasal tendency is also noticeable in words like :

Skoolgaan [sho:lχã:]  
 wa [vã:]  
 ma [mã:]  
 pa [pã:]

The plural *maens* [mã:s], for example, is often heard and seems quite logical.

The word *kansel*, probably owing to the dignity with which it is invested, is usually pronounced [kansəl] and not [kã:səl].

The pronunciation of [ɑ] presents few difficulties, but the tendency to mispronounce it in rapid or dialectic speech is very strong. The following list will illustrate how easily the weakened vowel becomes [ə] :

bagasie > [bəχɑ:si]	karba > [kərba:]
sal > [səl]	balans × [bəlã:s]
kadet > [kədət]	galop > [χələp]
karakter > [kərakter]	kabaai > [kəba:i]
makeer > [məke:r]	kalbas > [kəlbas]
adres > [ədres]	karkatjie > [kərkaci]
baklei > [bəklei]	karo > [kəro:]
alfabet > [alfəbet]	basaar > [bəsa:r]
as > [əs]	basuim > [bəsfɔyn]
kalant > [kəlant]	baas > [bəʃ]

The long vowel is easily shortened :

aan > [an]  
 aarbei > [arbei]  
 aaklig > [akləχ]  
 haakspeld > [hakspelt]  
 aanhou > [anhou]  
 aasvoël > [asvoil]  
 maar > [mar]

The following dialectic pronunciations are common :

biljart > [bəljɛrt]  
 gora > [χɔrɛɪ]  
 parafien > [pɛrəfin]  
 laaste > [lɛɪstə]  
 paljas > [pəljas]

[ə]

*Examples :* pit [pət]  
 lid [lɛt]  
 baie [baɪə]  
 koue [kouə]

This is the mixed half-open, unrounded vowel. It has already been noticed how easily the other vowels pass over into [ə] in rapid or dialectic speech. Therefore this vowel occupies a very important position in vocalisation.

It is always short and seems to be somewhat laxer than most of the Afrikaans vowels. It approximates more closely to its English theoretical equivalent than most of the other Afrikaans vowels. The result is that the Englishman has little difficulty in pronouncing this sound.

Confusion of spelling appears to be responsible for the following mistakes made by the Englishman :

pit > [pit]  
 sit > [sit]  
 lid > [lit]  
 in > [in]  
 koue > [koui]  
 hoëveld > [horifelt]

The nasal tendency is very strong :

alvorens > [alfo:rǝ:is]  
 betreurenswaardig > [bətʀɸ:rǝ:svɑ:irdəχ]  
 effens > [ɛfǝ:is]  
 enigsins > [e:inǝχsǝ:is]  
 hoogstens > [ho:χstǝ:is]  
 inent > [ǝ:ɛnt]  
 inagneem > [ǝ:ɑχne:im]  
 inlê > [ǝ:lɛ:]  
 inwy > [ǝ:vei]

The nasal tendency is weaker in compounds which demand clear enunciation :

buitenstyd > [bʰɸytənsteit]  
 buitenste > [bʰɸytənstə]  
 Dinsdag > [dǝnsdɑχ] or [dǝnsdɑχ]

The same applies to words of comparatively recent origin :

bekkens > [bɛkəns]  
 degens > [de:χəns]  
 dekens > [de:kəns]

In very illiterate speech the vowel is often nasalised when there is no need for it :

oefen > [ufǝ:]  
 dae > [dɑ:ǝ:]  
 hoë > [ho:ǝ:]

The weakened vowel is easily syncopated :

agteruit > [ɑχtrʰɸyt]  
 agteroor > [ɑχtro:r]  
 geloof > [χlo:f]  
 luitenant > [lʰɸytnant]  
 terug > [trǝχ]  
 sekretaris > [sɛkrɛtɑ:rs]

This syncopation of [ǝ] contributed consider-

ably towards the simplification of the language. This becomes clear if we study the following list :

Nederlands	degelik >	Afrikaans	[de:χlək]
„	tamelik >	„	[tɑ:mlək]
„	samstelling >	„	[sɑ:ɪmstələŋ]
„	byvoegelijke >	„	[beifuχləkə]

Even in a word like *duidelik* [ə] is often synco-pated. The spelling *duidlik* seems quite logical. The tendency to insert [ə] is seen in :

sybok > [seiəbək]  
 bynes > [beinəs]  
 taamlik > [tɑ: mələk]  
 bolmakiesie > [bələmakisi]  
 boerbeskuit > [bu: rəbəkʃyt]

[ə] is pronounced but not spelled in :

psalm > [pəsələm]  
 arm > [arəm]  
 warm > [vərəm]  
 weergalm > [ve: rχələm]  
 kalm > [kələm]

When associated with [r] mutata-sis is a characteristic of this vowel :

barlewiet > [bərəlvit]  
 present > [pərsənt]  
 probeer (pronounced prebeer) > [pərbe: r]  
 sekretaris > [sekərtɑ:rs]

In the suffix -ig [ə] usually becomes [ɑ] :

twingtig > [tvəntɑχ]  
 aardig > [ɑ:rdɑχ]  
 matig > [mɑ: tɑχ]  
 slordig > [slərdɑχ]

Notice also this tendency in :

klimaat > [klama:t]  
 jenever > [jane:vər]  
 isegrinnig > [isaχrənαχ]  
 rotting > [rɔtəŋ]

But [ə] shows quite as strong a tendency to become [ɛ], especially when it is accented :

gesig > [χəɛχ]  
 aanrig > [ã:reχ]  
 prins > [prē:s]  
 berig > [bərəχ]  
 disnis > [dɛsnes]  
 flikflooï > [flɛkflo:i]  
 hinder > [hənər]  
 distrik > [dɛstrɛk]  
 simpel > [sɛmpəl]  
 trippens > [trɛpē:s]  
 wins > [vɛ:is]

The following dialectic pronunciations are also common :

[ə] > [œ] : silwer > [sœlvər]  
 skilpad > [skœlpət]  
 biltong > [bœltɔŋ]  
 knibbel > [knœbəl]  
 groetnis > [χrutnœs] or [χrutnɔ:is]

[ə] > [e] : gister > [χe:stər]  
 gif > [χe:f]

[ə] > [ei] Egipte > [iχeiptə]  
 bloedvin > [blutfein]

[y]

*Examples :* muur [my:r]  
 nuus [ny:s]  
 nuut [nyt]  
 huwelik [hyvələk]

The close, front, rounded vowel. Its spread form is [i]. It may be either short or long as the above list indicates, but in a word like *nuus* the vowel only acquires half-length.

It has no English equivalent, and therefore the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult. Just as in the case of the back, close vowel [u], the influence of the English vowel-murmur [ɪ] is responsible for the chief mistake. The vowel is diphthongised and at the same time reduced to the half-close position :

muur > [mɸ:ə]  
 suur > [sɸ:ə]  
 duur > [dɸ:ə]  
 vuur > [fɸ:ə]

In the case of [u] we noticed that the diphthong tendency existed even when the vowel was not followed by [r]. We attributed this to a confusion of spelling; this view is strengthened by the fact that [y] loses this tendency when it is not followed by [r].

In his efforts to produce this unfamiliar sound, the Englishman is strongly tempted to convert it into [u] :

nu > [nu]  
 nuus > [nus]  
 huwelik > [huvələk]  
 muur > [mu:r]

Even the Afrikaner does this in words like :

rusie > [rusi]  
 rugare > [ruχɑ:rə]  
 spu > [spuχ]

Notice also the close relationship between :

suutjies and soetjies

rukeloos and roekeloos

to the influence of spelling in an English word like *piër* :

sien > [se:ən]  
 nies > [ne:əs]  
 kies > [ke:əs]  
 siel > [se:əl]

We have seen that there is a strong tendency for [y] to become [i]; but in a limited number of words there is a tendency in the opposite direction :

notiesie > [notysi]  
 nietsbeduidend > [nytsbədøydənt]  
 tot niet > [tötny't]  
 diesvolk > [dysfölk] or [dysölk]-  
 kwartier > [kwarty:r]  
 stiebeuel > [stybøəl]  
 ammuniesie > [amynysi]

The tendency to nasalise this vowel is not very marked. It is safe to say that the majority of Afrikanders do not habitually nasalise the following vowels :

diens > [dins] rarely [di:ns]  
 dienstyd > [dinsteit] rarely [di:steit]  
 gedienstig > [χədinstəχ] rarely [χədi:stəχ]  
 sinswyse > [sinsweisə] rarely [si:sweisə]

Nasalisation, however, is noticeable in :

sien jy > [si:jei]  
 miskien > [møski:i]  
 verdien > [fərdi:i]  
 verdienste > [fərdi:stə]

In certain newly-derived words the unaccented [i] is strongly inclined to become [j] :

Italiaans > [italjā:s]  
 prieel > [prəje:i] or [prə:je:i]  
 viool > [føjo:i]  
 kiaat > [køja:t]

This vowel is not often mispronounced by the Afrikaner. Notice the following :

iedereen > [eidərə:n]  
 breek > [bre:k]  
 predikant > [prɛ:dəkant] or [prɛ:kant]

[ɤ]

*Examples :* deur [dɤ:r]  
 leus [lɤ:s]  
 neus [nɤ:s]  
 geur [χɤ:r]

The half-close, front, rounded vowel. Its unrounded equivalent is [e].

This vowel is always long in purely Afrikaans words, as the above list indicates. When unaccented in the newly-derived words it is short :

Europa > [ɤro:pɑ]  
 reumatic > [rɤmatik]  
 neutraal > [nɤtra:l]

It has no English equivalent, hence the great difficulty which the Englishman has in producing this sound. The influence of the English "vowel-murmur" is less marked than in the case of [u], [o], [y], etc., already recorded, but still there remains a diphthong tendency :

deur > [de:ɤ]  
 geur > [χe:ɤ]  
 neus > [ne:ɤs]  
 keur > [ke:ɤr]

The same Afrikaner who is inclined to diphthongise [o] and [ɔ], also shows the tendency in pronouncing this vowel. In fact, many people of



both races declare that this sound is not an elementary vowel.

In his efforts to produce [ϕ] the Englishman often substitutes the English combination [ju] :

deur > [dju:]  
 neut > [nju:t]  
 keur > [kju:]  
 neus > [nju:s]

By far the most serious mistake made by both Englishman and Afrikander is the spreading of the rounded vowel :

deur > [deɪr]  
 neus > [neɪs]  
 fleur > [fleɪr]

This mistake is so common that there is grave danger of the rounded vowel disappearing entirely from Afrikaans. The confusion that will result is illustrated by the following pairs of words :

leus	lees
skeur	skeer
neut	neet
meul	meel
reun	reen
seun	seen
afkeur	afkeer

The nasal tendency is strong, but combinations favourable to nasalisation are rare :

leuens > [l̃ɸ̃ɪs]  
 steun-steun > [st̃ɸ̃ɪst̃ɸ̃ɪ]  
 reuns > [r̃ɸ̃ɪs]  
 seuns > [s̃ɸ̃ɪs]

The following changes are often heard :

- [ $\phi$ ] > [ $\phi y$ ] : sleutel > [sl $\phi$ ytəl]  
 uitpeul > [ $\phi$ ytp $\phi$ yl]  
 jeugdig > [j $\phi$ yχdəχ]  
 heuglik > [h $\phi$ yχlək]  
 deuntjie > [d $\phi$ yŋci]  
 breuk > [br $\phi$ yuk]  
 [ϕ] > [œ] : heuning > [hœnəŋ]  
 jeuk > [jœk]  
 euntjie > [œpci]  
 deuskant > [dœskant]  
 [ϕ] > [i] : Europa > [iro:pa]  
 [ϕ] > [y] : neutraal > [nytra:l]

### [e]

- Examples :* lees [le:ɪs]  
 leer [le:r]  
 skeel [ske:l]  
 een [e:ɪn]

The half-close, front, unrounded vowel. It is the unrounded form of [ $\phi$ ].

It is usually long except when it constitutes an unaccented syllable, especially in newly-derived words :

- teorie > [teori]  
 emosie > [emo:si]  
 elektries > [elɛktris]  
 ellende > [elendə]

It is not quite the same sound as its English theoretical equivalent. Besides being tenser it is usually a long vowel while the English [e] is usually short. This accounts for the difference between the Englishman's pronunciation of [e] and that of the Afrikander.

The influence of the English vowel-murmur is also very evident :

leer > [le:ə]  
 heer > [he:ə]  
 meer > [me:ə]  
 veer > [fe:ə]

When [e] is not followed by [r] the Englishman usually converts it into the close vowel [i] :

lees > [li:s]  
 vee > [fi:]  
 eet > [i:t]  
 see > [si:]

Confusion of spelling may be responsible for this to an appreciable extent. But in some Western Province districts, Afrikanders commit this error habitually and have come to regard it as standard speech. It is interesting to note that they are the same people who convert [o] into [u].

In other parts of the country this vowel is often diphthongised :

beet > [be:ət]  
 leer > [le:ər]  
 sweer > [swe:ər]  
 eet > [e:ət]

The people who make this mistake are the same as those who convert [o] into [o:ə] and [ɔ] into [ɔ:ə].

The diphthong tendency when [e] precedes [c] exists, but is not so marked as in the case of some other vowels already noted :

neetje > [ne:əci]  
 kleedjie > [kle:əci]  
 beetjie > [be:əci]  
 Leentjie > [le:ənci]

This vowel shows a strong nasal tendency :

eens > [ɛ̃:ɪs]  
 eensaam > [ɛ̃:ɪsɑ:m]  
 eenvoud > [ɛ̃:ɪfou̯t]  
 geensins > [χɛ̃:ɪsɔ̃:ɪs]  
 heengaan > [hɛ̃:ɪχɑ̃:ɪ]

The tendency is weaker in :

Deens > [de:ɪns]  
 leenstelsel > [le:ɪnstɛlsɛl]  
 leenheer > [le:ɪnhe:ɪr]

In certain old dialectic words and a few others the vowel is often rounded :

besem > [bɸ:ɪsəm]  
 teen > [tɸ:ɪn]  
 sewe > [sɸ:ɪvə]  
 speel > [spɸ:ɪl]  
 swcep > [swɸ:ɪp]  
 vandeessjaar > [fandɸ:ɪsja:r]  
 veel > [fɸ:ɪl]  
 gekskeer > [χɛkskɸ:ɪr]  
 brandnekel > [brantnɸ:ɪkəl]  
 breekwater > [brɸ:ɪkwatər]

The following are also common :

[e] > [ei]: besonderhede > [beisɔ̃ndərheidə]  
 swakhede > [svakheidə]  
 bredie > [breidi]  
 gemeente > [χəmeintə]  
 teken > [teikən]  
 kleedjie > [kleici]

[e] > [i] (probably as the result of English influence):

eland > [ilant]  
 elektris > [ilektris]  
 emosie > [imo:si]

	elimineer > [iləmənɛɪr]
	ellende > [ilɛndə]
[e] > [œ]:	teen > [tœn] or [tʰyn]
[e] > [ə]:	vreemde > [frɛmdə] even [frənə]

[ɛ]

*Examples :*

wet	[vɛt]
belet	[bɛlət]
sê	[sɛɪ]
sterk	[stɛrk]

The half-open, front, unrounded vowel. It has no exact rounded equivalent, but [œ] approximates closely to this position.

It may be either short or long, as the above list indicates.

It is tenser than its English equivalent, and consequently the Englishman's pronunciation of this vowel differs appreciably from that of the Afrikaner.

When it precedes [r] the Englishman often confuses it with the English *e* before *r* :

erf	> [ɛrf]
serp	> [sɛrp]
kerk	> [kɛrk]
vlerk	> [flɛrk]

It is very closely related to [ə] and even the Afrikaner constantly confuses the two vowels in a large number of words. The following two lists will illustrate this confusion :

bedenklik	[bɛdɛŋklɛk]	bedinklik	[bɛdɛŋklɛk]
sendeling	[sɛndəlɛŋ]	sindeling	[sɛndəlɛŋ]
beken	[bɛkɛn]	bekin	[bɛkɛn]
beset	[bɛsɛt]	besit	[bɛsɛt]
engel	[ɛŋəl]	ingel	[ɛŋəl]

Engels [ɛŋəls]	ingels [əŋəls]
engte [ɛŋtə]	ingte [əŋtə]
enkel [ɛŋkəl]	inkel [əŋkəl]
geskenk [χəskenk]	geskink [χəskenk]
ken [kɛn]	kin [kən]
lengte [lɛŋtə]	lingte [lən̥tə]
tent [tɛnt]	tint [tənt]
verlep [fɛrlɛp]	verlip [fərlɛp]
agent [ɑχɛnt]	agint [ɑχənt]
stegie [stɛχi]	stiglie [stəχi]
meng [mɛŋ]	ming [mən̥]

This vowel also shows the diphthong tendency when it precedes [c], even when [ŋ] intervenes :

bedjie > [bɛi:ɔci]  
 tameletjie > [təmələi:ɔci]  
 netjies > [nɛi:ɔcis]  
 tentjie > [tɛəŋci]

In some parts of the Western Province there is a strong tendency to diphthongise this vowel when it is accented :

sleg > [slɛəχ]  
 sê > [sɛi:ə]  
 vet > [fɛət]  
 skel > [skɛəl]

The vowel is also strongly nasalised :

grens > [χrɛ̃i:s]  
 spens > [spɛ̃i:s]  
 aanwensel > [ɑ̃i:vɛ̃i:səl]  
 mens > [mɛ̃i:s]  
 trens > [trɛ̃i:s]

The nasal tendency is weaker in :

intensief > [əntensif]  
 dekadensie > [dəkadɛnsi]  
 intelligensie > [əntɛləχɛnsi]

The following dialectic pronunciations are often heard :

[ɛ] > [a] :   dennebol > [danəbəl]  
                   terpentyn > [tarpəntein]  
                   tempteer > [tamteɪr]  
                   en > [an]  
 [ɛ] > [œ]    gewelf > [χəvœlf]

[œ]

*Examples :*   krul [krœl]  
                   hulle [hœlə]  
                   hut [hœt]  
                   put [pœt]

The open, front, rounded vowel. It has no exact unrounded equivalent, but both [ɛ] and [ə], especially the latter, serve this purpose.

It is usually short except in a few words in which the vowels ought really to be diphthongs :

brûens > [brœ̃ɪs]  
 rûens > [rœ̃ɪs]

It is not quite as tense as the other Afrikaans vowels except [ə].

It has no English equivalent, and therefore its pronunciation presents great difficulty to the Englishman. Owing to similarity of spelling, he converts it into the close back vowel [u] :

put > [put]  
 stut > [stut]  
 skuld > [skult]  
 stuk > [stuk]

Sometimes, however, the Englishman converts it into the half-open back English vowel [ʌ] :

hut > [hʌt]  
 nut > [nʌt]  
 krul > [krʌl]  
 kul > [kʌl]

By far the most serious mistake made by both Englishman and Afrikaner is the spreading of the rounded vowel :

krul > [krəl]  
 julle > [jələ] or [jɛlə]  
 hulle > [hələ] or [hɛlə]  
 skuld > [skəlt]

This tendency is so marked that there is grave danger of the rounded vowel disappearing entirely from Afrikaans. The confusion which will result is illustrated by the following limited lists of words :

kul	kil
stuk	stik
sug	sig
rug	rig
put	pit

The nasal tendency is strong, but the sound rarely occurs in combinations favourable to nasalisation :

afguns > [afχœ̃:s]  
 boukuns > [boukœ̃:s]  
 gunstig > [χœ̃:stəχ]  
 luns > [lœ̃:s]  
 lunsriem > [lœ̃:srim]

In the word *kuns*, in its more modern meaning of *art*, there appears to be a tendency to discard nasalisation.



The diphthong tendency when [œ] precedes [c], even when [ɲ] intervenes, is also marked :

hutjie > [hɸyɕi]  
 putjie > [pɸyɕi]  
 skutjie > [skɸyɕi]  
 muntjie > [mɸyɲɕi]

The following dialectic pronunciations are also heard :

[œ] > [ɸy] : krummels > [krɸyməls]  
 [œ] > [ɔ] : datum > [datɔm]  
 sulke > [sɔlkə] or [sɔkə]

## V. DIPHTHONGS

[ui]

*Examples :* koei [kui]  
 boeie [buiə]  
 roeier [ruiər]  
 moei [mui]

A compound of the close, back, rounded vowel [u] and the close, front, unrounded vowel [i]. It is closely related to [u], from which it is derived. It has no exact English equivalent, and therefore presents difficulties to the Englishman, who quite naturally substitutes for this sound the nearest English diphthong [uə] :

koei > kuə]  
 moei > [muə]  
 stoei > [stuə]  
 roei > [ruə]

More often, however, he reduces it to the half-close position and converts it into [o:i]:

koei > [ko:i]  
 moei > [mo:i]  
 goeie > [χo:iə]  
 boei > [bo:i]

Even Afrikanders are often heard to exclaim “*fooi tog!*” instead of “*foei tog!*”

The second element [i] is strongly inclined to become [j] when it is followed by the mixed vowel [ə]:

koeie > [kujə]  
 goeie > [χujə]  
 boeie > [bujə]  
 roeier > [rujər]

[o:i]

*Examples:* mooi [mo:i]  
 kooi [ko:i]  
 rooie [ro:iə]  
 hooi [ho:i]

A compound of the half-close, back, rounded vowel [o:] and the close, front, unrounded vowel [i]. It is closely related to [o:], from which it is derived.

It has no English equivalent, and therefore the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult.

Confusion of spelling appears to be responsible for the chief mistake:

mooi > [mu:i]  
 kooi > [ku:i]  
 rooi > [ru:i]  
 looi > [lu:i]

In some of the Western Province districts this mistake is habitually made by Afrikaners.

The second portion [i] of this diphthong is strongly inclined to become [j] when it is followed by the indefinite vowel [ə] :

mooie > [mo:ɨə]  
 rooie > [ro:ɨə]  
 foie > [fo:ɨə]  
 looier > [lo:ɨər]

Sometimes this diphthong is reduced to the open position and considerably shortened :

gooi > [χoi]  
 mooi > [mɔi]  
 booi > [bɔi]  
 kooi > [kɔi]

Compare with this the accepted forms *nooiens* and *nɔiens*.

[ɔi]

*Examples :* nôi [nɔi]  
 boikot [bɔikot]  
 toiings [tɔiŋs]  
 goiingsak [χɔiŋsək]

A compound of the open, back, rounded vowel [ɔ] and the front, close, unrounded vowel [i].

It is closely related to [ɔ] from which it is derived. In standard Afrikaans speech it is rarely used, but, as has already been noticed, it is fairly common in dialectic speech.

It is tenser than its English theoretical equivalent [ɔi], which accounts for the difference between the Englishman's pronunciation of a word like *boikot* and that of the Afrikaner.

The second element of the diphthong is inclined to acquire a [j] value when followed by the mixed vowel [ə] :

nôiens > [nojə:s]  
 toiings > [tojəŋs]  
 goiingsak > [χojəŋsak]

The diphthong is so rarely used in Afrikaans that it is seldom, if ever, mispronounced.

[ai]

*Examples :* baie [baiə]  
 baai [ba:i]  
 raai [ra:i]  
 fraai [fra:i]

A compound of the open, back, unrounded vowel [a] and the close, front, unrounded vowel [i]. It may be regarded as the unrounded form of [ai].

The length of this diphthong varies slightly. In *baie*, for example, it is shorter than in *raai*. In rapid or dialectic speech there is also a tendency to shorten the diphthong considerably :

raai-raai > [rai-rai]  
 saai > [saiə]  
 laai > [lai]  
 fraaie > [fraiə]

It is tenser than its English equivalent, and this is responsible for the difference between the Englishman's pronunciation of [ai] and that of the Afrikaner.

It is seldom mispronounced by either race.

[ou]

*Examples :* nou [nou]  
 hout [hout]  
 vrou [frou]  
 oud [out]

A compound of the half-close, back, rounded vowel [o] and the close, back, rounded vowel [u]. The two elements are so closely related and have so much in common that the diphthong is not a perfect one. It closely approximates to an elementary vowel.

The Englishman pronounces it more laxly than the Afrikaner, and this difference is easily noticeable in conversational speech.

The Englishman's commonest mistake in pronouncing this diphthong is probably due to a confusion of spelling :

[ou] > [au]: Hout Baai > [hautba:i]  
 pou > [pau]  
 makou > [makau]  
 vrou > [frau]

The following dialectic pronunciations are also common :

[ou] > [o]: sou > [so:]  
 wou > [vo:]  
 [ou] > [ɔ]: nou > [nɔ]

[ɸy]

*Examples :* huis [hɸys]  
 uit [ɸyt]  
 skuil [skɸyl]  
 lui [lɸy]

A compound of the half-close, front, rounded vowel [ $\phi$ ] and the close, front, rounded vowel [ $y$ ].

It has no English equivalent, and the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult.

The commonest mistake made by both races is spreading the rounded diphthong into its unrounded form [ei] :

huis > [heis]  
 kruis > [kreis]  
 uit > [eit]  
 skuil > [skeil]

There appears to exist a grave danger that this rounded diphthong will ultimately disappear from Afrikaans. The confusion that will result is illustrated by the following limited lists of words :

muisie	meisie
ruis	reis
lui	lei
kuil	keil
huil	heil
skuif	skyf

In their efforts to produce this diphthong correctly, children at school often round it to excess and convert it into the back sound [oi] :

huis > [hois]  
 muis > [mois]  
 lui > [loi]  
 uit > [oit]

This diphthong shows a strong nasal tendency :

skuins > [sk $\phi$ y $\chi$ s]  
 skuinste > [sk $\phi$ y $\chi$ st $\phi$ ]  
 bruinste > [br $\phi$ y $\chi$ st $\phi$ ]  
 tuingoed > [t $\phi$ y $\chi$ ut]

The following pronunciations are also commonly heard :

- [ $\phi y$ ] > [ $\phi$ ] : skuins > [sk $\phi$ :s]  
 skuinste > [sk $\phi$ :stə]  
 verkluum > [fərk $\phi$ :m]  
 [ $\phi y$ ] > [œ] : uientjie > [œjci]  
 vuilis > [fœləs]  
 [ $\phi y$ ] > [i] : uit > [it]

[ei]

- Examples* : reis [reis]  
 skeiding [skeidəŋ]  
 vye [feïə]  
 byl [beil]

A compound of the half-close, front, unrounded vowel [e] and the close, front, unrounded vowel [i]. It is the unrounded form of [ $\phi y$ ].

It is tenser than its English equivalent, and this accounts for the difference between the Englishman's pronunciation of this diphthong and that of the Afrikaner.

This diphthong shows a strong nasal tendency :

- deins > [dēi:s]  
 gryns > [χrēi:s]  
 kleinste > [klēi:stə]  
 kleingeestig > [klēi:χe:stəχ]  
 geveinsde > [χəfēi:sdə]

The tendency to round this spread diphthong appears in a few words only :

- onberymd > [ənbər $\phi$ myt]  
 rympies > [r $\phi$ ympis]  
 skyfskiet > [sk $\phi$ yfskit]  
 dryfsand > [dr $\phi$ yfsant]

The following dialectic pronunciations are also heard :

- [ei] > [ə]: kleinnooi > [kləno:i]  
 kleinbökkie > [kləmbəkɪ]  
 kleinjong > [klɛ:jɔŋ] or [klɔŋ]  
 [ei] > [i]: reisies > [risis]  
 eina > [ina]  
 [ei] > [e]: geitjie > [χe:ci]  
 [ei] > [ɛ]: heining > [hɛnəŋ]

[e:ϕ]

- Examples:* eeu [e:ϕ]  
 leeu [le:ϕ]  
 sneeu [sne:ϕ]  
 spreeu [spre:ϕ]

A compound of the half-close, front, unrounded vowel [e] and the half-close, front, rounded vowel [ϕ]. It has no English equivalent, and therefore the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult.

There is no doubt that many Afrikaners, especially the older generation, are strongly inclined to round off this diphthong with [w]:

- eeu > [e:ϕw]  
 leeus > [le:ϕws]  
 sneeu > [sne:ϕw]  
 eeu > [e:ϕwə]

The following mispronunciations are also common :

- leeu > [lou] or [lau]  
 skreeu > [skrou] or [skre:ɪ]



[iu]

[au]

[ei]

*Example* : benieud [bəniut]*Example* : miao [miau]*Example* : hêi ! [hɛi]

These three diphthongs so rarely occur in Afrikaans that there is no need to consider them in detail.

## VI. CONSONANTS

		Labio-					
	Labial.	dental.	Dental.	Palatal.	Velar.	Glottal.	
Plosive ..	p <u>b</u>		t <u>d</u>	c ( <u>ç</u> )	k <u>g</u>	ʔ	
Fricative ..	(w)	f v	<sup>s</sup> ʃ	(ç) j	x		
Nasal ..	<u>m</u>		<u>n</u>	<u>ɲ</u>	<u>ŋ</u>		
Rolled ..			<u>r</u>				
Lateral ..			<u>l</u>				

In the above table the voiced consonants are underlined thus : [—].

The consonants enclosed in parentheses are not standard sounds, but occur in dialectic speech.

The glottal sound [h] is omitted, but will be dealt with under [ʔ].

## CONSONANTS IN DETAIL

[p]

*Examples* : pit [pət]  
 poppe [pɔpə]  
 loop [lo:p]  
 gepak [χəpak]

The voiceless, labial plosive.

Its pronunciation presents few difficulties to either race. In careful emphatic speech [p] is usually followed by a slight aspirate [h]:

apart > [aphart]  
 pad > [phat]  
 gepak > [χəphak]  
 bepaal > [bəpha:l]

The Englishman is more prone to this peculiarity than the Afrikaner.

[p] is easily assimilated when it precedes the voiced sound [b]:

koopbrief > [ko:brif]  
 papbroek > [pabruk]  
 stampblok > [stamblok]

It also shows this tendency before the voiced labio-dental [v]:

skaapwagter > [ska:vaχtər]  
 skaapwol > [ska:ivəl]

Before the voiceless labio-dental [f] it always remains unassimilated:

skaapvet > [ska:pfet]  
 kopvel > [kɔpfəl]  
 propvol > [prɔpfəl]

In a few words there is a confusion of [p] and [b]:

plafon	blafon
onpassabel	onbesawel
peljaar	baljaar
laspos	lasbos

Notice also the following common mistake:

slurp > slurk

[b]

*Examples :* boek [buk]  
 dobbel [dɔbəl]  
 ribbetjie [rəbɛci]  
 bont [bɔnt]

The voiced, labial plosive.

As a final consonant it does not really exist in Afrikaans because it is always devocalised :

rib > [rəp]  
 rob > [rɔp]  
 eb > [ɛp]  
 skob > [skɔp]

This peculiarity causes great trouble to the Englishman, who pronounces it as a voiced consonant :

rib > [rəb]  
 rob > [rɔb]  
 eb > [ɛb]  
 skob > [skɔb]

Between vowels it easily passes over into the voiced labio-dental [v] :

dobbel > [dɔvəl]  
 dubbeltjie > [dɔvəlci]  
 hobbelrig > [hɔvəlɾəχ]  
 sabel > [sɑɪvəl]  
 skobbejak > [skɔvɛjak]  
 tabak > [tvak]

[t]

*Examples :* tand [tant]  
 tot [tɔt]  
 rotte [rɔtə]  
 ratel [rɑɪtəl]

The voiceless, dental plosive.

In emphatic speech a slight aspirate is often inserted after [t], especially by the Englishman :

toom > [tho:m]  
 tot > [thoθh]  
 tafel > [tha:fəl]  
 teken > [the:kən]

It is easily assimilated :

totdat > [tɔdat]  
 swart duif > [svardɔyf]  
 tortelduif > [tɔrɔldɔyf]  
 wat vir 'n > [vafər]  
 wat sê jy ? > [vase:jei]  
 wat maak jy ? > [vama:kjei]  
 hartbees > [harbe:s]  
 ontsien > [ɔ:sin]  
 proesterig > [prusərəχ]  
 sosatie > [sɔsɑ:si]

Its disappearance after [n] often brings about a change in that sound :

tant Bettie > [tambeti]  
 tant Kaatjie > [taŋka:ci]  
 tant Jaatjie > [tã:ja:ci]

It is sometimes inserted in words like :

dynserig > [dēi:stərɔχ]  
 Duitser > [dɔytstər]  
 visser > [fəstər]  
 koes > [kuts]

Notice also the dialectic pronunciation of :

nuut > [ny:f]  
 opnuut > [ɔpny:f]

[d]

*Examples :* daar [dɑ:ɾ]  
 derde [dɛrdə]  
 lede [le:də]  
 onder [ɔndər]

The voiced, dental plosive.

As a final consonant it does not really exist, because it is always devocalised :

hoed > [hut]  
 bloed > [blut]  
 hand > [hant]  
 raad > [ra:t]

The Englishman, not being accustomed to this devocalising, persists in pronouncing it as a voiced sound :

hoed > [hud]  
 goed > [χud]  
 land > [land]  
 tand > [tand]

[d] is assimilated in a large number of words when it follows [n] :

ander > [anər]	honderd > [hɔnɛrt]
bande > [banə]	lendelam > [lɛnələm]
sonder > [sɔnər]	brandsiekte > [brɑ:siktə]
fondse > [fɔ:sə]	kinds > [kɛ:s]
Nederlands > [ne:dərlǎ:s]	sindelik > [sənələk]
handskoen > [hǎ:skun]	vrindelik > [frɛnlək]

This assimilation is almost as common after [r] :

daardie > [dɑ:ri]  
 hierdie > [hiri]  
 erdepot > [ɛrɛpɔt]  
 perde > [pɛrə]

The following are also common :

adjektief > [ɑjətɪf]  
 daalder > [dɑ:lər]  
 skilder > [skələr]  
 duidelik > [døytlək]  
 dadelik > [dɑ:tlək]

Between vowels it shows a tendency to pass over into [r] :

stadig > [stɑ:rəχ]  
 koddig > [kərəχ]  
 padda > [para]  
 middag > [mərəχ]

It is confused with [t] in :

dadels > [dɑ:tləs]  
 hede > [he:tə]  
 duidelik > [døytlək]

The disappearance of [d] often converts the vowel into a diphthong :

gebede > [χəbe:ə]  
 gebode > [χəbo:ɪə]  
 vergoed > [fərχui]

The following are also heard :

eners > [e:ndərs]  
 leraar > [le:rɑ:rt]  
 welig > [ve:ldərəχ]  
 mosterd > [møstər]  
 introduceer > [əntrose:r]

[ç]

*Examples :* tjalie [çɑli]  
 hondjie [hɔŋçi]  
 tjek [çek]  
 latjie [lɑçi]

The voiceless, palatal plosive.

In emphatic speech it is also followed by a slight aspirate :

tjank > [tʃaŋk]  
 tjalie > [tʃa:li]  
 maatjie > [ma:ci]  
 handjie > [haŋci]

It has no English equivalent, and therefore the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult. He quite naturally converts it into the English [tʃ] sound :

tjalie > [tʃa:li]  
 tjank > [tʃaŋk]  
 hondjie > [hɔntʃi]  
 gaatjie > [χa:tfi]

This mistake is also typical of the speech of the Capetown coloured community known as the *Gammattjies* [χamatʃis].

In his efforts to produce this sound, the Englishman often converts it into [k] :

hondjie > [hɔnki]  
 tjalie > [ka:li]  
 handjie > [hanki]  
 tjank > [kank]

Primary school teachers often try to separate the two letters *tj* or *dj* in teaching their pupils. The results produced sound quite unnatural to the Afrikaans child. The spelling *d* in *dj* is simply the devocalised final consonant.

We have already noticed how strongly [c] influences the vowel preceding it. The conversion of [n] into [ɲ] will be dealt with later.

The dialectic voiced form [ʒ] will be dealt with under [g].

[k]

*Examples :* kol [kɔl]  
 kok [kɔk]  
 rok [rɔk]  
 raak [ra:k]

The voiceless, velar plosive.

In careful emphatic speech a slight aspirate follows this sound :

kool > [kho:l]  
 rook > [ro:kh]  
 rokke > [rɔkhə]  
 kook > [kho:kb]

[k] shows a strong tendency to come forward to the palatal position before the front vowels :

kuur > [cy:r]  
 keus > [cφ:s]  
 kul > [cɔl]  
 kiem > [cim]  
 keel > [ce:l]  
 kerk > [cɛrk]  
 kin > [cən]

Before the back vowels this tendency disappears :

koets > [kuts]  
 kool > [ko:l]  
 kol > [kɔl]  
 kan > [kən]

The reason for this tendency is quite obvious. It is easier to pronounce the consonant and vowel as closely together as possible, and as dialectic speech usually follows the lines of least resistance, the [k] is quite naturally brought forward.



The same rule applies to the diphthongs :

kuier > [cɔyər]  
keil > [ceil]

Even before the consonants [l], [r], [n], and [v] this tendency is noticeable in certain parts of the country where dialectic speech is general :

klad > [clat]  
klam > [clam]  
kras > [cras]  
kraal > [cra:l]  
knik > [cnək]  
knies > [cnis]  
kwaad > [cva:t]  
kwes > [cves]

Notice the assimilation in :

boekpens > [bupɛ:s]  
links > [lɛŋs]  
slinkse > [slɛŋsə]  
runnik > [rɔnɛŋ]

[g]

*Examples :* ghoen > [gun]  
ghaap > [gɑ:p]  
burger > [bɛrgər]  
berge > [bɛrgə]

The voiced, velar plosive.

It never occurs at the end of a word because it is always devocalised. As a final consonant it either becomes [χ] or [ŋ].

The following examples will illustrate this :

berge [bɛrgə]	berg [bɛrχ]
terge [tɛrgə]	terg [tɛrχ]
—	lange [lɛŋə]
—	vang [fɛŋ]

It shows the same tendency as [k] to come forward before front vowels, diphthongs and consonants. The reason why this tendency is not so marked is because [g] rarely occurs as an initial vowel in Afrikaans. It is particularly noticeable when the Afrikaner talks English :

gherilla > [ʒərələ]  
 ghienie > [ʒini]  
 ghitaar > [ʒita:r]  
 ghries > [ʒris]  
 ghwarie > [ʒvəri]

Only very rarely is this tendency observed when [g] is not an initial sound :

burger > [bœrʒər]  
 berge > ]berʒə]  
 borge > [børʒə]  
 sorgje > [sørʒə]

After [r] it is easily assimilated :

burger > [bœrər]  
 Burgerskolk > [bœrərskɔlk]  
 berge > [berə]  
 terge > [tərə]  
 borge > [børə]  
 sorgje > [sørə]

In some parts of the country [g] is still retained where it should have disappeared :

oë [o:ə]	oge [o:ɡə]
hoë [ho:ə]	hoge [ho:ɡə]
eë [ɛ:ə]	ege [ɛɡə]
eiendom [eiəndəm]	eigendom [eiɡəndəm]

Sometimes even the original [χ] is retained instead of [g] :

burgermeester > [bærχərme:stər]  
 burgerreg > [bærχərəχ]  
 wilgerboom > [vəlχərbo:m]

The Englishman often gets confused with the spelling of [g] and [χ]:

berge > [berχə]  
 borge > [børχə]  
 burger > [bœrχər]  
 sorge > [sørχə]

[ʔ]

*Examples:* geëet [χəʔeit]  
 naäap [näiʔaip]  
 suidoos [sɔytʔo:is]  
 een [ʔein]

The glottal plosive.

It is only heard when the initial vowel is emphasised. In rapid conversational speech it is seldom heard.

When preceded by a consonant it is seldom heard, but in certain words it is responsible for a decided difference in pronunciation:

suidoos > [sɔytʔo:is] or [sɔydo:is]  
 noordoos > [no:rtʔo:is] or [no:rdø:is]  
 vooros > [fo:rʔos] or [fœ:røs]  
 naasagter > [na:isʔaχtər] or [na:isaχtər]  
 agterop > [aχtərʔop] or [aχtərɔp]

The Afrikaans [h] is closely associated with [ʔ]. So much so that it appears to be only a slight modification of [ʔ]. The English [h] is a distinct voiceless fricative, but the Afrikaans [h] appears to be a slight explosion so closely associated with [ʔ] that it sounds like a compound of the glottal plosive. This view is strengthened by the fact that children and illiterate people when writing

Afrikaans for the first time usually substitute [h] for [ʔ]:

'n tand > [hətant]  
'n boek > [həmbuk]

The Englishman finds it difficult to hear the Afrikaans [h], and constantly accuses the Afrikaner of *dropping his h's*. But the Afrikaans [h] is not dropped in the same way as the English [h]. The illiterate Englishman drops initial [h] and often adds it to words that do not require it. The Afrikaner rarely does this, but he often omits the [h] in the body of a word where the preceding consonant can take its place. This is probably a form of assimilation:

aanhaal > [ɑ:nɑ:l]  
aanhits > [ɑ:nəts]  
ampshalwe > [ɑmpsa:lvə]  
draaghout > [dra:χout]  
geleentheid > [χələ:ntheit]  
dolheid > [dɔleit]

Compare with this the disappearance of [ʔ] in a word like *suidoos*. The [h] sound also has a strong tendency to come forward before front vowels and diphthongs:

huur > [jy:r]  
hier > [ji:r]  
heup > [jφ:ɪp]  
heer > [je:r]  
verhewe > [fərje:və]  
verheug > [fərjφ:χ]

Before the short vowels [œ] and [ɛ] the tendency seems to disappear.

The following dialectic pronunciations are also heard :

[h] > [χ]	vingerhoed > [fəŋəχut]
[h] > [r]	harpuis > [rəpφys]
	hinnik > [rœnək]
[h] > [ʔ]	horlosie > [ʔo:rlɔ:si]
	hotel > [ʔo:təl]

[w]

*Examples :* twee [twe:ɪ]  
 twaalf [twa:ɪlf]  
 ghwano [gwa:ɪnou]  
 swaar [swa:ɪr]

An English voiced, labial, fricative which is frequently heard in Afrikaans but which is not regarded as a Standard Afrikaans sound. So many Afrikaners habitually use [w] for [v] after a consonant that it is difficult to decide whether to classify it as a dialectic sound or not. It is certain that the Englishman always substitutes [w] for [v] after a consonant :

kwint [kvɔnt] > [kwənt]  
 bokwa [bɔkva:ɪ] > [bɔkwa:ɪ]  
 dwang [dvaŋ] > [dwaŋ]  
 booswig [bo:svəχ] > [bo:svəχ]  
 dwars [dvars] > [dvars]  
 twee [tve:ɪ] > [twe:ɪ]  
 twintig [tvəntəχ] > [tvəntəχ]

The Afrikaner also shows a tendency to insert this sound in the following words :

eeu > [e:φw]  
 eeue > [e:φwə]  
 waarsku > [va:ɪrskyw]  
 afsku > [afskyw]  
 skewebek > [ske:ɪwəbək]

This may be due to Nederlands influence.

[f]

*Examples :* Fanie [fa:ni]  
 vals [fals]  
 af [af]  
 voor [fo:r]

The voiceless, labio-dental fricative.

When it precedes its voiced form [v] it is easily assimilated :

afwas > [avas]  
 halfwas > [halvas]  
 halfweg > [halvɛχ]  
 twaalf waens > [tva:lvã:s]

Its two spellings often create confusion in the mind of the Englishman, who fails to distinguish between the Afrikaans *v* [f] and the English *v* [v] :

vat [fat] > [vat]  
 vloer [flu:r] > [vlu:r]  
 vaal [fa:l] > [va:l]  
 van [fan] > [van]

[v]

*Examples :* wat [vat]  
 weet [ve:t]  
 sewe [seivə]  
 twee [tve:]

Voiced, labio-dental plosive.

In some words both Englishman and Afrikander appear to be doubtful whether to use the voiced [v] or the voiceless [f] :

advokaat > [advoka:t] or [adfoka:t]  
 provinsie > [provənsi] or [profənsi]  
 provinsiaal > [provənsia:l] or [profənsia:l]  
 avontuur > [avənty:r] or [afənty:r]  
 vomities > [vəmatif] or [fəmatif]

In some districts it is re-inserted where it has disappeared :

nael > [naivəl]  
 hael > [haivəl]  
 swael > [sɔivəl]  
 teuel > [tɔivəl]  
 uie > [ɔyvə]

Notice also this insertion of [v] in :

Januarie > [janəvəri]  
 Februarie > [feivərvəri]

In other districts it is omitted where it should be retained :

nawel > [naɪl]  
 swawel > [sɔvaɪl]  
 Afskuwelik > [afskylək]

Notice the assimilation in

kalwerhok > [kalərɦok]

The Englishman often confuses the spelling *w* [v] with the English spelling *w* [w] :

wat > [wat]  
 weet > [weɪt]  
 hawe > [haɪwə]  
 sewe > [seɪwə]

We have seen how [w] is substituted for [v] after consonants.

[s]

*Examples :* saam [saɪm]  
 nes [nɛs]  
 gesê [χəsɛɪ]  
 ses [sɛs]

The voiceless, dental fricative.

In Afrikaans its voiced form [z] has disappeared

entirely, but traces of it are left in the following words :

Soeloe > [Zulu]  
 pasella > [pazela]  
 basaar > [bazair]

The Englishman is so accustomed to the voiced *s* in his own language that he constantly voices the Afrikaans *s* :

was > [vaz]  
 is > [əz]  
 roos > [ro:z]  
 raas > [ru:z]

The Afrikaner's devocalisation of the English *s* is one of the chief peculiarities which stamp his nationality.

The following vagaries of [s] are often heard :

godsdien *s* > [χədins]  
 skoorsteen > [ko:rstɛ:n]  
 noodhulp > [no:ɪtshœlp]  
 wydbeens > [veitsbe:n]  
 turksvy > [stœrkfeɪ]  
 Duitser > [dʰɔystər] or [dʰɔytstər]  
 visser > [fœstər]

[ʃ]

*Examples* : sjuut [ʃy:ɪt]  
 sjef [ʃɛf]  
 sjofel [ʃœfəl]  
 Sjina [ʃina]

The voiceless dental fricative.

Is this an Afrikaans sound ? It serves a useful purpose in a small number of words, but even in these it can quite easily be replaced by [s] without any serious loss to the language. It will be found



that many Afrikaners uninfluenced by English cannot produce this sound.

They habitually substitute [s] for [ʃ]:

sjieling > [siləŋ]  
 Sjina > [sina]  
 sjef > [sɛf]  
 sjerrie > [sɛri]

When they feel that the word is foreign and that it requires a different pronunciation they often substitute [ç]:

sjokolade > [çokola:də]  
 sjimpansee > [çəmpanse:]  
 sjaperone > [çapəronə]  
 sjouwinisme > [çouvənəsmə]

Its voiced form [ʒ] is occasionally heard in educated circles:

genre > [ʒɑnrə]  
 genie > [ʒəni]  
 genial > [ʒəniəl]  
 geranium > [ʒərəiniəm]

[ç]

*Examples:* gee [çe:]  
 geld [çɛlt]  
 gier [çi:r]  
 gek [çɛk]

Voiceless, fricative palatal. It is not a standard Afrikaans sound but it has a strong tendency to become so.

It is the same as the final sound in the German word *ich* and as the initial sound in English *huge*.

As a dialectic variation of the velar [x] it will be fully dealt with under that heading.

[j]

Examples : jy [jei]  
 Jan [jan]  
 julle [jœlə]  
 geja [χəja:]

Voiced fricative palatal.

The English equivalent is the initial sound in *young*, but the Englishman gets confused with the spelling, and pronounces it like the English *j* [dʒ]:

Jan > [dʒan]  
 jy > [dʒei]  
 jaar > [dʒa:r]  
 verjaar > [fərdʒa:r]

But this mistake is also typical of the speech of the Capetown coloured community, who convert [c] into [tʃ].

We have noticed how it takes the place of [h] in certain words, but it frequently takes the place of [i]:

aia > [aja]  
 diaken > [dəja:kən]  
 kaiings > [kaijəŋs] or [kaijə:s]  
 spioen > [spøjun]  
 kiaathout > [kəja:thout]  
 serieus > [sərijə:s]  
 vitriool > [fitərjəl]

Notice also the pronunciations:

Januarie > [janjua:ri]  
 Februarie > [feibjua:ri]

In newly derived words it is often inserted before [u] as in English:

buro > [bjurou]  
 puris > [pjurəs]  
 deputasie > [dɛpjuta:si]  
 spekulasie > [spɛkjula:si]

[j] is in reality a semi-vowel.

[χ]

*Examples :* gaan [χaɪn]  
 gees [χeis]  
 gogga [χɔχa]  
 berg [berχ]

Voiceless, velar fricative.

It has no English equivalent, and therefore the Englishman finds its pronunciation very difficult. Its nearest equivalent is the final sound in Scotch *loch*. It is not a guttural sound as is popularly supposed.

The Englishman usually converts it into [h] :

gogga > [hɔga]  
 gegiggel > [həhəhəl]  
 gelukkig > [həlœkœχ]  
 gewoonte > [həvoɪntə]

When this is difficult he substitutes [g] :

beweging > [bøve:gəŋ]  
 magtig > [mægtəg]  
 gelling > [gɛləŋ]  
 gebare > [gəbɑ:rə]

The Afrikaner often converts [h] into [χ] :

blouheid > [blouχeit]  
 eiewysheid > [eiøveisχeit]  
 moegheid > [muχeit]  
 stoutheid > [stoutχeit]

It is assimilated in :

hoogvaardig > [ho:fa:rdəχ]  
 orgelis > [ɔrələs]

Notice also the following dialectic pronunciations :

magistraat > [majəstrɑ:t]  
 diegene > [diχe:nəχə]  
 niemand > [χənimɑnt]

[χ] shows a stronger forward tendency before front vowels, diphthongs, and consonants than any other sound. It naturally becomes the voiceless palatal [ç]. This tendency is so strong that it is now regarded as standard speech in many parts of the country :

Before back vowels :

guur > [çyɪr]  
 gier > [çiɪr]  
 geur > [çøɪr]  
 gees > [çeis]  
 gul > [çœl]  
 geld > [çɛlt]  
 git > [çət]

Before back diphthongs :

geil > [çeil]  
 geuc > [çeiϕ]

Before back consonants :

groot > [çroɪt]  
 gras > [çras]  
 glad > [çlat]  
 gloei > [çlui]

Before front sounds this tendency disappears.

[m]

*Examples :* man [man]  
 lam [lam]  
 meet [meɪt]  
 leemte [leɪmtə]

The voiced, labial nasal.

The Afrikaans [m] shows a backward tendency. Many Afrikaners pronounce it as a labio-dental sound.

The voiceless [m] written [m̥] is only heard

when the voiced form is strongly accented and almost repeated :

ahem > [ɛhm̩m̩]  
 dam > [damm̩]  
 kam > [kamm̩]  
 kom man > [kɔmm̩m̩n]

[m] is syllabic in :

arm > [arəm]  
 kalm > [kaləm]  
 psalm > [pəsələm]  
 alarm > [alarəm]

It will be seen later that [m] is often an assimilated [n].

[n]

*Examples :* naam [naɪm]  
 van [fan]  
 manne [manə]  
 nat [nat]

The voiced dental nasal.

[n] is such an important sound that it may be regarded as the standard nasal sound, while the others are merely n-variations.

This sound varies according to the place which it occupies in a group of sounds :

(a) Before the labials [p], [b], and [m] it is assimilated to [m] :

'n paal > [əmpa:l]  
 'n boek > [əmbuk]  
 'n man > [əmmən]

(b) Before the dentals [t], [d], and [n] it remains unchanged :

'n tand > [əntant]  
 'n doek > [ənduk]  
 'n naald > [ənɑ:ɪlt] or [ɛ̃:nɑ:ɪlt]

- (c) Before the palatals [ç] and [ʝ], and possibly [ç̥] and [j̥], it becomes [ɲ] :

'n tjalie > [əɲca:li]  
 'n ghienie > [əɲʝini]  
 'n gees > [əɲçe:ɪs] or [ʝi:çe:ɪs]  
 'n jaar > [əɲjɑ:r] or [ʝi:jɑ:r]

- (d) Before the velars [k] and [g] it becomes [ŋ] :

'n kam > [əŋkam]  
 'n ghoen > [əŋgun]

- (e) Before the remaining consonant sounds it is usually pronounced as a nasalised vowel :

'n vark > [ə̃:ɸark]  
 'n wa > [ə̃:vaɪ]  
 'n saal > [ə̃:sa:l]  
 'n sjef > [ə̃:ʃef]  
 'n raam > [ə̃:ra:m]  
 'n gans > [ə̃:χɑ:ɪs]  
 'n oom > [ə̃:ʔo:m]

The voiceless [ŋ̥] is only heard in words in which [n] is strongly accented :

pan > [paŋ̥]  
 staan > [sta:ŋ̥]  
 kan nie > [kaŋ̥ni]  
 moenie > [mun̥ni]

The following dialectic pronunciations are often heard :

egalig > [ɛ:χɑ:ləχ]  
 jalop > [jɑ̃:lɑp]  
 jaloers > [jɑ̃:lʉ:rs]  
 lynolie > [leimo:li]  
 monderings > [mɔlde:rɛŋs]  
 Satan > [sataŋ]  
 toe > [tʉn]  
 Steenkamp > [stɛŋkamp]

[ɲ]

*Examples :* hondjie [hɔŋci]  
 'n tjalie [ɔŋca:li]  
 landjie [lɔŋci]  
 mondjie [mɔŋci]

Voiced, palatal nasal.

Normally this sound occurs only before [c], and may be regarded as an assimilated [n]. But it is also heard before the dialectic palatal [ʒ].

'n gherilla oorlog > [ɔŋʒərəlaɔ:rɔχ]  
 'n ghienie > [ɔŋʒini]  
 'n ghitaar > [ɔŋʒita:r]  
 van ghries > [fɑŋʒris]

Although it usually becomes a nasalised vowel before the fricative palatals [ç] and [j], yet it can be distinctly heard as a palatal nasal :

van geeste > [fã:çe:stə]  
 van geld > [fã:çɛlt]  
 'n jaar > [ʒi:ja:r]  
 'n jas > [ʒi:jas]

In these words one feels that it is [ɲ] which is the nasalised vowel, and not [n]. This feeling is further strengthened by the fact that the preceding vowel has a diphthong tendency which may at least be partly due to the influence of [ɲ] :

van geld > [fã̃:çɛlt]  
 vanjaar > [fã̃:ɲja:r]  
 aan geeste > [ã̃:çe:stə]  
 aan Jan > [ã̃:ɲjan]

It has no English equivalent, and is therefore

very difficult to the Englishman, who usually pronounces it as [n]:

hondjie > [hɔnci]  
 'n tjeek > [əncək]  
 handjie > [hancɪ]  
 mondjie > [mɔncɪ]

[ŋ]

*Examples:* bang [baŋ]  
 ring [rəŋ]  
 van kant [faŋkant]  
 'n ghoen [əŋgun]

The voiced velar nasal.

This is the familiar *ng* sound which is also very common in English. Before [h] and [g] it is an assimilated [n].

The Englishman is fond of *dropping* his final *g*. What he really does is to convert [ŋ] into [n], because there is no *g* to drop.

The Afrikaner is strongly inclined to convert [ŋ] into [n] when it is followed by *s*, and to nasalise the preceding vowel:

blindelings > [bləndəlɛ̃:s]  
 hartkloppings > [hartklɔpɔ̃:s]  
 herhalings > [hərha:lɛ̃:s]  
 hoofbrekings > [ho:fbre:kɛ̃:s]  
 padlans > [patlɑ̃:s]  
 solanges > [so:lɑ̃:s]  
 trekkings > [trɛkɛ̃:s]  
 koningin > [kɔnɛ̃:χɔn]

[r]

*Examples:* roer [ru:r]  
 raam [ra:m]  
 loer [lu:r]  
 rot [rɔt]



The voiced rolled dental.

The Afrikaans [r] is always distinctly rolled, and should never be pronounced like a vowel-murmur. The Englishman finds this very difficult. In dealing with the vowels we saw how vitally this weakness affected his speech. Some Afrikaners, influenced by English, are also subject to this difficulty.

In certain Western Province districts the *Uvular-r* [R] is so general that the local people have come to regard it as standard speech. This variety of *r* is so called because the uvula is made to vibrate instead of the tip of the tongue :

roer > [Ru:R]  
 loer > [lu:R]  
 hier > [hi:R]  
 riem > [Rim]

This [R] is often pronounced like [χ] :

skilder > [skəldəχ]  
 riem > [χim]  
 eerder > [e:χdəχ]  
 helder > [həldəχ]

When [R] is difficult to produce in a sound group it either disappears altogether or passes over into the glottal [ʔ] :

orrel > [ə:əl] or [əʔəl]  
 môre > [mə:ə] or [məʔə]  
 sorge > [sə:ə] or [səʔə]  
 gare > [χɑ:ə] or [χɑʔə]

In extreme cases it even becomes [h] :

orrel > [əhəl]  
 môre > [məhə]  
 sorge > [səhə]  
 gare > [χɑ:hə]

The voiceless [r̥] is only heard when [r] is strongly accented :

rrrr > [r̥r̥r̥r̥]  
 roer > [r̥urr̥]  
 loer raak > [lu:r̥r̥ɑ:k]

Mutataxis is a common feature of [r] :

granaat > [χərnɑ:t]  
 hakkekurke > [həkəkœrkə]  
 proses > [pœrsɛs]  
 present > [pœrsɛnt]

It is easily omitted in :

borsrok > [bœsrøk]  
 borsriem > [bœsrim]  
 eerder > [e:dær]  
 weerskante > [vœ:skantə]  
 wilgerboom > [vœlkəbœ:m]

[l]

*Examples :* loop [lo:p]  
 lol [lɔl]  
 geloop [χəlo:p]  
 kool [ko:l]

The voiced dental lateral.

The voiceless [l̥] only occurs when the sound is strongly accented :

llll > [l̥l̥l̥l̥]  
 kol > [kɔl̥]  
 smal > [smal̥]  
 val > [fal̥]

This sound has a considerable number of varieties. It closely resembles the vowel which

immediately follows it. Notice the difference between the *l*'s in the following words :

loer > [l<sup>u</sup>]  
 laas > [l<sup>a</sup>]  
 loop > [l<sup>o</sup>]  
 lief > [l<sup>i</sup>]

In careful speech, final [l] acquires a distinct [o] timbre :

rol > [rələ]  
 mal > [malə]  
 meel > [me:lə]  
 riel > [ri:lə]

The following dialectic pronunciations are common :

Omitted : almal > [amal]  
 almelewe > [amələivə]  
 gomlastiek > [χəməstik]

Mutatisis : plesier > [pəlsir]  
 kapabel > [kapa:lə]  
 [l] > [r] kolonel > [kørnel]  
 glimlag > [χrəmlɑχ]

## VII. GENERAL TENDENCIES

AFRIKAANS is a dialect of Nederlands just as modern Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese are dialects of Latin. But just as these dialects have developed into independent languages, so Afrikaans has developed into an independent

language which serves as a means of both *written* and *oral* communication between the individual members of the South African community.

Two centuries ago, Afrikaans, as we know it to-day, did not exist. This rapid development of a new language is not strange when we remember that the original Nederlands was spoken by people who had few educational facilities, who came in constant contact with native tribes, and who seldom had occasion to exercise the written form of the language. Under these circumstances it was only natural that inflexions should be lost and that the pronunciation of sounds should change rapidly. This development was not, as is popularly supposed, a chaotic process. Afrikaans reached its present form by developing in accordance with definite phonetic laws.

Now that Afrikaans has reached a standard form and is being taught in schools as a standard language, it is reasonable to assume that its further development will be greatly retarded. But even education cannot arrest this process of development altogether. In certain respects the language shows a strong tendency towards further changes. We may now examine the more important of these in the light of the foregoing information.

#### SPREADING THE ROUNDED VOWEL

The back rounded vowels are not easily spread, because their rounding is not so entirely dependent upon the rounded position of the lips as that of the front vowels. The uneducated Afrikaner is strongly averse to using his lips in speaking; but

in spite of this aversion he succeeds in producing a more or less rounded back vowel. The degree of rounding of the back vowels varies with different speakers, but the effects are not very noticeable in ordinary speech, unless the vowel is rounded to excess. This excessive rounding is sometimes heard when the Afrikander speaks English. It has a peculiar lengthening effect upon the vowel.

The front rounded vowels are in a different position. The slightest spreading of the lips converts the vowel into its unrounded equivalent :

$$\begin{aligned} [y] &> [i] \\ [\phi] &> [e] \\ [\œ] &> [\ø] \text{ or } [\varepsilon] \\ [\phi y] &> [ei] \end{aligned}$$

This tendency should be checked at all costs, because it will lead to the disappearance of at least four valuable sounds in the language. We have already illustrated the confusion that will be created by the disappearance of the rounded vowels.

An ever-increasing number of English people are now making a serious study of Afrikaans, and as the front rounded vowel is unknown in their mother-tongue, they are strongly tempted to substitute the spread form of the vowel. This, combined with the Afrikander's laziness to use his lips, may yet sound the death-knell of the Afrikaans front rounded vowel.

#### NASALISATION

Nasalisation of vowels is a common feature of dialects, and this is undoubtedly its origin in

Afrikaans. It has become so deeply ingrained in the Afrikaner that it must be regarded as standard speech. The Afrikaner's aversion to using his lips is often compensated for by his constant use of the velum in pronouncing the vowel sounds.

We may exclude from consideration here those very illiterate people (or those afflicted with physical defects) who habitually nasalise all their vowels. These are not normal, and must be regarded as exceptions. The educated Afrikaner nasalises his vowels according to general phonetic laws which, though they permit of considerable latitude, can be definitely traced.

We must now go back to the n-variations on page 68. Under (e) will be found the general rule governing the process of nasalisation. Normally we require a vowel + n + one of the following consonants :

[f]:	van vorm > [fã:fõrm]
[v]:	van wie > [fã:vi]
[s]:	saans > [sã:is]
[ʃ]:	'n sjef > [ẽ:ʃɛf]
[r]:	van rande > [fã:randə]
[χ]:	'n gek > [ẽ:χɛk]
[ʔ]:	van oom > [fã:ʔoim]

It will be noticed that nasalisation has a lengthening effect upon the vowel.

The above rule is by no means without exceptions. We cannot state that any vowel + n + one of the above consonants will always be nasalised. A good deal seems to depend upon the kind of vowel we have to do with.

Thus, [u] is not nasalised in :

Woensdag  
Poenskop

[u] has a slight nasal tendency in :

skoengespe  
skoensool

[y] has no nasal tendency at all.

[i] is not generally nasalised in :

diens  
dienstyd

This is sufficient justification for concluding that the close vowels show, at most, a very weak nasal tendency.

The remaining vowels show this tendency to a marked degree. It seems to be a logical assumption that the opener the vowel is, the stronger will be the nasal tendency.

Words which have crept into general use in comparatively recent times are rarely nasalised :

barons > [barəns]  
ballons > [baləns]  
wanstalte > [vanstaltə]  
degens > [de:χəns]  
Deens > [de:ns]  
intensief > [əntensif]

In certain compounds the Afrikander instinctively feels that a clearer enunciation is necessary than that given by a nasalised pronunciation, and he discards nasalisation :

sonsondergang > [sɔnsɔndərχɑŋ]  
sonskyn > [sɔnskein]  
waansin > [va:nsən]  
manslag > [manslɑχ]  
buitenstyd > [bɔytənsteit]  
Dinsdag > [dənsdɑχ]  
leenselsel > [le:nstelsəl]

Certain words invested with a religious dignity are rarely nasalised :

kansel > [kansəl]  
 doopbekkens > [do:pbəkəns]

The older Afrikaner in reading his Bible will still pronounce :

mense as [mənskə]  
 ons as [ɔns]  
 aanskyn as [ɑ:nskɛin]

In his daily conversation he will nasalise all these words. Notice the following distinctions :

“ Die ganse [χō:sə] is in die dam.”  
 “ Die ganse [χənsə] nag moes ek wag.”  
 “ Grootpraat is nie 'n kuns [kœ:s] nie.”  
 “ Kuns [kœns] en wetenskappe.”

At present there are two powerful factors that operate directly against the domination of the nasalised vowel and that may in time threaten its very existence. The first is the primary school teacher who, in her ignorance of phonetics, regards nasalising as a vulgarism and deliberately sets herself the task of stamping it out. It is a common occurrence to find children who habitually nasalise the vowels in ordinary speech, studiously avoiding it in reading and recitation. The second factor is the increasing number of English-speaking children who learn Afrikaans as a living language, and who do not nasalise at all.

#### DIPHTHONG TENDENCIES

The palatal plosive [ç] has such a decided diphthong effect upon the preceding vowel that



there is some doubt whether the diphthong should not be frankly recognised as standard speech. It can hardly be denied that the majority of Afrikaners diphthongise the vowels in the following words :

hoedjie > [huici]  
 lootjie > [lorici]  
 otjie > [oici]  
 laatjie > [la:rici]  
 lidjie > [leici]  
 suutjies > [suicis]  
 pietjie > [piēci]  
 geutjie > [χφēci]  
 neetjie > [ne:æci]  
 hutjie > [hœ:æci]  
 bedjie > [bæci]

Another tendency common in many parts of the country is the undue lengthening of the vowel and the consequent diphthong effect :

loop > [lo:əp]  
 sorg > [sɔ:ɔrχ]  
 laat > [la:ɔt]  
 deur > [dφ:ɔr]  
 lees > [le:əs]  
 krul > [krœ:ɔl]  
 sleg > [slɛ:ɔχ]  
 pit > [pɛ:ɔt]

The close vowels appear to be exempt from this mistake. It is distinctly dialectic, and should not be tolerated.

The Englishman's conversion of [r] into a "vowel murmur" may have serious effects on the Afrikaans elementary vowels in the near future :

boer > [bo:ɔ]  
 hoor > [ho:ɔ]  
 dor > [dɛ:ɔ]

daar > [dɑ:ə]  
 muur > [mʊ:ə]  
 mier > [me:ə]  
 deur > [dʊ:ə]  
 leer > [le:ə]

In some schools where English and Afrikaans children are educated side by side or where an English-speaking teacher teaches Afrikaans, the effects of this mistake are already noticeable.

### OTHER VOWEL TENDENCIES

The conversion of the half-close vowels into close vowels is quite general in certain Western Province districts, and also among English-speaking people. Teachers drawn from these two sections may carry the tendency into other parts, and in this way exert a powerful influence on the future of these vowels :

loop > [lu:p]  
 hoop > [hu:p]  
 lees > [li:s]  
 vee > [fi:]

English is also influencing Afrikaans by making the vowels laxer. On the whole, the Afrikaans vowels, except [ə] and [œ], are tenser than the English vowels. The difference is a subtle one, and this makes the influence all the more difficult to check. One can notice this influence in the pronunciation of the Afrikander who grew up in an English district.

### FORWARD TENDENCY OF BACK CONSONANTS

We have noticed the natural tendency which the velars [k], [g], [x], and even the glottal [h],

show to come forward when they precede front vowels, diphthongs, and certain consonants. Of these [χ] is the most persistent. The tendency is so general that many people are surprised to learn that [ç] is not standard pronunciation. One constantly hears :

guur > [çyɪr]  
 gier > [çi:r]  
 geut > [çφit]  
 gees > [çeis]  
 gus > [çœs]  
 geld > [çɛlt]  
 git > [çət]

[χ] appears to be so determined to come forward that it even becomes a dental sound :

geld > [ʃɛlt]  
 geld > [sɛlt] (children)  
 geel > [ʃe:l]

Notice also the native, [ɛlt] or [tʃɛlt].

The tendency before [r] and [l] is much rarer, but it is quite general in at least one Bushmanland village :

groen gras > [çrun çras]  
 groot gras > [çro:t çrap]  
 gladde glaas > [çladə çla:is]

The conversion of [k] into [c] is almost as common. It has a parallel in English :

count > [caunt]  
 cow > [cau]  
 keep > [ci:p]

### DEVOCALISING FINAL CONSONANTS

The Afrikaans consonant at the end of a word is always voiceless. This rule does not apply in

English, but the Englishman quite naturally adopts the phonology of his mother-tongue when he speaks Afrikaans, and he usually fails to devocalise the consonants. Similarly the Afrikaner constantly applies this law of devocalisation to English. This simple law is the source of a large number of mistakes in both languages. The following lists of examples will show how the two languages influence one another :

(a) Englishman's errors :

rib [rəp] > [rəb]  
 hoed [hʊt] > [hʊd]  
 lang [lɑŋ] > [lɑŋg]  
 beloof [bəloʊf] > [bəloʊv]  
 was [vɑs] > [vɑz]

(b) Afrikaner's errors :

cold [kould] > [koul̩t]  
 club [klʌb] > [klʌp]  
 leg [lɛg] > [lɛk]  
 love [lʌv] > [lʌf]  
 is [iz] > [is]  
 pleasure [plɛzjuə] > [plɛfjuə]

It is quite common to find children who habitually devocalise, reading Afrikaans in school without applying the law. The teacher's ignorance of phonetics is responsible for this. This ignorance may have far-reaching effects on the future of the language.

### THE VARIATIONS OF r

The Afrikaans [r] is subject to so many adverse influences that this sound appears to be in the melting-pot, as it were.

There is, first of all, the *Uvular-* or *throat-r*, which is being regarded as standard speech in some Western Province districts. It was ascertained in an oral examination of a Junior Certificate class in a High School, that fifty-one out of fifty-three candidates habitually used the uvular-r. The tendency appears to be on the increase in other parts of the country.

Then there is the powerful influence exerted by the English-r or vowel murmur. Afrikaners strongly under the influence of English find it difficult to produce the Afrikaans-r. This influence is more general, and therefore far more serious. The more the Englishman learns Afrikaans the more difficult it will be to counteract this influence.

A third tendency which may be described as *excessive rolling* (rrr) is noticeable in some of the north-eastern districts of the Cape Province.

Unless education applies strong remedial measures the Afrikaans-r will change. What it is ultimately destined to become is at present mere speculation.

THE END

