

# A PHONETIC COMPARISON OF QUÉBÉCOIS FRENCH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

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## Introduction

- Cot-caught merger in American English
- Affrication in Québécois French
- Diphthongization in American English and Québécois French
- High laxed vowels (voyelles fermées relâchées) in American English and Québécois French



## Methodology

- Clips of Québécois locals
  - Older White woman
  - Young multiracial woman
  - Middle-aged Asian man
- Clips of Americans speaking with a “standard” accent
  - Young nonbinary White person
  - Middle-aged Latino man
  - Middle-aged Black woman

## Findings

High laxed vowels (voyelles fermées relâchées)

- “I will live my life to the fullest”
  - [wɪl]
- “On a la ville”
  - [vɪl]

Diphthongization

- “...Probably ‘cause I eat a lot”
  - [aʰ]
- “On a la montagne”
  - [mɔ̃.taɲ]

Cot-caught merger

- Lack of distinguishment between the vowels in “caught” and “cot”
  - [kat]

Affrication

- /t/ and /d/ followed by /i/ and /y/
  - “Toutes sortes de différents places à aller”
  - [dʰi.fe.ʁɛ]

Québécois importance

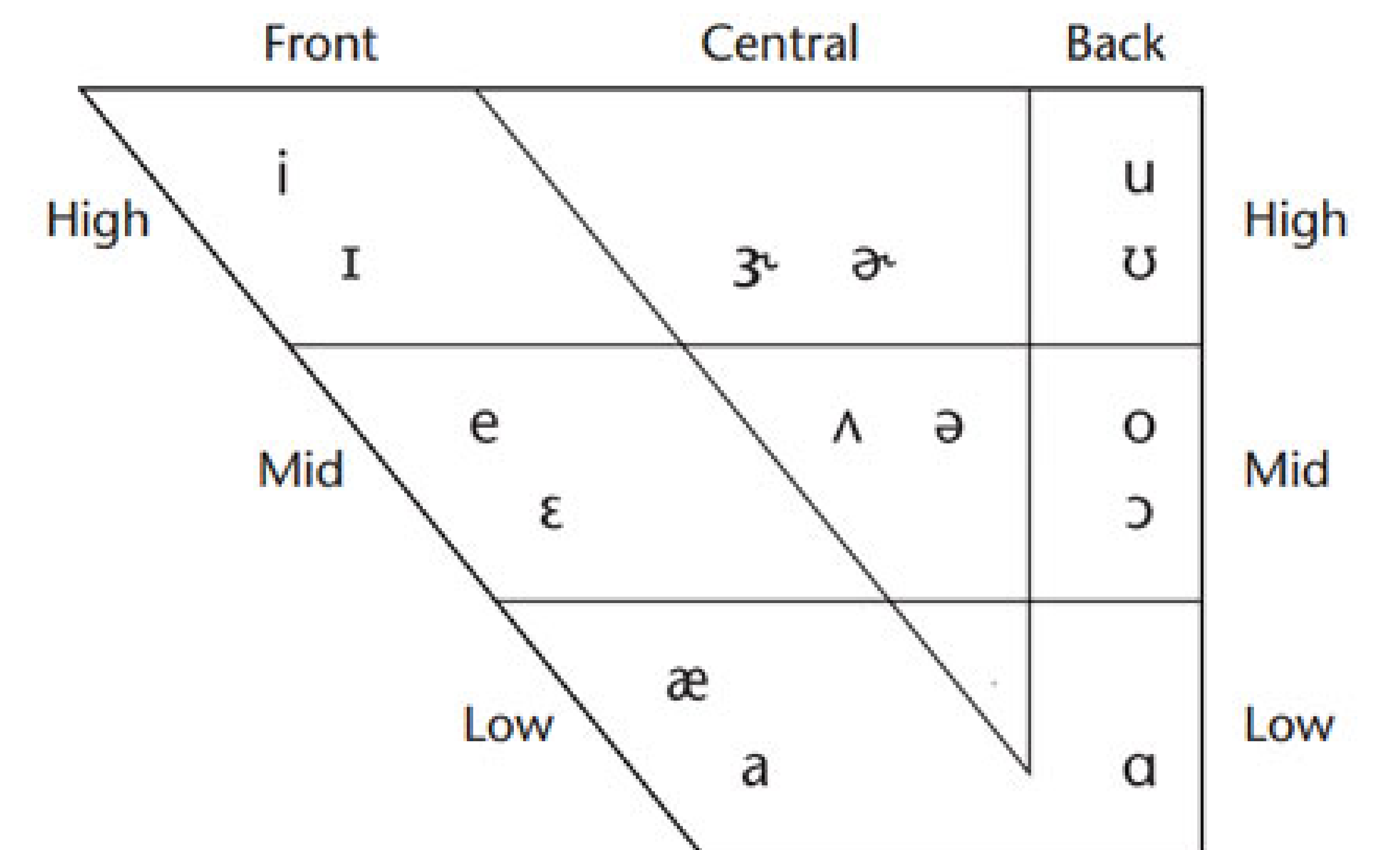
- Francophone diversity
- **Culture and identity**
- Phenomena remain across age, gender, race/ethnicity, and class

Standard American accent

- Less of a “neutral/negative accent” as the Anglophone standard, compared to the French Parisian standard accent

## Conclusion

Québécois French and American English share several phonetic phenomena including diphthongs and laxed high vowels. These phenomena are especially important to Québécois culture, which prides itself on its Francophone status within North America.



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