

Characteristic Speaking English
of North England
in the Movie “Billy Elliot”

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The Purpose of this Presentation

The goal of this presentation is to present **the characteristics of speaking dialects in northern England** while using the expressions in the movie “**Billy Elliot**”, where almost all lines are spoken with northern English.

Basic information of “Billy Elliot”

Release date : 2000

Production company : BBC Films

Directed by : Stephen Daldry

Produced by : Greg Brenman

Starring : Julie Walters, Gary Lewis, Jamie Bell

Plot : A boy from Northern England, Durham hopes to become Ballet dancer, while his father bitterly opposes against his dream.

Three types of speaking dialects in Northern English

1 vowel

The some kinds of vowels are pronounced in a different way

2 consonant

Consonants at the end of the word are often dropped or slightly pronounced.

3 vocabulary

There are some specific words in this region.

I will show you **the examples with the scene** where that words are pronounced actually in conversations. **Please click the links and skip to the designated time.**



Concrete example of northern England dialect

Vowel

/ʌ/ → /ʊ, ə/ : up, money, Monday

“up” (0:48~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0p2X2rQ6Ag&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=2>

“money” (1;17~) **“Monday”** (2:03~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uDISBx2Ry7s&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=5>

/eɪ/ → monophthong /e:/ : change, late

“change” (0:58~)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0tTT_87Hh8&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=10

“late” (0:23~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyLJCNyRov0&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=1>

Vowel

/əʊ/ → monophthong /ɔ: / : so, no, told

“no” (0:17~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qyLJCNyRov0&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=1>

/iə/ → disyllabic /i: ə/ : here, beer

“here” (1:42~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0p2X2rQ6Ag&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=3&t=0s>

Consonants

velar /ŋ/ → /n/ : boxing, wrestling, frigging

glottalization of /t/ → nothing : what, got, city → the “t” is completely dropped and not pronounced

“boxing” “wrestling” “frigging” (1:11~) these words will appear in a row

“what” (1:45~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmgV3OFn0aE&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=4>

/r/ → flap/tap : prepare, air, care

“prepare” (1:15~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69RNNexsig&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=3>

Vocabulary

“**Lad** (d)” = boy “**Lass** (s)” = girl → this expression is used also in Scotland dialect

“**Lads**” (1:10~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmgV3OFn0aE&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=4>

“**Aye** (ái) “ = yes

“**Aye**” (1:05~)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmgV3OFn0aE&list=PLZbXA4lyCtqrU4WWamVsJIzvaRGesWaPz&index=4>

Other examples of specific vocabularies in Northern English (without movies and sounds)

“**naught** (nɔ:t)” → nothing

“**bairn** (bɛərn)” → child, baby

“**Ta-ra**” → Bye-bye

At last...

What's the effect of using Northern English in this movie?

A dialect is one of a culture and deeply related with a custom in a specific region and could give familiarity in some situation. On the other hand, speaking dialects not standard English also contains persisting or stubbornness in their own culture, and in this movie it expresses the closedness and conservativeness in a countryside. Billy, little boy of main character was born as a member of this closed community and also speaks with this dialect, while hopes to become a male ballet dancer, which wasn't common at that period. The use of the dialect expresses the closedness which he suffer from and try to get out of.

Thank
you