

NEWFOUNDLAND ACCENT PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

It's vital that the Newfoundland accent used in *Come From Away* is easily understood at all times. The accent should never be so strong that the audience misses any dialogue, because they're trying to decipher the accent.

It's probably less Irish-sounding than one might think. The Newfoundland accent employed in the show is a blend of not only Irish accents, but also Southwestern English, Mainland Canadian, Scots, and French accents. One of the UK actors realized that it would be simpler to start from a base of a North American accent, and layer on the moderate Irish and other accent sounds, rather than trying to start with an Irish accent, and then reduce the strength of that.

Some specifics:

All /th/ sounds, both voiced (as in "the, that, another", and "breathe") and unvoiced (as in "think, thought, northeast" and "tenth,") should be "dentalized," meaning that the tongue should touch the top of the upper teeth, where the teeth meet the gums; rather than being made with the tongue at the bottom of the upper teeth. For voiced /th/ sounds, as in "the", we should hear a quick /d/ sound before the voiced /th/ sound; for unvoiced /th/ sounds, as in "think", we should hear a quick /t/ sound followed by the hissed /th/. These "dentalized" /th/ sounds occur in some Irish accents, but in this show, we don't change dentalize /d/ and /t/ sounds, as in the words "done, did, TV" or "take".

There can be a certain laxity to the Newfoundland sound: "and, of, around" and other "function" words, that don't carry the meaning of the sentence, probably don't require their final consonants.

Unstressed /t/ sounds need not be exploded (or aspirated), as they might in some Mainland Canadian accents, unless they're at the end of a phrase: These underscored /t/ sounds can turn to /d/ sounds (as is common to North American accents): "water, greeted, gentlemen, set up, later,... not a drill,... fit about..." etc.

When a /t/ sound is at the end of a phrase, however, it can be aspirated, or exploded (here, also underscored): "... there's an airport, Lucky shit, You can smell the exhaust, Holy shit, Thank you, Dwight."

And, in terms of intonation, or speech music, avoid the exaggerated "leprechaun" melody of an old-fashioned, sing-songy, Irish accent, that reaches to extreme high and low pitches; rather, the intonation here can be more flat, more typical of an everyday North American accent.

