

СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ЛИНГВИСТИКИ

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CORPUS-DRIVEN ANALYSIS OF CENTRING DIPHTHONGS DEVELOPMENT TRENDS IN RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION AND GENERAL AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH

Language is a dynamic system. It constantly changes and develops. Such changes can be easily observed on the phonetic level. The Received Pronunciation was described by Daniel Jones in the early 20th century, so we can suppose that a hundred years later, it is not rather relevant anymore. More and more people tend to use more modern accents and the learners of the English language should be aware of such a tendency to sound more native-like. We can discern several distinct fates for the centering diphthongs /ʊə/, /ɪə/ and /eə/ in the contemporary pronunciation of standard southern British English. In our work, we are based on the research, conducted by Professor Geoff Lindsey, devoted to the description of modern trends in the development of Received Pronunciation.

We also did our own corpus-driven analysis of the linguistic data. Its aim was to confirm the phonetician's hypothesis and compare modern trends in the pronunciation of the centering diphthongs in RP and General Australian.

The objectives of the research were:

- 1) to describe the modern trends in the pronunciation of the centering diphthongs in RP;
- 2) to conduct a corpus-driven analysis of the contemporary pronunciation of British and Australian native speakers;
- 3) to make conclusions about the relevance of the centring diphthongs in the present-day English.

So, according to Geoff Lindsey [Lindsey, 2012] there are 3 modern trends in the development of centring diphthongs /ʊə/, /ɪə/ and /eə/: merger, varisyllabicity and monophthonging. However, it's noteworthy that not all of these diphthongs have undergone each of the fates.

Trend 1. Merger. Merger is a phenomenon in which a diphthong coincides in the phonetic realization with an already existing monophthong. At the same time, there is a certain amount of variability. Now, even in the south of England, one can find the examples of merger of the diphthong /ʊə/ with the monophthong /ɔ:/ [Lindsey, 2012]. So, the words endure, moor, tour, etc. are pronounced with the /ɔ:/ vowel. At the same time, merger of the diphthong /ʊə/ with the /u:/ vowel is also rather frequent. The words Europe, rural and tourist are practically never heard with a centring diphthong /ʊə/. The vowel here tends to be realized as a monophthong that may be interpreted as a variant of /u:/.

Trend 2. Varisyllabicity. Varisyllabicity is a phenomenon in which a diphthong is divided into 2 syllables, forming two separate sounds. This trend is widely exhibited by the set of words with the diphthongs /ʊə/ и /ɪə/. These should be analyzed, respectively, as /u:.ə/, smoothable to /u:/ and /ɪ:.ə/, smoothable to /ɪ:/ [Lindsey, 2012]. To illustrate varisyllabicity, we can provide two pairs of words – near and nearly; secure and security. The first members sound disyllabic while the second members, in which further syllables follow within the word, exhibit smoothed-and-compressed monosyllabic variants. Moreover, the smooth diphthong /ʊə/ of security is not only monosyllabic but also monophthongal.

Trend 3. Monophthonging. Monophthonging is a phenomenon in which a diphthong turns into a new monophthong. For the /ʊə/ vowel, far more common today is a monophthongal realization, with a rounded central quality which can be transcribed as /ə:/ [Lindsey, 2012]. The monophthong sounds similar to /ɜ:/ but is distinct from it. If we compare these two sounds in the words pure and fern, it becomes obvious that /ɜ:/ vowel is clearly more front and open. There is also an increasing number of speakers for whom the diphthong /ɪə/ has become a long

monophthong /i:/. These speakers never say /hɪə/, but only the smooth form /hi:/. The centring diphthong /eə/ is relatively well preserved in lower-class speech. In modern world it is much common to use the contemporary monophthong /ɛ:/ like in square or mayor.

We conducted our own corpus-driven analysis that enabled us to investigate the modern tendency in the pronunciation of the centering diphthongs described by Geoff Lindsey. Our aim was to check if we can really state that the RP-style of pronunciation is becoming old-fashioned and not common in Great Britain of the 21st century and also to compare it with the Australian variant of English. For each of the diphthongs 3 monosyllabic lexemes were chosen. We analyzed 30 video examples for each lexeme, a total of 90 examples for each diphthong with native speakers of British English and 90 videos with native speakers of Australian English. For this purpose, we used the database Youglish which allows searching for particular words on Youtube video hosting. The parameters for selecting the informants were the pronunciation variant (British and Australian) and age (up to 45-50 years). Methods such as perceptual phonetic analysis and the method of descriptive statistics were used in the research.

To follow the modern trends in the pronunciation of the diphthong /ʊə/ we considered the words sure, poor, pure.

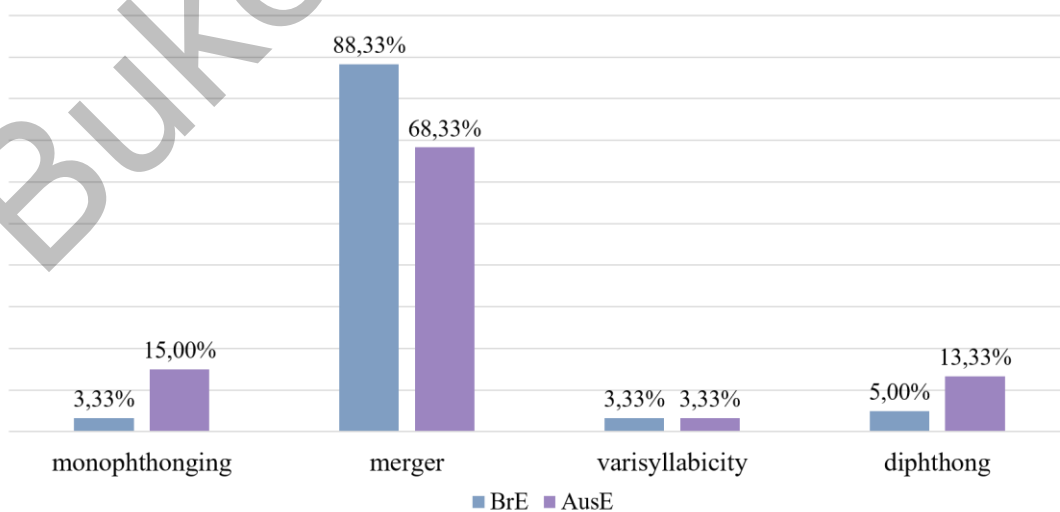


Figure 1. Centring diphthong /ʊə/

As can be seen from the graph, 88% of native speakers of the British and 68% of native speakers of the Australian variants exhibit the tendency to trend 1 (merger), i.e. they pronounced the word sure with the sound /ɔ:/. Monophthonging and varisyllabicity is less popular as well as the diphthong /ʊə/. Therefore, for this diphthong in both variants of the English language, merger is more relevant.

We can also follow the modern trends in pronunciation of the diphthong /ɪə/ in the words real, hear and clear.

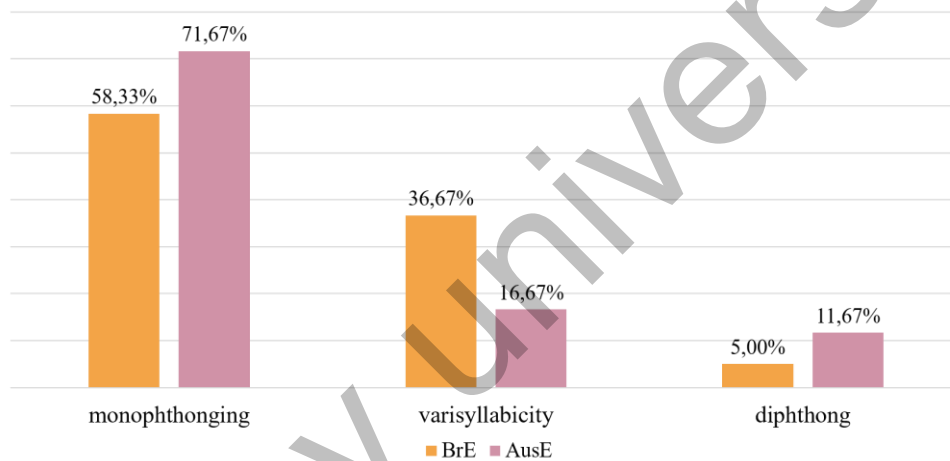


Figure 2. Centring diphthong /ɪə/

58% of native speakers of British and 72% of native speakers of Australian variants pronounced the word real with a long monophthong /i:/. However, we see that trend 2 (varisyllabicity) is also quite popular, especially in British English: 37% of speakers pronounced the word clear as /kli:ə/. The traditional diphthong /ɪə/ occurs less frequently in the speech of native speakers – only 5 and 12%. Regarding this diphthong, we can say that the most characteristic trend here is the trend 3 – monophthonging, but varisyllabicity also has a right to be mentioned.

Analysing the pronunciation of the diphthong /eə/ we considered the words care, there and fair.

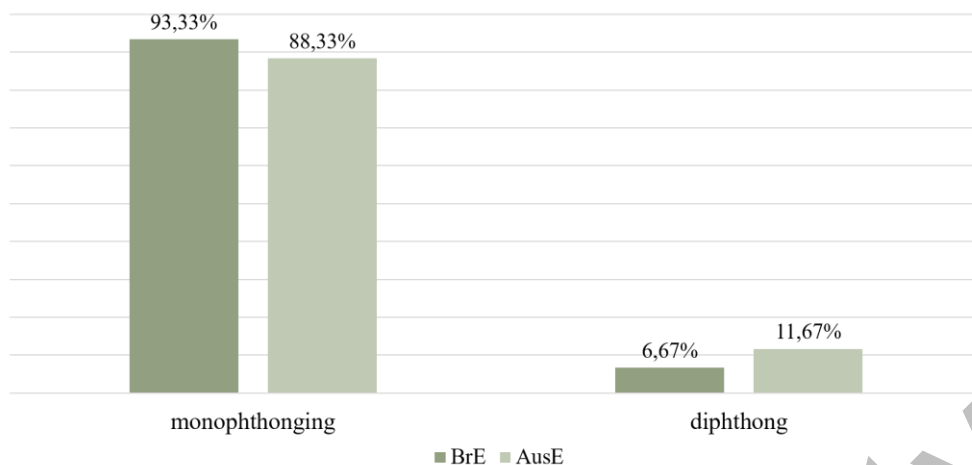


Figure 3. Centring diphthong /eə/

The overwhelming majority of native speakers of both variants of English (93 and 88%) pronounced the analyzed words with the monophthong /ɛ:/, i.e. we can trace the third trend (monophthonging), while only a few informants used the RP-diphthong /eə/.

Based on the work done, we can confirm that the modern tendencies in the pronunciation of the centering diphthongs can be easily found in the speech of the native speakers of both British and Australian variants of English. We can also conclude that the RP-pronunciation of the diphthongs under consideration is gradually becoming old-fashioned and is used quite rarely, so it seems appropriate to acquaint students of the Foreign Languages Department (future teachers) with the modern trends in the development of pronunciation standards.

References

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МЕТАФОРА В АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОЙ ТЕРМИНОЛОГИИ

Изучение метафоры в последние десятилетия характеризуется выходом на качественно новый уровень. Ученые исследуют смыслообразующие функции и возможности метафоры вместо стилистических характеристик. В современной лингвистике метафорическая номинация вносит весомый вклад в создание отраслевой терминологии. Терминология является объектом постоянных изменений и преобразований. Метафоризация как один из семантических видов образования терминов является наиболее распространенным способом. Актуальность данного исследования определяется недостаточностью лингвистических исследований в российской науке в области изучения феномена метафоры в отраслевых научных областях, особенно в области англоязычной экономики.

Длительный период времени метафора рассматривалась как «нечто вроде удачной уловки» [Ричардс А., 1990], «уместное лишь в некоторых случаях» [Ричардс А., 1990] и считалось недопустимом для языка науки. По мнению современников, она часто противопоставлялась ясному научному изложению. Когнитивный подход к изучению метафоры осуществили в своей работе Дж. Лаккоф и М. Джонсон. Лингвисты рассмотрели метафору как способ организации и объяснения материала. «Метафора – это результат мыслительной операции, интерпретация явлений одной понятийной сферы на