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Comparison of phonemes in Received Pronunciation and General
American pronunciation

Prohlášení:

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen prameny uvedené v seznamu literatury.

V Olomouci dne

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis is concerned with comparison of phonemes in RP and GA pronunciation. This writing is divided into two parts while theoretical part deals with RP and GA accent, vowels, pronunciation of vowels, short and long vowels, and connected speech which covers the topics of word stress, elision, weak forms and weak vowels. The research analyses audio recording representing RP and GA accent. The aim of this thesis is to compare phonemes of RP and GA and investigate differences between these two accents.

Introduction

I am very interested in phonetics because as a musician I have the ability to hear even the smallest nuances in sounds. Thus I have fewer difficulties with recognizing the differences in pronunciation of languages. As English belongs to my favourite languages I find it appealing to study the English accents which often vary not only between two nations but also within one. For instance a London accent differs from the accent of Liverpool and the New York accent varies from the one of Boston.

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to compare American and British accent and since we can distinguish a great variety of them I will focus on GA and RP accent only. To be more specific the detailed study of phonemes is going to be mentioned.

The thesis will be divided into the theoretical part and the research dealing with the analysis of the audio recording. The first chapter should contain general information about rhotacization, accents and specifically the GA and RP. In the second chapter I am planning to deal with vowels and their pronunciation, short and long vowels, and diphthongs. The last chapter should discuss connected speech which covers the topics of word stress, elision, weak forms, and weak vowels.

The research will be based on analyses of audio recording representing RP and GA accent. The goal of the research is to compare phonemes of RP and GA and investigate the differences between these two accents.

Theoretical part

1. Accent

It is known that in the Czech Republic Czech is spoken, and in the United States and the United Kingdom English is spoken. Even though in the certain country the proper language is used, we can observe some differences in the language when talking to native speakers. Great contrast can be noticed between the speech of an American and of a British, nevertheless, the contrast is evident even between speakers who come from diverse regions and society.

If we consider varieties of grammar and vocabulary, then we talk about dialect (Hughes, Trudgill, 1987). Nevertheless, we can also detect variations in pronunciation. In this case, there is used the relevant term accent (Hughes, Trudgill, 1987). If we want to comprehend the variations of dialect together with accent, we can use one special term for it which is variety (Collins, Mees, 2003). What is important to realize is that Cruttenden (2001) connect the term accent with the word stress, thus it is important to become aware of which word meaning the term carries.

Since this bachelor thesis is concerned with phonetics and phonology and this chapter is dealing with accent, it is apparent that the principal theme discussed will be about particular differences in pronunciation between RP and GA accents. The differences are also highly connected to features of connected speech which will be dealt later.

Collins and Mees (2003) distinguish between regional variation and social variation. The first conception suggests that the differences are noticed in language spoken in various areas. On the other hand, social variation deals with diversity in social groups, for instance religion, ethnicity, social class and gender (Collins, Mees, 2003).

Both mentioned variations can give us a view on an accent spoken by certain people in a certain place. As Collins and Mees (2003) note, in the British Isles there is an accent which has been spoken by privileged category of people and is known under its abbreviation RP. However, as it was already mentioned, the United Kingdom is not the single place where English as the first language is spoken. We should also consider the United States where are noticed various accents of language. The accent spoken by the majority of Americans is GA (Wells, 2008).

These accents RP and GA are discussed further in detail from the point of view of rhotacization and their specific characteristics.

1.1. Rhotic and non-rhotic accents

So far we have discussed the varieties of accents and we alluded to RP and GA English which are the main focus of this bachelor thesis.

The most significant distinction between these two accents may be noticed when considering *r*-coloured vowels (Ladefoged, 2006). Collins and Mees (2003) distinguish between rhotic and non-rhotic varieties. While rhotic accents are characterized by rhotacization - /r/ is pronounced when is preceded by a vowel and followed by either a vowel or a consonant (Ladefoged, 2006), non-rhotic accents use /r/ only before vowels (Collins, Mees, 2003). For instance, if we consider the word ‘beard’, in non-rhotic accent it would be pronounced as /bɪəd/. On the other hand, a speaker with rhotic accent would pronounce it as /bɪ^ɹrd/ (Wells, 2008, p. 74). As Ladefoged (2006) points out, the rhotacization may not be always evident, especially at the beginning of the vowel within a syllable. However, for example in the word ‘sir’ it is highly noticeable if it is pronounced by a speaker of GA English (Ladefoged, 2006).

We can observe the distinction in pronunciation when considering whether the word is pronounced in its strong form or weak form in GA or RP English. As Wells (2008) emphasizes, the word ‘sir’ in GA English is in most cases pronounced in the strong form - /sɜː/. Less usually it is in the weak form - /s^ɹr/. Non-rhotacization can be traced in RP English where the strong form is used commonly such as in an example ‘yes, sir’ - /sɜː/, however, if it is used with a name, it is usually used in the weak form, such as ‘Sir Peter’ - /sə/ (Wells, 2008, p. 745).

From now on we can distinguish the fundamental differences between GA and RP English with respect to rhotacization.

1.2. RP English

What we already know about RP English is that it is a kind of accent related to the privileged part of population in British Isles and it is a non-rhotic accent. However, this

knowledge is entirely insufficient, and hence, this chapter provides information about RP in details.

Received Pronunciation (henceforth RP) is derived from the word 'received' which meant 'socially acceptable' in times of Queen Victoria (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 3). RP English is sometimes substituted with terms Oxford English, BBC English or the Queen's English, however, none of these expressions bear the same characterization as RP (Collins, Mees, 2003).

Since this accent was spoken among the prestige class of people, it became a prestige accent (Collins, Mees, 2003). This term suggests that it was used among the people with high status, however, it was spoken among relatively few people, RP is considered as a social accent (Collins, Mees, 2003). At the same time Sangster (2007) mentions that RP is related to the accent of Southern England, but Collins and Mees (2003) point out RP does not belong to the regional accents. According to Jones (1960), RP English is spoken by those "who have been educated at 'preparatory' boarding schools and the 'Public Schools'" (Jones, 1960, p. 12).

As Collins and Mees (2003) observed, the reason why RP is sometimes replaced by the term 'BBC English' is that the announcers of BBC radio and television were obliged to use RP accent until the 1980s, nevertheless, there were employed only those who were of a good social position. Hence, "applicants naturally spoke RP" (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 203).

1.2.1. Types of RP

Hughes and Trudgill (1987) assert that RP is the accent which changes with time. Thus there does not exist just one specific type of RP but more of them when we take several generations into consideration. For instance, young students with the highest status would tend to speak advanced RP, the older ones to general RP and then we also distinguish conservative RP. Nevertheless, there is not an accurate reciprocity between pronunciation and age (Hughes, Trudgill, 1987).

Cruttenden (2001) confirms that the accent is modified due to the innovation of speech patterns even though the speakers are oblivious of it. He distinguishes General RP, Refined RP and Regional RP while Refined RP accent is spoken among speakers from the upper class and the Regional one is manifestly distinguished by regional varieties. The proper example of Regional RP can be London one which is an adjustment of RP towards Cockney (Cruttenden, 2001). Collins and Mees (2003) even introduce the term Estuary English which is

distinguished by features of traditional RP and London (Cockney) speech. Although phoneticians determine different types of RP accents, it is relevant to mention that they vary only in pettiness (Cruttenden, 2001). Collins and Mees (2003) present the neutral type of modern English which does not carry local accent elements and call it ‘non-regional pronunciation’ (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 4).

1.2.2. RP nowadays

According to Collins and Mees (2003), at one time RP accent was imitated by Australians, New Zealanders or South Africans, but now it is used rather scarcely. In the USA RP English was spoken in dramas and remains prestigious among actors. What might appear interesting is that RP is rather spoken by villains in American plays (Collins, Mees, 2003).

Nowadays, RP is regarded as a model for most foreign learners of English (Hughes, Trudgill, 1987) and is also represented in dictionaries, such as in Wells Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (2008). In Britain, there is a possibility of learning RP accent in the English public schools which are, naturally, highly prestigious but simultaneously high-priced (Collins, Mees, 2003).

According to Collins and Mees (2003), RP English used to be significant among Prime Ministers, such as Harold Wilson, James Callaghan, Edward Heath and Margaret Thatcher. Nevertheless, we can also hear some older members of the British Royal Family speaking RP English nowadays (Collins, Mees, 2003).

1.3. GA English

It is generally known that American English is utterly diverse from British English in many perspectives. We have also learned that if we hear speakers from different regions or society, the language in the UK can differ in some aspects. Thus it should not be surprising that American English distinguishes various accents as well. Hence this chapter will be concerned with GA English and will discuss its major characteristics.

General American (henceforth GA) may be in one aspect comparable to RP – it is not related to regional accents. Whilst the other American accents carry regional characteristics, GA is not spoken in any specific locality (Cruttenden, 2001). Unlike RP which is spoken by a small percentage of people, GA English is accepted by majority of inhabitants in North America (Wells, 2008). It originated in the Midwest and was regarded as the educated English

(Collins, Mees, 2003). As Cruttenden (2001) points out, GA is usually connected with the term Network English. Collins and Mees (2003) claim that GA accent is frequently heard from announcers of televisions and radios in the USA.

As it is with RP English, GA is considered as a model for learners whose first language is not English and who do not give preference to RP. We especially mean people from certain parts of Asia and Latin America (Cruttenden, 2001). As Collins and Mees (2003) suggest, many Europeans rather tend to GA English than to RP, however, GA has not been promoted at European schools yet for productive purposes by state authorities. It is, however, the accent of some listening comprehension tasks (Collins, Mees, 2003).

2. Vowels

As we want to devote attention to vowel sounds, in the first instance it is proper to introduce the branches of study dealing with them - phonetics and phonology. Although each of them is concerned with a different area of language, they are closely related to each other.

According to Cruttenden (2001), phonetics is a branch of linguistics studying sounds in languages, more precisely their articulation, acoustics and hearing. On the other hand, phonology studies the function of sounds in a certain language (Cruttenden, 2001). As it will be noticed later, this bachelor thesis deals with the subject matter from the point of view of both phonetics and phonology.

We should also know that vowels and consonants are comprehended as segments which are called phonemes (Collins and Mees, 2003). Phoneme is the smallest sound unit of a spoken word (Wheeler, 2014). Thus it means that the word 'man' consists of three phonemes - /m/, /æ/ and /n/ - two consonants and one vowel (Collins and Mees, 2003, p. 9). Nevertheless, the pronunciation of phonemes might be in some words slightly changed. This change we call allophone (Wheeler, 2014). The allophone can be observable in words such as 'top' and 'stop' while the consonant 't' is in the former example aspirated unlike in the latter one which is not (Wheeler, 2014).

2.1. Vowels and consonants

When talking about speech sounds, we have either vowels or consonants in our mind (Jones, 1960). Phoneticians such as Jones (1960) and Roach (1991) see the main distinction between vowels and consonants in their pronunciation. Vowel is ergo a voiced sound which is explained as "the one with no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips" (Roach, 1991, p. 10). Unlike vowels, consonants are either unvoiced sounds, sounds which are obstructed in some way when being pronounced, sounds which are not produced within air passing through mouth, or sounds with a perceptible friction (Jones, 1960). Nevertheless, Roach (1991) denies this rule by giving an example of a word 'way' which is pronounced rather without any obstruction even though it begins with the consonant (Roach, 1991, p. 10). Jones (1960) points out that the real distinction between vowels and consonants is in aural concentration, especially in the relative sonority or carrying power. When we take

this divergence into consideration, vowels are regarded as more sonorous than consonants (Jones, 1960).

Some differences can be noticed when comparing phonemes pronounced in RP and GA. The most significant distinction is observable in diphthongs while RP uses larger number of them in comparison to GA. Such differences can be seen in the inventory provided in the Appendix 1 (Wells, 2008, p. xxxiv).

2.2. Pronunciation of vowels

Since we know the main distinction in pronunciation between vowels and consonants, this chapter will provide the description of vowel sounds in details. When considering the vowel pronunciation from a general point of view, we distinguish the shape and position of tongue (Roach, 1991). Nevertheless, we should also consider the lip position (Ladefoged, 2006) and the distance between jaws (Jones, 1960). It is suggested that the following descriptions are characteristic for both RP and GA accent (Krynicky, 2013).

Roach (1991) refers to the vertical distance and the part of the tongue which is raised highest. In the first situation we can notice whether the tongue is rather up or low and the horizontal position distinguishes between front and back (Roach, 1991), however, as we will see later, we can also mention centre position of the tongue (Collins, Mees, 2003).

Firstly, we focused on the tongue height. In most cases the tongue tip is situated behind the lower front teeth such as in a word 'car' (Cruttenden, 2001, p. 34). In comparison to that, the word 'key' is pronounced with the tongue tip slightly raised (Cruttenden, 2001, p. 34). Nevertheless, it is essential to point out that the difference is fairly minor, and these vowels may be pronounced variously by two diverse speakers (Cruttenden, 2001). On the other hand, while pronouncing /ɑ:/ the mouth is more opened unlike it is with /i:/ (Collins and Mees, 2003, p. 58). We can distinguish between open vowels, such as is /ɑ:/, and closed ones /i:/ (Collins, Mees, 2003). Roach (1991) also differentiates between the open and close. The vowel sound /æ/ is pronounced as the oral cavity is more opened, unlike /i:/ when the lips are rather close to each other (Roach, 1991).

Since we cannot see and feel the back of the tongue precisely, there were observed various positions of the tongue when pronouncing /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ and /u:/ (Collins, Mees, 2003). The vowel sound /ɑ:/ is distinguished by rather horizontal tongue position, on the contrary the vowels /ɔ:/ and /u:/ are pronounced with the tongue raised at the back (Collins, Mees, 2003,

p. 58). Since we have used the terms front and back vowels while the vowel /i:/ belongs to the front ones because the front of the tongue is close to the roof of the mouth (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 58), unlike /u:/ which is considered as the back vowel as a result of the body of the tongue which is close to the palate at the back (Roach, 1991).

Ladefoged (2006) asserts that the pronunciation of vowels is dependent on the height of the tongue, the front-back tongue position and also the lip position which he calls lip rounding. He also suggests the lip rounding is highly noticeable when observing the motion of the corners of the lips, such as in pronunciation of the word 'who'd' which is rounded and 'heed' is regarded as unrounded (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 20).

2.3. Short and long vowels

Since there is a large amount of vowel sounds in English, Roach (1991), Collins and Mees (2003) divide them into groups according to the length of pronunciation. Although some vowels of RP English differ from GA and not only in vowel quality but also in the system (Wells, 2008), there will be provided general distinction of vowels, and at the same time we will concentrate on the diverse vowels in these accents.

Even though Roach (1991) uses the terminology different from Collins and Mees (2003), both sources practically make the same classification. Roach (1991) describes short vowels, long vowels, and Collins with Mees (2003) also categorize eight diphthongs among long vowels. Furthermore, Roach (1991) mentions triphthongs. Collins and Mees (2003) point out that RP accent consists of many diphthongs which is considered as a disadvantage for learners of English.

Ladefoged (2006), Cruttenden (2001), Roach (1991), Collins and Mees (2003) refer to the cardinal vowels which are described as "the range of vowels that the human vocal apparatus can make" (Roach, 1991, p. 13), however, "in no case is the quality of a cardinal vowel exactly the same as that of an English vowel" (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 213). Since the description of vowel sounds is difficult to explain, phoneticians use the cardinal vowel system which is valued as the most acceptable reference point (Cruttenden, 2001).

2.3.1. Short vowels

According to Roach (1991), there are seven short vowels in English. These are /ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/ and /ə/.

The vowel sound /ɪ/ is comparable to the cardinal vowel /i/ while /ɪ/ is rather close to the centre and is more open. The lips are barely spread. This vowel sound appears in words such as 'fish' or 'bit' (Roach, 1991, p. 14).

The vowel sound /e/ can be placed between the cardinal vowel /e/ and /ɛ/ while the lips are slightly spread. This vowel sound is typical for words 'yes' and 'men' (Roach, 1991, p. 15).

The vowel sound /æ/ is placed between the cardinal vowels /ɛ/ and /a/ in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) vowel trapeze, nevertheless, the pronunciation is rather comparable to the latter one. The example words can be 'man' and 'bat' (Roach, 1991, p. 15).

The other English vowel sound is /ʌ/ which is characterized as a central vowel but is fairly open and the lips are in neutral position. We can use the words 'but' or 'rush' as felicitous examples (Roach, 1991, p. 15).

Roach (1991) includes the vowel sound /ɒ/ among English vowels, however, Wells (2008) claims it is a sound characteristic only for RP English. It is described as the vowel sound which tends to the back vowels, it appears between open-mid and open and the lips are a little rounded. We can pronounce it for instance in the words 'gone' and 'cross' (Roach, 1991, p. 15).

The last vowel sound is /ʊ/ which is mostly comparable to the cardinal vowel /u/, but it is not alike. The /ʊ/ is distinguished as more open and nearer to the centre. The typical examples are 'put' and 'pull' (Roach, 1991, p. 15).

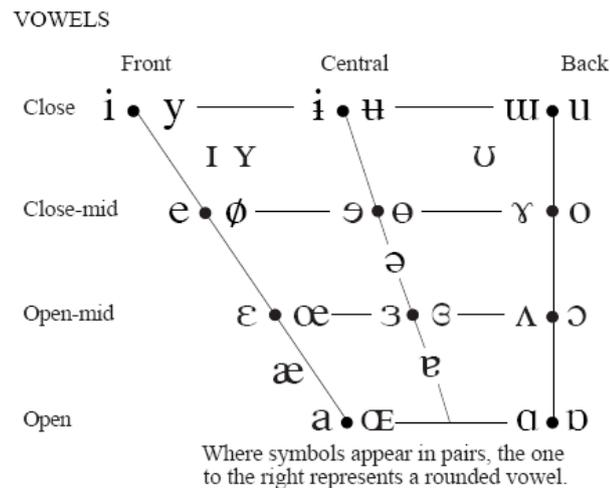


Figure 1: Vowel trapeze – International Phonetic Alphabet

(The International Phonetic Association, 2005)

This trapeze depicts cardinal vowel sounds in comparison to short vowels used in RP and GA.

2.3.2. Long vowels

In the preceding chapters we have focused on short vowels, and so it is proper to look at the other English vowel sounds which are long vowels and diphthongs. Despite the diphthongs will not be dealt with this writing, they deserve to be at least mentioned here.

Both Roach (1991) and Collins with Mees (2003) differentiate five long vowels which are in written system distinguished by a particular symbol which is the length mark : (Collins and Mees, 2003). As it was already mentioned, there might be observed diversities between RP and GA in some vowels. When we take short vowels into consideration, there was pointed out only one difference – the vowel /ɒ/ which is typical just for RP. Nevertheless, there could be found more differences among long vowels and diphthongs as it will be seen subsequently.

Roach (1991) introduces /i:/, /ɜ:/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ and /u:/. These vowel sounds are used in both RP and GA (Wells, 2008). The divergence is in the vowel sound /ɜ:/ which is characteristic for RP (Wells, 2008). Since we know GA belongs to the rhotic accents, now we can show an example with a rhotacized vowel sound /ɜ:z/ (Wells, 2008). As you might have noticed, there was not mentioned the long schwa /ə:/ which is characterized by Jones (1960).

However, the long schwa is usually replaced with /ɜ:/ or /ɝ:/ such as it can be seen in Wells' dictionary (2008).

As Roach (1991) mentions, in comparison to the short vowel /ɪ/, /i:/ is more close and front, and so it is also nearer to the cardinal vowel /i/ than the short vowel sound. The difference can be seen in the lip position because the long vowel sound is pronounced with the lips slightly spread only unlike the cardinal vowel (Roach, 1991). This long vowel sound is pronounced, for instance, in the word 'fleece' (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 13).

The second long vowel sound is /ɜ:/ which is heard, for example, in 'bird' in RP (Roach, 1991, p. 18) and /ɝ:/ in GA pronunciation (Wells, 2008, p. 86). The vowel sound /ɜ:/ is characterized as a central vowel with neutral lip position (Roach, 1991). The latter is faintly more closed than the former one (Wells, 2008).

The vowel sound /ɑ:/ typical of words such as 'father' or 'start' (Wells, 2008, p. xxiv) is an open vowel while the lips are in neutral position (Roach, 1991). The difference in pronunciation between RP and GA is scarcely noticeable. Wells (2008) depicts the vowel sound in GA more back than RP.

The other vowel sound /ɔ:/ is on the other hand less back in GA than in RP (Wells, 2008). Roach describes the sound in RP pronunciation as almost fully back with strong lip rounding and gives examples in words 'board' or 'horse' (Roach, 1991, p. 19).

The last long vowel sound in English is /u:/ such as in words 'food' or 'loose' which is comparable to the cardinal vowel /u/ (Roach, 1991, p. 19). The long vowel sound is just more open and front than the latter one, and the lips are slightly rounded (Roach, 1991).

Harris (2014) affirms that the long vowels are connected with non-rhotacization in RP English. In other words, the sound /r/ is usually pronounced when is followed by a vowel, such as in 'red' /red/, nevertheless, the word 'car' /kɑ:/ does not contain any /r/ when being pronounced (Harris, 2014, p. 1-4). On the other hand, the GA speaker expresses the /r/ sound without any exception /kɑ:r/ (Harris, no date, p. 1).

Despite Roach (1991) describes diphthongs in details, we will only provide short characterization of them and focus on differences between RP and GA diphthongs. Ergo, diphthongs are sounds which are distinctive for their glide from one vowel segment to another. When considering the length of their pronunciation, they are comparable to the long vowels. What is typical, the first vowel sound tends to be louder and longer than the latter one (Roach, 1991). Now it is proper to mention that it is because the second vowel sound is considered as a weak sound (Wells, 2008), however, this theme is discussed further in the following chapter.

RP and GA speakers use diphthongs in their speech, nevertheless, those of RP are quite dissimilar to GA ones, especially when we take their number into consideration. RP English distinguishes eight diphthongs in total: /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/, /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/ and /aʊ/ (Roach, 1991). It might be observed that the first three ones glide to /ə/ thus they are called the centring diphthongs (Roach, 1991). The other three glide to the vowel sound /ɪ/ and the last two to /ʊ/ (Roach, 1991).

Table 1 Examples with diphthongs

/ɪə/	‘beard’	/bɪəd/	/aɪ/	‘time’	/taɪm/
/eə/	‘scarce’	/skeəs/	/ɔɪ/	‘voice’	/vɔɪs/
/ʊə/	‘tour’	/tʊə/	/əʊ/	‘home’	/həʊm/
/eɪ/	‘face’	/feɪs/	/aʊ/	‘house’	/haʊs/

(Wells, 2008)

When considering GA accent, we can notice that the schwa is pronounced in none of the diphthongs. In GA we distinguish only five diphthongs - /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /aʊ/ and /oʊ/ while the first four ones are coincident with RP, and the last is typical for GA (Wells, 2008). To give the apposite example, the last diphthong is occurring in the word ‘goat’ /gəʊt/ (Wells, 2008).

3. Connected speech

When studying pronunciation of the language, it is desirable to pay attention to some features connected to speech which are regarded as not being less important than phonemes (Roach, 1991). Roach (1991) puts emphasis on strong and weak syllables which are highly related to word stress, elision and intonation. At the same time he also refers to the words with strong and weak forms.

3.1. Stress

Firstly we will deal with the word stress. Stress should be considered as one of the most important factors when deciding whether a syllable is weak or strong (Roach, 1991). As Collins with Mees (2003) point out, there are differences between RP and GA English.

As stress is related to syllables, it is proper to explain the term syllable firstly. Even though it is difficult to define it, there is a loose explanation of it as "a unit potentially larger than the phoneme but smaller than the word" (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 14).

Peter Ladefoged (2006) describes the stressed syllable as expelling more air out of the lungs in relation to other syllables. In other words, there is given special emphasis to a syllable when speaking. This process is called the production of the stress which characterizes how the stress is created by the speaker. Nevertheless, it is also important to look at this process from a listener's point of view. Peter Roach (1991) perceives it as the combination of four factors which indicate stressed syllables. Those are loudness, length, pitch and quality. Hence, stressed syllables should be pronounced louder, longer, on a higher pitch and clearer, unlike unstressed syllables. However, Peter Ladefoged (2006) points out that even if a syllable fulfils all of these features, it does not mean it is always stressed. In his opinion, it is better to find certain beats and rhythm in the pronounced words than being dependent on these factors.

As Roach (1991) mentioned, we should recognise two different levels of the stress. The first one is called primary stress and the second one secondary stress. The primary stress is presented as the strongest emphasis in a word. Whereas the secondary stress is distinguished by lower strength, however, it should have not been mistaken with the unstressed level (Roach, 1991). According to IPA conventions (2005) we mark the primary stress in transcription as an upper vertical line ' , and the secondary stress is indicated as ' .

There can be given an example of the word ‘photographic’ /,fəʊtə'græfɪk/ (Roach, 1991, p. 87).

As it was already mentioned, there were observed some differences between RP and GA in relation to the word stress (Collins, Mees, 2003). It can be seen in the word ‘military’ when the word ends with –ary. It is known that this ending takes the secondary stress in GA English, unlike in RP when it is reduced to the schwa or elided – GA /'mɪlə'teri/ x RP either /'mɪlɪtəri/ or /'mɪlɪtri/ (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 138). Another example can be given with the word where is the stress shifted, such as ‘cigarette’ - GA /'sɪgəret/ x RP /sɪgə'ret/ (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 139). The noticeable difference can be also observed in borrowed words from French which are usually stressed on the first syllable in RP but on final syllable in GA: ‘ballet’ – GA /bæ'leɪ/ x RP /'bæleɪ/, ‘garage’ – GA /gə'rɑ:ʒ/ x RP /'gæra:ʒ/ (Collins, Mees, 2003, p. 139).

3.2. Weak forms

When considering the stress, we should also discuss its influence on words that can be pronounced either in strong or weak form (Roach, 1991). Both RP and GA accent use strong and weak forms, we can just notice some differences in pronunciation.

Wells (2011) affirms that when we take stressed syllables into consideration, they can include strong vowels only, unlike weak syllables which may contain any vowel. It means that it is possible to use the strong vowel in the unstressed syllable, such as in ‘gymnast’ /'dʒɪmnæst/ while the second syllable contains the strong vowel /æ/ (Wells, 2011).

The strong and weak forms are connected with strong and weak vowels while the weak forms contain either: /ə/, /ɪ/ or /ʊ/, and the strong form all vowels and diphthongs except for those lately mentioned (Wells, 2008). Wells (2008) also affirms that the vowels /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ in RP and /oʊ/ in GA can be in some situations weak as well.

Roach (1991) mentions that there are approximately forty words which have both the strong and the weak form and almost all of them are known as function words - auxiliary verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, etc. The proper examples are the determiners, such as ‘a’, ‘an’, and ‘the’ which are pronounced in their weak form in most cases: /ə/, /ðə/ before consonants and /ən/, /ði/ before vowels (Roach, 1991, p. 103).

Knútsson (2008) distinguishes eight situations according to which the speaker decides whether to use the strong or the weak form. These situations are typical for both RP and GA accent, nevertheless, Knútsson (2008) provides examples in RP.

Firstly, he introduces the words which are commonly weak, but strong when there is the emphasis given: ‘This train isn’t coming from London, it’s going to London’ /’ðis ‘treɪn ‘iznt ‘kɑmɪŋ ‘frɒm ‘lʌndən its ‘gəʊɪŋ ‘tu: ‘lʌndən/. Normally, there would be instead of /’frɒm/ and /’tu:/ -> /frəm/ and /tə/ (Roach, 1991, p. 105-6).

In the following situation, the weak form becomes strong when is in a final position. This case is related to prepositions and auxiliary verbs which become strong at the end of a sentence such as the preposition ‘from’: ‘I come from Brighton. Brighton is where I come from.’ /aɪ ‘kʌm frəm ‘braɪtn/ -> /’braɪtn ɪz weər aɪ ‘kʌm frəm/.

Another case is connected with a different role of a word in speech while, for instance, the word ‘that’ is weak when is the relative pronoun and conjunction /ðət/ and strong when the demonstrative pronoun /ðæt/.

It is also known that the phoneme /h/ is not usually pronounced when occurs at the beginning of the word, such as: ‘I gave her a letter’ /aɪ ‘geɪv ə ðə ‘letə/, however, if it begins the sentence, it is usually pronounced in the strong form. Nevertheless, there is also possibility of linking r after /ə/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ or /ɜ:/: ‘I tried to give her his letter’ /aɪ ‘traɪd tə ‘gɪvər ɪz ‘letə/.

Conjunctions, such as ‘and’, ‘but’ and the preposition ‘than’ are found in weak forms in most cases: ‘Mary and Bruce are quicker than me but slower than you’ /’meəri ən ‘bru:s ə kwɪkə ðən mi bət ‘sləʊə ðən ju/.

It was also mentioned that auxiliary verbs can be pronounced in their weak form (Knútsson, 2008) - ‘can’ /kən/, ‘was’ /wəz/, ‘shall’ /ʃəl/, ‘will’ /wəl/, ‘could’ /kəd/, ‘should’ /ʃəd/ while these expressions are identical for both RP and GA, and ‘were’ is in RP pronounced as /wə/ and in GA /wə^ər/. However, they are occurring in the strong form if ending the sentence. Negatives are strong without any exception, such as ‘not’, ‘can’t’, ‘aren’t’, ‘won’t’, ‘shan’t’, ‘isn’t’, ‘mustn’t’, ‘hasn’t’, ‘haven’t’. Even here we can observe some distinctions in pronunciation - /nɒt/ - RP, /nɑ:t/ - GA, /kɑ:nt/ - RP, /kænt/ - GA, /ɑ:nt/ - RP, /ɑ:rnt/ - GA, /wəʊnt/ - RP, /woʊnt/ - GA, /ʃɑ:nt/ - RP, /ʃænt/ - GA, and /ɪz^ənt/, /mʌs^ənt/, /hæz^ənt/, /hæv^ənt/ are in RP and GA pronounced identically (Wells, 2008).

And finally, the structural words such as ‘how’, ‘if’, ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘off’, ‘then’, ‘they’, ‘up’, ‘what’, ‘when’ and ‘where’ are always in their strong form (Knútsson, 2008).

3.2.1. Weak vowels

As it has been already mentioned, Roach (1991) distinguishes seven short vowels including the schwa. Nevertheless, he perceives the schwa as a separate unit and pays special attention to it. In all probability that is because it differentiates from the rest of the vowels in several ways, and it is a sound which is used in the English language very frequently (Roach, 1991). Since the schwa is considered as the exceptional vowel sound, this chapter will be dedicated to it.

According to Harper (2001-2014), the word "schwa" originates from Hebrew *schewa*, or German *schwa*, which literally means "emptiness". The term is apparently associated with its pronunciation because the schwa is comparable to the expression of a sound 'uh' (Nordquist, 2014). It is described as a mid central vowel thus the tongue is not positioned neither in front nor back, but right in the centre, and the lips are in neutral position (Roach, 1991).

In the IPA (2005) there is the schwa marked as /ə/, and we can find it in every phonetic transcription representing the schwa phoneme. Roach (1991) mentions the schwa is connected with weak syllables without any exception and is never stressed. It is not suggested that all of them include /ə/, however, in many cases they do (Roach, 1991, p. 76).

The following diagram shows that apart from the schwa another two phonemes occur in weak syllables. It also suggests which vowels get reduced to these three phonemes /ɪ/, /ʊ/, and /ə/ (Knútsson, 2008).

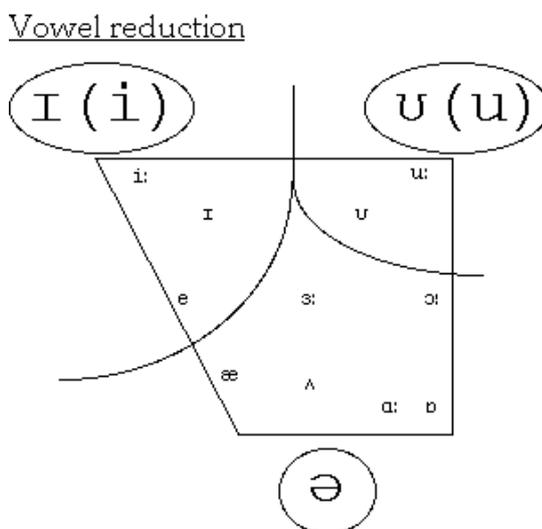


Figure 2: Vowel reduction

(Knútsson, 2008)

It is known that "weak vowels are confined to weak, unstressed, syllables" (Cardiff.ac.uk, 2014). However, it is sometimes difficult to recognize whether the vowel is weak or strong. The vowel /ɪ/ in the word 'bridge' /'brɪdʒ/ is strong, but in 'waited' /'weɪtɪd/ the ending -ed is weak (Wells, 2011).

The different usage of weak and strong vowels can be also dependent on accents. For instance, t-voicing, which is typical for GA, confirms the rule that the vowel which follows the t-voicing is weak, such as in 'emphatic' /ɪm'fætɪk/ (Wells, 2011).

The strong and weak vowels are also connected with assimilation which is described as the alteration of a speech sound influenced by its neighbours (Wells, 2008). It is noticeable with the yod semivowel /j/ which is in most cases adjusted to /ʃ/ or /ʒ/ when the vowel is strong in GA English, such as in 'tune' /'tju:n/ -> /'tʃu:n/, 'endure' /ɪn'dʒʊə/ -> /ɪn'dʒʊə/ (Wells, 2008, p. 52).

Roach (1991) provides general examples of weak vowels which are typical for both RP and GA English. Firstly, he introduces the /ɪ/ vowel which is pronounced neither as /i:/ as in 'beat' - /bi:t/ nor short /ɪ/ as in 'bit' - /bɪt/ but shares characteristics of both. At the same

time, he describes the weak vowel /u/ while the explanation corresponds to the previous one, thus the pronunciation is not equal neither to /u:/, as in 'shoe' - /ʃu:/ nor to /ʊ/ as in 'book' - /bʊk/ (Roach, 1991, p. 78).

Subsequently, he asserts that the final vowels 'y' or 'ey' which precede consonants are in most cases weak, such as in 'happy' - /hæpi/ or 'valley' - /væli/. Weakening can be also noticeable when pronouncing suffixes beginning with vowels, such as '-ier', '-est' or '-ing'. Another examples are given with prefixes which are unstressed and the following element is a vowel, such as 're-', 'pre-', 'de-'. Suffixes 'iate' and 'ious' are weak if the word consists of two syllables. The last rule is given with unstressed words, such as 'he', 'she', 'we', 'me', 'be', and 'the' which is followed by a vowel. All of them are naturally weak (Roach, 1991, p. 78).

Roach (1991) also refers to the weak vowel /ɪ/ which is usually represented by 'i' or 'e' when we take spelling into consideration, such as in 'enough' /ɪnʌf/ (Roach, 1991, p. 78). The occurrence of the vowel /u/ in weak syllables is rather sporadic. However, the best examples are the words 'you', 'to', 'into' and 'do' in weak forms, and unstressed words such as 'through' and 'who' (Roach, 1991, p. 78).

3.3. Elision

When determining whether to use strong or weak syllables in words, it is also important to consider elision which can highly influence the decision (Roach, 1991). In phonetics and phonology, elision is described as a disappearance of a certain sound in speech (Nordquist, 2014). The usage of the elision might not cause any problems to a speaker in a conversation but a listener can be puzzled due to ellipsis. It is important to know that elision is commonly used in casual speech and so a learner of English should be aware of it (Roach, 1991).

Cruttenden (2001) differentiates between allophonic variation and phonemic elision. In the first situation the elision refers to the pronounced diphthongs. If a syllable is ending with either /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/ or /aʊ/ and the subsequent syllable begins with a vowel, the elision is related to the second element of the diphthong, thus can be omitted. In practice, the sentence 'I may as well' would be normally pronounced as /aɪ meɪ əz 'wel/, but with the usage of elision it would sound as /aɪ meəz 'wel/ (Cruttenden, 2001, p. 287).

The phonemic elision concerns especially the schwa which is often omitted when being initial. To be more specific, the schwa can be elided when is followed by a continuant and preceded by a consonant. For example, ‘not alone’ can be pronounced as /nɒt ələʊn/, however elision would make it as /nɒt 'ləʊn/. In a different context, there is also the possibility of omitting the schwa when /ə/ is occurring in a final position of a word when related to the linking /r/ and followed by a word-initial vowel. Even now the schwa would be elided. Such as a phrase ‘as a matter of fact’ would be pronounced as /əz ə mətrəv 'fækt/, unlike /əz ə mətrə əv 'fækt/ (Cruttenden, 2001, p. 287). The website phon.ucl.ac.uk (2013) also introduces the intrusive /r/ which appears between the schwa and the following vowel such as in ‘vodka or two’ /'vɒdkə ə 'tu:/ in RP.

The elision is referring to both RP and GA English, however, we can notice some differences in pronunciation when considering these two accents (Wells, 2008). For example the adjective ‘comfortable’ would be pronounced as /'kʌmfətəbl/ by RP speaker, unlike GA speaker /'kʌmftrbl/ (Wells, 2008, p. 166). Nevertheless, before elision it is /'kʌmfətəbl/ (oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, 2014).

PRACTICAL PART

Introduction

This part of bachelor thesis is dealing with an analysis of one audio recording read in an RP and GA accent. First of all, the text transcript of recording and subsequently the phonetic transcription of each accent are provided. The transcription is made on the basis of listening to the recordings and my auditory perception. The transcription is divided into longer meaningful chunks so called tone units divided by double slashes. The rest of the practical part is based on discussion of discovered findings and on comparison of RP and GA phonemes. The goal of this section is to compare and prove distinctions between RP and GA accents.

The audio recording has been found on the website phon.ucl.ac.uk (2013) which provides short audio specimens, comments of various British and American accents, and transcript of the text. The text was processed by Textalyser (2004); the results can be found in the Appendix 2. It is affirmed that the first recording corresponds to RP while the second one to GA accent (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013). Wells's Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (2008) is used to compare these two accents. The recording is approximately 1:40 minutes long and is spoken by two different speakers.

4. Recordings

As the same text for both recordings is used, there can be easily heard and distinguished differences between RP and GA pronunciations. The speakers provide us a short story about one interesting and mysterious experience that happened the previous year. It can be observed that it is told in a calm and smooth way. Hence, it is presumable that the text is read.

4.1. Received Pronunciation

The speaker is Susan Ramsaran (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013) who is especially known for editing the 4th version of Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Kraut, 2012). In the recording she uses a wide intonation range and thanks to that the story becomes suspenseful and attracts the listener's attention.

4.1.1. Transcript of the text

"One day last year, when I was driving back to work after I'd had lunch, I had an amazing and unforgettable experience. It must have been two o'clock — or perhaps a quarter of an hour later, a quarter past two. It was an incredible thing, really: I was sitting there at the steering wheel of my new car, waiting for the lights to change, when all of a sudden the car started to shake this way and that, rocking from side to side, throwing me backwards and forwards, up and down. I felt as if I was riding a bucking horse. Worse than that, some mysterious spirit or hostile force seemed to be venting its vast fury upon the earth. And the noise! — there was a kind of deep groaning and horrible awesome grinding which seemed to fill the air. And then, a short while after, the whole paroxysm had stopped, just as suddenly. Everything was calm and smooth again, quiet and peaceful once more. I put my foot down, just a gentle pressure on the accelerator (or the gas pedal, as it's known in America), and drove off. Everything was utterly normal once more.

So then — was this some very local and momentary earth tremor which had struck us? Or, I ask myself, was it a supernatural visitation, some fiery storm of diabolical wrath? Or was it, rather, merely that I'd drunk a double vodka or two during my lunch? "

4.1.2. Phonetic transcription of the RP recording

|| 'wʌn 'der 'lɑ:st 'jɪə || 'wen 'aɪ wəz 'draɪvɪŋ 'bæk tu 'wɜ:k 'ɑ:ftər aɪd 'hæd 'lʌntʃ ||
aɪ 'hæd nə 'meɪzɪŋ ən ,ʌnfə'getəbəl ɪk'spɪrɪən's ||
ɪt 'mʌst əv bɪn 'tʊə'klɒk || 'ɔ: pə'hæps ə 'kwɔ:tərəv ən 'aʊə 'leɪtər || ə 'kwɔ:tə 'pɑ:st 'tu: ||
ɪt wəz ən m'kredɪbəl 'θɪŋ 'rɪəlɪ ||
aɪ wəz 'sɪtɪŋ 'ðeə || ət ðə 'stɪəriŋ wi:əl əv 'maɪ ,nju: 'kɑ: || 'weɪtɪŋ fə ðə 'laɪts tə 'tʃeɪndʒ ||
'wen 'ɔ:l əv ə 'sʌdʳn ðə 'kɑ: 'stɑ:rtɪd tə 'ʃeɪk 'ðɪs ,weɪ ən 'ðæt || 'rɒkɪŋ frəm 'saɪd tə 'saɪd ||
'θrəʊŋ mi 'bækwədz ən 'fɔ:wədz ,ʌp ən 'daʊn ||
aɪ 'felt əz 'ɪf aɪ wəz 'raɪdɪŋ ə 'bʌkɪŋ 'hɔ:s ||
'wɜ:s ðən 'ðæt || 'sʌm mi'stɪrɪəs 'spɪrɪt || 'ɔ: 'hɒstərəl 'fɔ:s ||
'si:mɪd tu bi 'ventɪŋ ɪts 'vɑ:st 'fju:əri ə'pɒn ði 'z:θ ||
ən ðə 'nɔ:z ||
ðeə wəz ə 'kaɪnd əv 'di:p 'grəʊnɪŋ ənd 'hɒrəbəl 'ɔ:səm 'graɪndɪŋ || 'wɪtʃ 'si:mɪd tə 'fɪl ði 'eə ||
ən 'ðen || ə 'ʃɔ:t 'waɪəl 'ɑ:ftə || ðə 'həʊl 'pærək,sɪzəm həd 'stɒpt || 'dʒʌst ə'sʌdʳnli ||
'evrɪθɪŋ wəz 'kɑ:m ən 'smu:ð ə'gen || 'kwaiət ən 'pi:sfəl 'wʌn's mɔ: ||
aɪ ,pʊt 'maɪ 'fʊt 'daʊn || 'dʒʌst ə 'dʒentəl 'preʃər 'ɒn ði ək'seleɪtə || 'ɔ: ðə 'gæs ,pedəl əz ɪts
'nəʊn ən ə'merɪkə || ən ,drəʊv 'ɒf ||
'evrɪθɪŋ 'wɒz 'ʌtəlɪ 'nɔ:məl 'wʌn's mɔ: ||
'səʊ 'ðen ||
'wɒz 'ðɪs 'sʌm 'veri 'lʊkəl ən 'məʊməntəri 'z:θ ,tremə 'wɪtʃ həd 'strʌk ʌs ||
'ɔ:r aɪ 'ɑ:sk maɪ'self || 'wɒz ɪt ə ,sju:pə'nætʃrəl ,vɪzɪ'teɪʃən ||
'sʌm 'faɪəri 'stɔ:m əv ,dæ'bɒlɪkəl 'rɒθ || 'ɔ: 'wɒz ɪt 'rɑ:ðə || 'mɪəli ðæt aɪd
'drʌŋk ə 'dʌbəl 'vɒdkər əɪ 'tu: || 'dʒʊəriŋ 'maɪ 'lʌntʃ ||

4.2. General American

The second recording is referring to the GA accent which is spoken by majority of Americans (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013). What we know about the speaker is that he is a male and he comes from Seattle, Washington, the Pacific Northwest (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013). When considering the intonation, it is comparable to the RP one. We can notice the very similar style of narration.

4.2.1. Phonetic transcription of the GA recording

|| 'wʌn 'deɪ 'lɑ:st 'jɪr 'wen aɪ wəz 'draɪvɪŋ 'bæk tu 'wɜ:k || 'ɑ:ftər aɪd 'hæd 'lʌntʃ || aɪ 'hæd
n^ə 'meɪzɪŋ ən ,ʌnfər 'geʃəb^{əl} ɪk 'spɪrɪənts ||
ɪt 'mʌst həv bɪn 'tuə 'klæk || 'ɔ:r pər'hæps ə 'kwɔ:ʃər n 'aʊər 'leɪʃər || ə 'kwɔ:ʃər 'pæst 'tu: ||
ɪt 'wɒz ən ɪn 'kredɪb^{əl} 'θɪŋ 'rɪli ||
'aɪ wəs 'sɪŋ ɪθ 'deər ət ðə 'stɪrɪŋ wɪ:əl əv 'maɪ ,nu: 'kɑ:r || 'weɪtɪŋ fər ðə 'laɪts tu 'tʃeɪndʒ ||
'wen 'ɑ:l əv ə 'sʌdⁿ || ðə 'kɑ:r 'stɑ:rʃɪd tə 'ʃeɪk || 'ðɪs ,wei ən 'ðæt || 'rɑ:kɪŋ frəm 'saɪd ə 'saɪd ||
'θru:ŋ mi 'bækwɜ:dz ən 'fɔ:r wɜ:dz || 'ʌp əm 'daʊn ||
aɪ 'felt əz 'ɪf 'aɪ wəz 'raɪdɪŋ ə 'bʌkɪŋ 'hɔ:rs ||
'wɜ:s ðən 'ðæt || 'sʌm mɪ 'stɪrɪəs 'spɪrɪt || ər 'hɑ:st^l 'fɔ:rs ||
'sɪ:md tə bi 'ventʃɪŋ ɪts 'væst 'fjʊəri ə 'pɑ:n ði 'ɜ:θ ||
ən ðə 'nɔ:z ||
ðər wəz ə 'kaɪnd əv 'di:p 'gru:ŋɪŋ ənd 'hɑ:rəb^{əl} || 'ɔ:səm 'graɪndɪŋ 'wɪtʃ 'sɪ:md tə 'fɪl ði 'eər ||
ən 'ðen || ə 'ʃɔ:rt 'waɪl 'æftər || ðə 'hʊl pə 'rɑ:kɪzəm əd 'stɑpt || 'dʒʌst ə 'sʌdⁿli ||
'evrɪθɪŋ wəz 'kɑ:m ən 'smu:ð ə 'gen || 'kwɑɪət ənd 'pɪ:sfʊl 'wɒn's 'mɔ:r ||
aɪ ,put 'maɪ 'fʊt 'daʊn || 'dʒʌst ə 'dʒent^l 'preʃər 'ɒn ði ək'selərəɪʃər || ər ðə 'gæs ,ped^{əl} əz ɪts
'nu:ŋ ən ə 'merɪkə || ən ,dru:v 'ɑ:f ||
'evrɪθɪŋ wəz 'ʌʃrli 'nɔ:rm^{əl} 'wɒn's 'mɔ:r ||
'soʊ 'ðen || 'wɒz 'ðɪs 'sʌm 'veri 'lʊk^{əl} ən 'mu:mənteri 'ɜ:θ ,tremər 'wɪtʃ əd 'strʌk 'ʌs ||
'ɔ:r || aɪ 'æsk maɪ 'self || wəz ɪt ə ,su:pər'nætʃrʊl ,vɪzɪ'teɪʃn || 'sʌm 'faɪri 'stɔ:rm əv
,daɪ'bɒlɪk^{əl} 'ræθ ||
ər 'wɒz ɪt || 'ræðər || 'mɪrli ðət aɪ 'draŋk ə ,dʌb^{əl} 'vʌdkə ər 'tu: || 'dʊrɪŋ maɪ 'lʌntʃ ||

5. Comparison of RP and GA accent

Firstly, general distinction between RP and GA will be provided, such as rhotacization, and then differences in vowels, weak vowels, weak and strong forms, and word stress will be dealt with. As the following Tables include words taken from the phonetic transcriptions, the word stress will be preserved.

5.1. Rhotacization and non-rhotacization

We know that RP belongs to non-rhotic accents unlike GA which is rhotic. It means that GA speaker pronounces the sound /r/ each time when it is included in spelling. On the other hand, the /r/ sound is sounded only before vowels when speaking RP (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013).

The following Table proves the rhotacization of English words in GA and non-rhotacization in RP. It includes words including /r/ sound which is followed by a word beginning with a consonant or a syllable beginning with a consonant.

Table 2 *Non-rhotic and rhotic words*

	Received Pronunciation	General American
year	/ˈjɪə/	/ˈjɪr/
work	/ˈwɜ:k/	/ˈwɜ:r/
unforgettable	/ˌʌnfəˈgetəbəl/	/ˌʌnfərˈgetəbəl/
perhaps	/pəˈhæps/	/pərˈhæps/
quarter	/ˈkwɔ:tə/	/ˈkwɔ:ɾ/
hour	/ˈaʊə/	/ˈaʊr/
there	/ˈðeə/	/ˈðeər/
car	/ˈkɑ:/	/ˈkɑ:r/

backwards	/'bækwədz/	/'bækwɔːrdz/
forwards	/'fɔːwədz/	/'fɔːrɔːrdz/
horse	/'hɔːs/	/'hɔːrs/
worse	/'wɜːs/	/'wɜːrs/
force	/'fɔːs/	/'fɔːrs/
earth	/'ɜːθ/	/'ɜːθ/
air	/'eə/	/'eɪr/
short	/'ʃɔːt/	/'ʃɔːrt/
after	/'ɑːftə/	/'æftər/
accelerator	/ək'selɪtə/	/ək'seləreɪtər/
utterly	/'ʌtəli/	/'ʌtʃrli/
normal	/'nɔːməl/	/'nɔːrməl/
tremor	/'tremə/	/'tremər/
supernatural	/,sjuːpə'nætʃrəl/	/,suːpər'nætʃrəl/
storm	/'stɔːm/	/'stɔːrm/

As it has been mentioned, RP speaker pronounces /r/ sound if the following sound element is a vowel. In most situations the /r/ sound is also preceded by a vowel. We can prove it in Table 2.

Table 3 Rhotic words

	Received Pronunciation	General American
driving	/'draɪvɪŋ/	/'draɪvɪŋ/
experience	/ɪk'spɪəriənts/	/ɪk'spɪəriənts/

incredible	/ɪn'kredɪbəl/	/ɪn'kredɪbəl/
really	/'ri:li/	/'ri:li/
steering	/'stiəriŋ/	/'stiəriŋ/
rocking	/'rɒkiŋ/	/'rɑ:kɪŋ/
from	/frəm/	/frəm/
throwing	/'θrəʊɪŋ/	/'θroʊɪŋ/
riding	/'raɪdɪŋ/	/'raɪdɪŋ/
mysterious	/mɪ'stɪriəs /	/mɪ'stɪriəs/
spirit	/'spɪrɪt/	/'spɪrɪt/
fury	/'fjʊəri/	/'fjʊri/
groaning	/'grəʊnɪŋ/	/'groʊnɪŋ/
horrible	/'hɒrəbəl/	/'hɑ:rəbəl/
grinding	/'graɪndɪŋ/	/'graɪndɪŋ/
paroxysm	/'pærək,sɪzəm/	/pə'ra:ksɪzəm/
everything	/'evrɪθɪŋ/	/'evrɪθɪŋ/
pressure	/'preʃər/	/'preʃr/
America	/ə'merɪkə/	/ə'merɪkə/
drove	/'drəʊv/	/'droʊv/
very	/'veri/	/'veri/
momentary	/'məʊməntəri/	/'mouməntəri/
tremor	/'tremə/	/'tremər/
struck	/'strʌk/	/'strʌk/

supernatural	/,sju:pə'nætʃrəl/	/,su:pər'nætʃrəl/
fiery	/'faɪəri/	/'faɪri/
wrath	/'rɒθ/	/'ræθ/
rather	/'rɑ:ðə/	/'ræðər/
drunk	/'drʌŋk/	/'drʌŋk/
during	/'dʒʊərɪŋ/	/'dʊrɪŋ/

There are two more words which have not been included neither in the Table 2 nor 3. These are ‘more’ and ‘merely’. When considering GA, it is known that both words are rhotacized: /'mɔ:r/ and /'mɪrli/. In spite of the fact that the ‘r’ letter is followed by a vowel element, the RP speaker did not pronounce it there: /'mɔ:/ and /'mɪli/.

The first situation is related to non-rhotacization when the letter ‘r’ is preceded by the long vowel /ɔ:/. We can notice this rule even in words such as: ‘car’ /'kɑ:/, ‘horse’ /'hɔ:s/, ‘force’ /'fɔ:s/, or ‘storm’ /'stɔ:m/. The word ‘merely’ is not rhotacized because RP speakers prefer the diphthong /ɪə/ to the /r/ sound (phon.ucl.ac.uk, 2013).

The words ‘later’, ‘pressure’ and ‘started’ are heard as being slightly rhotacized when listening to the RP recording. Nevertheless, in comparison to the GA speaker, the RP does not pronounce it so expressively.

What can be also observed is the linking /r/, however, this case is related to RP only. When considering the recording, it is noticeable in phrases such as: ‘after I’d had’ /'ɑ:ftər aɪd 'hæd/ and ‘quarter of an hour’ /'kwɔ:tərɒv n 'aʊə/. Normally, there would be pronounced the words ‘after’ and ‘quarter’ as /'ɑ:ftə/ and /'kwɔ:tə/. Nevertheless, RP speakers simplify the pronunciation with linking /r/ in order to avoid /'ɑ:ftə aɪd 'hæd/ and /'kwɔ:tə əv ən 'aʊə/.

In the RP recording can be also observed one case with intrusive /r/ in the phrase ‘vodka or two’ /'vɒdkər ɔr 'tu:/.

5.2. Vowels

We can distinguish three types of vowels in English language according to the length and manner of their pronunciation. These are short vowels, long vowels, and diphthongs. Nevertheless, there should not also be neglected weak vowels, especially the schwa which

plays significant role when comparing RP and GA accents. When listening to the recordings, there are observable distinctions between RP and GA in the usage of vowels in words. This chapter is going to deal with all vowels occurring in the recordings while there will be discussed vowels in general firstly, subsequently diphthongs and triphthongs, weak vowels, and finally weak forms which are closely related to the weak vowels.

5.2.1. Short vowels

We will firstly look at the similarity and dissimilarity of strong vowels between RP and GA accent. We know that strong vowels are those which always occur with stressed syllables.

As it might have been observed, when considering strong vowels only, we can find out that the diversity in pronunciation of such words between these two accents is rare. The exceptions will be discussed as follows.

The word ‘two’ is generally pronounced as /'tu:/. In the recordings we can hear this pronunciation and also that with the short /ʊ/ RP or /u/ GA. The latter described situation is related to the following word ‘o’clock’ beginning with the schwa and as we can observe, both speakers connect these two words together while the vowel /u:/ is pronounced shorter. It is also noticeable that in the RP recording the vowel is more opened than in the GA one.

Another observation is heard in the word ‘o’clock’ when the second vowel in the RP recording is rounded, unlike GA recording where it is pronounced with the unrounded vowel. The same situation can be seen in words such as ‘stopped’ and ‘vodka’.

In some words where the /e/ vowel is contained, such as ‘felt’ and ‘venting’, the RP speaker tends to pronounce it as the sound /i/. Thus, we can notice that the vowel shares characteristics of both /e/ and /i/.

The word ‘during’ is pronounced with the diphthong /ʊə/ by RP speaker, however, on the contrary, the GA speaker pronounces the vowel /ʊ/ only.

There are two words which are pronounced with diverse short vowels – ‘once’ and ‘wrath’. The word ‘once’ is expressed with the vowel /ɒ/ by GA speaker which is more back than the vowel /ʌ/ as it is heard in the RP recording. The latter word tends to be pronounced with the vowel /ɒ/ when referring to the RP speaker, the GA one uses the opened vowel /æ/ instead of it.

5.2.2. Long vowels

We know that there exist the short and long schwa in English, rhotacized and non-rhotacized, while the short schwa is marked as /ə/, the long one as /ɜ:/, and the long rhotacized as /ɜ:/. When we look at the words such as ‘work’, ‘worse’ and ‘earth’ in the transcribed version /'wɜ:k/, /'wɜ:s/, /'ɜ:θ/ in RP and /'wɜ:k/, /'wɜ:s/, /'ɜ:θ/ in GA, we will find out that the only noticeable dissimilarity between these words is in rhotacization. Hence, the RP speaker pronounces these words more softly in comparison to GA one who inserts the /r/ sound into the long /ɜ:/ sound. Here we can also find the noticeable distinction between the short and the long schwa – the word stress. It is known that /ə/ appears in unstressed syllables only, however, here we can see that the long /ɜ:/ or /ɜ:./ can be stressed.

There was observed that the word ‘all’ is pronounced diversely when comparing RP and GA recording. It might have seemed to be hardly noticeable, nevertheless, the RP speaker uses the vowel /ɔ:/, unlike the GA one whose pronunciation tends to be more opened and rather sounds as /ɑ:/.

5.2.3. Different expressions

There are words whose pronunciation is typical of RP only and those which are characteristic for GA. The pronunciation can be various either in vowels or we can even find utterly diverse expressions. It means that the pronunciation of one word by RP speaker might be totally different from the GA one.

The first described situation is referring to words, such as ‘rocking’, ‘vast’, ‘upon’, ‘horrible’, ‘after’, ‘off’, ‘ask’, and ‘rather’. From the following Table we can learn some interesting observations.

There might be noticed that the words using the short vowel /ɒ/ in RP are pronounced as the long vowel /ɑ:/ in GA. Nevertheless, the words ‘off’ and ‘upon’ are rather pronounced with the long vowel /ɔ:/ or something between /ɔ:/ and /ɑ:/. In other words, the quality of the vowel /ɔ:/ when listening to the RP speaker is different from the GA one.

On the other hand, the long vowel /ɑ:/ being pronounced by RP speaker is rather expressed as the short vowel /æ/ by GA speaker.

Table 4 Different vowels

	Received Pronunciation	General American
rocking	/ˈrɒkɪŋ/	/ˈrɑ:kɪŋ/
off	/ɒf/	/ɑ:f/
upon	/əˈpɒn/	/əˈpɑ:n/
horrible	/ˈhɒrəbəl/	/ˈhɑ:rəbəl/
after	/ˈɑ:ftə/	/ˈæftər/
vast	/ˈvɑ:st/	/ˈvæst/
ask	/ˈɑ:sk/	/ˈæsk/
rather	/ˈrɑ:ðə/	/ˈræðər/

Nevertheless, in the recordings there were also found two words that are in contrast when dealing with the pronunciation. These are ‘hostile’ and ‘paroxysm’. When taking the former word into consideration, there is observed the same rule which was mentioned in the previous Table - the vowel /ɒ/ changes into /ɑ:/. In addition, the RP speaker adds the diphthong /aɪ/ into the second syllable unlike GA speaker. The word ‘paroxysm’ is not diverse in vowels only but also in the word stress. While the RP speaker emphasizes the first syllable, the GA speaker stresses the second one. It is influenced by the strong and weak vowels. In the first case, the RP uses the strong vowel /æ/ while the GA /ə/. In the second one, the GA pronounces the long vowel /ɑ:/ unlike the RP who reduces it to the schwa. In the RP expression we can also notice the secondary stress in the third syllable.

Table 5 Diverse expressions

	Received Pronunciation	General American
hostile	/ˈhɒstərəl/	/ˈhɑ:stəl/
paroxysm	/ˈpærəkˌsɪzəm/	/pəˈrɑ:ksɪzəm/

5.2.4. Diphthongs

Subsequent diversity can be observed in diphthongs and their different usage in these two accents. Firstly, we can notice that RP speaker uses the diphthongs more frequently than GA one while most of them are the centring diphthongs. Secondly, it is known that one diphthong is characteristic for GA only, but on the other hand, RP speaker very often glides from one vowel to the schwa which is not so frequently used in GA accent. In some cases there are found triphthongs as well.

The first diphthong which is characteristic of both RP and GA is /eɪ/. From the following Table we can read that both accents use this diphthong equally in the same words.

Table 6 Diphthong /eɪ/

	Received Pronunciation	General American
day	/ˈdeɪ/	/ˈdeɪ/
amazing	/əˈmeɪzɪŋ/	/əˈmeɪzɪŋ/
later	/ˈleɪtə/	/ˈleɪt̩ə/
waiting	/ˈweɪtɪŋ/	/ˈweɪtɪŋ/
change	/ˈtʃeɪndʒ/	/ˈtʃeɪndʒ/
shake	/ˈʃeɪk/	/ˈʃeɪk/
way	/ˈweɪ/	/ˈweɪ/
accelerator	/əkˈseləreɪtə/	/əkˈseləreɪt̩ə/
visitation	/ˌvɪzɪˈteɪʃən/	/ˌvɪzɪˈteɪʃən/

The second diphthong which is expressed in the recordings is /aɪ/. We can find out that this diphthong occurs mostly in the same words, except for ‘hostile’ which is in GA pronounced as /'hɑ:stə'l/ and therefore this pronunciation avoids any diphthong, and on the other hand, the word ‘diabolical’ which is by RP speaker pronounced as /,daə'bɒlɪkəl/. Here we can see that the RP speaker rather glides to the schwa than to /ɪ/.

We can also notice that the /aɪ/ diphthong in the word ‘myself’ occurs with the unstressed syllable. Nevertheless, this case is characteristic for both RP and GA.

Table 7 Diphthong /aɪ/

	Received Pronunciation	General American
I	/ 'aɪ/	/ 'aɪ/
driving	/ 'draɪvɪŋ/	/ 'draɪvɪŋ/
my	/ 'maɪ/	/ 'maɪ/
lights	/ 'laɪts/	/ 'laɪts/
side	/ 'saɪd/	/ 'saɪd/
riding	/ 'raɪdɪŋ/	/ 'raɪdɪŋ/
hostile	/ 'hɒstərəl/	-
kind	/ 'kaɪnd/	/ 'kaɪnd/
grinding	/ 'graɪndɪŋ/	/ 'graɪndɪŋ/
while	/ 'waɪəl/	/ 'waɪəl/
myself	/maɪ'self/	/maɪ'self/
diabolical	-	/,daɪ'bɒlɪkəl/

The third diphthong which can be heard in both recordings is /ɔɪ/ which is not frequently used neither by RP nor GA speaker. It is found only once there in the word ‘noise’ which is pronounced as /'nɔɪz/ in both RP and GA.

The diphthong /aʊ/ occurs in these recordings once as well and is also used in the same word in RP and GA - ‘down’ /'daʊn/.

Now, there will be provided two diphthongs while the one is typical of RP only - /əʊ/ and the other one for GA - /oʊ/. It might be observed that these two diphthongs are used in the identical words. RP speaker just prefers the schwa to /o/ in comparison to GA speaker. There is only one exception with the word ‘throwing’ which is by RP speaker pronounced without the /ʊ/ sound.

Table 8 Diphthongs /əʊ/ and /oʊ/

	Received Pronunciation /əʊ/	General American /oʊ/
throwing	/ˈθrəɪŋ/	/ˈθroʊɪŋ/
groaning	/ˈgrəʊnɪŋ/	/ˈgroʊnɪŋ/
whole	/ˈhəʊl/	/ˈhoʊl/
known	/ˈnəʊn/	/ˈnoʊn/
drove	/ˌdrəʊv/	/ˌdroʊv/
so	/ˈsəʊ/	/ˈsoʊ/
local	/ˈləʊkəl/	/ˈloʊkəl/
momentary	/ˈməʊməntəri/	/ˈmoʊməntəri/

Subsequently, the diphthong /ɪə/ will be introduced. From the following Table we can learn that this diphthong is more frequently expressed in RP than in GA. RP speakers tend to glide to the schwa which leads the word to be softer when listening it. GA speaker pronounces the vowel /ɪ/ only while the schwa is omitted. The same case is noticeable in words ‘really’ /'ri:li/, ‘steering’ /'stiəriŋ/, and ‘merely’ /'mɪrli/.

Table 9 Diphthong /ɪə/

	Received Pronunciation	General American
year	/'jɪə/	/'jɪr/
experience	/ɪk'spɪriənts/	/ɪk'spɪriənts/
really	/'ri:li/	-
steering	/'stiəriŋ/	-
mysterious	/mɪ'stiəriəs/	/mɪ'stiəriəs/
merely	/'mɪəli/	-

The diphthong /eə/ is typical of the word ‘there’ in RP when being pronounced in the strong form - /'ðeə/, and GA - /'ðeər/ and when it is the adverb. However, it is not a typical expression of GA. This diphthong can be found in one word which is peculiar for both RP and GA - ‘air’. The pronunciation of RP speaker is /'eə/ and GA /'eər/. Nevertheless, the schwa is hardly heard when considering GA.

The last diphthong /ʊə/ is just in RP recording, in GA one it is not expressed at all. Firstly, we can hear it in the word ‘fury’ /'fjʊəri/ while GA speaker pronounces it as /'fjʊri/, and secondly in ‘during’ /'dʒʊəriŋ/ in RP. Here the yod semivowel /j/ should be observed which is mainly typical of RP. The GA recording proves this rule by pronouncing the word ‘during’ as /'dʒʊriŋ/.

As it has been mentioned, the triphthongs are found in the recordings as well. They are a combination of two vowels and the schwa which is added to them. In total three expressions we can find - ‘hour’, ‘quiet’ and ‘fiery’ while RP speaker pronounces them as /'aʊə/,

'kwaɪət/ and /'fɑːrɪ/, and GA one as /'aʊər/, /'kwaɪət/ and /'fɑːrɪ/. To be accurate, there should be also mentioned the word 'while' which is pronounced as /'waɪl/ by the RP speaker.

5.2.4. Weak vowels

It is known that except for strong vowels also exist weak vowels in English. These are the schwa, /ɪ/, /ɪ/, /u/ and /ʊ/.

The first and the most noticeable difference between RP and GA is in the usage of weak vowels in words. We know that the most common one is the schwa which is in phonetic transcription marked as /ə/. This statement can be confirmed by these recordings. We can observe that both RP and GA use this sound very often. It was found out that both accents use the vowel equally. GA speaker just usually masks it by the following /r/ sound.

Firstly, we should perceive weak endings when considering RP. This situation has a close connection to the rhotacization which is, on the other hand, characteristic for GA. It means that words ending with 'r' in spelling are pronounced with /r/ at their endings in GA unlike RP which rather weakens them into the schwa. When looking at the following Table, it is also noticeable that the schwa is pronounced even by GA speaker, but with a lower tense.

Table 10 Weak endings

	Received Pronunciation	General American
year	/ˈjɪə/	/ˈjɪr/
hour	/ˈaʊə/	/ˈaʊr/
quarter	/ˈkwɔːtə/	/ˈkwɔːt̥r/
air	/ˈeə/	/ˈeər/
after	/ˈɑːftə/	/ˈæft̥r/
accelerator	/əkˈselɪtə/	/əkˈseləreɪt̥r/
tremor	/ˈtremə/	/ˈtremr/
rather	/ˈrɑːðə/	/ˈræð̥r/

There are two words pronounced with the schwa in its ending by GA speaker: ‘America’ and ‘vodka’ /ə'merɪkə/, /'vɔ:dkə/, nevertheless, as it is seen, none of these words contain ‘r’ in their ending but the vowel ‘a’. In comparison to RP, the former word shares the same pronunciation with GA. The latter one would be pronounced identically in its ending as GA, however, in this case there is noticed the intrusive ‘r’ which was discussed in the previous chapter.

There are situations in which the English language uses weak vowels to connect two consonants and so to facilitate the pronunciation. In most cases it refers to the schwa which is sometimes barely audible. In some cases we can observe some dissimilar usage of the schwa when comparing RP and GA.

The first difference can be heard in the word ‘amazing’ whose pronunciation is influenced by the preceding indefinite article ‘an’. When paying attention to the RP speaker, she pronounces it with the audible schwa - /nə'meɪzɪŋ/, unlike the GA speaker /n^ə'meɪzɪŋ/ in whose speech the schwa is hardly noticeable.

The word ‘unforgettable’ sounds like being pronounced with hardness by the GA speaker. This is caused by the rhotacized /r/ sound which is preceded by the schwa, and also t-voicing which is always followed by the weak vowel. In this case it is the schwa - /,ʌnf^ə'getəb^ll/. There is also noticeable the schwa sound between the consonants ‘b’ and ‘l’ which enables the former consonant being voiced. When considering the RP pronunciation, it is pronounced with the soft ‘t’ and there is not heard any rhotacization - /,ʌnfə'getəb^ll/.

Although there are two separate words in the following phrase - ‘two o’clock’ they are pronounced as one. It is heard that the vowel /ʊ/ in RP or /u/ in GA is linked together with the schwa, thus there is no interruption noticed between these two words. This case is observable in both RP and GA recording.

In some cases we can notice the superscript schwas written in the phonetic transcription which are also used in Well’s dictionary (2008). They usually help the consonants being voiced, for instance /m'kredɪb^əl/, /'sʌd^ən/ or /'pi:sf^əl/ which is typical of both RP and GA. They are also ordinarily used by GA speaker who is rhotacizing, for example /p^ər'hæps/, /'bækw^ərdz/, or /'fɔ:rw^ərdz/ while the RP speaker pronounces the schwa only. This superscript schwa is also observed in the word ‘wheel’ /'wi:^əl/ while both speakers glide from the long vowel to the schwa to make the word sound softer.

Since the schwa is never stressed, it is used in the unstressed syllables. We can usually find them in both RP and GA. On the other hand, the RP speaker weakens the third syllable in

the word ‘momentary’ while the GA speaker uses the strong /e/. The marked difference is observable in the word ‘paroxysm’ but it has been already discussed.

Table 11 **Schwa**

	Received Pronunciation	General American
amazing	/ə'meɪzɪŋ/	/ə'meɪzɪŋ/
unforgettable	/,ʌnfə'getəbəl/	/,ʌnfə'r'getəbəl/
o'clock	/ə'klɒk/	/ə'klak/
horrible	/'hɒrəbəl/	/'hɑ:rəbəl/
awesome	/'ɔ:səm/	/'ɔ:səm/
paroxysm	/'pærək,sɪzəm/	/pə'rɑ:ksɪzəm/
again	/ə'gen/	/ə'gen/
accelerator	/ək'selɪtə/	/ək'seləreɪtər/
America	/ə'merɪkə/	/ə'merɪkə/
momentary	/'məʊməntəri/	/'moʊməntəri/

Besides the schwa we should also take other weak vowels into consideration. These are /i/, /ɪ/, /u/ and /ʊ/.

We can observe that the weak /u/ and /ʊ/ are not pronounced very frequently. In the RP recording it is heard in words where occurs the diphthong /əʊ/, and in the word ‘to’ when being in the weak form - /tu/, which is observable in the GA recording as well. However, there is also the word ‘peaceful’ which is pronounced with the weak /ʊ/ by GA speaker, unlike the RP one who uses the schwa instead of it.

Weak vowels /i/ and /ɪ/ are found in more words in comparison to /u/ and /ʊ/, while their occurrences are, in most cases, the same in both RP and GA recording.

Firstly, the weak /ɪ/ sound is heard in suffixes beginning with vowel, such as ‘-ing’ and ‘ed’. Subsequently, when considering the first and unstressed syllables containing the /ɪ/

sound, the sound is pronounced weakly. In these recordings we mean the words ‘experience’, ‘incredible’, and ‘mysterious’. When taking the word ‘incredible’ into consideration, both ‘i’ letters are pronounced weakly. If we compare this situation with the Wells’s dictionary (2008), there is also possibility of pronouncing the third syllable with the schwa which is not heard neither in the RP nor GA recording. Since the word ‘its’ is pronounced without stress, we should assume that it is pronounced with the weak /ɪ/ sound as well.

Now, we will look at the differences between the RP and GA recording related to the weak /i/ and /ɪ/ vowels. We know that for GA the t-voicing is typical. As we can observe, the GA recording proves this knowledge as it is audible many times there, for instance in the words ‘unforgettable’ - /,ʌnfəˈrgetəbəl/ and ‘started’ - /ˈstɑːrtɪd/. What is also known is that the vowel following the voiced ‘t’ is always weak (Wells, 2011). In this recording there is usually used the schwa and the weak vowel /ɪ/.

What might appear to be interesting is the different pronunciation of the words ending with the letter ‘y’. While the GA speaker always pronounces them with the weak /ɪ/, the RP speaker uses the vowel /i/ in the words such as ‘really’, ‘fury’, ‘utterly’, and ‘fiery’.

5.2.5. Weak forms

It is known that English speakers distinguish between weak and strong forms. It means that the words in the strong forms are always stressed, unlike the weak ones which are not. In these recordings the weak forms may be highly observable as being hardly pronounced in some situations. Since this topic does not belong to those which I am concerned with, there will not be discussed the weak forms in details. But the broad comparison and the most distinctive differences between these two recordings will be provided.

Both RP and GA speakers use the weak forms quite frequently, especially the function words such as the determiners ‘a’, ‘an’, ‘the’ before consonants and also before vowels, auxiliary verbs ‘was’, ‘been’, ‘had’, and pronouns, for instance ‘me’ and ‘us’. Since both speakers narrate one text with the same intonation and expression, they use the weak and strong forms identically in most cases.

The exceptions can be heard in the phrase ‘must have been’ while the word ‘must’ is in the strong form in both recordings, which is not generally used in this form, and ‘have’ is pronounced with the /h/ sound in GA, unlike in RP where it is omitted. Subsequently, the conjunction ‘or’ is very frequently emphasized by the RP speaker, thus is pronounced in the strong form. In comparison to that, the GA speaker uses its weak form. There can be also

heard /wəs/ instead of /z/ at the ending when listening to the GA speaker in the phrase 'I was sitting there'. That is because the following element after 'was' is the consonant /s/, and thus it helps the speaker to pronounce it in a simple way. However, the RP speaker rather tends to the /z/ sound in this case.

Conclusion

The aim of this bachelor thesis was to compare phonemes of RP and GA and to show some differences between these two accents. The thesis is divided into the theoretical part and the research dealing with the analysis of the audio recording.

The theoretical part discusses topics referring to the accent, rhotic and non-rhotic accents, RP and GA, vowels and their pronunciation, short and long vowels, diphthongs, connected speech which focuses on word stress, weak forms and elision.

The practical part analyses audio recording representing RP and GA accent. Firstly, the text transcript of the recording is given together with the phonetic transcription of each accent which was made on the basis of my auditory perception of both accents. This part is based on analysis of these two recordings and on comparison of RP and GA accent while the emphasis is given to vowel sounds. When comparing the accents, there were observed differences as follows.

The first difference is in rhotacization. It is known that GA accent belongs to those which are rhotacized, unlike the RP one which is distinguished by non-rhotacization. Nevertheless, it is not suggested that RP speakers do not use the /r/ sound at all, there is just observed a lower occurrence of this sound in words in comparison to GA. While GA speaker pronounced the /r/ sound wherever the letter 'r' occurred in the text, RP speaker pronounced only 53% of them under these circumstances.

The remaining part of the practical section is related to vowels: short and long vowels, and different expressions. Special emphasis is given to diphthongs and weak vowels, and finally weak forms are discussed broadly.

When taking short and long vowels into consideration, there were not observed such distinctions in pronunciation when dealing with vowels in a strong form. Nevertheless, we could notice some differences in the frequency of their usage in the recordings. It was found out that the vowel 'æ' was expressed by one third more frequently in GA recording than in the RP one. On the other hand, the vowel 'ɒ' was more typical of the RP speaker who pronounced it approximately twice as many times as GA speaker. The short vowel 'ʌ' was characteristic for the GA speaker only, as in the word 'stopped'.

We could notice that some words differed in vowels, and some in whole form of the word such as 'hostile' and 'paroxysm'. These two words are distinguished by different quality of vowels and the word stress. For instance, the word 'hostile' is by RP speaker pronounced

with the short vowel /ɒ/ in the first syllable and with the diphthong /aɪ/ in the second one whereas the GA speaker pronounces the first syllable with the long vowel /ɑː/ and the second one with the schwa. The word 'paroxysm' is in RP recording distinguished by primary stress in the first syllable and the secondary one in the third syllable, unlike GA speaker who uses the primary stress in the second syllable and the secondary stress is not noticeable at all.

It was found out that both GA and RP speaker use diphthongs very frequently. Some of them are used equally in both accents, and some are characteristic for a particular accent only, such as /ʊə/ which was heard just in the RP recording, and /oʊ/ in GA.

Someone would say that the most frequent weak vowel, called schwa, is more typical of RP accent in comparison to GA one. Nevertheless, it was found out that both accents use the vowel equally. GA speaker just usually masked it by the following /r/ sound.

In conclusion I would say that RP accent is so similar and at the same time so different to GA one. When we talk to a speaker with GA accent, we can hear the hardness in the speech which is especially caused by rhotacization and t-voicing. On the other hand, the RP accent is indicated by softness. Nevertheless, as soon as the speech is transcribed into phonetic symbols, there can be noticed rather minor differences.

Thanks to this bachelor thesis I learned in which aspects these two accents might be different.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Table with RP and GA phonemes (Section 2.1.) given by Wells Longman Pronunciation Dictionary, 2008, p. xxxiv

RP	GA	Consonants	Examples	RP	GA	Vowels	Examples
•	•	p	pen	•	•	ɪ	kit
•	•	b	back	•	•	e	bed
•	•	t	tie	•	•	æ	trap
	•	t̚	city	•		ɒ	odd
•	•	d	day	•	•	ʌ	love
•	•	k	cup	•	•	ʊ	good
•	•	g	get	•	•	i:	sea
•	•	tʃ	match	•	•	eɪ	day
•	•	dʒ	age	•	•	aɪ	price
•	•	f	fat	•	•	ɔɪ	boy
•	•	v	view	•	•	u:	two
•	•	θ	thing	•		əʊ	goat
•	•	ð	other		•	oʊ	no
•	•	s	sister	•		ɒʊ	<i>variant in cold</i>
•	•	z	zero	•	•	aʊ	now
•	•	ʃ	sure	•		ɪə	here
•	•	ʒ	pleasure	•		eə	fair
•	•	h	whole	•	•	ɑ:	start
•	•	m	more		•	ɑ:	odd
•	•	n	know	•	•	ɔ:	law
•	•	ŋ	long	•		ʊə	poor
•	•	l	light	•		ɜ:	nurse
•	•	r	sorry		•	ɜ:	stir
•	•	j	use	•	•	i	happy
•	•	w	one	•	•	ə	about
				•			father
				•	•	u	situation
				•	•	ɪ	intend
				•		ʊ	stimulus

Appendix 2: Table with results of text analysis (Section 4.1.1.) given by Textalyser (2004)

Total word count:	140
Number of different words:	116
Complexity factor (Lexical Density):	82.9%
Readability (Gunning-Fog Index): <i>(6-easy 20-hard)</i>	8.7
Total number of characters:	1310
Number of characters without spaces:	732
Average Syllables per Word:	1.54
Sentence count:	16
Average sentence length (words):	16.33
Max sentence length (words):	45
<i>(i was sitting there at the steering wheel of my new car waiting for the lights to change when all of a sudden the car started to shake this way and that rocking from side to side throwing me backwards and forwards up and down)</i>	
Min sentence length (words):	3
<i>(and the noise)</i>	
Readability (Alternative) beta: <i>(100-easy 20-hard, optimal 60-70)</i>	60

Frequency and top words:

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
I	9	6.4%	1
Two	3	2.1%	2
My	3	2.1%	2
Just	2	1.4%	3
Seemed	2	1.4%	3
Everything	2	1.4%	3
Down	2	1.4%	3
Side	2	1.4%	3
Once	2	1.4%	3
Car	2	1.4%	3
Quarter	2	1.4%	3
D	2	1.4%	3
Then	2	1.4%	3
Earth	2	1.4%	3
Lunch	2	1.4%	3
Air	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
Fill	1	0.7%	4
Put	1	0.7%	4
Foot	1	0.7%	4
Accelerator	1	0.7%	4
Pressure	1	0.7%	4
Grinding	1	0.7%	4
Gentle	1	0.7%	4
Peaceful	1	0.7%	4
Again	1	0.7%	4
Stopped	1	0.7%	4
Short	1	0.7%	4
While	1	0.7%	4
Paroxysm	1	0.7%	4
Gas	1	0.7%	4
Suddenly	1	0.7%	4
Whole	1	0.7%	4
Smooth	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
Calm	1	0.7%	4
Quiet	1	0.7%	4
Drove	1	0.7%	4
Storm	1	0.7%	4
Diabolical	1	0.7%	4
Fiery	1	0.7%	4
Visitation	1	0.7%	4
Supernatural	1	0.7%	4
Wrath	1	0.7%	4
Rather	1	0.7%	4
Vodka	1	0.7%	4
During	1	0.7%	4
Double	1	0.7%	4
Drunk	1	0.7%	4
Merely	1	0.7%	4
Myself	1	0.7%	4
Ask	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
Off	1	0.7%	4
Utterly	1	0.7%	4
Awesome	1	0.7%	4
America	1	0.7%	4
Known	1	0.7%	4
Normal	1	0.7%	4
Very	1	0.7%	4
Struck	1	0.7%	4
Us	1	0.7%	4
Tremor	1	0.7%	4
Momentky	1	0.7%	4
Local	1	0.7%	4
Pedal	1	0.7%	4
Upon	1	0.7%	4
Thing	1	0.7%	4
Really	1	0.7%	4
Incredible	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
Past	1	0.7%	4
Later	1	0.7%	4
Sitting	1	0.7%	4
Steering	1	0.7%	4
Lights	1	0.7%	4
Change	1	0.7%	4
Waiting	1	0.7%	4
new	1	0.7%	4
wheel	1	0.7%	4
hour	1	0.7%	4
perhaps	1	0.7%	4
back	1	0.7%	4
work	1	0.7%	4
driving	1	0.7%	4
year	1	0.7%	4
day	1	0.7%	4
amazing	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
unforgettable	1	0.7%	4
clock	1	0.7%	4
o	1	0.7%	4
must	1	0.7%	4
experience	1	0.7%	4
sudden	1	0.7%	4
started	1	0.7%	4
venting	1	0.7%	4
vast	1	0.7%	4
force	1	0.7%	4
hostile	1	0.7%	4
spirit	1	0.7%	4
fury	1	0.7%	4
one	1	0.7%	4
groaning	1	0.7%	4
deep	1	0.7%	4
kind	1	0.7%	4

Word	Occurrences	Frequency	Rank
noise	1	0.7%	4
mysterious	1	0.7%	4
worse	1	0.7%	4
throwing	1	0.7%	4
me	1	0.7%	4
rocking	1	0.7%	4
way	1	0.7%	4
shake	1	0.7%	4
backwards	1	0.7%	4
forwards	1	0.7%	4
horse	1	0.7%	4
bucking	1	0.7%	4
riding	1	0.7%	4
felt	1	0.7%	4
horrible	1	0.7%	4

Word Length:

Word Length (characters)	Word count	Frequency
3	51	20.4%
4	43	17.2%
2	40	16%
5	33	13.2%
1	27	10.8%
6	18	7.2%
7	16	6.4%
8	10	4%
10	7	2.8%
9	2	0.8%
12	1	0.4%
13	1	0.4%
11	1	0.4%

Syllable count:

Syllable count	Word count	Frequency
1	141	62.4%
2	63	27.9%
3	10	4.4%
4	9	4%
5	3	1.3%

2 word phrases frequency:

Expression	Expression count	Frequency	Prominence
i was	3	1.2%	79.2
was it	2	0.8%	7
once more	2	0.8%	25.2
everything was	2	0.8%	27.9
seemed to	2	0.8%	48.4
i d	2	0.8%	48.8
a quarter	2	0.8%	85.2

Unfiltered wordcount:

Expression	Expression count	Frequency	Prominence
and	11	4.5%	47.8
was	10	4.1%	45.3
a	9	3.7%	47.5
the	9	3.7%	50.7
i	9	3.7%	59.2
or	6	2.4%	31
to	6	2.4%	66.9
it	5	2%	42.2
of	5	2%	57.5
had	4	1.6%	59.4
some	3	1.2%	26.7
as	3	1.2%	40.5
that	3	1.2%	42.4
an	3	1.2%	86.5
more	2	0.8%	25.1
once	2	0.8%	25.5

Expression	Expression count	Frequency	Prominence
everything	2	0.8%	28.2
which	2	0.8%	28.4
then	2	0.8%	29.2
earth	2	0.8%	32
just	2	0.8%	32.9
this	2	0.8%	42.4
down	2	0.8%	45.7
seemed	2	0.8%	48.6
d	2	0.8%	48.6
my	2	0.8%	53.3
there	2	0.8%	63.5
side	2	0.8%	65.7
after	2	0.8%	67.3
car	2	0.8%	72.9
quarter	2	0.8%	84.9
when	2	0.8%	85.5
two	2	0.8%	85.9

Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá srovnáním fonémů ve standardní britské a americké výslovnosti a je rozdělena na dvě části.

Teoretická část zahrnuje vědomosti týkající se standardního britského a amerického akcentu, samohlásek a jejich výslovnosti, krátkých a dlouhých samohlásek, a také vázání slov, do nichž zahrnujeme přízvuk, elizi, měkké tvary a měkké samohlásky.

Praktická část se věnuje analýze dvou audio nahrávek týkajících se standardní britské a americké výslovnosti.

Hlavním cílem této bakalářské práce bylo srovnat fonémy dvou zmíněných akcentů a zkoumat rozdíly těchto akcentů.

Annotation

Jméno a příjmení:	Dominika Nálepová
Katedra:	Katedra anglického jazyka
Vedoucí práce:	Mgr. Jaroslava Ivanová, M.A., Ph.D.
Rok obhajoby:	2014

Název práce:	Srovnání fonémů ve standardní britské a americké výslovnosti
Název v angličtině:	Comparison of phonemes in Received Pronunciation and General American pronunciation
Anotace práce:	<p>Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá srovnáním fonémů ve standardní britské a americké výslovnosti. Práce je rozdělena na teoretickou a praktickou část. Teoretická část pojednává o standardním britském a americkém akcentu, samohláskách, jejich výslovnosti, krátkých a dlouhých samohláskách a vázání slov, kam se řadí přízvuk, elize, měkké tvary a s nimi spojené měkké samohlásky. Praktická část se věnuje analýze audio nahrávek, jež se týká standardní britské a americké výslovnosti. Cílem této práce je srovnat fonémy standardní britské a americké angličtiny a zkoumat rozdíly mezi těmito akcenty.</p>
Klíčová slova:	Standardní britský akcent, standardní americký akcent, samohlásky, vázání slov, přízvuk, elize, měkké tvary, měkké samohlásky

Anotace v angličtině:	This bachelor thesis is concerned with comparison of phonemes in RP and GA pronunciation. This writing is divided into theoretical and practical part. The theoretical part deals with RP and GA accent, vowels, pronunciation of vowels, short and long vowels, and connected speech which covers the topics of word stress, elision, weak forms and weak vowels. The practical part is referring to analysis of audio recordings related to RP and GA pronunciation. The aim of this thesis is to compare phonemes of RP and GA and investigate the differences between these two accents.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	RP accent, GA accent, vowels, connected speech, word stress, elision, weak forms, weak vowels
Přílohy vázané v práci:	<p>Appendix 1:<i>Table with RP and GA phonemes (Section 2.1.) given by Wells Longman Pronunciation Dictionary, 2008, p. xxxiv</i></p> <p>Appendix 2:<i>Table with results of text analysis (Section 4.1.1.) given by Textalyser (2004)</i></p>
Rozsah práce:	67 stran
Jazyk práce:	AJ