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**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRONUNCIATIONS OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN
SPEECH SOUNDS IN RELATION TO ENGLISH STANDARD ACCENTS**

Bakalářská práce

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Prohlašuji, že jsem závěrečnou práci vypracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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vlastnoruční podpis

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List of phonetic symbols:

Vowels:

- a open front unrounded; the first element of English diphthongs aɪ (*high*) and aʊ (*how*)
- ɑ open back unrounded; *father* (ɑ:)
- æ open front unrounded; *trap*
- e close-mid front unrounded; *dress*; first element of English diphthongs eɪ (*face*) and RP eə (*square*)
- ə mid central unrounded; in *about*; first element of RP diphthong əʊ (*goat*), second element of RP diphthongs in *near*, *square*, *cure*
- ɚ rhotacized ə; GA *better*
- ɜ mid central unrounded; RP *nurse* (ɜ:)
- ɝ rhotacized ɜ; GA *nurse* (ɝ:)
- i close front unrounded; *key* (i:); English neutralization of i: - ɪ in *happy*
- ɪ close-mid centralized; *kit*; second element of English diphthongs aɪ (*price*), eɪ (*face*), ɔɪ (*choice*)
- o close-mid back rounded; first element of AmE diphthong oʊ (*goat*)
- ɔ open-mid back rounded; in *thought*; first element of English diphthong ɔɪ (*choice*)
- ɒ open back rounded; RP *lot*
- u close back rounded; *goose* (u:)
- ʊ lowered centralized; *foot*; second element of English diphthongs aʊ (*mouth*), əʊ (*goat*)
- ʌ open-mid back unrounded; *love*

Consonants:

- b voiced bilabial plosive; *labour*
- d voiced alveolar plosive; *sudden*
- dʒ voiced palato-alveolar fricative; *marriage*
- ð voiced dental fricative; *father*
- f voiceless labiodentals fricative; *phone*
- g voiced velar plosive; *eagle*
- h voiceless glottal fricative; *horse*
- j voiced palatal approximant; *yet*
- k voiceless velar plosive; *key*
- l voiced alveolar lateral approximant; *lock*
- ɫ voiced alveolar lateral approximant with velarization; *fell*

| | |
|----|---|
| m | voiced bilabial nasal; <i>mouse</i> |
| n | voiced uvular nasal; <i>number</i> |
| ŋ | voiced velar nasal; <i>hunger</i> |
| p | voiceless bilabial plosive; <i>pit</i> |
| r | voiced alveolar trill; <i>red</i> |
| s | voiceless alveolar fricative; <i>sea</i> |
| ʃ | voiceless palate-alveolar fricative; <i>shout</i> |
| tʃ | voiced palate-alveolar affricate; <i>ch</i> in <i>leech</i> |
| t | voiceless alveolar plosive; <i>tender</i> |
| ɾ | alveolar tap; GA <i>city</i> |
| θ | voiceless dental fricative; <i>thought</i> |
| v | voiced labiodentals fricative; <i>voice</i> |
| w | voiced labial-velar approximant; <i>well</i> |
| z | voiced alveolar fricative; <i>zoom</i> |

Other symbols:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| ʔ | glottal stop |
| ə | optional sound |
| ' | primary stress |
| , | secondary stress |
| ˘ | extra short vowel |
| | tone unit |
| | pause |
| ˆ | dental sound |

Abstract:

The thesis presents two aspects of speech sounds comparison. The theoretical comparison of speech sounds of two standard English accents, Received Pronunciation and General American, has shown that differences between these two accents consist mainly in the vocalic area and the phenomenon of rhoticity.

The practical comparison shows these standard accents in relation to actual utterances by British and American speakers. The aim is to find out to what extent eight speakers deviate from their standard accents in their reading aloud. Variations have been identified namely in the vocalic area. While four British speakers under scrutiny showed rather minor variations from RP, four American speakers deviated from GA more frequently.

INTRODUCTION

The world being a global place today is undoubtedly in need of a global language which would be understood in all its parts in all spheres of human life, as to understand and being understood is nowadays a matter of crucial importance. Such status has been over a long period of time attributed to English which has crossed the border of its original territory and has spread worldwide as the primary means of communication. The term “global language” does not, however, imply that there is one single variety of language easily understood by everyone. Considering the fact how many people speak this language worldwide, it can be deduced that there are numerous pronunciation varieties of English which can be distinguished by a diverse phonemic inventory. Of all English accents there are two which can be considered as most important and which most foreign learners of English are taught: Received Pronunciation or BBC English accent of British English variety and General American accent of American English variety.

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to describe phonemic and some phonetic differences between these two major accents of English. Thanks to regional language varieties in both territories, these terms are, however, rather broad, therefore I will focus on two model pronunciations – Received Pronunciation (henceforth RP) and General American Pronunciation (henceforth GA).

The thesis is divided into two parts – theoretical and practical. The first part of the theoretical part is devoted briefly to the accents of the English language and provides background information on the two accents dealt with in this thesis. It is followed by the description of vowel and consonant systems of both. The practical part is based on the analysis of 8 recordings by different American and British speakers with the effort to analyze in what terms the speech of the informants diverts from the model pronunciations that are considered an “educated accent” in both countries in which they are spoken.

THEORETICAL PART

1 The Accent

The term *accent* refers to the way one pronounces sounds and words and it includes intonation, too. Wells (1982) puts it that it may be regarded as the phonetic / phonological component of the variety a speaker speaks. He regards accents as “*powerful indicators of geographical identity*” (ibid., p. 8).

Giegerich (1992, p. 52) distinguishes three types of variations that are possible among accents: Realisational variation is a common type of variations where phonemes are the same but their phonetic realization differs. Phonemic variation consists in the difference between the numbers of phonemes. And finally lexical variation consists in the way how speakers of different accents use different phonemes in different words.

In general, differences of accent refer to pronunciation differences (Roach, 2009).

1.1. Accents of the Present Day English

English is a native language for around 377 million people worldwide (Crystal, 1995). The high number of English-speaking population implies also a high number of different ways of English pronunciation. Wells (1982) divides the English accents into two major groups – North American one and one of British-oriented countries. England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, West Indies and Australia, New Zealand and southern Africa fall within the latter one. Most homogenous territories in terms of local accents are Australia, New Zealand and the American far west. Britain is, on the contrary, most diversified in this respect. These main accent groups can be further subdivided into regional areas or even cities with characteristic accents. The fact whether the area is urban or rural plays also its role.

Apart from regional variations, accents of the present-day English can be divided into several classes according to the factors which influence them. Thus we can distinguish between regional varieties, social varieties or ethnic varieties (Viereck et al., 2004). They are also strongly influenced by a social position of the speaker. In this respect differences in phonetic realizations are to be observed more strongly in England than North America due to the traditional social class stratification (Wells, 1982a).

Although the tendencies are towards equal perception of all spoken varieties of English (Baugh, 1963) foreign learners are usually taught one of the major English accents - either Received Pronunciation or BBC English or General American for productive purposes, and are exposed to a number of English accents for receptive purposes.

1.2. Standard Accents

A standard accent, as Wells puts it, is *“the one which, at a given time and place is generally considered correct: it is held up as a model of how one ought to speak, it is encouraged in the classroom, it is widely regarded as the most desirable accent for a person in a high-status profession to have”* (1982, p. 34). He also speaks of a non-localizable accent, an accent revealing little or nothing of a person’s geographical origin. The spoken standard (or, as it is sometimes called, the received or educated standard) (Baugh, 1963) varies in different parts of the English-speaking world. The standard in England is thus different from the one in the USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand.

Gimson (2001) notes the British are particularly sensitive to variations in their pronunciation, such extreme sensitivity not being observed in any other English-speaking country. The way one speaks in Britain is often connected with a rank in society and some dialects and accents tend to be considered as inferior. In this regard, one kind of English pronunciation enjoys more social prestige than others and has become an orthoepic¹ norm, namely the pronunciation of the south-east of England, so called Received Pronunciation. RP is treated as a standard in other English-speaking countries, as well, like Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, while Americans have a pronunciation standard of their own, so called General American English. GA, however, is not connected with such a social stigmatization as RP. It rather serves as a standard for comparison with other dialects and accents.

1.2.1. Received Pronunciation

The term Received Pronunciation implies that this kind of pronunciation has not been established officially (by an official body), but it is a result of a social consensus as to what is correct. RP is thus referred to as a social accent of English

¹ Orthoepy – study of correct pronunciation (Hála, 1975)

not linked to any particular region (Viereck et al, 2004). As Wells (1982) writes, the geographical location of RP is simply England. It has arisen from the need to establish one form of language which would be generally accepted and preferred to other ones. Thus the accent of South England, although once a regional accent, began to be used in politics and official matters and as such became more prestigious than other accents (Gimson, 2001). In this respect Bronstein (1960, p. 6) refers to the standard of British English as the "accent of social standing."

Since there are reservations against term "Received Pronunciation" (it is defined by Bronstein (1960, p. 6) as "*heard or received by the "best" circles*"), one can encounter also other names expressing the standard British pronunciation. Roach (2009, p. 3) points out that the word "received" meaning "accepted" or "approved" may indicate that other accents are not acceptable. In this connection he mentions other names as more suitable than RP, and that "General British" and "Public School Pronunciation". (Wells, 1982a, p. 117) finds the name "*less than happy*" as it relies on an outmoded meaning of the word "received". In this respect the term "BBC pronunciation" or "BBC English" seems to be more acceptable since it was adopted by BBC as a standard accent used by its announcers and is used in other public TV and radio broadcasts, as well, although it does not imply that no other accents can be heard from the media. One can also hear the terms Queen's English or Oxford English (Viereck et al, 2004).

RP is considered the language associated with public school graduates and upper and upper middle classes. However, as the sharp division between classes is disappearing, this also can no longer be said with certainty (Gimson, 1980, In Skaličková, 1982, p. 13). Information on the number of RP speakers differs from source to source. While Wells (1982) states there are about 10 % of the population of England who speak RP, Trudgill & Hannah (1994) say it is used by 3 – 4 % of the population only. The figure stated in the Oxford Guide to British and American Culture (1999) is 5 % and the British Library website² estimate is merely 2 %.

Although it may seem that RP is a homogenous accent, one can encounter different types of pronunciation within RP. Gimson (2001, p. 80 - 81) distinguishes three main types of RP, and that: General RP, which is most commonly used, Refined RP - connected with upper class. It is nowadays often considered as

² The British Library [online]. [cited on 28/02/2014]. Available from <http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/case-studies/received-pronunciation/>

affected and the number of its speakers is on decline (mostly upper class members and public school graduates). Another name for upper class RP is “Marked RP”. Characteristic for Refined RP is e.g. is the realization of final /ə/ where it forms part of /ɪə, eə and ʊə/ which are pronounced very open. In the third, Gimson mentions Regional RP which contains some regional characteristics (e.g. London regional RP known as “Estuary English”).

Gimson (2001) further speaks of the Conservative RP – used by the older generation and the Advanced RP – used by young people from higher social strata. He also remarks that some younger people reject RP because it is associated with class division and the general tolerance to other accents is on the increase. Also Wells (1982) points out that thanks to the loosening of social stratification RP may be on its way out. In his report on the poll of British English pronunciation preferences, carried out in 1998, he reports “*less of deference to RP*” among younger people (Wells, 2000, p.5).

1.2.1.1. Near-RP

Near-RP is an accent that closely resembles RP but still shows certain features of a regional character. Wells (1986, p. 297) notes that this accent is perceived as “*indeed educated, well-spoken, middle-class.*” Trudgill & Hannah (1994) claim that it is spoken by many teachers of English who are not native RP speakers, especially by those coming from the south (particularly south-east) of England.

Some characteristic features of Near-RP, compared with RP, are as follows (ibid., p. 12- 13): Final syllables of words like *very* or *many* have /i:/ rather than /ɪ/. The RP vowel /ɪ/ in unstressed syllables corresponds to /ə/, although the distribution the two vowels varies in different near-RP accents, e.g. as in *honest* /-ɪst/ and *wanted* /- əd/ and /u:/ is often fronted towards /ʊ/. They further mention features of northern near-RP accents but these can be omitted herein.

1.2.2. American English

The beginnings of American English date back to 1607 when the first British settlers founded Jamestown, Virginia, which comes within the period of Early Modern English. Peprník (2004) claims that today’s American pronunciation

reflects the state of the pronunciation of the south-east of England around 1770 as following the Declaration of Independence from Britain in 1776 the contacts with the mother country lost intensity and the development of the language sound system, unlike in Britain, slowed down considerably or was discontinued. In this respect Baugh (1963) talks about the archaic character of American English which is attributed to the fact the language overseas has preserved old features of the language no longer used in Britain, such as the preservation of the *r* in GA (ibid., p. 416). Another feature of American English pronunciation that Baugh mentions is its uniformity. In comparison with pronunciation differences between different parts of England, the differences in America are much smaller. Historically, this can be ascribed to the “*constant mingling of settlers from one part with settlers from other parts*” (ibid., p. 416), a high mobility being a trend among American population till the present time. Thanks to its homogenous character, American English has thus developed in a highly intelligible language (ibid., 412-416).

The United States are nowadays typically divided into three principal speech areas – Southern, Eastern and General American, as shown in fig. 1. The most diversified area in terms of speech differences is the Atlantic coast, where the first European settlements were established (Wells, 1982a).

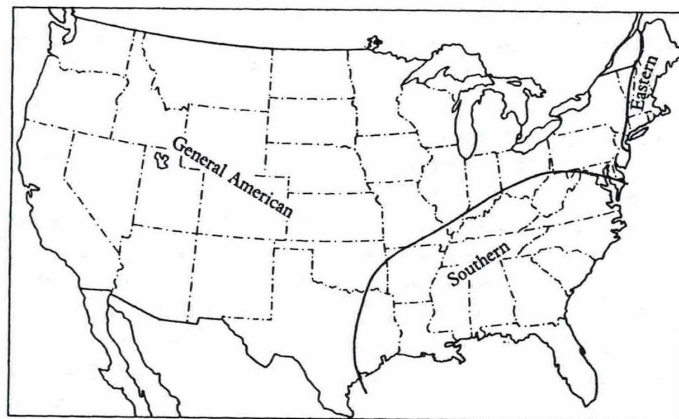


Fig. 1: Three major speech areas in the USA (Wells, 1982a)

1.2.2.1. General American

Although both RP and GA are considered as reference accents for the purpose of English teaching and studying, their status within their two mother countries is not the same. GA, comparably with RP, is not linked to any particular region within the country, it is a non-localizable accent, although the accent of the

area of the Midwest is often considered as a standard of American English (Wells, 1982a).

While RP is spoken by a minority of British speakers only, the number of the US speakers speaking GA is as much as two thirds of the total population (Wells, 1982a).

Another difference between RP and GA is that while RP is closely connected with social classes, this is not the case of GA. GA is not a socially preferred standard. Accents of all social classes in the USA are characterized by regional variation – as Bronstein (1960, p. 6) observes, “*the speech of educated Bostonian is no more “standard” than the educated speech of Tulsa, except in Boston*”³. GA is thus more closely connected with geographical regions.

GA is not a uniform accent. It is a general name for accents which do not have north-eastern or southern characteristics (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994, p. 45). It covers a range of US accents, although regional variations within GA are rather minor. In this respect, Carr (1999, p. 23) describes GA as an “*idealization over a group of accents whose speakers inhabit a vast proportion of the United States.*” The same actually applies to RP since it also covers a variety of accents.

Similarly like RP, also GA has been used by national television networks in America and is therefore sometimes referred to as “Network English” (Wells, 1982a).

2 Speech Sounds Comparison

As it has been indicated above, neither RP nor GA are uniform accents, even within these two model accents there are variations in pronunciation, so it may seem difficult to compare like with like. Wells (1986, p. 279) uses the term “*Mainstream RP*” to define a central tendency within RP. I dare borrow this term and say that this work will reflect the mainstream pronunciation tendencies of RP and GA. The approach employed is synchronic, i.e. studying two currently existing pronunciation variations of the language (while diachronic approach would show them in their historical context). The comparison deals with both phonemic (differences in phonemic inventories) and phonetic differences (differences in the sounds realization) (Roach, 2009).

³ Bronstein (1960, p. 4) describes the term *standard speech* as the „*socially acceptable patterns of speech as used by the educated persons of any community*“.

2.1. Transcription

In works of various authors (e.g. by A. C. Gimson (2001), D. Jones (1963) or Kenyon & Knott (1949)) we can find various systems of transcription set by these authors. In this work I will employ the system adopted in Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (henceforth LPD, 3rd edition), 2008, which conforms to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The transcription is phonological, it shows phonemes, and the brackets used in transcription are slant ones / /, only for phonetic transcription of individual sounds square brackets [] are used. Transcription symbols that are raised (°) represent optional sounds inserted by speakers.

2.2. Lexical Sets

The two varieties of English dealt with herein will be compared with the help of lexical sets. A lexical set, a term devised by J. C. Wells (1982), is a system of representative keywords in which vowels are pronounced in the same manner. It may be used to describe English pronunciation and differences between accents of English.

2.3. Longman Pronunciation Dictionary

For the 3rd edition of LPD, a preference poll was conducted by Prof. Wells, the author, and the publisher, Pearson Education, regarding the words with uncertain or disputed pronunciation. Some of the findings related to the theme of this work are mentioned in the footnotes, the reason being not only that I find them more than interesting but they also add to the complete picture of the current state of both GA and RP.

3 The Vowel

Vowels include monophthongs, diphthongs and triphthongs. They are described as “*sounds in which there is no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips*” (Roach 2009, p 10). They can be typically found in the middle of a syllable. Vowels are pronounced with open vocal tract, no part of the mouth is closed and their distinctive sound is made by using the tongue and lips. According to the tongue position in the oral cavity, they are divided into close and open vowels and front and back vowels. On pronouncing a close vowel, the tongue is positioned high in the mouth – close to the roof of the mouth, while on

pronouncing an open vowel, the position of the tongue is low. If the front part of the tongue is raised, we talk about front vowels and if it is the back of the tongue, we talk about back vowels (ibid.). In books on American phonetics the terms *high – low* vowels are used instead *close – open* (e.g. Carr, 1999; Celce-Murcia, 1996). According to lips position, they can be divided into rounded /u/, spread /i/ and neutral (lips are neither round nor spread) vowels. A simpler division of vowels into rounded and unrounded will be used in this work (Roach, 2009).

The manner of articulation is a qualitative feature of sounds (Crystal, 1995). Another qualitative characteristic of vowels is the *lax - tense* distinction which is given by the muscle tenseness. Lax vowels are short ones and the muscles are more relaxed on their articulation that on the articulation of the tense ones (e.g. a lax – tense opposition of /ɪ/ - /i:/) (Celce-Murcia, 1996).

Quantitative characteristic of vowels is determined by their length. From this perspective vowels can be split into *short - long* ones. Another classification of vowels is their division into *checked - free* ones (Wells, 1982a). Checked vowels occur in stressed syllables and are followed with a consonant, for example *fit* /fɪt/ or *rent* /rent/. Free vowels occur in stressed open syllables, e.g. *key* /ki:/ or *play* /pleɪ/. The length of the vowel is thus dependant on the way a final consonant is linked to it. English short vowels cannot stand in a final position of a stressed syllable unless they are followed by a consonant (ibid.).

The system of vowels is demonstrated in the cardinal vowel diagram. Cardinal vowels do not refer to particular sounds of any language, they represent a reference system for the recognition and comparison of vowels (Crystal, 1995).

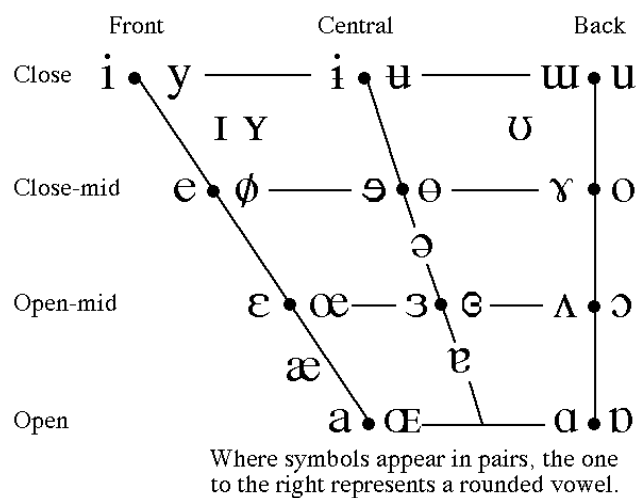


Fig. 2: Cardinal vowel diagram (The IPA, 2005)

8 primary cardinal vowels (most familiar sounds for European speakers), depicted in the diagram, are denoted as follows: 1 - [i]; 2 - [e]; 3 - [ɛ]; 4 - [a]; 5 - [ɑ]; 6 - [ɔ]; 7 - [o]; 8 - [u].

3.1. British and American Vowels

RP vowels: ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, ʊ, ɒ / i:, u:, ɜ:, ɔ:, ɑ: / ə
 aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ, aʊ, əʊ, ɪə, ɛə, ʊə

GA vowels: ɪ, ɛ, æ, ʌ, ʊ / i, u, ɒ, ɜ, ɔ, ɑ / ə
 aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ, aʊ

(Unlike all others, the sound ə occurs in unstressed syllables only) (Wells, 1982a)

3.2. Short Vowels

[ɪ] - KIT E.g. *England, pin, pretty, busy, wanted, beloved, build*⁴

The quality of the vowel is in many words the same both in RP and GA. It is a lower vowel than the cardinal vowel [i] and it is more open than the cardinal vowel [i]. In non-final syllables in GA, /ɪ/ and /ə/ are often not distinct as weak vowels, the quality of /ɪ/ in GA is more lax and is close to /ə/ (Wells, 2008). This phenomenon does not appear in the word-final position – e.g. *city* (Peprník, 1994). Nevertheless, Gimson (2001) mentions that this trend can be now observed in RP, too.

[e] - DRESS E.g. *step, egg, sweat, ready, many, friend*

A vowel between cardinal vowels 2 and 3. In GA it corresponds to [ɛ].

[æ] – TRAP E.g. *cat, back, man, shall, ant, tax*

The vowel is articulated higher and less front than cardinal vowel 4. In GA some words with the stressed vowel /æ/ belong to TRAP words and others to BATH words which will be referred to later herein. Thus:

⁴ All representative words relating to the individual lexical sets are drawn from Wells, 1982a.

| | RP | GA |
|-------------|--------|---------------------|
| <i>trap</i> | /træp/ | /træp/ ⁵ |
| <i>man</i> | /mæn/ | /mæn/ |

Where there is *r* in spelling GA /æ/ is articulated higher than the RP one and it may sound rather closer to /e/, as in *marry* or *carry* (Skaličková, 1982). In GA this vowel is often lengthened and may be diphthonged, as well, e.g. *bad* may sound as /bæd/ or /be: əd/ (Wells, 1982a).

[ʌ] - STRUT E.g. *up, run, hurry, butter, love, touch, blood*

[ʌ] belongs to central vowels. It is a backer sound in GA, it may sound deeper than in RP and its pronunciation is closer to /ə/. /ʌ/ and /ə/ can be allophones in GA (Wells, 2008).

[ʊ] – FOOT E.g. *put, full, could, woman, good, pudding*

The sound is articulated near the cardinal vowel no. 8. The vowel is of nearly the same quality in both accents, GA /ʊ/ is less rounded in words like *book* or *pull* than the RP one (Celce-Murcia, 1996).

| | RP | GA |
|--------------|---------|---------|
| <i>foot</i> | /fʊt/ | /fʊt/ |
| <i>woman</i> | /wʊmən/ | /wʊmən/ |

[ɒ] – LOT E.g. *pot, box, solve, watch, quality, profit*

– CLOTH E.g. *cough, cross, cost, often, wrong, Florida, sorry*

Probably the major phonological difference between RP and GA in the field of vowel sounds is represented by the /ɒ/ – /ɑ:/ difference. The /ɒ/ sound exists in RP inventory only, in GA this phoneme is absent and is realized either by the sound /ɑ:/ or /ɔ:/ – in this case the words belong to the CLOTH group (Wells, 1982a). The RP /ɒ/ sound is a back relatively low *rounded* vowel, although less rounded than /ɔ:/, while the GA /ɑ:/ sound is a low back *unrounded* sound and is longer than the RP one (Giegerich, 1992). Thus:

⁵ Example words are drawn from Wells, 1982

| | RP | GA |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------------|
| <i>lot</i> | /lɒt/ | /lə:t/ |
| <i>possible</i> | /pɒsəbəl/ | /pa:səbəl/ |
| <i>tomorrow</i> | /təmə:rəu/ | /təma:rou/ ⁶ |
| <i>cloth</i> | /klɒθ/ | /klɔ:θ/ |
| <i>long</i> | /lɒŋ/ | /lɔ:ŋ/ |

Due to the substitution of /ɒ/ for /ɑ:/ in GA, there is no real distinction in the quality of the stressed vowels of *father – fodder* /fɑ:/ or for *cart – cot* /kɑ:/, except the vowel length (Bronstein, 1960, p. 163).

[ə] The vowel called schwa is a very short central vowel and it does not occur in stressed syllables. In words where it is followed by *r*, schwa is r-coloured in GA (and may be symbolized as [ə̣] with added hook of retroflexion) (Roach, 2009). Thus:

| | RP | GA |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| <i>teacher</i> | /ti:tʃə/ | /ti:tʃər/ |
| <i>standard</i> | /stændəd/ | /stændərɪd/ |

Where schwa is pronounced the word-final position, similarly as /ɑ:/ and /ɔ:/, there is a final *r* in the spelling and the following word begins with a vowel, RP has linking *r* in connected speech, as in *teacher and pupil* /ti:tʃər ənd/ or *dear Ann* /dɪər æn/. There are also many cases of a so called intrusive *r*, where there is no *r* in the spelling, such as in *law and order* /lɔ:r ənd ɔ:də/ or *drama and music* /drɑ:mər ənd/ (Gimson, 2001, p. 288 – 289).

In RP there is often an /ə/ – /ɪ/⁷ contrast in word-final positions or before consonants – e.g. *bracelet, goodness*. This incidence is sporadic in GA (Giegerich, 1992).

⁶ According to LPD (2008) preference poll 65 % of Americans pronounce *tomorrow* as /təma:rou/, as opposed to 35 % who prefer /təmə:rəu/.

⁷ Other authors use /i/ for this unstressed syllable (Roach, 2009, p. 67; Wells, 2008, xxxiv)

3.2.1. RP and GA Short Vowel Summary

In terms of lexical set comparison, the short vowels can be compared as follows, highlighting the differences in bold type:

| Reference Word | RP | GA | Reference Word | RP | GA |
|----------------|----|----|----------------|----|----|
| KIT | ɪ | ɪ | DRESS | ɛ | ɛ |
| TRAP | æ | æ | STRUT | ʌ | ʌ |
| LOT | ɒ | ɑ: | CLOTH | ɒ | ɔ: |
| FOOT | ʊ | ʊ | | | |

Table 1: RP and GA short vowel comparison

The place of articulation of single vowels can be depicted by a simple diagram (fig. 3):

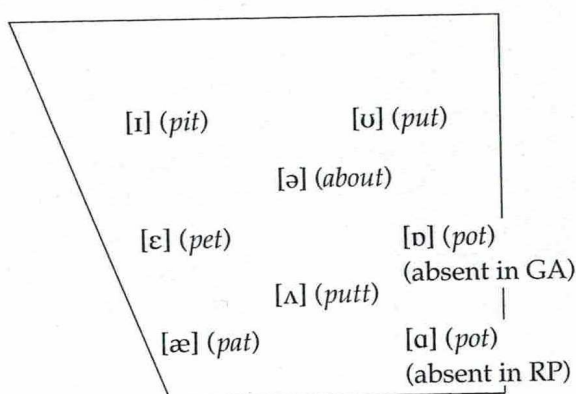


Fig. 3: RP and GA short vowels (Carr, 1999, p. 25)

3.3. Long Vowels

The vowel length duration in GA is not as distinct as in RP. Kenyon & Knot (1949) claim that there are few cases only in American English in which the duration of vowels is a distinguishing feature of words. Equally, Wells (1982 and 1986) in his *Accents of English* volumes does not use the length mark to denote the American English long vowels. The transcriptions in this work, however, reflect those stated in LPD, 3rd edition, in which the length mark is retained for clarity (Wells, 2008).

[i:] – FLEECE E.g. *see, seek, be, sea, receive, prestige*

The sound is articulated near the cardinal vowel no. 1. In GA the vowel tends to glide toward y, forming /iy/ – a so called *vowel + glide sequence* (Celce-Murcia, 1996, p. 94).

[u:] – GOOSE E.g. *loose, mood, fruit, do, group, music*

A rounded vowel close to cardinal vowel no. 8. GA sound is often diphthongized, it glides towards w in words like *blue* forming /uw/. Following alveolar consonants *t, d, n, l, s* and *z* the RP pronunciation is /-ju:/, while in GA /j/ is dropped leaving a single sound /-u:/, the phenomenon known as yod dropping (Wells, 1982a, p. 207). Yod dropping does not occur after labials and velars (ibid.). Thus:

| | RP | GA |
|-------------|---------|--------|
| <i>lose</i> | /lu:z/ | /lu:z/ |
| <i>knew</i> | /nju:/ | /nu:/ |
| <i>duke</i> | /dju:k/ | /du:k/ |

[ɜ:] – NURSE E.g. *girl, hurt, turn, nerve, earth, word, emergency*

A central vowel the articulation of which is close to the one of schwa. GA /ɜ:/ variant gets an r-colouring before a vowel and its articulation is more retroflex and it is pronounced with the tip of the tongue raised (Peprník, 1994). The corresponding GA sign is [ɜ̣]. Thus:

| | RP | GA |
|--------------|--------|---------|
| <i>nurse</i> | /nɜ:s/ | /nɜ̣:s/ |
| <i>word</i> | /wɜ:d/ | /wɜ̣:d/ |

[ɔ:] – THOUGHT E.g. *caught, ought, cause, crawl, talk, also*

The RP vowel is pronounced between cardinal vowels no. 6 and 7, while the GA one is higher, between no. 5 and 6, and less rounded. GA one is slightly shorter than the RP one (although it does have the short - long opposition like in RP). In GA /ɔ:/ is not as distinct sound as in RP and may move towards /ɑ:/ (Celce-Murcia, 1996). *Thought* can thus be pronounced as /θɑ:t/ or *stalk* as /sta:k/. Wells (1982b and 2008) asserts that there is a strong tendency in GA not to distinguish THOUGHT and LOT sounds (his LPD offers therefore both pronunciations

alternatives). Due to this THOUGHT – LOT merger *on* may rhyme both with *John* /dʒɑ:n/ and *lawn* /lɔ:n/, since the opposition between /ɔ:/ and /ɑ:/ is missing (ibid., 1982b).

– NORTH E.g. *fork, storm, order, warm, moral, fortunate*

In words in which the pronounced /ɔ:/ is followed by *r*, GA has the sequence /ɔr/, while there is only /ɔ:/ in RP. Thus:

| | RP | GA |
|--------------|--------|---------|
| <i>north</i> | /nɔ:θ/ | /nɔ:rθ/ |
| <i>warm</i> | /wɔ:m/ | /wɔ:rm/ |

[ɑ:] – Words containing this long vowel can be split into 3 pronunciation groups (Wells, 1982a):

– BATH E.g. *class, ask, after, path, chance, demand, aunt, banana*

Vowels which are followed by fricatives *f, s* and *θ* and nasals *n/m* + *vowel* are pronounced with /ɑ:/ in RP, but with /æ/ in GA – a so called “flat A” (as opposed to the RP “broad A”) (ibid., p. 134). The pronunciation of flat A in this type of words is generally longer than in TRAP words. This is one of the most noticeable differences between the two varieties in the field of vowels sounds.

| | RP | GA |
|----------------|------------|-----------|
| <i>bath</i> | /bɑ:θ/ | /bæθ/ |
| <i>ask</i> | /ɑ:sk/ | /æsk/ |
| <i>command</i> | /kə'mɑ:nd/ | /kə'mænd/ |

– START E.g. *far, large, park, card, market, farm*

Where /ɑ:/ is followed by *r* it is pronounced as /ɑr/ in GA:

| | | |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| <i>start</i> | /stɑ:t/ | /stɑ:rt/ |
| <i>far</i> | /fɑ:/ | /fɑ:r/ |
| <i>market</i> | /mɑ:kɪt/ | /mɑ:rkət |

– PALM E.g. *calm, spa, father, drama, lava, pyjama*

Words with relatively identical incidence of /ɑ:/

| | | |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| <i>palm</i> | /pɑ:m/ | /pɑ:lm/ |
| <i>spa</i> | /spɑ:/ | /spɑ:/ |

3.3.1. RP and GA Long Vowel Summary

In terms of lexical set comparison, the long vowels can be compared as follows, highlighting the differences in bold type:

| Reference Word | RP | GA | Reference Word | RP | GA |
|----------------|-----------|------------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| FLEECE | i: | i: | GOOSE | u: | u: |
| NURSE | ɜ: | ɝ | THOUGHT | ɔ: | ɔ: |
| NORTH | ɔ: | ɔ:r | BATH | ɑ: | Æ |
| START | ɑ: | ɑ:r | PALM | ɑ: | ɑ: |

Table 2: RP and GA long vowel comparison

The place of articulation of single vowels can be depicted in a simple diagram (fig. 4):

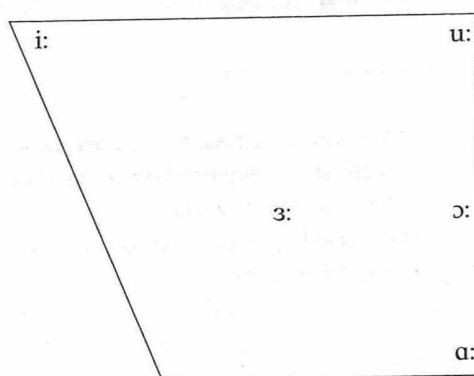


Fig. 4: RP and GA short vowels (Carr, 1999, p. 29)

3.4. Diphthongs

Diphthongs are sounds which consist of a glide from one vowel to another (Roach, 2009). They can be described as vocalic clusters.⁸ They are one-syllable sounds, which means that adjacent vowels that are in separate syllables are not diphthongal (Bronstein, 1960).

RP has altogether eight diphthongal sounds, mentioned in Section 3.1. above, while the number of GA diphthongs is four only. The diphthong [əʊ] and all three diphthongs ending with schwa are absent in GA. These are pronounced with an *r*-coloured vowel instead (Wells, 1982a).

⁸ Another possible denotation of diphthongs, "sound-blends", is referred to in Skaličková (1982, p. 201).

| | | |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| | RP | GA |
| <i>no</i> | /nəʊ/ | /nou/ |
| <i>hair</i> | /heə/ | /heər/ |
| <i>pure</i> | /pjʊə/ | /pjʊr/ |
| <i>here</i> | /hɪə/ | /hɪər/ |

For completeness we can make the comparison with the help of Wells' lexical sets words highlighting the differences in bold type:

| Reference Word | RP | GA | Reference Word | RP | GA |
|----------------|----|-------|----------------|----|----|
| PRICE | aɪ | aɪ | FACE | eɪ | eɪ |
| CHOICE | ɔɪ | ɔɪ | MOUTH | aʊ | aʊ |
| GOAT | əʊ | o | NEAR | ɪə | ɪr |
| SQUARE | eə | er/ær | CURE | ʊə | ʊr |

Table 3: RP and GA diphthongs comparison

4 The Consonant

Consonants are characteristic by obstructing the flow of air through the vocal tract and they are typically found at the beginning and end of syllables (Roach, 2011). They are classified according to the manner and place of articulation, as to the presence of voice they are divided into voiced ones (with vibrating vocal folds) and voiceless ones (e.g. p – b; t – d) (Bronstein, 1960). Voiced consonants are also referred to as fortis (strong) and the voiceless ones as lenis (weak) (Crystal, 1995). Consonants produced with a complete closure of vocal tract are called stops (p, b, t, d, k, g) and those produced with a partial closure of the vocal tract are referred to as continuants (Bronstein, 1960).

The differences between American and British consonants are not as extensive as the vocalic ones, in particular, they comprise the following characteristics: the r-phoneme, rhoticity, the t-phoneme and the l-phoneme.

English consonant phonemes are depicted in Table 4 in Appendix 1 hereof.

4.1. The R – Phoneme

It has already followed from the vowel comparison, in which retroflex variants of [ɜ] and [ə] are shown, that the two varieties differ in the distribution of

the r-phoneme. This difference is of salient importance. While RP is classified as a non-rhotic language, GA is a rhotic one⁹ – it allows *r* in all positions, including before consonants and at the end of utterances (Roach, 1995, p. 163). Skaličková (1982, p. 201) claims that American *r* is the most variable speech sound of all with a number of realizations.

4.1.2. Rhoticity

One essential difference between RP and GA is the absence of the postvocalic *r* phoneme in RP and its presence in GA. In this context Giegerich (1995, p. 62 - 63) points out that speaking of the postvocalic *r* is inaccurate since one needs to identify the position of the *r* within the syllable. He defines rhotic accents as those which permit *r* in syllable rhymes (it follows the vowel within the same syllable), as in *here* or *bird*, and non-rhotic accents as those which do not have *r* in this context. So while RP drops *r* in syllable rhymes, it still keeps it in intervocalic positions, as in *herring* or *lyrics* or in connected speech (linking *r*), as in *here and there* or *quarter of* (ibid., p. 66).

On the perception of (non)-rhoticity in the two countries Wells (1982, p. 35) notes that while in the US a non-rhotic pronunciation is perceived as slovenly or ugly, for English speakers it is a norm. So what is prized in one country, is even stigmatized in the other one and the other way round.

4.2. The T-Phoneme

Another major allophonic distinction between RP and GA are the variations in the pronunciation of *t*. GA *t* that occurs in unaccented intervocalic positions is realized as a tap /ɾ/ (Gimson, 2001, p. 164). While Gimson (ibid.) denotes this *t*-allophone as a tap /ɾ/, Jones in his *Pronunciation of English* (1963, p. 71) talks of flap¹⁰ /ɾ/ and states two possible phonetic denotations: /ɾ/ and /ɾ̥/. Bronstein (1960, p. 60) calls it simply a “voiced *t*” using the /ɾ̥/ symbol, noting that some

⁹ Not all American accents are rhotic. Traditional US *r*-less regions are New England, New York City and Tidewater Virginia (Wolfram, Schilling-Estes, 2006, p. 107). Equally one can encounter the pronunciation of postvocalic *r* in the British Isles, mainly in the western part of the country and some northern accents (Wells, 1986).

¹⁰ Flap is a voiced consonant produced by curling back the tip of the tongue and then throwing it against the alveolar ridge (Roach, 2011).

phoneticians consider it rather an allophone of *d*. Wells' LPD uses the /ɾ/ symbol, therefore it will be used herein, too.

Bronstein (1960, p. 74) provides a more detailed specification of the voiced *t* incidence: in intervocalic positions before an unstressed vowel, as in *better* /'beɾər/ or *butter*, before a syllabic *l*, as in *subtle* /'sʌɾl/ or *beetle*, between a non-syllabic *l* and an unstressed vowel, as in *consulted* /kən'sʌɾtɪd/ or *salted*, between *n* and an unstressed vowel, as in *twenty* /'twenɾi/ or *wanted*. Voiced realization of *t* further follows after a vowel + *r*, as in *party* /'pa:ɾti/ or *forty* (Celce-Murcia, 1996, p. 365). The use of the voiced *t* results in the fact that the distinction between word pairs, such as *bitter* and *bidder* or *latter* and *ladder* is often unclear. American speakers further often drop their *t* following the consonant *n*, e.g. in *twen(t)y* or *win(t)er* (ibid.), although, as Skaličková (1982) points out, in rather in less formal utterances. Final *t* is often unreleased before a following consonant, as in *that man* (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994, p. 41).

4.3. The L-Phoneme

In RP *l* is articulated differently when it occurs before a vowel and before *j*, e.g. in *lucky* and *value*, and when before a consonant and in final position, e.g. in *feel* and *cooled*. The former *l* is called “clear *l*” and is denoted as /l/, the latter one is its dark variant, denoted as /ɫ/ – *lull* /lɫ/ (Jones, 1963, p. 90 – 91). On producing the clear *l* the tongue is raised in the front of the mouth, the dark one is more velarized. In America this opposition is distinguishable in *r*-less regions but in the *r*-full GA the *l*-phoneme is pronounced as dark *l* in all positions (Bronstein, 1960, p. 125). In fast speech RP speakers sometimes omit the dark *l* before another consonant, as in *almost* or *fulfil* (Jones, 1963, p. 93).

4.4. Some Other Differences

GA speakers often pronounce words beginning with *wh* with /hw/ cluster, while for RP speakers plain /w/ is more usual, although it cannot be said it is fully omitted – *white* /hwait/ x /wait/ (Wells, 1982a).¹¹

¹¹ According to the LPD (2008) preference poll 77 % of British speakers pronounce *white* with plain [w], the number increasing as the age of the speakers is decreasing.

Words ending in *-ile* are commonly pronounced with /aɪ/ in RP and /əl/ in GA - *hostile* /hɒstaraɪ/ x /ha:stəl/ or *agile* /ædzaraɪ/ x /ædzəl/ (Peprník, 1994).

In GA short vowels /ɪ, e, æ/ tend to be diphthongized before *nd*. Thus *wind* will in GA be pronounced as /wiənd/ or *friend* as /freənd/ (ibid.). GA vowels are generally more glided than the RP ones, monophthongs /ɪ, e, ʌ and ʊ/ tend to have a centering diphthong, e.g. *bed* /be: əd/, *good* /gʊəd/ or *rub* /rʌəb/ (Wells. 1982b).

Unstressed suffixes *-ary*, *-ory* and *-ative* in multisyllabic words are pronounced as /-əri, -ori, -ətɪv/ in GA and as /-əri, -əri, -ətɪv/ in RP, e.g. in *primary*, *territory* and *qualitative* (Peprník, 1994).

In RP a syllable-final *t* before a consonant may be realized as a glottal stop [ʔ], as in *batman* /bæʔmən/. Glottal stop may occur as a so called glottal reinforcement also before /tʃ/, as in *church* /tʃɜ:ʔtʃ/ and some other consonant clusters, e.g. in *box* /bɒʔs/. Glottal reinforcement is not found in GA. Neither is /ʔ/ found as an allophone of *t*, with some exceptions as before *n*, as in *button* /bʌʔn/ (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994, p. 13 – 14, 41).

Finally, apart from the systematic differences between the two varieties, there is a large group of words that are pronounced in a different way in GA and RP, although it can be inferred from the results of the LPD preference poll that there is no sharp distinction between the pronunciations. Probably the best known examples are:

| | RP | GA |
|-----------------|------------|---------------------|
| <i>tomato</i> | /təma:təʊ/ | /təmeɪtəʊ/ |
| <i>schedule</i> | /ʃedju:l/ | /skedʒu:l/ |
| <i>neither</i> | /naɪðə/ | /ni:ðər/ |
| <i>vase</i> | /va:z/ | /veɪz/ |
| <i>clerk</i> | /kla:k/ | /klæ:k/ |
| <i>leisure</i> | /leɪzə/ | /ˈi:zər/ |
| <i>figure</i> | /fɪgə/ | /fɪgjər/ |
| <i>ate</i> | /et/ | /eɪt/ ¹² |

¹² The LPD (2008) preference poll reports that 70 % of the British speakers pronounce *schedule* as /ʃedju:l/ and 30 % prefer /sk/. The American way of pronunciation is preferred especially among younger speakers.

5 Summary of Major Differences Between RP and GA Phonemes

Major differences between phonemic inventories of RP and GA can be identified in the vocalic area. Altogether there are twelve monophthongs and eight diphthongs in RP and the same number of monophthongs and only four diphthongs in GA. There are two instances when a phoneme is present in one accent and missing in the other. The most noticeable phonemic distinction consists in low back vowels, namely in /ɒ/ and /ɑ:/ phonemes. Since /ɒ/ exists in RP inventory, in GA it is realized by other phonemes, and that by /ɑ:/ or /ɔ:/, in dependence on lexical incidence. The /o/ phoneme, present in GA only, is a part of the GA diphthong /ou/. Two of RP monophthongs can be pronounced in more ways in GA, in dependence on lexical incidence: /ɔ:/ can be pronounced as /ɔ:/ or /ɔ:r/ and /ɑ:/ as /æ/, /ɑ:/ or /ɑ:r/. The /ɑ:/ vs. /æ/ distinction, or flat A vs. broad A distinction, typically distinguishes the two accents. It relates to words which in RP have broad /ɑ:/ before fricatives and nasals while GA has flat /æ/ in this environment. The reduced number of GA diphthongs results from the rhotic character of GA. RP diphthongs ending with schwa have the /r/ phoneme instead in GA. Rhoticity affects also pronunciation of /ə/ and /ɜ:/ phonemes which are r-coloured if they precede a spelt *r*. Similarly, phonemes /ɑ:/ and /ɔ:/ have the /r/ sequence in words in which they precede a spelt *r*. Due to rhoticity GA does not preserve linking *r*, unlike RP.

The vowel length is a distinguishing feature in RP, in GA their duration is not as distinct.

Complete summary of RP and GA vowels is shown in Table 5 which is in Appendix 2.

Less extensive differences in the field of consonants include the already mentioned /r/ phoneme which is in GA allowed in all positions. Allophonic distinctions comprise the RP voiceless vs. GA voiced *t*-phoneme and the *l*-phoneme which is in GA realized as *dark l* in all positions while RP has *clear l* before a vowel and /j/.

87 % of the British speakers prefer to pronounce the initial diphthong in *either/neither* as /aɪ/ and 13 % as /i:/, as opposed to 84 % of Americans who prefer to pronounce it as /i:/ and 16 % who prefer /aɪ/.

The word *eat* is pronounced by 55 % of British speakers as /et/ and by 45 % (of mainly younger speakers) as /eɪt/. /et/ in AmE is considered non-standard.

Differences between the two accents include both phonemic and realizational (or allophonic) variations (s. section 1. above), the latter ones being more extensive, since, as Jones (1963) points out, different speakers may use different shades of sounds. Lexical variation is represented by a number of words which are pronounced in a different way in RP and in GA and the pronunciation of which cannot be always predicted.

PRACTICAL PART

6 Introduction to Practical Part

In this part of the work I will analyze the actual speech samples of eight native speakers using English as their mother tongue. The aim of this part is not to compare the British speech sounds with the American ones but rather to compare the accents of the informants with the presented standard accents of their own countries.

The idea to perform this kind of analysis comes from the fact that thanks to my job I have been in frequent touch with mainly British speakers, but recently also American speakers. Thanks to this experience I have found that I am able to perceive certain variations in the speech of various British speakers but the speech of the Americans sounds all the same to me, which is probably because I have been exposed to British English much more thanks to daily phone calls and travels to England at least twice a year. On the other hand, the point here is that so far I have not studied the two accent varieties in detail so my experience is based just on a common contact with them.

A set of eight recordings are presented, four recordings of British accents and four recordings of American accents.

As follows from section 1.2.1., RP is an accent of a mere minority of British speakers and as such the possibility to come across an RP speaker unless one moves in “higher circles” or in the media is relatively low. On the other hand, if we perceive RP as the “educated standard”, we may presume that speakers with an appropriate education may tend to draw near to such standard.

The facts given in section 1.2.2.1., on the other hand, indicate one may have a fairly good chance to meet with a GA speaker since the GA area forms a vast majority of the US. The accent distinctions here should not be linked to social division but one should rather count with certain geographical variations.

In the light of these facts we may lay down questions for this part of the thesis:

- Will a speaker with an appropriate (university) education stick to the pronunciation standard of his/her respective country?
- If not, to what extent will he/she deviate from such standard?
- What kind of pronunciation variations in relation to the speakers' standard accents can be identified?

6.1. Informants and Criteria for their Choice

For the purpose of this work it was necessary to make recordings of native British and American speakers. The British recordings were made during my short visit to Thame and Sowerby Bridge in Britain. One recording was made in the Czech Republic since the speaker is a British teacher of English domiciled in the Czech city of Zlín. Recordings of American speakers were made during my visit to a subsidiary of an American company in Villach, Austria, the headquarters of which is based in Fremont, California.

There were two main criteria for the choice of the informants. Firstly, their speech could not bear any "burden" of any strong regional accent, ideally the British speakers should come from the southern part of Britain and the American ones from the GA region. Secondly, as this paper deals with "educated standards" of the speech, all the chosen speakers have a university education, mostly of technical and managerial nature.

13 recordings were made altogether during my stays, of which 5 could not be used just because of the speakers' strong regional accents.

6.2. Requirements for the Audio Materials

The first part of the recordings is rather informative. Informants were asked to give brief information about where about in their respective countries they come from so that we know where their accents originate. The information about what they do provides us with an idea of their social status. Lastly, the speakers were asked how they perceive the accent of the other group, so the British speakers were asked a question about how they find the American English and vice versa. The reason for the last question was simple – I was interested to know. Answers to the first two questions can be found in Appendix 4.

In the second part of the recordings the informants were asked to read two short texts of which one was later chosen for the purpose of the analysis. The purpose of the reading part is to obtain identical material from all speakers so that it is easier to make comparisons. It is not the aim of the practical part to compare pronunciation features from the point of view of reading aloud and speaking therefore only the second part of the recording will be analysed.

6.2.1. The Text Passage

“Mrs. Drover looked for the date: it was today’s. She dropped the letter on to the bed-springs, then picked it up to see the writing again – her lips, beneath the remains of the lipstick, beginning to go white. She felt so much the change in her own face, that she went to the mirror, polished a clear patch in it and looked at once urgently and stealthily in. She was confronted by a woman of forty-four, with eyes starting out under a hat-brim that had been rather carelessly pulled down. She had not put on any more powder since she left the shop where she ate her solitary tea. The pearls her husband had given her on their marriage hung loose round her now rather thinner throat, slipping in the V of the pink wool jumper her sister knitted last autumn as they sat around the fire.” (Elizabeth Bowen, *The Demon Lover*)

At the beginning the informants were asked to read two text passages. One of the two passages was obviously easier for the informants to read but it showed up that it offered minimum variables to focus on, all the informants read it practically the same way, without any deviation. The passage chosen for the analysis was more difficult for the informants to read. The difficulty lay in the pronunciation of some words, like *solitary* or *rather thinner throat*, which proved to be sort of a tongue-twister, in context of the text, three speakers confused *starting* with *staring* and too many possessive pronouns in the last sentence were also confusing. On the other hand, the passage offered more variables which are listed in 6.3. The structure of the text has been analysed by Textanalyser (2004) and the results are shown in Appendix 6.

6.3. Identifying Variables

The following words chosen from the text passage, listed in Table 6, have one or more possibilities of pronunciation either in RP or GA, or in both. For this reason they will be focused on analysing the given text, although this does not mean that pronunciation variations may not affect other words in the text.

| Main RP | Less common alternative | Main GA | Less common alternative |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|
| 'mɪsɪz | 'mɪsəz* | 'mɪsɪz | 'mɪzɪz |
| lʊkt | lʊ:kt* | | |
| tə'deɪ | tu'deɪ | tə'deɪ | tu'deɪ |
| | | ɑ:n | ɔ:n |
| ə'gen | ə'geɪn | | |
| bi'ni:θ | bə'ni:θ | bi'ni:θ | bə'ni:θ |
| ri'meɪnz | rə'meɪnz | ri'meɪnz | rə'meɪnz |
| wʌnts | wɒnts* | | |
| kən'frʌntɪd | kɒn'frʌntɪd*/ -əd | | |
| | | fɔ:r | four |
| wɪð | wɪθ* | wɪθ | wɪð / wəð / wəθ ¹³ |
| bi:n | bɪn | | |
| 'keələsli | 'keəlɪsli | 'kerləsli | 'kærləsli |
| | | mɔ:r | mour |
| weə | hweər | weər | hweər/wæər/hwæər |
| Et | eɪt | eɪt | Et |
| 'sɒlətəri | 'sɒlɪtəri | | |
| ðeə | ðeɪə* | ðeər | ðæər / ðər |
| | | 'mæɪɪdʒ | 'merɪdʒ |
| | | 'ɔ:təm | 'ɑ:təm |

Table 6: Text Passage Variables¹⁴

(* non-RP pronunciation)

¹³ LPD (2008) preference poll states that 84 % of American speakers use /wɪθ/ and only 16 % use In Britain 85 % of speakers use /wɪð/ and 15 % /wɪθ/ (/wɪθ/ is nevertheless frequent in Scotland, preferred by 82 % respondents).

¹⁴ Wells, 2008 (LPD, 3rd edition)

As follows from Table 6, some variations are rather of minor character and occur both in RP and GA, such as /ə/ – /i/ variation in /bi'ni:θ/ – /bə'ni:θ/ and /ri'meɪnz/ – /rə'meɪnz/, especially in GA these sounds may easily merge. Other variations can be found in one of the accents only, which is caused by the difference in their vowel systems. Thus GA /ɑ:n/ and /ɔ:təm/ have secondary pronunciations of /ɔ:n/ and /'ɑ:təm/ respectively due to the fact that the distinction of LOT and THOUGHT vowels is on decline in GA. RP has only a single /ɒ/ vowel in this environment. Words /'mæɪrɪdʒ/ and /'kerləsli/ may have in GA an alternative pronunciation with /e/ and /æ/ respectively, since /æ/ may move towards /e/ before spelt *r*.

/wɪθ/ in GA has a weak form /wəð/ or /wəθ/, there is no weak form in RP. Likewise, /ðeər/ may have a weak form /ðə/ in GA, while there is either no weak form in RP or occasionally /ðə/ before a vowel (Wells, 2008).

6.4. Transcriptions and Method of Work

In the first step, the transcription of the given text passage is made in RP and GA respectively, with the help of LPD, 3rd edition (2008). Since the informants do not come from the very same locality, a basic description of each speaker's locality, in terms of its phonemic characteristics, is given. Such characteristics would usually make a long list of features, for this reason they are reduced to the most obvious ones only.

Transcription of the text passage follows. Each reader was offered to read the text silently first but most of them did not use this opportunity and read it straightaway. The transcription is made on the basis of careful listening to the speakers' reading.

Broad transcription is employed, only where necessary some allophonic symbols are used. Sounds that are found to deviate from the given standards are highlighted in bold letters. Misread words are marked in italics. In case that a word is not fully understandable, it is marked with *xxx*. A CD with recordings forms an integral part of this paper as Appendix 7.

7 Analysis of the Recorded Materials

7.1. The British Speakers

7.1.1. RP Transcription

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Mrs. Drover looked for the date: it was today's. She dropped the letter on to the bed-springs, then picked it up to see the writing again - her lips, beneath the remains of lipstick, beginning to go white.</p> | <p> 'mɪsɪz 'drəʊvə ,lʊkt 'fɔ: ðə 'deɪt ɪt wəz tə'deɪz ʃi 'drɒpt ðə 'letə ʊn tə ðə 'bedsprɪŋz ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'ʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen hə 'lɪps bɪ'ni:θ ðə ri'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk bɪ'ɡɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪt </p> |
| <p>She felt so much the change in her own face, that she went to the mirror, polished a clear patch in it and looked at once urgently and stealthily in.</p> | <p> ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndʒ ɪn hər əʊn 'feɪs ðæt ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪrə 'pɒlɪʃt ə 'klɪə 'pætʃ ɪn ɪt ən 'lʊkt ət 'wʌns 'ɜ:dʒəntli ən 'steɪlθɪli ɪn </p> |
| <p>She was confronted by a woman of forty-four, with eyes starting out under a hat-brim that had been rather carelessly pulled down.</p> | <p> ʃi wəz kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən əv 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ: wɪð 'aɪz ,stɑ:tɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm ðæt həd bi:n 'rɑ:ðə 'keələsli ,pʊld 'daʊn </p> |
| <p>She had not put on any more powder since she left the shop where she ate her solitary tea.</p> | <p> ʃi həd 'nɒt ,pʊt 'ʌn 'eni 'mɔ: 'paʊdə 'sɪn's ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɒp weə ʃi 'et hə 'sɒlətəri 'ti: </p> |
| <p>The pearls her husband had given her on their marriage hung loose round her now rather thinner throat, slipping in the V of the pink wool jumper her sister knitted last autumn as they sat around the fire.</p> | <p> ðə 'pɜ:lz hə 'hʌzbənd həd 'ɡɪvŋ hər ʊn ðeə 'mæɪɪdʒ 'hʌŋ 'lu:s 'raʊnd hə 'naʊ 'rɑ:ðə 'θɪnə 'θrəʊt 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpə hə 'sɪstə 'nɪtɪd 'lɑ:st 'ɔ:təm əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪə </p> |

7.1.2. Speakers' Localities

Two of the speakers come from south-west England. The feature which distinguishes the accents of this locality from other areas is rhoticity, although this does not imply that the *r* is pronounced by all speakers in the region (Wells, 1986). Short vowels are often lengthened in many environments. The /æ/ vowel in TRAP words is pronounced rather as /a/. The same quality have vowels in BATH and START words. The contrast between *gas* – *grass* or *carry* – *starry* thus depends on the vowel length only and the phonemic contrast /æ/ vs. /ɑ:/ is rather absent (ibid.).

Speaker no. 2 comes from Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, north-west of London, a relatively new rapidly growing city with many migrants and mix of accents.

Speaker no. 3 comes from London, which is a specific area in terms of phonology.

7.1.3. Speaker no. 1: Karl

||'mɪsɪz 'dəʊvə ,lʊkt 'f ðə 'deɪt || ɪt wɒz tə'deɪz || ʃi 'drɒpt ðə 'letə ɒn
tə ðə bedspɪŋz | ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hə 'lɪps | bi'ni:θ ðə
ri'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bi'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪt || ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndʒ
ɪnərəʊn 'feɪs | ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪrə | 'pɒlɪʃt ə 'klɪə 'pætʃ ɪn ɪt | ənd 'lʊkt ət
'wʌns 'z:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃi wəs kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə (xxx) əv 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ: |
wɪθ 'aɪs,sta:tɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm ðə hæd bi:n 'rɑ:ðə 'keələsli
,pʊld'ɪəʊn || ʃi həd 'nɒt ,pʊt 'ɒn 'eni 'mɔ: 'paʊdə | 'sɪns ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɒp | 'weə
ʃi: 'eɪt hə 'sɒ.lɪ.tə.ri 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz hə 'hʌzbənd həd 'gɪvŋ hər ɒn ðeə 'mæɪɪdʒl
'hʌŋ 'lu:s ə'raʊnd hə 'naʊ 'rɑ:ðə 'θɪnə 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk
'wʊl 'dʒʌmpə | hə 'sɪstə 'nɪtɪd 'lɑ:st 'ɔ:təm əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪə ||

In the effort to enunciate Karl pronounces words in a rather isolated manner and uses strong forms where one would more likely expect weak forms (/ʃi:/ and /hæd/).

Hi pronounces *with* as /wɪθ/, which is a non-RP feature.

Ate is pronounced as /eɪt/.

The word *solitary* is pronounced by Karl in four syllables as /'sɒ.lɪ.tə.ri/.

Rhoticity connected with the south-west accents is not noticeable.

7.1.4. Speaker no. 2: Leigh

|| 'mɪsɪz 'dəʊvə ,lʊkt 'f ðə 'deɪt || ɪt wəz tə'deɪs || ʃi 'drɒpt ðə 'letə ʊn ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hə 'lɪps | bi'ni:θ ðə ri'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bi'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪt || ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪnə'reʊn 'feɪs | ðæt ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪrə | 'pɒlɪʃɪŋ ə 'klɪə 'pæʃ ɪn ɪt ən 'lʊkt ə 'wʌnts 'z:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃi wəs kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən əv 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ: | wɪð 'aɪz ,steəriŋ 'aʊt 'lʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm ðæt əd **bɪn** 'rɑ:ðə 'keələsli ,pʊlɪ'dʒaʊn || ʃi əd 'nɒt ,pʊt 'ʊn 'eni 'mɔ: 'paʊdə | sɪnz ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɒp | weə ʃi 'eɪt hə 'sɒlɪtrɪ 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz hə 'hʌzbənd həd 'gɪvŋ hə ʊn ðeə 'mæɪɪdʒ | 'hʌŋ 'lu:s ə'raʊnd hə 'naʊ 'rɑ:ðə 'θɪnə 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpə | hə 'sɪstə 'nɪtɪd hɜ: 'lɑ:st 'ɔ:təm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪə ||

This recording must be listened to with headphones, otherwise it is difficult to get. Leigh pronounces as /bɪn/. There is a small number of British speakers who may have /bi:n/ as strong form and /bɪn/ as weak form (Wells, 2008).

Ate is pronounced as /eɪt/.

He pronounces *solitary* as /'sɒlɪtrɪ/ with /ɪ/ and a syllabic consonant.

7.1.5. Speaker no. 3: Steve

|| 'mɪsɪz 'drəʊvə ,lʊkt 'fə ðə 'deɪt || ɪt wəz tə'deɪz || ʃi 'drɒpt ðə 'letər ʊn ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | ðen ,pɪkt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'**geɪn** | hə 'lɪps | **bə'ni:θ** ðə ri'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bi'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪt || ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪnə 'laɪf ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪnə'reʊn 'feɪs | ðæt ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪrə | 'pɒlɪʃt ə 'klɪə 'pæʃ ɪn ɪt | ənd 'lʊkt ə 'wʌns 'z:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃi wəs kən'frʌntɪd wɪð ən wɪð ə 'wʊmən əv 'θɜ:ti 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ: | wɪð 'aɪz ,steəriŋ 'aʊt 'lʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm | ðæt əd bi:n 'rɑ:ðə 'keələsli ,pʊlɪ'dʒaʊn || ʃi həd 'nɒt ,pʊt'ʊn 'eni 'mɔ: 'paʊdə 'sɪnts ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɒp | weə ʃi 'eɪt hə 'sɒlɪtrɪ ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz hə 'hʌzbənd əd 'gɪvŋ hər ʊn ðeə 'mæɪɪdʒ | 'hʌŋ 'lu:s ə'raʊnd hə 'naʊ 'rɑ:ðə 'θɪnə 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpə hə 'sɪstə 'nɪtɪd 'lɑ:st 'ɔ:təm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪə ||

Steve pronounces *again* as /ə'geɪn/ and *eat* as /eɪt/. He has /ə/ in *beneath*. *Solitary* is pronounced with a syllabic consonant.

7.1.6. Speaker no. 4: Gary

|| 'mɪsɪz 'drəʊvə ,lʊkt 'fə ðə 'deɪt || It wəz tə'deɪz || ʃɪ 'drɒpt ðə 'letər ɒn
 tə ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'ven | **hər** 'lɪps | bɪ'ni:θ ðə
 rɪ'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bɪ'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪt || ʃɪ 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪn
 hər əʊn 'feɪs | ðət ʃɪ 'went tə ðə 'mɪrə | 'pʌlɪʃt ə 'klɪə 'pæɪtʃ ɪn ɪt | ən 'lʊkt ət
 'wʌnts 'ɜ:dʒətli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃɪ wəz kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən əv 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ: |
wɪθ 'aɪs ,stɑ:tɪŋ 'aʊt 'lʌndə ə 'hæt 'brɪm ðət həd '**bɪn** 'rɑ:ðə 'keələsli
 ,pʊld'ɔ:ʊn || ʃɪ həd 'nʌt ,pʊt 'ɒn 'eni 'mɔ: 'paʊdə | 'sɪnts ʃɪ: 'left ðə 'ʃɒp | weə
 ʃɪ 'eɪt hə '**sɒlətrɪ** 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz **hər** 'hʌzbænd əd 'gɪvŋ **hɜ:** ɒn ðə 'mæɪrɪdʒ |
 'hʌŋ 'lu:s 'raʊnd *hə* 'nek **hər** 'naʊ 'rɑ:ðə 'θɪn 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə
 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpə**r** | hə 'sɪstə 'nɪtɪd 'lɑ:st 'ɔ:təm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə
 'faɪə ||

Gary has lived almost an equal time in Britain, where he grew up, and in California in the United States. Although, as he himself says, he tends to gravitate more towards British English, the influence of the American English on the way he speaks is more than obvious and his speaking can serve as an example how one's accent can be influenced by another one when being exposed to it for a longer time.

There are signs of rhoticity in his speech, as in /hər, hɜ:, 'dʒʌmpər/ or /ɜ:dʒətli/, where he also dropped /n/. There is a fricative sound in *with*. He also pronounces *been* as /bɪn/, a GA variant.

In her own contains a very clear linking *r*.

Like all other informants, he pronounces *ate* as /eɪt/, there is a syllabic consonant in *solitary*.

An example of his “ambivalence” in terms of the two accents is also the pronunciation of *twenty* in his free utterance. He repeats the word twice, once he pronounces it as /twenti/ and once as /twentɪ /.

7.1.7. Summary of Variations by the British Speakers

All the British speakers showed variations from the given standard. The pronunciation of the devoiced fricative in *with*, realized by two of the speakers, falls outside the RP range. The pronunciation of *been* with /ɪ/ sound, realized by two speakers, is negligible since some RP speakers may have /bi:n/ as strong form and /bɪn/ as weak form (Wells, 2008). /bɪn/ is also a standard pronunciation of *been* in GA. It would probably be commonly expected that the speakers will pronounce *eat* as /et/, but none of them did, they used the variant /ert/ instead.

The variations and the number of their occurrences are summarized in Table 7 hereunder. This summary does not include variations made by the speaker no. 4, Gary, in terms of his “American-like” sounds as I did not find them relevant for it.

| Main RP | Variant realized by the speakers | No. of occurrences |
|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| wɪð | wɪθ | 2 / 4 |
| Et | ert | 4 / 4 |
| 'sɒlətəri | 'sɒ.lɪ.tə.ri | 1 / 4 |
| 'sɒlətəri | 'sɒlɪtɹɪ | 1 / 4 |
| bi:n | bɪn | 2 / 4 |
| bi'ni:θ | bə'ni:θ | 1 / 4 |
| ə'gen | ə'geɪn | 1 / 4 |
| 'ɜ:dʒəntli | ɜ:dʒətli | 1 / 4 |

Table 7: Pronunciation variations made by the British speakers

Further observations: The passage contains examples of regressive assimilation in which the voiceless word-initial consonant influences the preceding voiced one which becomes also voiceless (Roach, 2009), as in *eyes starting out* /'aɪz,sta:tɪŋ 'aʊt/ , *of forty-four* /əf'fɔ:ti 'fɔ:/ and *was confronted* /wəs kən'frʌntɪd/. Some of the speakers make a pause between the two words, then the word-final consonant remains voiced: /'aɪz ,sta:tɪŋ 'aʊt/, /əv 'fɔ:ti 'fɔ:/ and /wəs kən'frʌntɪd/. Words like /'mɪsɪz/, /tə'deɪz/, /rɪ'meɪnz əv/ and /'bedsprɪŋz/ are thus pronounced with /z/, although the degree of voicing is sometimes difficult to determine. There are also examples of the RP linking *r* in the passage, and that *in her own* /ɪn

hərəʊn/ (or /ɪnərəʊn/), *under a hat-brim* /ʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm/ and *her on* /hər ɒn/. However, the *r* is not always sounded since some of the speakers read the words in an isolated manner.

7.2. The American Speakers

7.2.1. GA Transcription

| | |
|---|--|
| Mrs. Drover looked for the date: it was today's. She dropped the letter on to the bed-springs, then picked it up to see the writing again - her lips, beneath the remains of lipstick, beginning to go white. | l'mɪsɪz 'drouvə ,lʊkt 'fɔ:r ðə 'deɪt 'ɪt wəz tə'deɪz ʃɪ 'dra:pt ðə 'leʃər a:n tə ðə 'bedsprɪŋz ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'ʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen hər 'lɪps bɪ'ni:θ ðə rɪ'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk bɪ'ɡɪnɪŋ tə 'ɡoʊ 'waɪt |
| She felt so much the change in her own face, that she went to the mirror, polished a clear patch in it and looked at once urgently and stealthily in. | l ʃɪ 'felt 'soʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪn hər 'oʊn 'feɪs ðæt ʃɪ 'went tə ðə 'mɪrər 'pɑ:lɪft ə 'klɪər 'pætʃ ɪn ɪt ən 'lʊkt ət 'wʌnz 'ɜ:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn |
| She was confronted by a woman of forty-four, with eyes starting out under a hat-brim that had been rather carelessly pulled down. | l ʃɪ wəz kən'frʌŋtəd baɪ ə 'wʊmən əv 'fɔ:rʃi 'fɔ:r wɪθ 'aɪz ,stɑ:rʃɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndr ə 'hæt 'brɪm ðæt həd 'bɪn 'ræðər 'keərɪləsli ,pʊld 'daʊn |
| She had not put on any more powder since she left the shop where she ate her solitary tea. | l ʃɪ həd 'nɑ:t ,pʊt 'a:n 'eni 'mɔ:r 'paʊdər 'sɪn'ts ʃɪ 'left ðə 'ʃɑ:p 'weər ʃɪ 'eɪt hər 'sɑ:lətəri 'ti: |
| The pearls her husband had given her on their marriage hung loose round her now rather thinner throat, slipping in the V of the pink wool jumper her sister knitted last autumn as they sat around the fire. | l ðə 'pɜ:lz hər 'hʌzbənd həd 'ɡɪvŋ hər a:n 'ðeər 'mæɪɪdʒ 'hʌŋ 'lu:s 'raʊnd hər 'nəʊ 'ræðər 'θɪnər 'θrəʊt 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpər hər 'sɪstər 'nɪʃtəd 'læst 'ɔ:təm əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪər |

7.2.2. Speakers' Localities

Speaker no. 5 comes from California, western part of the country. One of the characteristic features of the local accent is the THOUGHT - LOT merger: the /ɔ:/ of *thought* and /ɑ:/ of *lot* are not distinguished, whereby /ɔ:/ is becoming absent. Further, the vowel /æ/ merges to /e/ before *r* in words like *merry* – *marry* or *carry* – *cherry*. This phenomenon is widespread in GA accents. Similarly, other mergers before *r* involve /ɪ/ – /i:/ in *mirror* – *nearer* or /ʌ/ – /ə/ in *hurry* – *furry* (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994, p. 46 – 47). Californians may further use /ɪ/ rather than /e/ before a nasal, as in *ten* /tɪn/ and /i:/ rather than /ɪ/ before the velar nasal, which make *thing* be pronounced as /θi:ŋ/ (Wells, 2008, p. xxi).

It is difficult to identify the locality of speaker no. 6 since he gave more places where he grew up.

Speaker no. 7 comes from Detroit, Michigan, which falls within the northern GA area, the accents of which are in many respects similar to the western ones. Characteristic for them is a so called Northern Cities Chain Shift which involves /ɑ:/ moving to /æ/, /æ/ is becoming longer and may be diphthongized to /eə/ or /ɪə/, e.g. *man* /mɪən/ and *mat* /meət/, and /e/ is moving closer to /ʌ/, so *best* and *bust* may sound the same (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994, p. 48). Michigan falls within the area where THOUGHT – LOT merger is typically realized (Wells, 1982b).

Speaker no. 8 comes from California but lived a long time outside it, which may have influenced his accent. New York, that he mentions, does not fall within the GA area.

Regional varieties of educated North American English are depicted in Figure 6 which forms Appendix 3 hereof.

7.2.3. Speaker no. 5: Chris

|| 'mɪsɪz 'dɒvə ,lʊkt 'fɜː ðə 'deɪ? || 'ɪt wəz tə'deɪx || ʃi 'drɑːpt ðə 'leʃər
 ɔːn ðə 'bedsprɪŋz ən ,pɪkt ɪt 'lɒp tə 'siː ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hɜː 'lɪps | 'breθ ðə
 rɪ'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bɪ'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪ? || ʃi 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪn
 hɜː 'əʊn 'feɪs | ðæt ʃiː ɪn ðə 'mɪrər ('aɪ dʒəst 'kænt 'siː ðæt) | 'pɑːlɪft ə 'klɪr 'pæʃ
 ɪn ɪn ən 'lʊkt æt 'wʌnts 'ɜːdʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃi wəz kən'frʌŋtəd baɪ ə
 'wʊmən ə'θɜː əf'fɔːrʃi 'fɔːr | wɪð 'aɪs ,stɑːrʃɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndr ðə ,steərɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndr
 eɪ 'hæt 'brɪm ðæt 'hæd 'bɪn 'ræðər 'kerləsli ,pʊld'ɔːn || ʃi əd 'nɑːt ,pʊt ɔːn 'eni
 'mɔːr 'paʊdər 'sɪns ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɑːp | 'weɪ ʃi 'eɪt hɜː 'sɑːləteri 'tiː || ðə 'pɜːlz əv
 hɜː 'hʌzbænd ðə 'pɜːlz hɜː 'hʌzbænd hæd 'gɪvɪn hɜː ɔːn hɜː 'meərɪdʒ 'hʌŋ 'luːs
 'raʊnd hɜː 'naʊ 'ræðər 'θɪnər 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'viː əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpər
 hɜː 'sɪstr 'nɪʃəd 'læst 'ɑːtəm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪər ||

It seems that the final *t* in *date* and *white* is realized as a glottal stop since no true *t* is noticeable and the sound is cut off.

The final consonant in *with* is voiced.

/æ/ in *marriage* is closer to */e/* with an indication of diphthongization.

The vowel in *on* is rounded. On the other hand, *autumn* is pronounced with an unrounded initial vowel.

7.2.4. Speaker no. 6: David

|| 'mɪsɪz 'drouvə ,lʊkt 'f ðə 'deɪt || 'ɪt wəz tə'deɪs || ʃɪ 'dra:pt ðə
'leʃər ɔ:n tə ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | 'ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hər 'ɪps |
bɪ'ni:θ ðə rɪ'meɪnz əv 'ɪpstɪk | bɪ'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gəʊ 'waɪ? || ʃɪ 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə
'tʃeɪndʒ ɪn hər 'əʊn 'feɪs | ðət ʃɪ 'went tə ðə 'mɪərər | 'pɔ:lɪst ə 'klɪr 'pæɪtʃ ɪn 'ɪt
| ən 'lʊkt ət 'wʌns 'ɜ:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn || ʃɪ wəz kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən
ə'fɔ:rtɪ 'fɔ:r | wɪθ 'aɪz ,stɑ:rtɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndər ə 'hæt 'brɪm | ðət hæd 'bɪn 'ræðər
'kerləsli ,pʊlɪd'daʊn || ʃɪ əd 'nɑ:t ,pʊt 'ɔ:n 'eni 'mɔ:r 'paʊdər 'sɪnts ʃɪ 'left ðə 'ʃɑ:p
| 'wer ʃɪ 'eɪt hər 'sɔ:lɪtəriʃi 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lɪz hər 'hʌzbænd hæd 'gɪvŋ hɜ: ɔ:n 'ðer
'mæɪɪdʒ 'hʌŋ 'lu:s 'raʊnd hər 'nəʊ 'ræðər 'θɪnər 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi: əv ðə
'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpər | hər 'sɪstrɪ 'nɪʃəd 'læst 'ɔ:təm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪr
||

/t/ in *white* seems to be realized as glottal stop.

There is a noticeable diphthongization of */ɪ/* in *mirror*.

The word *polished* tends to have a rounded vowel and */ʃ/* moves rather towards */s/*.

There is no voiced */t/* in *confronted*.

The vowel in *on* is rounded.

Schwa in the triphthong of *fire* is omitted.

7.2.5. Speaker 7: Krista

|| 'mɪsɪz 'dɒvə ,lʊkt 'fɜː ðə 'deɪt || 'ɪt wəz tə'deɪs || ʃi 'dra:pt ðə 'leʃər
a:n ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | 'ðen ,pɪkt ɪt 'lʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hɜːr 'lɪps | bi'ni:θ ðə
ri'meɪnz əv 'lɪp,stɪk | bi'gɪnɪŋ ʒə 'gəʊ 'weɪ? || ʃi: 'felt 'səʊ 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪn
ə'əʊn 'feɪs | ðət ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪərər | 'pɑ:lɪft ə 'klɪr 'pæʃ ɪn ɪt ən 'lʊkt ət
'wʌnz 'ɜ:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪli ɪn ɪt || ʃi wəz kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən əf 'θɜ:ʃi
'fɔ:ʃi 'fɔ:r | wɪθ 'aɪs,stɑ:rtɪŋ 'aʊt 'lʌndr̩ ðə 'hæt 'brɪm | ən hæd 'ræðər 'kerləsli
,pʊld'ɔːn || ʃi əd 'nɑ:t ,pʊt a:n 'eni 'mɔ:r 'paʊdər 'sɪnts ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɑ:p | 'wer ʃi
'eɪt hɜːr 'sɑ:lɪ 'sɑ:lɪteri 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz hɜːr 'hʌzbænd hæd 'gɪvŋ hɜ: a:n 'hɜːr
'mæɪɪdʒ | hən 'hʌŋ 'lu:s ə'raʊnd hɜːr 'nɑʊ 'ræðər 'θɪnər 'θrəʊt | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ðə 'vi:
əv ðə 'pɪŋk 'wʊl 'dʒʌmpər | hɜːr 'sɪstr̩ ,nɪʃəd 'læst 'ɑ:ʃəm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd
ðə 'faɪr ||

The /eɪ/ diphthong in *today* is realized as a monophthong with a prolonged /e/.

The particle *to* is pronounced with a voiced /t/.

White is pronounced as /weɪ?/.

There is no voiced *t* in *confronted*.

Solitary is pronounced with /ɪ/.

Schwa in the triphthong of *fire* is omitted.

7.2.6. Speaker no. 8: John

|| 'mɪsɪz 'drouvə ,lʊkt 'fə ðə 'deɪt || 'ɪt wəz tə'deɪz || ʃi 'dra:pt ðə 'leʃər
ɑ:n ðə 'bedsprɪŋz | 'ðen ,pɪkt 'ɪt ʌp tə 'si: ðə 'raɪtɪŋ ə'gen | hər 'lɪps | bi'ni:θ ðə
rɪ'meɪnz əv 'lɪpstɪk | bi'gɪnɪŋ tə 'gou 'waɪt || ʃi 'felt 'sou 'mʌtʃ ðə 'tʃeɪndz ɪn ə
'oun 'feɪs | ðət ʃi 'went tə ðə 'mɪrər | 'pɔ:lɪft eɪ 'klɪr 'pæʃ ɪn 'ɪt | ən 'lʊkt ət
'wʌns 'ɜ:dʒəntli ən 'stelθɪ'li: ɪn || ʃi wəs kən'frʌntɪd baɪ ə 'wʊmən ə'fɔ:rti 'fɔ:r |
wɪθ 'aɪz ,stɑ:rtɪŋ 'aʊt 'ʌndər eɪ 'hæt 'brɪm | ðət hæd 'bɪn 'ræðər 'kerləsli
,pʊld'ɔ:ʊn || ʃi əd 'nɑ:t ,pʊt 'ɑ:n 'eni 'mɔ:r 'paʊdər 'sɪnts ʃi 'left ðə 'ʃɑ:p | 'wər ʃi
'eɪt hər 'sɑ:ləteri 'ti: || ðə 'pɜ:lz hər 'hʌzbænd hæd 'gɪvŋ hər ɑ:n 'ðer 'mæɪɪdʒ |
'hæŋ 'lu:s ə'raʊnd hər 'nɑʊ 'ræðər 'θɪnər 'θrout | 'slɪpɪŋ ɪn ði: 'vi: əv ðə 'pɪŋk
'wʊl 'dʒʌmpər | hər 'sɪstrɪ 'nɪʃəd 'læst 'ɔ:təm | əz 'ðeɪ 'sæt ə'raʊnd ðə 'faɪr ||

Vowels in *polished* and *on* are pronounced as rounded ones.

There is an additional stress in *stealthily* as a result of which the final vowel in is prolonged.

There is no voiced /t/ in *confronted*.

The vowel in *hung* is indistinct, it sounds rather as /ə/.

Schwa in the triphthong of *fire* is omitted.

7.2.7. Summary of Variations by American Speakers

All speakers showed deviations from the given standard. Variations by the American speakers were more diverse than those made by the British speakers. In most cases speakers made a clear distinction between unrounded /ɑ:/ and rounded /ɔ:/, which indicates that the THOUGHT – LOT merger is not realized by the speakers. All but one speakers had rounded vowel in *on*, the distinction being clearly recognizable in /ʃi əd 'nɑ:t 'pʊt ɔ:n/. The actual roundness of vowels is, however, difficult to assess.

In some instances it was difficult to distinguish whether the speaker pronounces /ɪ/ or /ə/ phoneme, confirming a more lax character of /ɪ/ in GA. Similarly, there was an instance when /ə/ and /ʌ/ were difficult to distinguish, on the other hand, speaker no. 8, John, made a clear distinction between these two

phonemes by pronouncing a clear /ə/ instead of /ʌ/ in *hung*, unlike the rest of the speakers.

There was also an evidence of a vowel diphthongization realized in the word *mirror*, in which two of the speakers pronounced /ɪ/ with a glide towards /ə/. In once instance /e/ glided towards /ə/ in *marriage*.

An interesting point was the occurrence of *t*-glottaling which occurred in two instances in *white*, although this phenomenon is supposed to be rather a matter of RP than GA.

As regards the vowel length, it was not always easy to distinguish between short and long vowels but as the length is not considered to have a distinguishing character in GA, this could have been predicted. Table 8 shows an overview of the variants realized by the speakers and their occurrence vis-à-vis the number of speakers.

| GA | Variant realized by the speakers | No. of occurrences |
|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| dɛɪt | dɛɪʔ | 1 / 4 |
| wɑɪt | wɑɪʔ | 2 / 4 |
| wɑɪt | wɛɪʔ | 1 / 4 |
| ɑ:n | ɔ:n | 1 / 4 |
| wɪθ | wɪð | 1 / 4 |
| 'mæɪɪdʒ | 'mɛəɪɪdʒ | 1 / 4 |
| 'mɪɪəɪ | 'mɪəɪəɪ | 2 / 4 |
| 'pɑ:lɪft | 'pɔ:lɪst | 1 / 4 |
| 'pɑ:lɪft | 'pɔ:lɪft | 1 / 4 |
| kən'frʌŋtəd | kən'frʌntɪd | 3 / 4 |
| 'sɑ:ləteri | 'sɑ:lɪteri | 1 / 4 |
| tə'deɪz | tə'de:s | 1 / 4 |
| tə | ʔə | 1 / 4 |
| hʌŋ | həŋ | 1 / 4 |
| 'ɔ:ʔəm | 'ɑ:ʔəm | 1 / 4 |
| fɑɪəɪ | fɑɪr | 3 / 4 |

Table 8: Pronunciation variations made by the American speakers

7.3. British vs. American Speakers – Summary of the Practical Part

In section 6 we have asked three questions which we can repeat here:

- Will a speaker with an appropriate (university) education stick to the pronunciation standard of his/her respective country?
- If not, to what extent will he/she deviate from such standard?
- What kind of pronunciation variations in relation to the speakers' standard accents can be identified?

The analysis of the recordings has shown that all addressed informants, having a university degree and a proper job position, did, to a greater or lesser extent, deviate from the pronunciation standards of their countries.

Variables have been identified within the text passage to focus on, showing less common pronunciation variants, although it has been pointed out that some other pronunciation variations may occur, as well. Fifteen variables have been identified for RP and fourteen for GA.

In reference to sections 7.1.7. and 7.2.7. above, we can conclude that the American speakers had almost twice as many occurrences of variations than the British speakers, which is shown in Table 9. This may be caused by a greater mobility of American speakers and their exposure to different regional accents. Most of the variations occurred expectedly in the vocalic area and not all variations are realized by all the speakers. The overall list of variations is shown in Table 10 in Appendix 5 hereof.

| | No. of variations | % vs. word count |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| British speakers | 8 | 5.3 |
| American speakers | 15 | 10 |

Table 9: Number of variations in proportion to word count

7.4. Free Utterances

We will not deal with the speakers' free utterances in detail, we will only list major variations they made. Those made by the British speakers are negligible, therefore variations from GA only are listed in Table 11 and recording in the Appendix 7.

| GA | Variant realized by the speakers |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| nɔ:rθ | nɔ:rð |
| 'kʌntri | ˌkʌnt'ri: |
| læst | læ̃st |
| ænd | æn |
| 'mænədʒə | 'mænədʒɜ: |
| nu: | nju: |
| wɪθ | wɪð |

Table 11: Variations made by the American speakers in free utterances

7.5. Problematic areas

Analyses of sounds are today commonly made with instruments that are devised for it, while the only instrument of mine was my auditory perception. The listening part was thus the greatest challenge for me on writing this thesis. All in all I listened to the recordings 7 – 8 times but there were areas on which I had to concentrate even more. They relate to one of the following aspects.

One of the challenges was the area of American vowels. The vowels in the British pronunciation are much easier to distinguish. There were three types of American vowels where I found difficulties. Firstly, the /ɑ:/ vs. /ɔ:/ distinction, caused by the smaller roundness of /ɔ:/. To distinguish between these two phonemes, I had to focus on two nearest contrasting words which contained them. For assessing a degree of roundness a video recorder may be helpful (although I would then be afraid if the informants would cooperate as willingly as they did). Secondly, the /ə/ vs. /ɪ/ distinction, these two phonemes having allophonic character in GA, and thirdly, some of the speakers had a less clear /æ/ vs. /ɑ:/ distinction.

Other challenges lay in identification of strong and weak forms, voiced and voiceless final consonants and assimilated sounds, as in *pulled down*.

8 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to compare differences between pronunciations of British and American speech sounds in relation to their standard accents, the

standard British accent being Received Pronunciation and the standard American accent being General American.

The theoretical part serves as a background for the practical part and can be divided into three main sections. In the first one the term accent itself and the two standard English accents are introduced, featuring the main aspects of both. While RP is a socially preferred accent spoken by a minority of British speakers, and may be exposed to a certain stigmatization therefore, GA is not linked to any social class and is spoken on vast area of the US.

The second section deals with the comparison of RP and GA vowels which are the source of the most phonemic and phonetic differences. The comparison is made with the help of lexical sets, a system of reference words representing individual vowels. Vocalic differences between RP and GA can be found both in the area of short and long vowels and diphthongs, as well, differences of salient importance were ascertained in LOT and BATH words.

The last section of the theoretical part deals with differences between the RP and GA consonants and it also presents features and impacts of rhoticity, which is the main source of differences in this area, besides the t-phoneme and l-phoneme.

Practical part is devoted to the analysis of four recordings I made with British speakers and four recordings I made with American speakers. This was an interesting part of the work as I had a direct interaction with native speakers and some of them were very interested in the topic of accents and provided me with some interesting information. This was, in particular, speaker no. 6, David, who's wife comes from New Zealand and speaks, as he says, the "Queen's English" and speaker no. 4, Gary, whose accent is very much influenced by his long-time stay in the US.

The aim of the practical part was to compare if and how the speakers' accents deviate from their respective standard (educated) accents. The speakers' task was first to speak freely in order to provide information about their origin and social status and then read a short text passage. Their utterances were transcribed and compared with transcriptions of the same in their standard accents. The results were first described individually for each speaker and then summarized in terms of the type of variations and number of occurrences. It was ascertained that the American speakers deviated from GA in more than twice as many instances than the British speakers. With some exceptions the variations made by the British speakers were of

rather a minor importance. Most of the variations made by the American speakers were actually expected, except one, which was t-glottaling, a feature found in RP but not in GA and most of American accents.

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Appendix 1: English consonant phonemes

| | | PLACE OF ARTICULATION | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------|----------|---------------|---------|-------|---------|
| | | Bilabial | Labiodental | Dental | Alveolar | Post-alveolar | Palatal | Velar | Glottal |
| MANNER OF ARTICULATION | Plosive | p b | | | t d | | | k g | |
| | Fricative | | f v | θ ð | s z | ʃ ʒ | | | h |
| | Affricate | | | | | tʃ dʒ | | | |
| | Nasal | m | | | n | | | ŋ | |
| | Lateral approximant | | | | l | | | | |
| | Approximant | w | | | | r | | j | |

Table 4: Chart of English consonant phonemes (Roach, 2009, p. 52)

Appendix 2: RP and GA vowel sounds comparison

| Reference Word | RP | GA | Reference Word | RP | GA |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| KIT | ɪ | ɪ | DRESS | e | ɛ |
| TRAP | æ | æ | STRUT | ʌ | ʌ |
| LOT | ɒ | ɑ: | CLOTH | ɒ | ɔ: |
| FOOT | ʊ | ʊ | | | |
| FLEECE | i: | i: | GOOSE | u: | u: |
| NURSE | ɜ: | ɝ | THOUGHT | ɔ: | ɔ: |
| NORTH | ɔ: | ɔ:r | BATH | ɑ: | æ |
| START | ɑ: | ɑ:r | PALM | ɑ: | ɑ: |
| PRICE | aɪ | aɪ | FACE | eɪ | eɪ |
| CHOICE | ɔɪ | ɔɪ | MOUTH | aʊ | aʊ |
| GOAT | əʊ | o | NEAR | ɪə | ɪr |
| SQUARE | eə | er/ær | CURE | ʊə | ʊr |

Table 5: RP and GA vowel sounds comparison

Appendix 3: Regional varieties of educated North American English

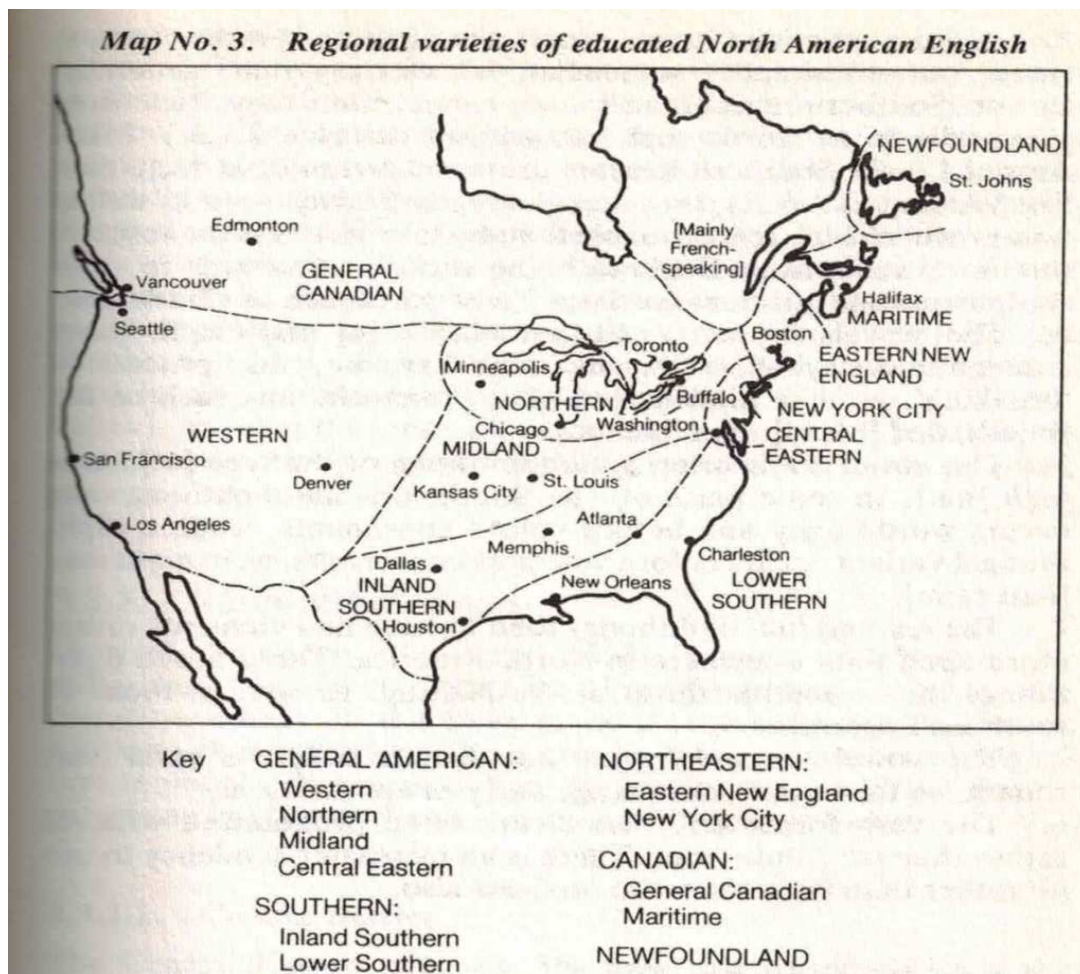


Fig. 6: Regional varieties of educated North American English (Trudgill & Hannah, 1994)

Appendix 4: Record of the informants' natural speech

Speaker no. 1: Karl:

Occupation: English teacher in the Czech Republic

Comes from Budleigh Salterton, county of Devon, UK

| | |
|--|---|
| Ok, so, my name is Karl, I am from a small seaside town in south-west England, called Budleigh Salterton, in the capital in the county of Devon near Exeter. Previously I studied psychology and biology at university before retraining as an English teacher in preparation for life in the Czech Republic. Now I live and work as an English teacher in the small but beautiful city of Zlín. | ,ə'keɪ 'səʊ 'maɪ 'neɪmɪs 'kɑ:l 'aɪəm frəm eɪ 'smɔ:l 'si:sai'taʊn ɪn ,səʊθ'west 'ɪŋɡlənd 'kɔ:ld 'bʌdli 'sɔ:ltətən ɪn ðə 'kæpɪtəl ɪn ðə 'kæʊnti: əv 'devn nɪə 'eksɪtə 'pri:vɪəsli: 'aɪ 'stʌdi:d saɪ'kɒlədʒi: ænd baɪ'ɒlədʒi: ət ju:nɪ'vɜ:sɪti bɪ'fɔ: ,ri:'treɪnɪŋ əz ən 'ɪŋɡlɪʃ 'ti:tʃə ɪn ,prepə'reɪʃn fə 'laɪf ɪn ðə 'tʃek rɪ'ɒblɪk naʊ 'aɪ 'lɪv ænd 'wɜ:k əz ən 'ɪŋɡlɪʃ 'ti:tʃə ɪn ði : 'smɔ:l bət 'bjʊ:tɪʃl 'sɪti: əv 'zli:n |
|--|---|

Speaker no. 2: Leigh

Occupation: Business unit manager

Comes from Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, UK

| | |
|---|--|
| Hello, my name is Leigh Jessiman, I'm from Milton Keynes and I find American English fairly straightforward as it's my native language. | hə'ləʊ maɪ 'neɪmɪs li: 'dʒesɪmən 'aɪm frəm 'mɪltən 'ki:nz ænd 'aɪ 'faɪnd ə'merɪkən 'ɪŋɡlɪʃ 'feəli ,streɪt'fɔ:wəd əz ɪts 'maɪ 'neɪtɪv 'læŋɡwɪdʒ |
|---|--|

Speaker no. 3: Steve

Occupation: Electronics engineer

Comes from north-west London, UK

| | |
|---|---|
| Hello, My name 's Steve, eh I was eh born and lived for majority of my live in north-west London, moved to Basingstoke, lived there for about five years, and the last eight years I have lived in Yorkshire. | hə'ləʊ məi 'neɪmsti:v e:m 'aɪ wəz e: 'bɔ:n ən 'lɪvd f mə'dʒɔrəti məi 'laɪv ɪn ,nɔ:θ'west 'lʌndən mu:vɔ tu: 'beɪzɪŋstəʊk 'lɪvd ðeə fə ə'baʊt 'faɪv 'jɪəz ænd ðə 'lɑ:st 'eɪt 'jɪəz 'aɪ əv 'lɪvd ɪn 'jɔ:kʃə |
|---|---|

Speaker no. 4: Gary

Occupation: Business manager

Comes from south-west of England

| | |
|--|--|
| Ok, so my name is Gary, ehm, I lived for 25 years in the UK, in the south-west of England, and for the last 20 years I've been living in the US, specifically California, ehm, I work as a business manager in the semiconductor industry. | ,ou'keɪ 'səʊ məi 'neɪm ɪs 'gæri e:m 'aɪ 'lɪvd fɔ: 'twentɪ faɪv 'jɪəz ɪn ðə ju:'keɪ ɪn ðə ,saʊθ'west əv 'ɪŋɡlənd ænd fə ðə 'lɑ:st 'twenti 'jɪəz aɪv bɪn 'lɪvɪŋ ɪn ði ju: 'es spə'sɪfɪkəlɪ ,kælə'fɔ:njə e:m 'aɪ 'wɜ:k əz eɪ 'bɪznɪs 'mænɪdʒər ɪn ðə ,semɪkən'dɪktə 'ɪndəstri |
|--|--|

Speaker no. 5: Chris

Occupation: Director of engineering

Comes from south of San Francisco, California, USA

| | |
|--|---|
| Hello, eh, my name is Chris Chang, I was born in actually Seattle, Washington, but I've spent, eh, almost all my life growing up in California, north in California just south of San Francisco, ehm, I am currently director of engineering here in Lam Research. | hə'ləʊ 'e 'məi 'neɪmɪs 'krɪs 'tʃæŋ 'aɪ wəz 'bɔ:n ɪn 'æktʃəli si'ætl 'wɑ:ʃɪŋtən bət aɪv 'spent e: 'ɑ:lmost 'ɑ:l 'məi 'laɪf ,ɡroʊɪŋ 'ʌp ɪn ,kælə'fɔ:njə 'nɔ:rð ɪn ,kælə'fɔ:njə 'dʒəst 'saʊθ əv 'sæn fræn'sɪskəʊ e:m 'aɪ əm 'kɜ:əntli: də'rektər əv ,endʒɪ'nɪrɪŋ hiərəɪn 'læm 'ri:sɜ:tʃ |
|--|---|

Speaker no. 6: David

Occupation: Product manager

Grew up in seven different cities in the USA

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Ok, ehm, my name is David Kratz, I was originally born in Orlando, Florida, ehm, I grew up in seven different cities in the US, so my accent is very much a mix of many areas of the US, Orlando, Florida, Columbus, Ohio, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Chicago, Illinois, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, ehm, primarily where I grew up. After xxx xxx university I also lived in California for some xxx time. Ehm, I currently work as management, responsible for product management in semiconductor equipment industry and living for last three years in Austria.</p> | <p>,ou:'keɪ e:m 'maɪ 'neɪmɪs 'deɪvəd 'kræts 'aɪ wəz ə'ɹɪdʒənəli 'bɔ:rn ɪn ɔ:r'lændou 'flɔ:ɹɪdə e:m 'aɪ ,gru: 'ʌp ɪn 'sevn 'dɪfrənt 'sɪtɪz ɪn ðə ju: 'es 'sou 'maɪ æk'sent s 'veri 'mɪks ə 'mɪks əv 'meni 'erɪəz əf ðə ju: 'es ɔ:r'lændou 'flɔ:ɹɪdə kə'lʌmbəs ɔ:'haɪou 'pɪtsbɜ:g ,pensəl'veɪnjə ʃɪ'ka:ɡou ,ɪlə,nɔɪ ,mɪ'lwɔ:ki ,wɪ'skɑ:nsən e:m praɪ'merəli 'wer 'aɪ ,gru: 'ʌp 'æfər xxx xxx ju:nɪ'vɜ:səti 'aɪ 'kɔ:lsou 'lɪvd ɪn ,kælə'fɔ:rnjə fər 'səm xxx 'taɪm e:m 'aɪ 'kɜ:əntli: 'wɜ:k əz 'mænədʒmənt 'spɑ:nsəbl fr 'pra:dʌkt 'mænədʒmənt ɪn ,semikən'dʒɛfrɪ 'kwɪpmənt 'ɪndəstri ænd 'lɪvɪŋ fər 'læst 'θri: 'jɪrz ɪn 'ɔ:striə </p> |
|---|---|

Speaker no. 7: Krista

Occupation: Technical product manager

Comes from Detroit, Michigan, USA

| | |
|---|---|
| My name is Krista, I grew up in Detroit, Michigan, which is an mid-west of the US, middle of the country, I also lived in California for about nine years, and most recently Colorado for the last twelve years and now Austria. I'm a technical product manager at Lam Research and been in Austria for the past fifteen months. | 'maɪ 'neɪm ɪz 'krɪstə 'aɪ ,gru: 'ʌp ɪn di:trɔɪt 'mɪʃɪŋ, 'wɪtʃ ɪz ən 'mɪ'dwest əv ði ju: 'es 'mɪdl əv ðə ,kʌnt'ri: 'a 'kʌlɪsou 'lɪvd ɪn ,kælə'fɔ:rnjə fɔ:r ə'baut 'naɪn 'jɪrz ən 'moust 'ri:sntli ,kɑ:lə'rɑ:dou f ðə 'læst 'twelv 'jɪrz əŋ 'həʊ 'ɔ:striə 'aɪ əm eɪ 'teknɪkl 'prɑ:dʌkt 'mænədʒɜ: ət 'læm rɪ'sɜ:tʃ ænd 'bɪn ɪn 'ɔ:striə fər ðə 'pæst ,fɪf'ti:n 'mʌnθs |
|---|---|

Speaker no. 8: John

Occupation: Director of supply chain

Comes from California, USA

| | |
|--|---|
| Hello, my name's John, I was born in California and I've lived in New York and Colorado and I moved back to California about fifteen years ago and have lived there ever since. I work in supply chain, I am a director of supply chain and responsible for purchasing all sorts of different materials for semiconductor equipment. | hə'lou 'maɪ 'neɪmz 'dʒɔ:n 'aɪ wəz 'bɔ:rn ɪn ,kælə'fɔ:rnjə e: aɪv 'lɪvd ɪn 'nju: 'jɔ:rk æn ,kɑ:lə'rɑ:dou æn 'aɪ 'mu:vt'bæk tə ,kælə'fɔ:rnjə ə'baut ,fɪf'ti:n 'jɪrz ə'gou ən əv 'lɪvd ðər 'evər 'sənts 'aɪ 'wɜ:k ɪn sə'plɑɪ 'tʃeɪn 'aɪ əm ə də'rektər f sə'plɑɪ 'tʃeɪn æn rɪ'spɑ:nsəbl fər 'pɜ:tʃəsɪŋ 'ɔ:l 'sɔ:rts ə 'dɪfərənt mə'tɪrɪəlz fər ,semikən'dæktər ɪ'kwɪpmənt |
|--|---|

Appendix 5: Summary of variations made by the British and American speakers

| Main RP | Variant realized by the speakers | No. of occurrences | GA | Variant realized by the speakers | No. of occurrences |
|------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| wɪð | wɪθ | 2/4 | deɪt | deɪ? | 1/4 |
| et | eɪt | 4/4 | waɪt | waɪ? | 2/4 |
| 'sɒlətəri | 'sɒ.lɪ.tə.ri | 1/4 | waɪt | weɪ? | 1/4 |
| 'sɒlətəri | 'sɒlɪtɹɪ | 1/4 | ɑ:n | ɔ:n | 1/4 |
| bi:n | bɪn | 2/4 | wɪθ | wɪð | 1/4 |
| bi'ni:θ | bə'ni:θ | 1/4 | 'mæɪɪdʒ | 'meəɪɪdʒ | 1/4 |
| ə'gen | ə'geɪn | 1/4 | 'ɔ:ʃəm | 'ɑ:ʃəm | 1/4 |
| 'ɜ:dʒəntli | ɜ:dʒətli | 1/4 | 'mɪrər | 'mɪərər | 2/4 |
| | | | 'pɑ:lɪʃt | 'pɔ:lɪʃt | 1/4 |
| | | | 'pɑ:lɪʃt | 'pɔ:lɪʃt | 1/4 |
| | | | kən'frʌŋtəd | kən'frʌntɪd | 3/4 |
| | | | 'sɑ:lə,teri | 'sɑ:lɪteri | 1/4 |
| | | | tə'deɪz | tə'de:s | 1/4 |
| | | | tə | ʃə | 1/4 |
| | | | hʌŋ | həŋ | 1/4 |

Table 10: Overall variations made by the British and American speakers

Appendix 6: Analysis of the text by Textanalyser (2004)

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total word count : | 150 |
| | |
| Number of different words : | 105 |
| Complexity factor (Lexical Density) : | 70% |
| Readability (Gunning-Fog Index) : (<i>6-easy 20-hard</i>) | 8.1 |
| Total number of characters : | 785 |
| Number of characters without spaces : | 620 |
| Average Syllables per Word: | 1.41 |
| Sentence count : | 8 |
| Average sentence length (words) : | 18.88 |
| Max sentence length (words) : | 38 |
| <i>(the pearls her husband had given her on their marriage hung loose round her now rather thinner throat slipping in the v of the pink wool jumper her sister knitted last autumn as they sat around the fire)</i> | |
| Min sentence length (words) : | 1 |
| <i>(mrs)</i> | |
| Readability (Alternative) beta : (<i>100-easy 20-hard, optimal 60-70</i>) | 68.5 |

Frequency and top words :

| Word | Occurrences | Frequency | Rank |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| The | 13 | 8.7% | 1 |
| She | 7 | 4.7% | 2 |
| Her | 7 | 4.7% | 2 |
| To | 4 | 2.7% | 3 |
| In | 4 | 2.7% | 3 |
| Of | 3 | 2% | 4 |
| Had | 3 | 2% | 4 |
| A | 3 | 2% | 4 |
| On | 3 | 2% | 4 |
| It | 3 | 2% | 4 |
| And | 2 | 1.3% | 5 |
| rather | 2 | 1.3% | 5 |
| Was | 2 | 1.3% | 5 |
| looked | 2 | 1.3% | 5 |
| that | 2 | 1.3% | 5 |
| since | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

| | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|
| Tea | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| left | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| shop | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| solitary | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Ate | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| where | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Not | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| carelessly | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| been | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| brim | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Hat | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| pulled | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| down | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| more | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Any | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Put | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| pearls | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| powder | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

| | | | |
|----------|---|------|---|
| hung | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| knitted | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| last | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| sister | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| jumper | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| wool | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| autumn | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| As | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| fire | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| around | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Sat | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| they | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| pink | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| V | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| under | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| marriage | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| their | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| given | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

| | | | |
|-----------|---|------|---|
| loose | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| round | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| slipping | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| throat | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| thinner | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Now | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| husband | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| woman | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| lips | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| again | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| writing | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| See | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| beneath | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| remains | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| white | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Go | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| beginning | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| lipstick | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

| | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|
| Up | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| picked | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| today's | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| date | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| For | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| drover | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| dropped | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| letter | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| then | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| springs | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Bed | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| felt | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| So | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| By | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| confronted | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| stealthily | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| urgently | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Mrs | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

| | | | |
|----------|---|------|---|
| forty | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| starting | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| eyes | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| with | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| four | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| once | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| At | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| face | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Own | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| change | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| much | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| went | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| mirror | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| patch | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| clear | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| polished | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |
| Out | 1 | 0.7% | 6 |

Word Length :

| Word Length (characters) | Word count | Frequency |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 3 | 48 | 31.8% |
| 4 | 25 | 16.6% |
| 2 | 23 | 15.2% |
| 6 | 17 | 11.3% |
| 5 | 13 | 8.6% |
| 7 | 9 | 6% |
| 8 | 7 | 4.6% |
| 1 | 5 | 3.3% |
| 10 | 3 | 2% |
| 9 | 1 | 0.7% |

Syllable count :

| Syllable count | Word count | Frequency |
|----------------|------------|-----------|
| 1 | 97 | 66% |
| 2 | 42 | 28.6% |
| 3 | 6 | 4.1% |
| 4 | 2 | 1.4% |

2 word phrases frequency :

| Expression | Expression count | Frequency | Prominence |
|------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| of the | 2 | 1.3% | 43.6 |
| to the | 2 | 1.3% | 77.5 |

Unfiltered wordcount :

| Expression | Expression count | Frequency | Prominence |
|------------|------------------|-----------|------------|
| The | 13 | 8.7% | 56.3 |
| Her | 7 | 4.7% | 34.8 |
| She | 7 | 4.7% | 54.8 |
| In | 4 | 2.7% | 48.8 |
| To | 4 | 2.7% | 79 |
| Had | 3 | 2% | 33.3 |
| Of | 3 | 2% | 45.8 |

| | | | |
|--------|---|------|------|
| On | 3 | 2% | 48.7 |
| A | 3 | 2% | 52.2 |
| It | 3 | 2% | 80.7 |
| rather | 2 | 1.3% | 27.3 |
| That | 2 | 1.3% | 54.3 |
| And | 2 | 1.3% | 57 |
| Was | 2 | 1.3% | 74 |
| looked | 2 | 1.3% | 78.3 |

Appendix 7: Audio CD

Résumé

The thesis is devoted to the comparison of speech sounds of standard British and American accents. The practical part is devoted to the analysis of recordings of four British and four American speakers whose utterances are compared with their respective accents. The analysis has shown to what extent the speakers' utterances deviated from the standard accents of their mother countries. Types of variations made by the speakers have been identified and compared.

ANNOTACE

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Jméno a příjmení: | Andrea Slavičková |
| Katedra nebo ústav: | Katedra anglického jazyka |
| Vedoucí práce: | Mgr. Jaroslava Ivanová, M.A., Ph.D. |
| Rok obhajoby: | 2014 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Název práce: | Rozdíly mezi výslovností britských a amerických hlásek ve vztahu k anglickým standardním akcentům |
| Název v angličtině: | Differences between pronunciations of British and American speech sounds in relation to English standard accents |
| Anotace práce: | Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o rozdílech ve výslovnosti hlásek v britském a americkém standardním akcentu. V teoretické části jsou porovnány samohlásky a souhlásky obou akcentů. Praktická část se zabývá analýzou nahrávek britských a amerických mluvčích, jejichž projevy jsou porovnány se standardními akcenty jejich mateřských zemí. Výsledky jsou poté vyhodnoceny a porovnány. |
| Klíčová slova: | výslovnost, hláska, samohláska, souhláska, dvojhlaska, standardní britský akcent, standardní americký akcent |
| Anotace v angličtině: | This bachelor thesis deals with differences between pronunciations of British and American speech sounds in relation to English standard accents. In the theoretical part, the vowel and consonant systems of both are compared. In the practical part, recordings of utterances of British and American speakers are analyzed in terms of variations from standard accents of their mother countries. Results are assessed and compared. |
| Klíčová slova v angličtině: | pronunciation, speech sound, vowel, consonant, diphthong, Received Pronunciation, General American |
| Přílohy vázané v práci: | Příloha č. 1: Tabulka 4 Příloha č. 2: Tabulka 5 Příloha č. 3: Obrázek 6 Příloha č. 4: Transkripce mluveného projevu Příloha č. 5: Tabulka 10 Příloha č. 6: Analýza textu Příloha č. 7: CD |
| Rozsah práce: | 53, 19 stran příloh |
| Jazyk práce: | Angličtina |