

Beatriz Morales
THE PHONETICAL TRANSCRIPTIVE BRITISH TRADITION VS. THE
PHONETICAL TRANSCRIPTIVE NORTHAMERICAN TRADITION

INTRODUCTION:

This dissertation studies the impact which the prolonged use of the British transcriptional tradition, which is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet, may have on Spanish-speaking learners of English pronunciation who, for some reason or other, have to finish, or decide to finish or complement, their university studies in a North American context or environment. North American dictionaries and pronunciation manuals are normally based on so-called ‘respelling’ [see e.g. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pronunciation_respelling_for_English>]

The differences existent between both transcriptional methods (IPA and respelling), and the way which these transcriptional differences can affect the representation of the pronunciation of English, (if it is a northamerican speaker the one who talks or a British one) will be studied in this paper. Aspects such as the suprasegmental level, (the upspeak-statement or question), in the segmental one, the concept of rhoticity, (‘t’-tap or plosive, ‘got- rounded or unrounded’, /j/ included or not), will be dealt with, since they can involve problems of understanding, due to the existence of two different ways of interpreting the representation of the pronunciation of English.

METHODOLOGY:

First of all, and in order to understand these two ways of interpreting the representation of the pronunciation of English, it is convenient to introduce a little about the history of General British Pronunciation, so as to understand what it is at the phonological level. It is necessary to know what British pronunciation is based on, in order to understand afterwards the bases of American one, since American one is based on British one, as it can be seen in the following pages.

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As regards systems of phonetic representation, Wikipedia distinguishes between the use of an alphabet and the use of respelling. From the standpoint of the work carried out by the International Phonetic Association 'The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabetic system of phonetic notation based primarily on the Latin alphabet. It was devised by the International Phonetic Association in the late 19th century as a standardized representation of the sounds of spoken language. The IPA is used by lexicographers, foreign language students and teachers, linguists, speech-language pathologists, singers, actors, constructed language creators and translators.

The IPA is designed to represent only those qualities of speech that are part of oral language: phones, phonemes, intonation and the separation of words and syllables. To represent additional qualities of speech, such as tooth gnashing, lisping, and sounds made with a cleft lip and cleft palate, an extended set of symbols, the extensions to the International Phonetic Alphabet, may be used.

IPA symbols are composed of one or more elements of two basic types, letters and diacritics. For example, the sound of the English letter ⟨t⟩ may be transcribed in IPA with a single letter, [t], or with a letter plus diacritics, [t^h], depending on how precise one wishes to be. Often, slashes are used to signal broad or phonemic transcription; thus, /t/ is less specific than, and could refer to, either [t^h] or [t], depending on the context and language.

IPA's letters represent consonants and vowels which harmonize with the Latin alphabet, therefore most of them are either Latin or Greek, or modifications from them, with only some exceptions such as the one denoting the glottal stop ⟨ʔ⟩, which has got the form of a dotless question mark and derives originally from an apostrophe, and a few other letters, such as that of the voiced pharyngeal fricative ⟨ʕ⟩, which was taken from the

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Arabic letter ع. There are also 31 diacritics which modify these, and 19 additional signs indicating suprasegmental qualities such as length, tone, stress, and intonation. We should take into account that the IPA's alphabet comes from the Romic one, created by a group of French and British language teachers, led by the French linguist Paul Passy in 1886. They created what would come to be known from 1897 onwards as the International Phonetic Association. The Romic alphabet was based on a spelling reform for English, but the intention was to make it usable for other languages, so the values of the symbols could vary from language to language. However, this alphabet was revised in 1888, 1932, 1989 and 1993 to end as it is nowadays since 2005. The IPA normally provides one letter for each distinctive sound (speech segment), although this could change if the sound itself is complex. Anyway, we should take into consideration that the IPA does not usually have separate letters for two sounds if no known language does the same, (this is called 'selectiveness').

In terms of the segmental level, both General American English and General British English can be represented with IPA, but with the difference that American English would require some modifications of the representation of General British pronunciation. For example, o as /ɑ:/ rather than /ɒ/ for o or /o:/, intervocalic 't' as /t/ or mid-find 'r' as /ɹ/. (so General American English is not completely based on the IPA, unlike General British English). Actually, according to Wikipedia article <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Phonetic_Alphabet> '... IPA is popular in order to transcribe for linguists, but anyway, American linguists often alternate use of the IPA with Americanist phonetic notation (nonstandard symbols)...'. Anyway, these changes which we are going to see now are quite relevant, since they are the ones which achieve to make American English pronunciation totally different from British one but,

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to understand both ways of transcription and therefore, their differences, we should first understand IPA.

An IPA symbol is often distinguished from the sound it is intended to represent, since there is not necessarily a one-to-one correspondence between letter and sound in broad transcription, making articulatory descriptions such as 'mid front rounded vowel' or 'voiced velar stop' unreliable. While the Handbook of the International Phonetic

Association states that no official names exist for its symbols; it admits the presence of one or two common names for each. The symbols also have nonce names in the Unicode standard. In some cases, the Unicode names and the IPA names do not agree. For example, IPA calls ϵ "epsilon", but Unicode calls it "small letter open E".

The traditional names of the Latin and Greek letters are usually used for unmodified letters. Letters which are not directly derived from these alphabets, such as $[\zeta]$, may have a variety of names, sometimes based on the appearance of the symbol or on the sound that it represents. In Unicode, some of the letters of Greek origin have Latin forms for use in IPA; the others use the letters from the Greek section.

On the other hand, and according to Wikipedia, respelling pronunciation for English is a notation used to convey the pronunciation of words in English, which does not have a phonemic orthography. 'Phonemic' systems, commonly found in American dictionaries, consistently use one symbol per English phoneme. These systems are conceptually equivalent to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which is commonly used in bilingual dictionaries (such as Cambridge Learner's dictionary or Oxford ones) and scholarly writings, but tend to use symbols based on English rather than Romance-language spelling conventions (e.g. \bar{e} for IPA $/i/$) and avoid non-alphabetic symbols (e.g. sh for IPA $/ʃ/$), unlike in the case of English itself (IPA has got its influence from

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Latin). We can find this pronunciation respelling systems for English in dictionaries, and we will see that these pronunciation systems use only the 26 ordinary letters of the Latin alphabet with diacritics, and are meant to be easy for native readers to understand. English dictionaries have used various such respelling systems to convey phonemic representations of the spoken word since Samuel Johnson published his Dictionary of the English Language in 1755. Today, such systems remain in use in American dictionaries for native English speakers, but they have been replaced by the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in linguistics references and many bilingual dictionaries published outside the United States.

The pronunciation which dictionaries refer to is some chosen "normal" one, thereby excluding other regional accents or dialect pronunciation. In England this standard is normally the Received Pronunciation, based upon the educated speech of southern England. The standard for American English is known as General American (GA).

All this can be seen in the following chart, according to Wikipedia, where we can see that the IPA symbols used to represent the sounds of the English language are matched with the phonetic symbols used in several dictionaries, a majority of which transcribe American English.

Vowels																					
IP A 1	IP A 2	A P A	N O A D	A H D	R H D	W B O	M E C D	D P L	D P N	T B D	N B C	M W C D	C O D ³	P O D	Ch a m	S D	A B	Dict co m	B B C	Wiki pedi a	Exa mpl es
æ	æ	æ	a	ă	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	ă	a	a	a	a e	a	a (a	a (arr	cat

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																		rr)		
e ɪ	e	e(y)	ā	ā	ā	a y	ay	ā	a y	ā	a y	ā	ā	a y	ā	a y, a e	e y	ey	a y	ay	day
ɛ ər	ɛr	ɛr	e(ə) r	âr	âr	ai r	air	-	-	e r	ai r	er	ār	ai r	ār	ai r	e h r	air	ai r	air	hair
ɑ: r	ɑ	a	ä	ä	ä	a h	aa	ä	a w , o	ä	a h	ä, à	a h	a a	ä	a h	a a	ah	a a	ah	fath er
ɑ: r	ɑr	ar	är	är	är	a hr	aar	är	-	ä r	a hr	är	(ä r	a a r	är	ar	a a r	ahr	ar	ar	arm
ɛ	ɛ	ɛ	e	ě	e	e h	e	e	ɛ	e	e	e	ě	e	e	e	e h	e	e (e rr)	e (err)	let
i: r	i	i(y)	ē	ē	ē	e e	ee	ē	ē	ē	e e	ē	ē	e e	ē	e e	i y	ee	e e	ee	see
ɪ ər	ɪr	ɪr	i(ə) r	îr	ēr	ih r	eer			ir	ie r	ir	ēr	e e r	ēr	ih r	i h r	eer	e er	eer	her e
ɪ	ɪ	ɪ	i	ĩ	i	ih	i	i	i	i	i	i	ĩ	i	i	i	i h	i	i (ir r)	i (irr)	pit

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a ɪ	a ɪ	ay	ī	ī	ī	y	ī	ī	y	ī	igh	ī	ī	ī	ī	e y e, ie , y e	a y	ah y	y	y, eye ₄	by	
ɒ	ɑ	a	ä	ǒ	o	o	o	ä	o	o	a h	ä	ǒ	o	o	o	a a	o	o (o rr)	o (orr)	pot	
o ʊ	o	o(w)	ō	ō	ō	o h	ō	ō	ō	ō	o h	ō	ō	ō	ō	o h, o e	o w	oh	o h	oh	no	
ɔ: ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ô	ô	ô	a w	a w	ô	a w , o	ô	a w	ò	a w	a w	ö	a w	a o	aw	a w	aw	aw	cau ght
ɔ: r	ɔr	ɔr	ôr	ô r					ô r	a w r	òr				or	a o r	aw r	or	or	or	nort h	
	or	o(w) r													or	aw r, ohr	or	ohr	ohr	for ce		
ɔɪ	ɔɪ	ɔy	oi	oi	oi	o y	oy	oi	o y	oi	oi	òi	oi	o y	oi	oi	o y	oi	o y	oy	noi se	
ʊ	u	u	oo	o	o	u	oo	o	u	ù	o	ù	o	o	ü ²	u	u h	oo	u u	uu	too k	
ʊ	ur	ur	oo	o	o	ur	oo			ù	o	ùr	o		oo	o	u	oor	o	oor	tou	

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ə			r	o	o		r			r	or		or		r	or	h		or		r
u:	u	u(w)	oo	o	o	o	oo	o	ū	ü	o:	ü	o	o	oo	o	u	oo	o	oo	soon
a	a	a	ou	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	au	o	o	o	o	a	ou	o	ow	out
ʌ	ʌ	ʌ	ə	ǔ	u	u	u	u	u	u	u	ə	ǔ	u	u	u	a	uh	u	u	cut
ɜ:	ɜr	ər	ər	û	û	ur	ur	ɚ	e	è	er	ər	er	ər	ûr	ur	e	ur	ur	ur	word
ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	ə	u	ə	ə	e	ə	u	ə	a, e, i, o, u	ə	ə	u	a	uh	u	ə	about
ər	ər	ər	ər	ər	ər	u	ər	ər	e	ər	er	ər	er	ər	ər	ur	e	er	u	ər	butter
ju:	ju	yu	yo	y	y	y	yo	y	y	y	yü	ū	y	ū	y	y	yo	y	ew	y	view

We can see in this chart that each individual sound corresponds to an individual symbol.

Some dictionaries indicate hyphenation and syllabic stress in the headword. A few have even used diacritics to show pronunciation "without respelling" in the headwords.

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RESULTS:

The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1st through 4th edition, used a mix of two systems. Some editions of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary have offered a method for teachers to indicate pronunciation without respelling as a supplement to the respelling scheme used in the dictionary. It is often the case that the two ways of pronouncing English, G.A.E. and G.B.E., can be found simultaneously in English dictionaries for learners of English. While IPA has not been adopted by popular dictionaries in the United States, there is a demand for learner's dictionaries which provide both British and American English pronunciation. Some dictionaries, such as the Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English provide a separate transcription for each, but it is always based on IPA, not on respelling despite the fact that one of the accents is G.A.E.

British and American English accents have a similar set of phonemes, but some are pronounced differently; in technical parlance, they consist of different phones. Although developed for RP, the Gimson system being phonemic, it is not far from much of General American pronunciation as well. A number of recent dictionaries, such as the *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary*, add a few non-phonemic symbols /ɾ i u əl ən/ to represent both RP and General American pronunciation in a single IPA transcription.

Adaptations of the Gimson system for American English

/ɒ/ Pronounced [ɑ:] in General American: this is called 'got- rounded or unrounded', and is one of the main characteristics of G.A.E., as we have already seen

/e/ In American English falls between [e] and [æ] (sometimes transcribed /ɛ/)

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/əu/ This traditional transcription is probably more accurately replaced by /ou/ in American English.

/r/ Regular r is always pronounced, this is called rhoticity, being one of the main characteristics of G.A.E., in contrast with British English phonetic characteristics.

/r̥/ Superscript r is only pronounced in rhotic dialects, such as General American, or when followed by a vowel (for example adding a suffix to change dear into dearest)

/i/ Medium i can be pronounced [ɪ] or [i:], depending on the dialect

/ɔ:/ Many Americans pronounce /ɔ:/ the same as /ɒ/ ([ɑ:])

/l̥/ Syllabic l, sometimes transcribed /l/ or /əl/

/n̥/ Syllabic n, sometimes transcribed /n/ or /ən/

In order to understand all these differences and representational questions, we can analyse specific examples:

In the case of the noun 'car', when its pronunciation is simply 'respelt', it is transcribed as \`kär\, although there are some dialectal varieties such as \`kôr\, \`kyär\, (when we talk about 'dialectal varieties', we refer to the fact that, a language is something which is not 'paralysed', but in constant change, especially in the case of English, since it has no linguistic academy, as is the case of Spanish. This all leads us to the idea that a language can be spoken, used differently depending on which part of the country in which this language is spoken, we are. It is not the same the kind of English spoken in Scotland than the variety of English spoken in London). We will continue now with the example of the noun 'car', which would be transcribed differently in G.B.E., since B.E is non-rhotic, so the symbol /r/ would not be used, (in fact in B.E we would never

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pronounce an 'r' at the end of the word). As another example, we could use the word 'Thursday', transcribed as \ 'thɜːz-(,)dā , -dē \ in General American English. Again, in B.E we would never pronounce the 'r' of the word itself, instead, we would use /ɜː/. We should continue with the noun 'computer', transcribed as \ kəm-'pyü-tər \, according to Merriam Webster Dictionary of English. Again, in B.E., the final 'r' would not be pronounced, unlike in G.A.E., where the final 'r' would. Apart from that, in G.A.E., the 't' of /tər/ would be pronounced rather as a /d/, not so much as a /t/, unlike in G.B.E., in which it would be pronounced as a /t/, (this is another main characteristic of General American English, 't'- tap or plosive, also known as 'lenition', standing for a phenomenon which takes place in linguistics, and consists of making more sonorous a consonant sound when it goes before a weak vowel). The situation is similar if we use the 'American heritage dictionary', in which, for instance, the word 'better' is transcribed as \ bɛt'ər \, as we can see, the final 'r' is kept when pronouncing and transcribing, so rhoticity is kept. In this case, however, lenition is not shown, since it can also be said keeping the 't' sound of R.P. in British English (this sounds as an exception to the rule in American English since, 't'- tap or plosive should be kept as a characteristic of G.A.E.). The same would happen with the word 'God' (\gɒd\), according to 'American heritage dictionary', the back open vowel /o/ would be pronounced as /a/.

As another characteristic of American English, it does not really make quite a lot of use of the schwa letter, unlike in British English, which is also a difference to be taken into account between both varieties of the same language. In fact, and as it is said in Wikipedia, as Yule and Fraser (;), (both of them, authors of studies concerning

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respelling systems), 'the reduced vowel (schwa) need not be shown in a respelling so long as syllabification and syllable stress are shown.

DISCUSSION:

All this has got a communicative impact in the sense that, as we have already seen, the same word can be pronounced in different ways, which can lead to confusions (taking into account the fact that there are differences between G.B.E. and G.A.E. ways of pronunciation), so here we have this social impact, the fact that one person who has been brought up with the phonetical conventions of G.A.E. will find it difficult to understand and make him or herself understood when talking to another person who has been brought up with the phonetical conventions of G.B.E., since, again, and as we have already said, pronunciation varies.

Although there are similarities between both varieties of English, differences come in terms of pronunciation (the same word would be pronounced differently in one variety and the other). G.A.E. is characterized by rhoticity, in contrast with G.B.E., characterized this last one precisely by non-rhoticity. Therefore, in G.A.E. every written 'r' is pronounced, unlike G.B.E. in which 'r' is only pronounced before a vowel sound (therefore it is silent before consonant sounds). In G.A.E., 't' is pronounced with a voiced tap, (this is a phenomenon known as 't'-tap or plosive), which sounds a bit as a very fast 'd', unlike in G.B.E., in which 't' is a voiceless plosive /t/ with some aspiration. G.B.E. is characterized by lip rounding with back open vowel in 'got', 'what', 'shop', unlike G.A.E., which is characterized by an unrounded sound /a/, (this last phenomenon is called 'got' rounded or un-rounded). Finally, /j/ is pronounced by speakers of G.B.E. before the vowel sound in words such as 'tune', 'new', (words where /t/, /d/, /n/ are followed by /u:/), unlike G.A.E., which is characterized by /j/

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dropped, also known as ‘yod-dropping’. All this can be seen in different dictionaries, both of G.A.E. pronunciation and of G.B.E. pronunciation. For instance, we can see it in the ‘Merriam Webster Dictionary’ or the American Heritage (as examples of General American English), in contrast with the ‘Cambridge advanced learner’s dictionary’, the ‘Longman dictionary’ and the ‘Oxford dictionary’, (as examples of General British English).

These differences in terms of pronunciation, due to two very different transcriptional systems, make it difficult, therefore, understanding among people. This can be seen in the following social experiment, where some native Spanish interviewees were asked to pronounce the same word, both according to IPA transcriptional system and to respelling transcriptional one. A total of 36 words were pronounced. The first, second and third candidate pronounced 10 words, both basing themselves on the IPA transcriptional system and on the respelling one. The fourth one pronounced only six words, both according to IPA and to respelling transcriptional system. Finally, 22 out of 36 words seem easier to pronounce according to respelling transcriptional system, and only 14 out of 36 seem easier to pronounce according to IPA transcriptional system. Here we can see the comments of all the interviewees:

Chiara:

- 1) Divergent: when she pronounced this word according to the respelling system of transcription, she found easier that way because of the rhoticity, /r/ is pronounced and therefore it is easier for her to pronounce the word, this consonant is transcribed. Actually, the problem which arose when she pronounced this word according to IPA transcription system, is that there is no /r/ sound transcribed, instead, the vowel is lengthened, and that was a problem,

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the fact that it is not a rhotic pronunciation.

- 2) Outperform: when she pronounced this word according to the respelling transcription system, she found it easier than in IPA transcription system, again because of the /r/ which is transcribed in respelling transcription system, but it is not in IPA transcription system.
- 3) Conservative: when she pronounced this word according to the respelling transcription system, she found it easier because of its rhoticity. She found it more difficult to pronounce long vowels as in IPA transcription system.
- 4) Preprocessing: when she pronounced this word according to the respelling transcription system, she found it more difficult because of the vowel sounds. She found it easier to say /pri/ rather than /pre/ and /pracessing/, that /a/ sound was too open for her in respelling
- 5) Furthermore: she found it easier to pronounce the word according to the respelling transcription system because of its rhoticity, so she found it easier to pronounce the consonant /r/.
- 6) Hyphen-delimited: she found it easier to pronounce it according to the IPA transcription system, since it is easier to pronounce /haifen/ than /hifen/ according to respelling transcription system. Apart from that, it is easier to pronounce /dilimited/ according to IPA transcription system, and not /dilimeted/ according to respelling transcription system. Finally, she found it easier to

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pronounce the 't' as it sounds, 't' according to IPA transcription system, and not as a 'd', according to respelling transcription system.

- 7) Implementation: she found it easier to pronounce the word according to IPA transcription system, because she found it easier to say /implementeishen/ according to IPA transcription system, rather than /implementashion/ according to respelling transcription system.
- 8) Labour-intensive: she found it easier to pronounce it according to IPA transcription system, rather than according to respelling transcription system. She found it easier to say /leiber intensiv/ rather than /labar intensiv/
- 9) Orthographic: she found it easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system because she found it easier to pronounce the /r/, unlike in IPA, where it is replaced by a long 'o'
- 10) Counterintuitive: she found it harder to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since she found it more difficult to pronounce /t/ as a /d/, unlike according to IPA transcription system.

Jessica:

- 1) immediately: she finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since there are no long vowels and the vowel sounds are similar as

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the ones whose pronunciation is based on IPA transcription system. Spanish speakers are not used to long vowels in English, so respelling transcription system can be an easier way to pronounce.

2) supervised: she finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since the sound /r/ is transcribed, (because of rhoticity). Spanish speakers are more used to pronounce the /r/ sound, which is not pronounced in English according to IPA pronunciation. This is what makes the pronunciation based on IPA transcription system more difficult.

3) proportion: she finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since the sound /r/ is transcribed, because of its rhoticity. However, in the pronunciation of English based on IPA transcription system, this /r/ is not pronounced.

4) syllabification: she finds easier to pronounce this word according to IPA transcription system, since she is used to saying /fi/ rather than /fe/, and since she is used to say /kei/ rather than /ka/

5) automatically: she finds it easier to pronounce this word according to IPA transcription system, since she is more used to pronounce the 't' as /t/ sound rather than as /d/ sound

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6) simultaneously: she finds it easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since there are not so many diphthongs as in IPA transcription system of this word. According to IPA transcription system of this word, there would be two diphthongs, /ei/ and /ie/. However, in respelling transcription system of this word, there is only one /ea/.

7) digraphs: she finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since its pronunciation is more similar to the writing of the word, vowel sounds are similar to what is written, unlike in IPA transcription system, where vowel sounds are not, since we can find a triphthong at the beginning /aie/.

8) assert: she found easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since it is a rhotic pronunciation, therefore the /r/ sound is transcribed, unlike in pronunciation based on IPA transcription system, where a longer vowel sound is pronounced, which is more difficult for a Spanish speaker of English.

9) sonority: she found easier to pronounce it according to IPA transcription system, since she is more used to pronounce this word with 't' as /t/ rather than as /d/, which is more typical of respelling transcription system.

10) relatively: she found easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since she found easier to pronounce 't' as /d/ rather than as a /t/ in this word. Apart from that, in the pronunciation based on respelling transcription system, the last vowel sound is pronounced as /e/, which is a sound similar to the other vowel sounds of

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the word. According to pronunciation based on IPA transcription system, this last vowel sound is pronounced as /i/, which is a different vowel sound to the other ones of the word.

Sara:

1) verifiable: she found easier to pronounce this word according to IPA transcription system, since she is used to pronounce 'fia' as /fai/ rather than /ie/

2) ambiguity: she found easier to pronounce this word according to IPA transcription system, since she found it easier to end the word in /i/ rather than in /ë/. Apart from that, she found it easier to pronounce the sound /i/ where the letter 'i' is placed in the word, rather than to pronounce 'i' as a schwa as in respelling transcription system in 'bi'.

3) procedure: she found it easier to pronounce this word according to IPA transcription system, because she is more used to pronounce 'e' as /i/ and not as /e/.

4) arguably: she finds easier to pronounce it according to IPA since the sounds of the vowels correspond to the letters written, unlike respelling transcription system, where 'y' is pronounced as /e/. Apart from that, IPA transcription system places a schwa in 'gua', unlike respelling transcription system, which omits it and that is seen when the

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word is pronounced.

5) context-free: she finds easier to pronounce it according to IPA transcription system, since the sounds of the vowels correspond to the vowels written. 'Free' is pronounced with /i:/ according to IPA transcription system and as /ë/ according to respelling transcription system.

6) overgenerate-and-rank: she finds easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since the /ɾ/ sound is transcribed in 'over', unlike in IPA transcription system, since it is not rhotic. Apart from that, she finds it easier to pronounce the 'o' of 'over' as /o/ and not as a diphthong /ou/ as it is done in IPA transcription system. Apart from that, she finds it easier to pronounce 'ate' as /ät/ in respelling transcription system, unlike as /eit/ in IPA, since in respelling transcription system, she only has to pronounce one vowel sound and in IPA transcription system, she has to pronounce a diphthong. Another aspect is that she finds easier to omit /d/ as a sound in 'and' according to the pronunciation based on respelling transcription system, since according to the pronunciation based on IPA transcription system, that sound has to be kept.

7) ultimately: she finds it easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since all the vocalic sounds are similar (schwa and only a final /e/). According to IPA transcription system, however, 'u', 'i', and 'a' are pronounced completely different from each other.

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8) incorporate: she finds it easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since the /r/ sound is transcribed, as the pronunciation based on respelling transcription system is rhotic. This is more difficult for her in a pronunciation based on IPA transcription system, since that 'r' is not pronounced, instead, a long 'o' is used. However, for a Spanish speaker, this is more difficult, since there are no long vowels in Spanish. Apart from that, she finds it easier to pronounce 'ate' as /a/ according to the pronunciation based on respelling transcription system and not as a diphthong in the pronunciation based on IPA transcription system.

9) synthesized: she finds it easier to pronounce it according to IPA transcription system, since she finds easier to end the word in /ai/ (as in IPA) rather than in /i/ (as in respelling transcription system), she is used to say /ai/ for the letter /i/ in English.

10) evaluators: she finds it easier to pronounce it according to respelling transcription system, since all the vowel sounds are more similar in this word (/a/ and schwa), except only for the first one ('e', pronounced as /i/). However, according to IPA transcription system, we can find the following vocalic sounds in this word /i/, /ae/, /u/, /ei/, therefore it is a bit more complicated to pronounce all the vowel sounds, and there is even a diphthong. Apart from that, the sound /r/ is transcribed according to the pronunciation based on respelling transcription system. That would not happen if the pronunciation was based on IPA transcription system. Therefore, pronouncing the sound /r/, because of its rhoticity, is easier.

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Daniel:

- 1) correctness: he finds easier to pronounce this word, according to respelling transcription system, since the /t/ sound is not so marked as in the pronunciation based on IPA transcription system.
- 2) accurate: he finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since according to IPA transcription system, an /æ/ is used in the first vowel, something that does not happen in the pronunciation based on respelling. Spanish people do not have this /æ/ sound; therefore, it is more difficult.
- 3) overlap: he finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since the /r/ sound is transcribed, because of rhoticity. He actually finds it more difficult to pronounce it according to IPA transcription system, since it is not based on a rhotic pronunciation, instead schwa is used and this vowel sound does not exist for Spanish people.
- 4) ensure: he finds it easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since the /r/ sound is transcribed, because of rhoticity. Pronouncing it according to IPA transcription system is more problematic since it is not a rhotic pronunciation, so the /r/ is not pronounced. Spanish people are used to pronounce all the vowel and consonant sounds; therefore, it is not so easy.

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5) facilitates: he finds easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since there is no diphthong in 'tates', just one vowel sound. He also finds easier that he can pronounce /t/ sounds as /d/ according to respelling transcription system, therefore is less effort when pronouncing.

6) importance: he finds it easier to pronounce this word according to respelling transcription system, since the /r/ sound is transcribed, because of rhoticity. The problem that arises with a pronunciation based on IPA transcription system is actually the use of a long vowel instead of /r/. Spanish people are not used to long vowels, so the problem to pronounce according to IPA transcription system arises.

As it can be seen, respelling is preferred rather than IPA, because of the following reasons:

- Respelling transcriptional system is nearer than IPA to ordinary writing
- Respelling coincides with the rhotic accent, the General American one, where the letter 'r' is never muted. This way, the transcription does not seem to miss any letters.

All in all, British and American English are quite different varieties of the same language, English. As we have already seen, their transcription systems are different, therefore the way words of these two varieties are pronounced is different too, which can lead to a problem in order to be understood for a person who is used to British pronunciation but needs to handle American one.

Pronunciation without respelling is also sometimes used in texts with lots of unusual words, such as Bibles, when it is desirable to show the received pronunciation. These will often be more exhaustive than dictionary respelling keys because all possible digraphs or readings need to have a unique spelling.

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The IPA transcription conventions used in the first twelve editions of the EPD was relatively simple, using a quantitative system indicating vowel length using a colon, and requiring the reader to infer other vowel qualities. Many phoneticians preferred a qualitative system, which used different symbols to indicate vowel timbre and colour. A.C. Gimson introduced a quantitative-qualitative IPA notation system when he took over editorship of the EPD (13th edition, 1967); and by the 1990s, the Gimson system had become a de facto standard for phonetic notation of British Received Pronunciation (RP).

Short and long vowels in various IPA schemes for RP

word quant. qual. Gimson

rid ri:d rɪd rɪd

reed ri:d rɪd rɪ:d

cod kɔd kɒd kɔd

cord kɔ:d kɒd kɔ:d

The first native (not learner's) English dictionary using IPA may have been the Collins English Dictionary (1979), and others followed it. The Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd edition (OED2, 1989) used IPA, transcribed letter-for-letter from entries in the first edition, which had been noted in a scheme by the original editor, James Murray.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES:

The use of the General British Pronunciation by non-native English speakers can be harder than the use of the General American Pronunciation. One of the disadvantages of GBP is its non rhoticity, which makes the r sound to be pronounced only when it goes

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before a vowel sound. This makes it harder to pronounce words following the GBP, since when the r is placed afterwards a vowel sound in a word, the vowel sound is just lengthened, and therefore, actually no 'r' is pronounced. Unlike the GBP, in GAP the r is always pronounced, in any place in the word. Considering all this, it is much easier for a non-native speaker of English to pronounce according to GAP, since all letters, both consonants and vowels, are pronounced with their own sounds, not just enlarging vowels, as it happens in a non-rhotic pronunciation.

However, the existence of the phenomenon known as 't'-tap in GAP, makes it more difficult the recognition of the 't' sound (voiceless plosive), since that sound looks more like a 'd' sound. This can lead to some confusion of words pronounced as GAP, such as 'God' and 'got'. These two words would be clearly differentiated in GBP, since the 't' sound is made clear in GBP. However, in GAP, the sound of the final 't' and the final 'd' would be the same, and this would make it difficult to distinguish both words. It is true that pronouncing a 'd' requires less effort, since it is not a voiceless sound, but at the same time, it can create a misunderstanding.

Considering the existence of the phenomenon 'got' unrounded, again, it might seem easier to pronounce an 'o' as if it was an 'a' in GAP, but again, this can lead to confusion of words. Another aspect is 'yod-dropping' in GAP. As it has already been shown, GAP can seem easier, since it requires less effort to pronounce words following its' method, nevertheless this pronunciation can lead to an error for speakers since it makes totally different words (in terms of what they mean), sound nearly identical. That is why it might seem easier to pronounce according to GAP for non-natives of English, but at the same time, it is better for them to get accustomed to GBP. GBP seems harder than GAP; however, it is less probable that two speakers get misunderstood, since

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phenomena such as ‘yod-dropping’ or ‘t-tap’ do not exist, therefore words are well-differentiated.