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/faɪs/, /fes/ OR /feɪs/?

TEACHERS' PHONETIC ACCOMMODATION OF DIPHTHONGS IN AN L2 CLASSROOM SETTING

Abstract. The following paper aims to investigate whether, and if so to what extent, native speaker teachers resort to phonetic accommodation in the use of diphthongs in the classroom setting. In the course of analysis, seven native speaker teachers, each representing a different variety of British English, were recorded in two distinct contexts: classroom and natural. The recordings were used in acoustic analysis in order to gauge potential differences in F1 and F2 in each context. It was concluded that phonetic accommodation does occur in the classroom setting and the modifications of either individual segments or the whole glides can be observed, irrespective of the native accent of the user. It was found, however, that the speakers representing northern varieties of English accommodate more than those speaking with other accents. Another important observation resulting from the analysis was that some diphthongs are likely to undergo phonetic accommodation more than others. On the one end of the cline we observe the diphthong PRICE, whereas the other end is occupied by the glides GOAT and CURE. It is still unclear, however, whether the modifications occur consciously, thus representing a rather developed declarative knowledge of the users, or subconsciously, which would suggest an inner need to attempt to pronounce diphthongs in a standardized way.

Key words: phonetic accommodation; classroom discourse; teacher talk.

1. INTRODUCTION

Phonetic accommodation amounts to the modifications of sounds in order to converge with target variety speakers. Previous research studies have found evidence that speakers change their speech in response to varied input. This phenomenon has been referred to as accommodation (Babel 2009; Shephard, Giles and Le Poire 2001), convergence (Pardo 2006), phonetic

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imitation (Babel 2012), alignment (Kraljic, Brennan and Samuel 2008), mimesis (Delvaux and Soquet 2007) or entrainment (Brennan & Clark 1996). Phonetic accommodation is described either as an automatic process (Goldinger 1998; Trudgill 2008), or as a conscious one that serves a social function (Shephard et al. 2001). It is motivated phonetically rather than phonologically. Trudgill (1986, 54) argues that speakers tend to modify certain words first so the shifts in pronunciation occur in sequences with some words being affected before others. Speakers' motivation, therefore, is not phonological since it is individual words and not the phonological system that are subject to modifications.¹

Studies on phonetic accommodation have been primarily concerned with first language acquisition (Chambers 1992; Payne 1980), dialect acquisition and dialect change (Evans & Iverson 2007; Munro et al. 1999), or heritage speakers (Roeder 2009; Wolfram, Carter & Moriello 2004). Teachers' phonetic accommodation in the classroom context has received little attention in literature. Steinbrich (2014) investigated the extent to which British teachers of English modify their vowels so as to converge with the learners. He observes that accommodation is applied to provide a uniform pronunciation model of an L2 and that stable accommodation patterns could be delineated irrespective of the varied accents of the teachers. Steinbrich concedes that some vowels are more likely to lend themselves to accommodation than others. These include /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, /ʊ/, /u:/ and /ʌ/.

In this paper we argue that native speaker (henceforth NS) teachers employ phonetic accommodation in the production of diphthongs in a classroom setting so as to converge with the learners. The term accommodation, as a way of converging with target speakers, will be used with reference to pronunciation shifts that form recurring patterns. Therefore, it will be argued that in the classroom context accommodation is motivated pedagogically rather than socially in that it does not amount to imitating learners' pronunciations but to providing a model that does not deviate much from the input that learners receive from other sources.

¹ In their recent study, however, Mitterer & Ernestus (2008) argue that accommodation is phonological in that the relationship between speech perception and production results from abstract phonological generalizations. They also postulate that whether accommodation takes place at all is dependent on individual user's phonological system.

2. THE STUDY

The aim of the present study is to determine whether NS teachers resort to accommodation of diphthongs in a FL classroom setting. We postulate the following research hypotheses:

1. NS teachers do not accommodate to learners' pronunciation patterns, instead they modify their sounds in the classroom context to make them consistent with Standard English.
2. NS teachers employ accommodation for the sake of intelligibility.

The following research questions are derived from the research hypotheses and will be addressed in the course of study:

1. What modifications are observed in the production of diphthongs in the classroom context compared with participants' natural setting?
2. Do all diphthongs lend themselves to accommodation to the same extent?
3. Do diphthong modifications constitute predictable patterns on the basis of which it might be possible to discern features of Standard English?

2.1. PARTICIPANTS

Seven NS teachers teaching EFL in Poland took part in the study. The selection of the participants was based on the following criteria:

1. Each teacher was required to have a DELTA degree or a BA/MA in TEFL.
2. Each teacher was required to have at least five years of experience in teaching EFL to teenagers and adults.
3. Each teacher was required to be employed in the PLS sector in Poland for at least one year prior to the study.

All the participants were male coming from different parts of the UK, representing different varieties of English. Participants' biodata are given in the Table 1:

Table 1. Participants' profiles

Id	Age	Origin	Years in Poland	Years in other countries
S1	38	London (South-East)	8	6; Mexico, Uruguay
S2	27	Okehampton (Devonshire)	3	3; China
S3	34	Wolverhampton (West Midlands)	7	—
S4	47	Liverpool (Merseyside)	6	8; Thailand, Russia
S5	41	Burnley (Lancashire)	18	—
S6	40	Grimsby (Lincolnshire)	6	4; Thailand
S7	29	Hexham (Northumberland)	4	2; China, Peru

2.2. METHOD

In order to compare the pronunciation of diphthongs so as to determine whether, and if so, to what extent, participants accommodate, teachers' performance was recorded in two distinct contexts. Firstly, the recordings were made in the classroom context (henceforth C2), where each teacher was teaching General English to a group of Polish teenage students at the B1 level (CEFR, 2001). The other context in which recordings were made were naturally-occurring conversations (henceforth C1). These were recorded in staff rooms and pubs. In both contexts the recordings were made using the uncompressed PCM format (44.1 kHz, 16 bit) with the Olympus DM-620 digital recorder. Logic Pro 9 was used for mastering and smoothing out the recordings, which proved particularly useful with the C1 material. For the analysis, 20 instances of each diphthongs from each speaker, both in C1 and C2, were isolated and saved as separate WAV files, totalling 2,240 tokens. All diphthongs that are labelled as diphthongs (Jones, 2003; Wells 2008) were attended to in the study, even though some were realized as monophthongs by some speakers, as will be shown in the subsequent sections of the paper.

F1 and F2 values were extracted for each token using Praat (Boersma & Weenink, 1992/2005) and Burg algorithm was set to default parameters. F1 and F2 values were transformed into the Bark scale (Traunmüller 1990) and robust regression was applied to smooth out formant trajectories. Z-score was applied to F1 and F2 for each speaker under each condition (Adank et al. 2004; Ferragne & Pellegrino 2010; Lobanov 1971). Finally, median values were calculated for each segment of the glide.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. THE REALIZATION OF DIPHTHONGS IN C1 AND C2

The analysis begins with the presentation of the diphthongs as pronounced by each speaker under both conditions (C1 and C2). We use the classic description of RP referring to standard lexical sets as representing each glide: FACE, PRICE, CHOICE, GOAT, MOUTH, SQUARE, NEAR, CURE. The reason for referring to the sets rather than the actual diphthongs stems from the inconsistencies in the pronunciation thereof by different speakers and the possible confusion this might cause. For example, the majority of the speakers realize the diphthong that refers to the lexical set FACE as /eɪ/, whereas some pronounce it as /aɪ/ or /e/. Using the sets as a reference preempts the possible ambiguity in interpreting the results and allows for the clear presentation of the findings.

3.1.1. *London*

Generally, the accent from the south-east of the UK, also referred to as Standard Southern British English (SSBE) (Jones 2003, Upton 2004, Wells 2008) is used as a reference for comparing the other varieties.

Looking at the C1 data, we observe that the diphthongs that belong to the lexical sets FACE and PRICE deviate from their descriptions in Received Pronunciation. In the case of the former, the starting point of the glide is lowered and significantly retracted, thus resembling the acoustic and auditory features of the vowel /a/. The latter, on the other hand, due to the retraction of the first element, approximates the pronunciation of /ɔɪ/. The data from the natural context also demonstrate that the sound in CURE is realized as a monophthong.

Comparing the articulation of the diphthongs in C1 and C2, we observe significant shifts in the pronunciation of some glides. In C2, the initial element of FACE is fronted resulting in a sound which is closer to /eɪ/ rather than /aɪ/. Similarly, the first segment of the diphthong in PRICE is characterized by the forward movement, thus shifting the pronunciation from /ɔɪ/ to /aɪ/.

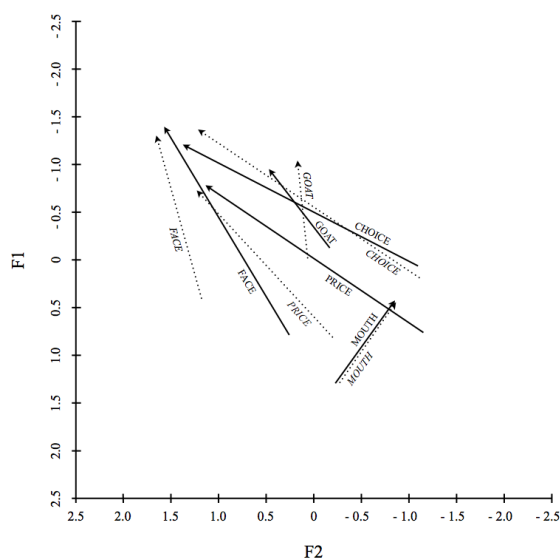


Figure 1. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the London speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

The articulation of GOAT in C2 is shown to differ from its realization in C1 in that the end point of the glide is retracted, resulting in the pronunciation that loses its /ɪ/ flavouring typical of participant's natural speech. Finally, the sound in NEAR is characterized by the raising and fronting of /ɪ/, and a slight movement of /ə/ which ceases to occupy the central position of the chart. Accommodation does not seem to operate in the case of CURE which is realized as a monophthong irrespective of the context in which it is uttered. All the other diphthongs remain intact. The shifts in pronunciation are presented in Figures 1 and 2 for closing and centring diphthongs respectively.

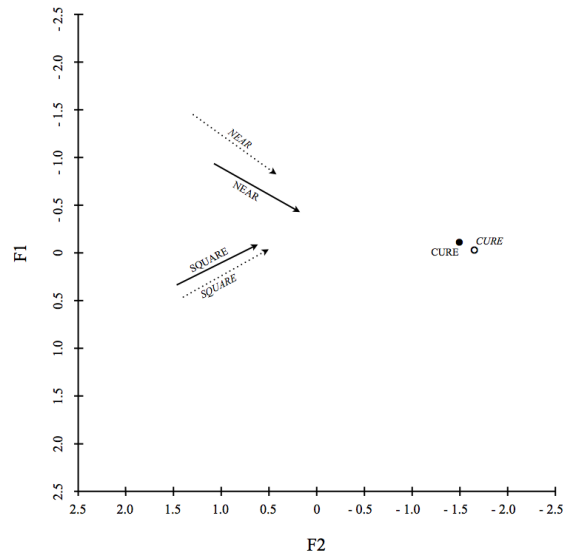


Figure 2. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the London speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.1.2. Okehampton

The realization of the diphthongs in the accent from the south-west of Britain is shown to be different from the pronunciation of SSBE. The C1 data exhibit some general differences between the London and Okehampton speakers which manifest themselves in the realizations of the end points of the glides.

Analyzing the articulations of diphthongs in C1, we observe that in the pronunciation of the diphthong FACE the first element exhibits acoustic properties of /a/. The realization of PRICE is characterized by the retraction of the element /a/. The end point of the diphthong in MOUTH is shifted towards /ɔ/. In the case of the centring diphthongs, CURE is realized as a monophthong, and the glide in SQUARE is hardly noticeable—only if we resort to the acoustic analysis are we able to discern /eə/ and distinguish it from /ɜ:/.

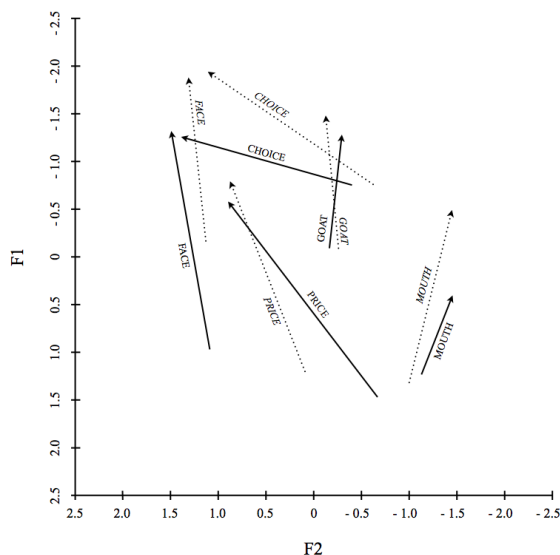


Figure 3: F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Okehampton speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

The comparison of C1 and C2 articulations of the diphthongs allows us to determine the extent to which the Okehampton speaker accommodates. The two closing diphthongs—FACE and CHOICE are characterized by the raising of the second element, which results in the articulation that approximates /i/. In other words, the end point of the glide receives more prominence than when pronounced in a natural setting. Besides, in FACE, the first element is significantly raised thus bringing it closer to /e/ than /ɛ/. We also observe the forward movement of /a/ in PRICE, resulting in the realization of the diphthong as /aɪ/. Finally, the second element in MOUTH is raised, approximating /ʊ/.

Analyzing centring diphthongs, we see that although CURE remains to be realized as a monophthong in C2, its pronunciation differs in that the sound is closer to the vowel /ɔ:/ than /ʊ/ in the C1 rendition. The other shift that seems significant is the one that concerns SQUARE. We observe that the first element is lowered and fronted which makes it possible to detect the glide both on auditory and acoustic grounds.

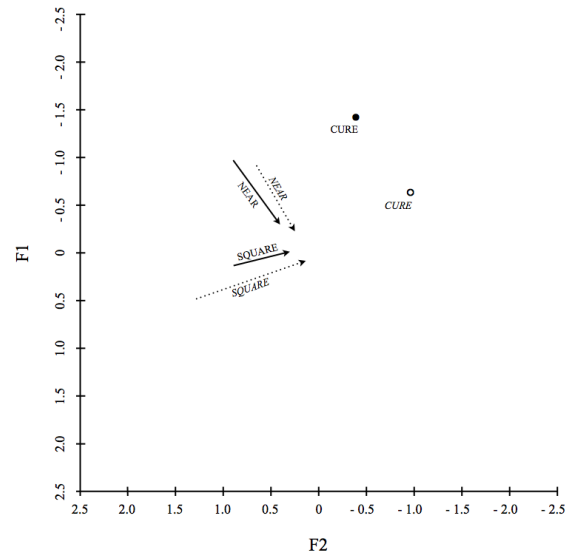


Figure 4. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Okehampton speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.1.3. *Wolverhampton*

Looking at Figures 5 and 6, we see that the acoustic properties of diphthongs as realized by the Wolverhampton speaker are quite distinct from the previous participants'.

The data representing C1 show that the diphthong in PRICE is articulated with the retraction of the first element, thus resembling /ɔ/. MOUTH is shown to share more features with centring diphthongs due to the position of the second element. The glide in the set GOAT is realized as /oʊ/. SQUARE is shown to merge with the monophthong NURSE, resulting in the pronunciation of /eə/ as /ɜ/. Finally, the glide in CURE is minuscule, making it hard to delineate the diphthong using the auditory channel. The acoustic properties of /oə/ show the tendency of the glide to move towards the centre of the diagram.

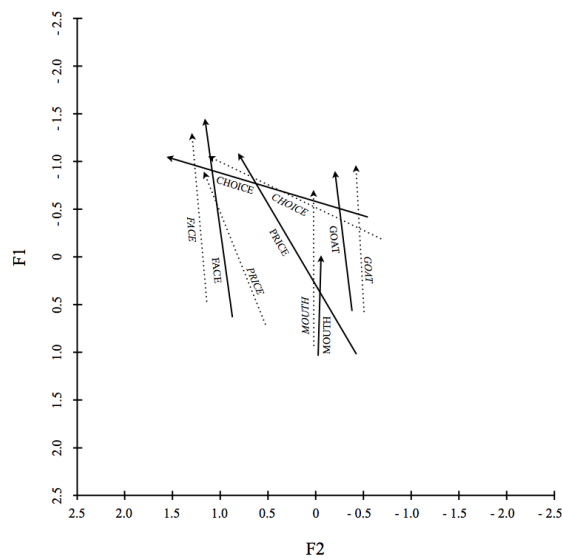


Figure 5. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Wolverhampton speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

The comparison of the articulation of the diphthongs in C1 and C2 demonstrates few instances of accommodation. Firstly, we observe that the first element in PRICE is not as retracted in C2 as it is in C1. In MOUTH, whose C1 articulation exhibits the features of centring diphthongs, the end point of the glide is significantly raised. In NEAR, both elements are lowered. SQUARE is realized in such a way to facilitate the SQUARE-NURSE split. The diphthong in CURE is modified in C2 by moving both segments slightly towards the front of the chart.

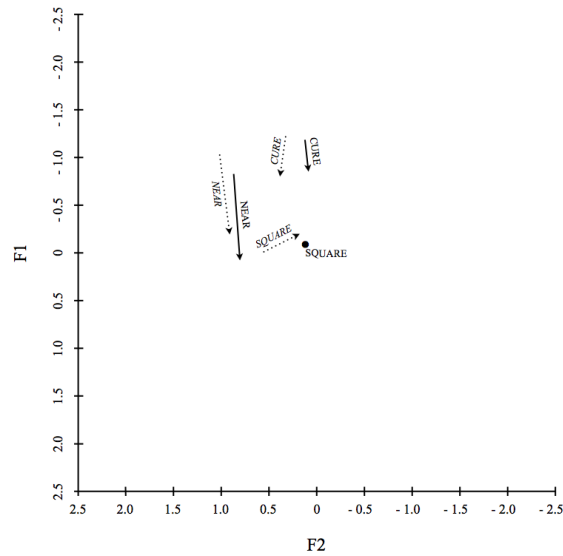


Figure 6. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Wolverhampton speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.1.4. *Liverpool*

The C1 data demonstrate that the realization of diphthongs by the Liverpool speaker shows some idiosyncrasies (Figures 7 and 8). In the articulation of CHOICE the starting point of the glide assumes the central position on the diagram, thus resembling the sound /ɜ/. The diphthong referring to the lexical set MOUTH is realized with the second element approximating /ɔ/. The glide in GOAT is pronounced as /ɔu/—the starting point of the glide fails to locate itself anywhere near the centre of the diagram. The end point, on the other hand, is retracted, sharing more characteristics with the vowel /u:/ than /ʊ/. Out of the three centring diphthongs, two—SQUARE and CURE are realized as monophthongs, /ɜ:/ and /ɔ:/ respectively.

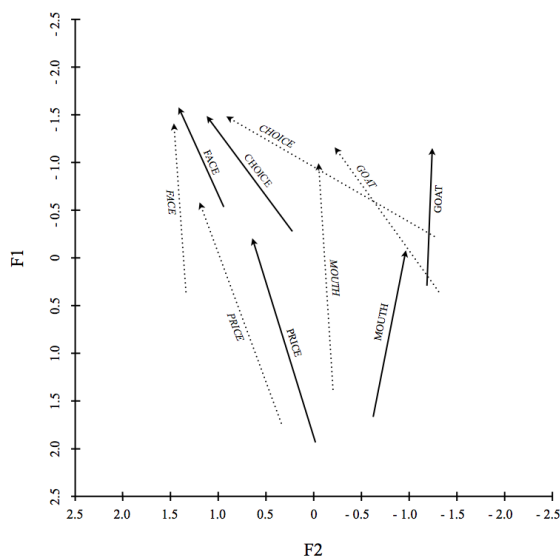


Figure 7. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Liver-pool speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

Juxtaposing the articulation in C1 and C2, we can identify instances of accommodation. Looking at the fronting diphthongs, the starting point of the glide in FACE is significantly lowered and fronted in C2. This reflects the change in the articulation of the diphthong whereby the speaker pronounces it in a more canonical way. The C2 rendition of PRICE does not differ much from its C1 counterpart. Generally, both elements of the glide are slightly raised and fronted. A significant shift can be observed in the starting point of CHOICE, where in C2 it becomes significantly retracted. Another occurrence of accommodation can be identified in the articulation of MOUTH, particularly evident in the movement of the second element which ceases to be pronounced as /ɔ/ and tends to adopt the features of /ʊ/. Finally, the glide in GOAT, although still starting in the region of /ɔ/, in C2 drifts in the direction of /ʊ/. Changes in articulation are also found in the pronunciation of the centring diphthongs. NEAR is lowered with the second segment assuming the central position in the diagram. SQUARE, compared to the C1 realization, is pronounced as a diphthong.

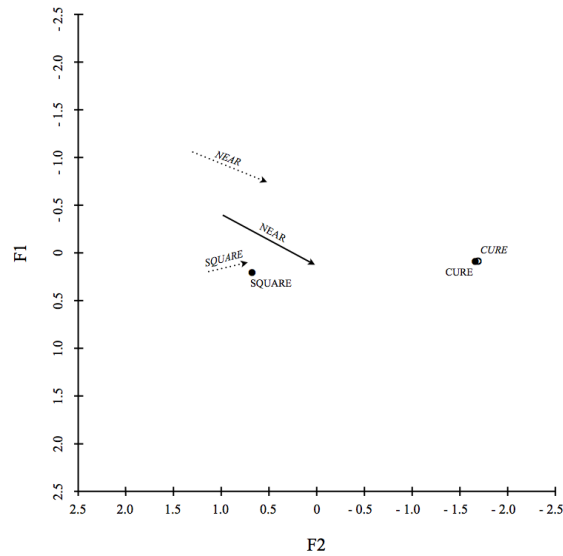


Figure 8. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Liverpool speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.1.5. Burnley

As shown in Figures 9 and 10, the sounds FACE, GOAT and SQUARE are realized as monophthongs in the pronunciation of the Burnley speaker. The diphthong in FACE is realized as /e/, the articulation of GOAT contains /ɔ/, and SQUARE uses the vowel /ɜ/. Other peculiarities concerning the pronunciation of closing diphthongs include the position of the end point of PRICE, which resembles the acoustic properties typically ascribed to /e/, and the realization of CHOICE, with the first element assuming the central position in the diagram and the second one gearing towards /ɪ/. In the pronunciation of NEAR both elements appear to prefer the central area in the diagram, which results in the articulation of the glide that is closer to /ɜə/.

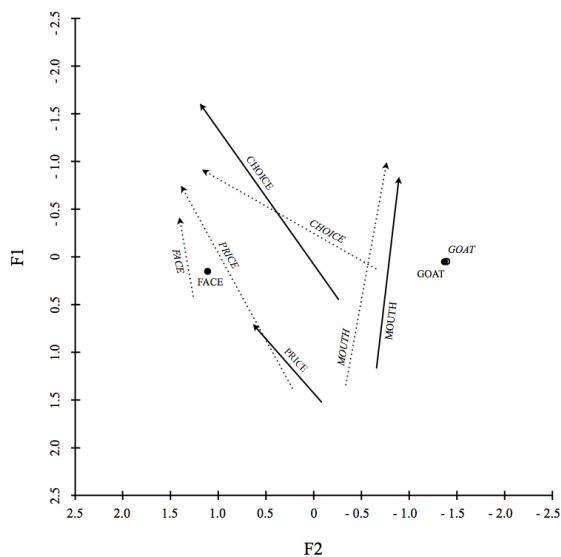


Figure 9. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Burnley speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

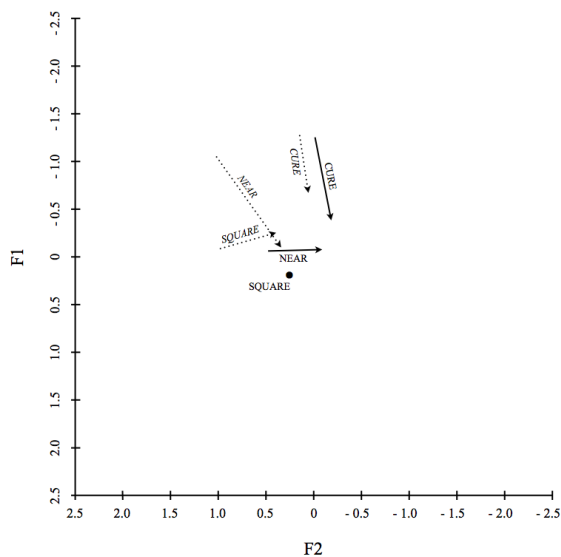


Figure 10. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Burnley speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

In C2, we observe certain modifications of diphthongs. Firstly, FACE and SQUARE are no longer realized as monophthongs but pronounced as glides. In the case of the former, we observe the realization /eɪ/ that might be referred to as canonical. The latter is characterized by the fronting of the first element and the centring of the second one. The end points of FACE, PRICE and CHOICE move towards the region of /ɪ/, making major shifts compared to their C1 realizations. The glide in NEAR starts in the region of /ɪ/ and ends in the centre of the diagram. CURE is slightly centred yet the shift appears insignificant.

3.1.6. Grimsby

The C1 data for the Grimsby speaker show that FACE and GOAT are realized as monophthongs, pronounced as /fes/ and /gɔ:t/ respectively. The glide in PRICE terminates in the region of /e/. The starting point of the diphthong represented by the set NEAR is shown to approximate /ɜ/. Likewise, the first element of SQUARE appears to assume the position of /e/.

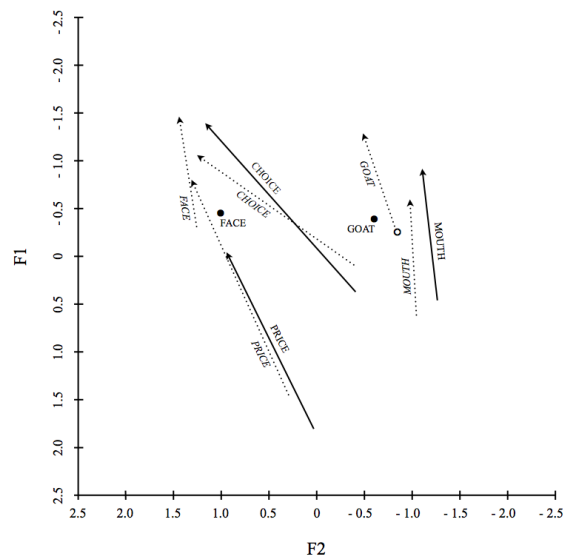


Figure 11. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Grimsby speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

Looking at how diphthongs are articulated in C2, we observe a shift in the pronunciation of FACE and GOAT which are realized as /eɪ/ and /oʊ/. The glide in PRICE becomes more extended as it moves towards /ɪ/, rather than ending in the area of /e/ as was the case in C1. Both elements in MOUTH are slightly less retracted when pronounced in the classroom context. Similarly, CURE becomes more fronted. The two remaining centring diphthongs, NEAR and SQUARE, also undergo modifications in C2. In the case of the former, the first element is raised and the second lowered, resulting in the pronunciation that resembles the standard articulation of /ɪə/. SQUARE appears to shift towards the front of the diagram, with the starting point assuming the position of /e/ and the end point approximating /ə/.

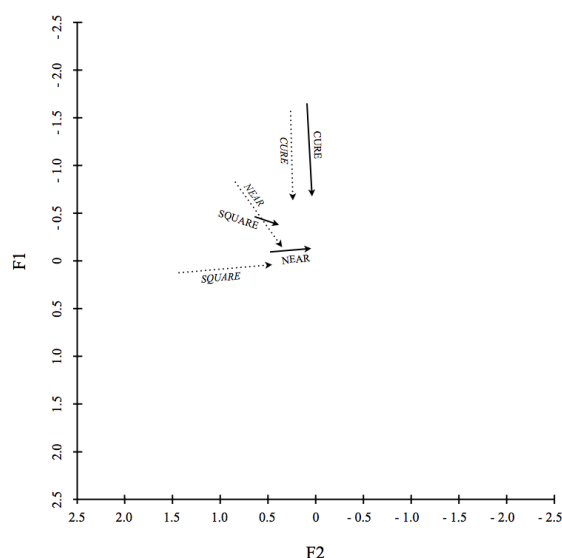


Figure 12. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Grimsby speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.1.7. Hexham

The most striking difference between the Hexham speaker and the other speakers taking part in the study pertains to the pronunciation of FACE in C1. As shown in Figure 13, the sound is realized as a glide but its elements occur in a reverse order, articulated as the rising diphthong /ɪe/. Another significant feature of S7 is a relatively greater number of diphthongs realized as monophthongs when compared to the other varieties. The data demon-

strate that GOAT, NEAR, SQUARE and CURE are pronounced as /gu:t/, /ni:/, /skwɜ:/ and /kjʊ/.

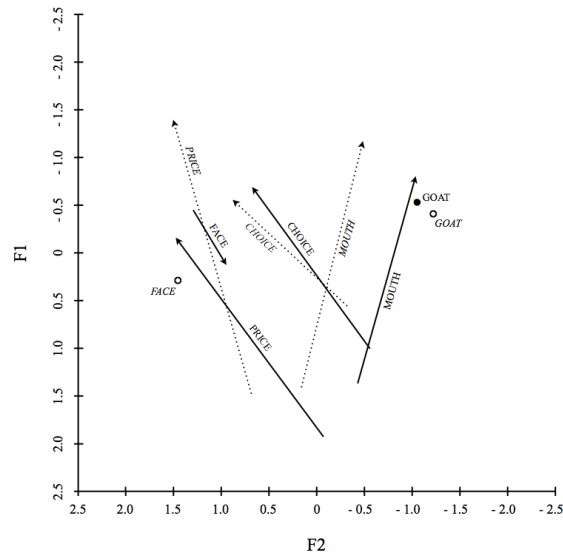


Figure 13. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the closing diphthongs by the Hexham speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

Modifications in the articulation of diphthongs evidenced in the C2 data (Figure 14) are found in the lexical sets FACE, PRICE, MOUTH and NEAR. FACE is no longer pronounced as a glide but as the monophthong /e/. In PRICE, the first segment is fronted and raised and the second one is raised significantly, assuming the position of /i/. Both elements in MOUTH are less retracted. NEAR becomes a diphthong in C2, however, its realization deviates from the standard pronunciation of the glide in that its end point approximates /ɪ/, thus resulting in the articulation that resembles /iɪ/.

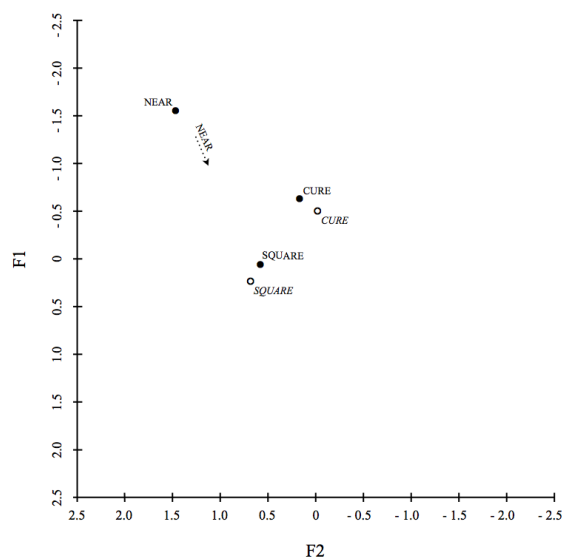


Figure 14. F1 and F2 Bark z-score values for the centring diphthongs by the Hexham speaker in C1 (solid line) and C2 (dotted line)

3.2. ACCOMMODATION PATTERNS OF DIPHTHONGS IN A CLASSROOM SETTING

The analysis presented above has shown that teachers tend to modify some diphthongs in the classroom context and that these modifications vary from speaker to speaker. In this section we aim to determine whether there exist recurring accommodation patterns in the pronunciation of diphthongs. Our goal is to gauge whether the shifts deployed by the participants in C2 share similar acoustic features irrespective of the differences found in the articulation of diphthongs in C1.

3.2.1. *The accommodation pattern of FACE*

A general tendency that can be observed in the realization of the diphthong in FACE is the apparent fronting of the first element of the glide (Figure 15). Besides, in non-northern varieties—SSBE, South-West and West Midlands, /e/ becomes raised. The second segment of the glide does not exhibit any signs of patterning. Both in C1 and C2, these are congested, with the exception of S2 whose articulation clearly stands out from the other speakers shifting towards /i/. Also, as shown in Section 3.1.7, S7's pronunciation of the glide is different from the other speakers'.

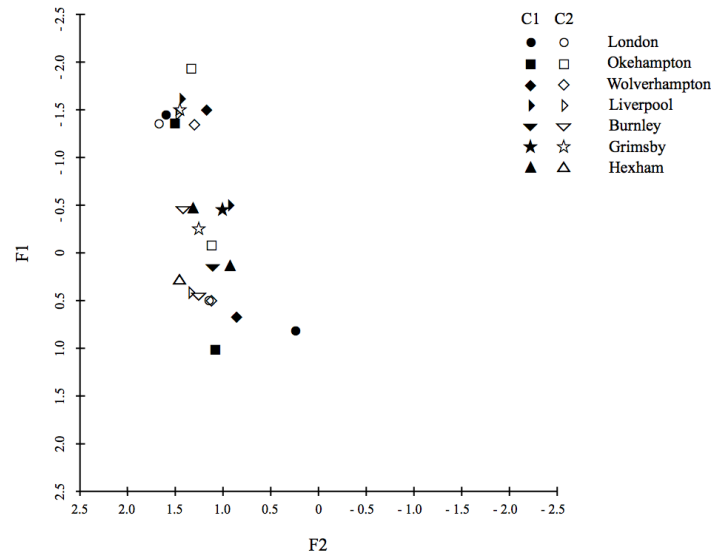


Figure 15. A plotted diagram of the diphthong /eɪ/

3.2.2. The accommodation pattern of PRICE

PRICE demonstrates the accommodation pattern that can be clearly identified (Figure 16). The first element of the glide is fronted and, with the exception of S1, raised. Although the fronting and the raising are not applied evenly by each speaker, for example, in the case of S2, S3 and S7 the shift is more conspicuous than in the articulation of S4, S5 and S6, it is possible to delineate a clear-cut boundary between the C1 and C2 realizations. Accommodation is particularly evident in S1's articulation where the retraction found in the C1 realization of the first element of /aɪ/ is clearly absent. Yet the shift results in the location of the element in the close proximity of the other speakers' realizations of /a/.

Similarly, the end point of the diphthong is shown to be articulated differently in C1 and C2 and those differences, especially pertaining to the articulation in C2, form a predictable pattern. As shown in Figure 16, the shifts in the articulation of S1 and S2 are rather minute. Similarly, S3's articulation of /ɪ/ in C2 does not seem to differ significantly from that in C1. However, in the pronunciation of northern speakers, the modification is applied to a much greater extent. Consequently, in C2, /ɪ/ is more congested in the diagram than in C1.

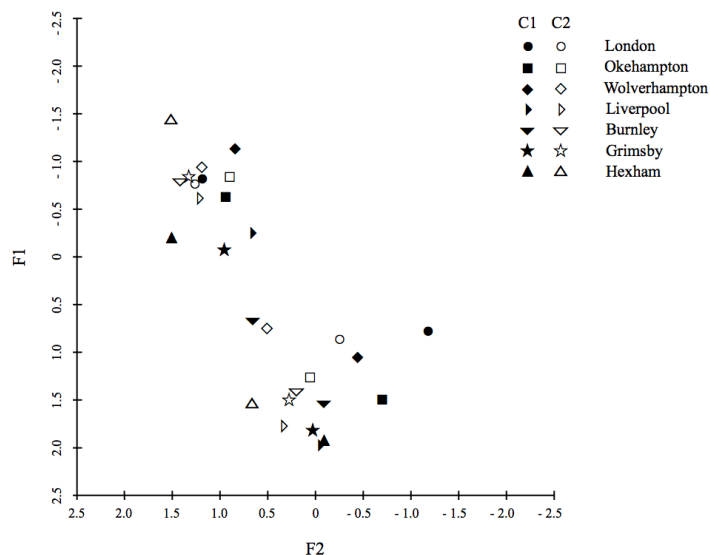


Figure 16. A plotted diagram of the diphthong /aɪ/

3.2.3. The accommodation pattern of CHOICE

As can be observed in Figure 17, the accommodation pattern of CHOICE is not as easily identifiable as the one associated with PRICE. The starting points of the glide are dispersed on the diagram making it impossible to delineate a uniform pattern for the first element of the diphthong.

In C2, the end point of the glide, however, is less fronted compared to its C1 realizations. Accommodation occurs as a result of different processes employed by the speakers and we can observe that the shifts are motivated geographically. In southern speakers' articulation (S1 representing the south-east variety and S2 the south-west variety) we observe the raising and retraction of the segment. Northern speakers (S5 representing the north-west accent, S6 the north-east variety and S7 Geordie English), employ the lowering and fronting of /ɪ/. In the West-Midlands and Scouse varieties the element becomes less fronted. As a result the segment becomes fronted in C2 than in C1 thus allowing to constitute a uniform accommodation pattern for /ɪ/.

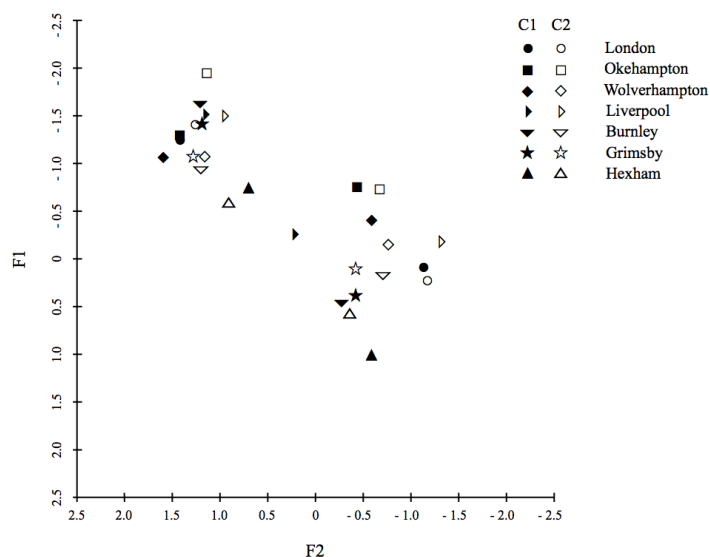


Figure 17: A plotted diagram of the diphthong /ɔɪ/

3.2.4. *The accommodation pattern of GOAT*

As shown in Figure 18, although shifts can be observed in the articulation of GOAT in C2, no patterns can be delineated either for the first or the second segment of the glide.

An interesting observation concerning the British pronunciation of the diphthong in GOAT is that, contrary to a common belief that often manifests itself in various ELT materials, the sound is rarely realized as /əʊ/. Our data show that it is the southern variety speakers who pronounce it in such a way. The other speakers' pronunciation patterns involve /ɔʊ/ or /ɔ:/.

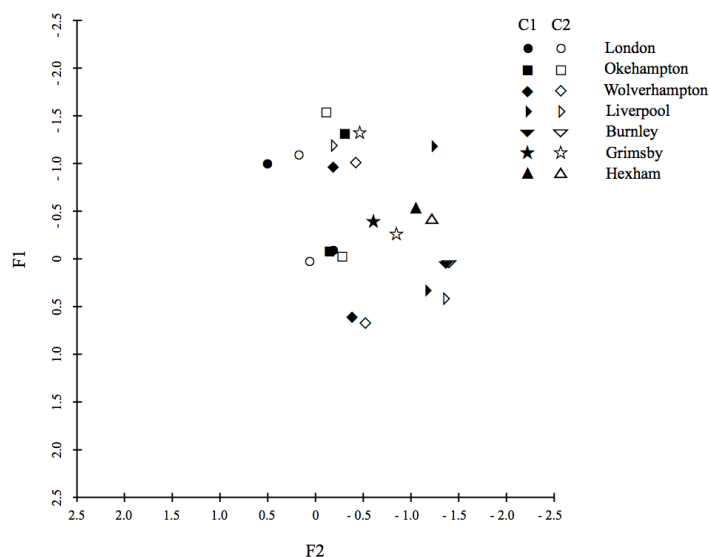


Figure 18. A plotted diagram of the diphthong /əʊ/

3.2.5. *The accommodation pattern of MOUTH*

Looking at Figure 19, we conclude that a general tendency in the C2 pronunciation of MOUTH amounts to the fronting of both segments. A more detailed analysis, however, reveals that the directionality of the shifts is not uniform and that it is dependent on the realizations of glides in C1. It can also be observed that the extent to which modifications are utilized varies across speakers. Both elements are modified in the pronunciation of the northern speakers (S4, S5, S6 and S7), in the articulation of S2 and S3 the first segment remains intact, and the realization of /əʊ/ by S1 exhibits no differences between C1 and C2.

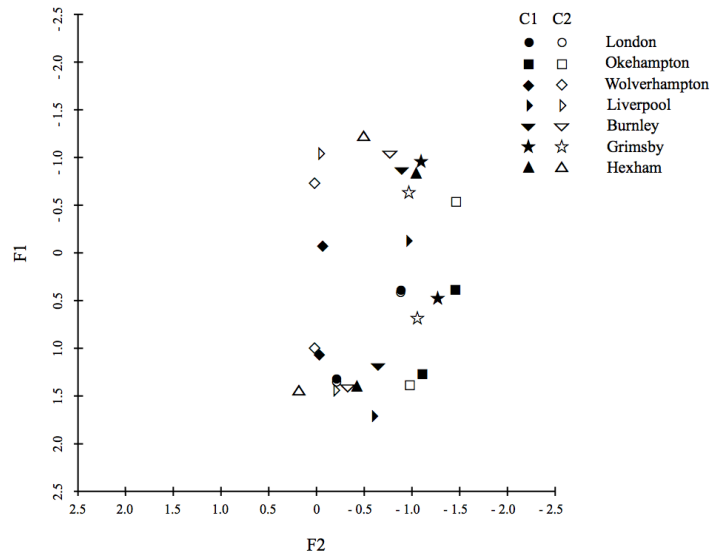


Figure 19: A plotted diagram of the diphthong /aʊ/

3.2.6. *The accommodation pattern of SQUARE*

Figure 20 shows that in the C2 articulation of SQUARE both segments move towards the front of the diagram. Comparing individual speakers' realizations, we observe that S3, S4 and S5 pronounce the sound as a diphthong in C2 whereas in C1 it is rendered as a monophthong. No changes are observed in the articulation of S1 and S7. The former realizes the sound as /eə/ in both contexts whereas the latter pronounces it as /ɜ:/.

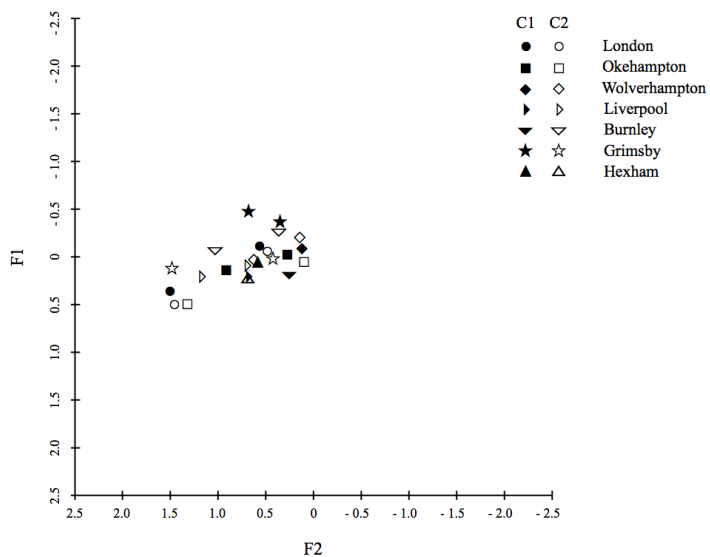


Figure 20: A plotted diagram of the diphthong /eə/

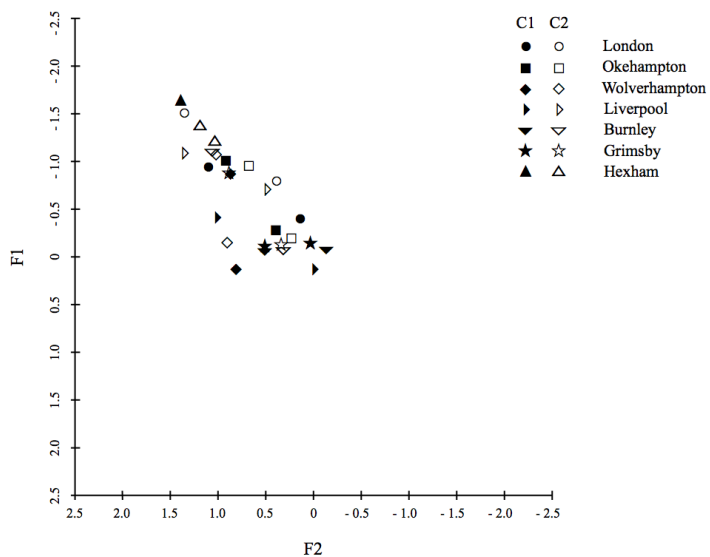


Figure 21: A plotted diagram of the diphthong /ɪə/

3.2.7. *The accommodation pattern of NEAR*

NEAR is shown to form a pattern based on the first segment of the glide which tends to get clustered in the region of /ɪ/ (Figure 21). Modifications that result in the C2 articulation of /ɪə/ are not evenly applied by all speakers. In S1, the raising and fronting of /ɪ/ can be observed. S3 follows a similar pattern, but the shifts are less articulate. In the articulation of S4, S5 and S6 the raising of the first segment is more significant, the element is also fronted.

We also observe the shift of the second element towards the front of the diagram, but it is much more subtle than in the case of the first segment. The shift is concerned mainly with the articulation of S4, S5 and S6. In the articulation of S1 and S3, the end point of the glide is raised. S2 does not alter the pronunciation of /ɪə/ in C2. S7, on the other hand, employs the diphthong which replaces the monophthong /i/ in C1.

3.2.8. *The accommodation pattern of CURE*

The diphthong in CURE, as demonstrated in Figure 22, does not seem to constitute an accommodation pattern. Most of C2 realizations are shown to be articulated in a fashion similar to their C1 equivalents. The exception is the C2 variant of the glide by S2. Four speakers (S1, S2, S4 and S7) pronounce the sound as a monophthong both in C1 and C2.

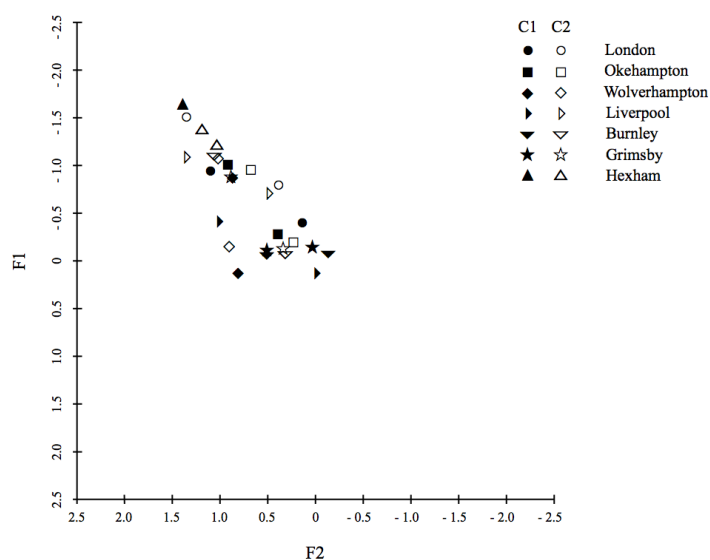


Figure 21. A plotted diagram of the diphthong /ɪə/

4. CONCLUSION

The study presented in this paper has shown that NS teachers employ the accommodation of diphthongs in the classroom context which manifests itself either in the modifications of the segments of particular glides or the whole glides themselves. Phonetic accommodation seems motivated pedagogically and is triggered by the urge to present a model of language that does not deviate from what is considered standard English. This does not necessarily mean Received Pronunciation. As shown in the data, none of the speakers even attempted to articulate the sounds in the RP domain. Standard English that some of the speakers tend to aspire to in their C2 articulation may be said to result from participants' general preconceptions as to how to pronounce English diphthongs in a canonical way. From the analysis conducted in this paper, it is the northern speakers who tend to use accommodation to a greater extent, which may lead us to conclude that the southern variety is generally perceived as gearing more towards the standard pronunciation.

Section 3.2 has shown that certain glides are more likely to undergo accommodation than others. Phonetic accommodation of diphthongs can be presented on a scale. On the one end, there are the diphthongs whose both segments are modified in such a way so as to constitute recurring pronunciation patterns. On the other end, there are those which, in spite of the shifts in pronunciation, do not form such patterns. The two extremes of the cline are occupied by PRICE on the one end and GOAT and CURE on the other. PRICE forms a clear accommodation pattern when pronounced in a classroom setting with both elements of the glide undergoing predictable modifications. GOAT and CURE do not form such patterns. Looking at the diagrams in Figures 18 and 22, we see that the C2 realizations of those diphthongs are dispersed rather unpredictably. The remaining glides should be positioned in the middle of the scale as they tend to constitute predictable patterns of only one segment—either a starting or an end point of the diphthong.

A question that remains unanswered is whether the teachers are aware of the pronunciation shifts they deploy in a setting that necessitates accommodation and whether those modifications are conscious or automatic. The conscious manipulation of the sounds would suggest a vast declarative knowledge and a highly developed phonetic awareness of the speakers. Automaticity in employing shifts, on the other hand, would suggest a subconscious drive towards the perceived standardized model of English pronunciation.

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AKOMODACJA FONETYCZNA DYFTONGÓW PRZEZ NAUCZYCIELA W KONTEKŚCIE KLASY JĘZYKA OBCEGO L2

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł stawia sobie za cel zbadanie, czy i w jakim stopniu, nauczyciele native speakers stosują akomodację fonetyczną w odniesieniu do dyftongów w kontekście klasowym. W badaniu udział wzięło siedmiu nauczycieli reprezentujących różne akcenty brytyjskiej odmiany języka angielskiego. Nagrań, na podstawie których przeprowadzono analizę, dokonano w dwóch kontekstach—klasowym i naturalnym i poddano analizie akustycznej w celu zbadania potencjalnych różnic w F1 i F2 i obydwu kontekstach. Wyniki wskazują, że akomodacja fonetyczna występuje w kontekście klasowym oraz, że da się zaobserwować modyfikacje zarówno w przypadku pojedynczych segmentów jak i całych dyftongów, niezależnie od natywnego akcentu użytkownika. Zaobserwowano, że akomodacja występuje w większym stopniu u użytkowników posługujących się północnymi odmianami angielszczyzny. Kolejną istotną obserwacją było to, że niektóre dyftongi są bardziej podatne na akomodację. Na jednym końcu spektrum występuje dyftong reprezentujący kategorię leksykalną PRICE, a na drugim kategorii GOAT i CURE. Na podstawie badania, nie dało się jednoznacznie stwierdzić, czy modyfikacje następują w wyniku świadomych decyzji użytkownika, co mogłoby sugerować rozwiniętą wiedzę deklaratywną, czy też następują one nieświadomie, co z kolei może świadczyć o próbach wymawiania dyftongów w kontekście pedagogicznym w formie zbliżonej do standardu.

Streścił Piotr Steinbrich

Słowa kluczowe: akomodacja fonetyczna; dyskurs klasowy; język nauczyciela.