

Re: BBC does it again

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- *From:* Nathan Sanders <nsanders@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 14 Jun 2008 09:03:52 -0400
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In article <1v7qccqfj657s\$.lbdyozn2umx6\$.dlg@xxxxxxxxxxxx>, "Brian M. Scott" <b.scott@xxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

On Fri, 13 Jun 2008 12:00:34 -0400, Harlan Messinger <hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in <news:6bfjt2F3bto8tU1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> in sci.lang:

John Atkinson wrote:

"Harlan Messinger"
<hmessinger.removethis@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
wrote in message
news:6bcsnhF3akn8nU1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
...

[...]

I just commented on this in another note, but it's relevant here so I'll reiterate it: One of the advantages of underspecification is that you don't restrict the scope of your phonemic model unnecessarily. If you use /eI/ for English "long E", then you're limiting the utility of your model to the Englishes of speakers who have a diphthong there. Sure, *technically* we can just as easily write /eI/ > [e:] for those speakers as we could write /e:/ > [eI]

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for the remaining speakers if we chose to use /e:/ to represent long "E". But /eI/ marks the diphthong explicitly. To me it seems to make more sense not to mark a feature in the abstract representation that *may* appear in the realization, than to mark one that *may not*.

What do you mean by "long E"?

I mean what American primary school teachers—at least, my teachers—call "long E", [...]

The 'long E' of the grade school teacher is the vowel of <beet>. You were talking about the grade school teacher's 'long A', the vowel of <bait>.

I think some of the confusion here goes back to me getting it wrong accidentally. I meant "long A", but wrote "long E".

Nathan

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