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## ГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ ПЕРЕДАЧА АНГЛИЙСКИХ МОНОФТОНГОВ И ДИФТОНГОИДОВ НА ПИСЬМЕ

Обзор

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## Аннотация

Статья посвящена исследованию проблемы графической передачи монофтонгов и дифтонгоидов при осуществлении образовательной деятельности педагогическим работником в рамках дисциплины «Иностранный язык (английский)» в образовательных учреждениях Российской Федерации. Автор рассматривает основные способы графической передачи фонем, а именно буквы и комбинации букв, используемые при образовании рассматриваемых звуков. Исследование имеет целью выявление и описание способов графической передачи гласных звуков английского языка.

**Ключевые слова:** английский язык, графическая передача, дифтонгоиды, монофтонги, образовательная деятельность, педагогический работник.

## LETTERS AND THEIR COMBINATIONS REPRESENTING ENGLISH MONOPHTHONGS AND DIPHTHONGOIDS IN WRITING

Review

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## Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of the problem of graphic spelling of monophthongs and diphthongoids in educational activities of the pedagogical worker in English classes at educational institutions in the Russian Federation. The author identifies the main ways of graphic spelling of the phonemes, namely letters and combinations of letters used in the formation of the sounds in question. The study aims to define and describe the ways of graphic spelling of English sounds.

**Keywords:** diphthongoids, educational activities, English, graphic spelling, monophthongs, pedagogical worker.

First classes of English at the overwhelming majority of educational institutions in the Russian Federation make pedagogical workers solve a lot of vital issues while training their students within the main language aspects that are listening, speaking, reading and writing (such aspects as interpretation and translation are being omitted here since they are in the domain of a limited number of specialized Russian universities; for this reason transliteration, being a way of rendering lexical units in writing, is not the subject of our research). Writing universally seems to be the most complicated aspect in its mastering due to the fact that it is directly connected with grammar, lexicology, phonetics, punctuation, spelling and stylistics. One complexity of writing is “phonetics [12] vs spelling” problem. In short, we mean a case when one letter or a group of letters contained in various lexical units [1] has several ways to be pronounced, e.g.:

- vowel letter *a* in the following lexical units: *plaque* [a:], *cradle* [eɪ], *adorn* [ə], *gall* [o:], *acrid* [æ], *Bologna* [jə], *vintage* [ɪ], *garish* [εə], *swab* [ɔ];
- consonant letter *s*: *episode* [s], *fusion* [ʒ], *controversial* [ʃ], *liaison* [z], *Asia* [ʃ] or [ʒ], *CIS* [es] [5], [8];
- double *oo*: *flood* [ʌ], *nook* [ʊ], *tattoo* [u:], *floor* [o:], *brooch* [əʊ];
- a group of vowel and consonant letters *ough*: *through* [u:], *sought* [o:], *dough* [əʊ], *rough* [ʌʃ], *cough* [ɔʃ], *thorough* [ə];
- a combination of consonant letters *ch*: *avalanche* [ʃ], *chime* [tʃ], *ochre* [k], *Greenwich* [dʒ] [9], [10], [11].

To avoid bewildering in writing among students and to ensure that they will learn to write well is one of the primary tasks of the pedagogical worker in the initial and further stages of teaching English.

This publication is a humble attempt to unfold our experience in classifying the modes of graphical spelling of ten monophthongs ([ʌ], [a:], [ɪ], [ɔ], [o:], [ʊ], [æ], [e], [ə], [ə:]) and two diphthongoids ([i:], [u:]) [2], [3], [4], temporarily omitting the consonant sounds [6], [7].

The relevance of the research work arose in the light of insufficient coverage of the multiple ways of graphical spelling of vowel and consonant phonemes and their combinations in textbooks currently applied in the educational process.

Our research is based on the material of various extracts taken for our consideration from pieces of fiction, periodicals, textbooks, the Internet. We also dealt with corporate letters, movie subtitles, pieces of advertising; off-line and on-line dictionaries; reference books to contemporary English pronunciation [13]. We examined the parts of English speech and their transformations regarding case, degree, mood, number, tense and voice categories. It seemed natural for us to view abbreviations, acronyms, clipped words, interjections, loan words, etc, paying particular attention to such toponyms as geographic names, corporate names, days of the week, months, nationalities, people's names, patronymics and sur-names, social networks, astronyms, types of drinks, meals and food, etc.

Paradoxically, some English consonant sounds can be rendered by vowel letters, e.g.:

- [f] can be rendered by vowel letter *u* (*lieutenant* [lef'tenənt]);

- [j] can seldom be rendered by vowel letter *e* (*Eugene* [ˈjuːdʒiːn], *eureka* [juəˈrika] or [joːˈrika], *Europe* [ˈjuərəp] or [ˈjoːrəp]); by vowel letter *u* (*unique* [juːˈniːk], *use* [juːz], *usual* [ˈjuːʒəl] or [ˈjuːʒl]); by vowel letter *y* (*yacht* [jɔːt], *year* [jɪə] or [jæː], *youth* [juːθ]);
- [w] can sometimes be rendered by vowel letter *o* (*one* [wʌn], *once* [wʌns], *oneself* [wʌnˈself]); by vowel letter *u* (*cuisine* [kwɪˈziːn], *persuade* [pəˈsweɪd], *quake* [kweɪk]).

We can observe a reverse process, when consonant letters render vowel sounds if they are pronounced under their names in the English Alphabet, e.g. letter *Pp* in *PPP* (that stands for *Power Point Presentation*) [ˈpiːpiːpiː]. To be more exact, consonant letters can render one (letter *Rr*), two (letters *Bb*, *Cc*, *Dd*, *Ff*, *Gg*, *Hh*, *Jj*, *Kk*, *Ll*, *Mm*, *Nn*, *Pp*, *Ss*, *Tt*, *Vv*, *Zz*, the latter in American variant of English), three (letters *Qq*, *Xx*, *Zz*) and six sounds (letter *Ww*):

- letter *Rr* rendered by one sound [aː];
- letter *Bb* rendered by two sounds [biː];
- letter *Qq* rendered by three sounds [kjuː];
- letter *Ww* rendered by six sounds [dʌbljuː].

Letters rendered by two (*Bb* [biː], *Hh* [eɪtʃ], *Nn* [en]), three (*Qq* [kjuː], *Xx* [eks], *Zz* [zed]) and six sounds (*Ww* [dʌbljuː]) involve both consonant and vowel sounds. This postulate says that if we pronounce the consonant letters in definite positions (in abbreviations and compound words, for instance), we have to use both consonant and vowel sounds to utter them, e.g. abbreviation *CIF* [siːˈaɪˈef] and compound word *X-ray* [ˈeksreɪ]:

- *CIF* is composed of letter *C* – [siː] rendered by two sounds, consonant [s] and vowel [iː], letter *I* [aɪ] rendered by one vowel sound [aɪ], letter *F* rendered by two sounds, vowel [e] and consonant [f];
- *X-ray* is composed of letter *X* [eks] and word *ray*.

Thus, a notable feature of this article is its inclusion of examples where consonant letters can take part in rendering vowel sounds.

The ways of graphical spelling of vowel phonemes described here correspond to the style which is currently the norm in Great Britain and the Commonwealth. Standard American usage differs in one respect; in this case examples of American spelling are marked in brackets, e.g. *o(u)r* (*vigour* or *vigor* [ˈvɪgə]).

In the pages that follow are to be found specimen letters and letter combinations depicting English monophthongs and diphthongs.

### Monophthongs

Vowel sound [ʌ] can be represented by English letters *o* (e.g., *dozen* [ˈdʌzn]), *u* (*thus* [ðʌs]), *w* (*WTO* [dʌbljuːtiːˈəʊ]) and by groups of letters *oe* (*does* [dʌz]), *oo* (*blood* [blʌd]), *ou* (*double* [ˈdʌbl]), *uh* (*uh-huh* [ʌˈhʌ]) or [ʊˈhʊ]). Sound [ʌ] can be put in the opening (*oven* [ˈʌvn] or [ˈʌvən]) and central (*flood* [flʌd]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral and ending position of lexical units. Monophthong [ʌ] is represented by two vowel letters (*o*, *u*), one consonant letter (*w*), three groups of vowel letters (*oe*, *oo*, *ou*). In one case, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by a group of a vowel and a consonant letters (*uh*).

Vowel sound [aː] can be represented by letters *a* (*disaster* [dɪzˈaːstə]), *e* (*ensemble* [aːnˈsaːmbl]), *r* (*R&D* [aː(r)ənˈdiː]) and by groups of letters *ah* (*Ah* [aː]), *al* (*almond* [ˈaːmænd]), *ar* (*arc* [aːk]), *are* (*aren't* [ˈaːnt]), *arre* (*bizarre* [bɪˈzaː]), *au* (*laugh* [laːf]), *ear* (*hearth* [haːθ]), *er* (*sergeant* [ˈsaːdʒənt]), *ir* (*memoir* [memˈwaː]), *oi* (*turquoise* [ˈtɜːkwaːz]), *ois* (*bourgeois* [ˈbuəʒwaː]), *uar* (*guard* [gaːd]). Sound [aː] can be put in the neutral (*Ah* [aː]), opening (*ask* [aːsk]), central (*barley* [ˈbaːli]) and ending (*spa* [spaː]) position of lexical units. Monophthong [aː] is represented by two vowel letters (*a*, *e*), one consonant letter (*r*) and 12 groups of letters (*Ah*, *al*, *ar*, *are*, *arre*, *au*, *ear*, *er*, *ir*, *oi*, *ois*, *uar*). In two cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*au*, *oi*), in ten cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*Ah*, *al*, *ar*, *are*, *arre*, *ear*, *er*, *ir*, *ois*, *uar*).

Vowel sound [ɪ] can be represented by letters *a* (*image* [ˈɪmɪdʒ]), *e* (*depart* [dɪˈpaːt]), *e* or *i* (*enquire/inquire* [ɪnˈkwaɪə]), *i* (*inlet* [ˈɪnlet]), *o* (*women* [ˈwɪmɪn]), *u* (*busy* [ˈbɪzi]), *y* (*hymn* [hɪm]), by French letter *é* (*protégé* [ˈprɒtɛʒeɪ]) and by groups of the letters *ae* (*palaeontology* [pælɪɒnˈtɒlədʒɪ]), *ai* (*fountain* [ˈfaʊntɪn]), *ay* (*Friday* [ˈfraɪdɪ]), *ea* (*Guinea* [ˈɡmi]), *ee* (*yankee* [ˈjæŋki]), *ehea* (*forehead* [ˈfɒrɪd]), *ei* (*forfeit* [ˈfoːfɪt]), *eig* (*sovereign* [ˈsovərɪn]), *eo* (*pigeon* [ˈpɪdʒɪn] or [ˈpɪdʒən]), *ey* (*kidney* [ˈkɪdnɪ]), *ia* (*marriage* [ˈmæɪrɪdʒ]), *ie* (*kerchief* [ˈkɜːtʃɪf]), *ui* (*guild* [ɡɪld]), *wi* (*Greenwich* [ˈɡrɪnɪdʒ]).

Table 1. Ways of Graphical Spelling of Monophthongs [ʌ], [a:] and [ɪ]

Spelling	Monophthongs					
	[ʌ]	Example	[a:]	Example	[ɪ]	Example
Vowel Letter	o	front	a	brass	a	coinage
	u	blunt	e	penchant	e	below
					i	brisk
					o	women
					u	minute
					y	belfry
					é	protégé
Vowel Letters	oe	does	au	aunt	ae	anaesthesia
	oo	flood	oi	turquoise	ai	porcelain
	ou	flourish			ay	Saturday
					ea	guinea
					ee	yankee
					ei	forfeit
					eo	pigeon
					ey	barley
					ia	carriage
					ie	junkie
			ui	roguish		
Vowel and Consonant Letters	uh	Uh-huh	ah	hurrah	ehea	forehead
			al	balm	eig	foreign
			ar	bar	wi	Greenwich
			are	hectare		
			arre	bizzare		
			ear	heart		
			er	clerk		
			ir	memoir		
			ois	bourgeois		
			uar	guard		
			r	R&D		
Consonant Letters	w	WTO	-	-	-	-

Sound [ɪ] can be put in the opening (*ink* [ɪŋk]), central (*climate* ['klaɪmɪt]) and ending (*plenty* ['plenti]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral position. Monophthong [ɪ] is represented by seven vowel letters (*a, e, i, o, u, y, é*) and 14 groups of letters (*ae, ai, ay, ea, ee, ehea, ei, eig, eo, ey, ia, ie, ui, wi*). In 11 cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*ae, ai, ay, ea, ee, ei, eo, ey, ia, ie, ui*), in three cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*ehea, eig, wi*).

Table 1 above displays particular cases of monophthongs [ʌ], [a:] and [ɪ] represented by single letters and groups of letters in English lexical units.

Vowel sound [ɔ] can be represented by letters *a* (*wrath* [rɔθ]), *e* (*entrepreneur* [ɔntrəprə'nə:] or [a:ntrəprə'nə:]), *o* (*inoculate* [ɪ'nɔkjuleɪt]) and by groups of letters *ach* (*yacht* [jɔt]), *au* (*sausage* ['sɔsɪdʒ]), *ea* (*Sean* [ʃɔn]), *ho* (*honest* ['ɔnɪst]), *oh* (*John* [dʒɔn]), *ou* (*lough* [lɔh]), *ow* (*knowledge* ['nɔlɪdʒ]). Sound [ɔ] can be put in the opening (*onto* ['ɔntu:]) and central (*pond* [pɔnd]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral and ending position of lexical units. Monophthong [ɔ] is represented by three vowel letters (*a, e, o*) and seven groups of letters (*ach, au, aw, ea, ho, oh, ou*). In three cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*au, ea, ou*) and in four cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*ach, aw, ho, oh*).

Vowel sound [o:] can be represented by letters *a* (*gall* [go:l]), *o* (*sanatorium* [sænə'to:riəm]) and by groups of letters *al* (*stalk* [sto:k]), *aor* (*extraordinary* [ɪks'tro:dənəri]), *ar* (*swarm* [swo:m]), *au* (*taunt* [to:nt]), *ough* (*naught* [no:t]), *aw* (*thaw* [θo:]), *awe* (*awesome* ['o:səm]), *hau* (*haut* or *haute* [o:t]), *oa* (*broad* [bro:d]), *oar* (*hoard* [ho:d]), *oor* (*floor* [flo:]), *or* (*enforce* [ɪn'fɔ:s]), *ore* (*pore* [po:]), *orps* (*corps* [ko:]), *ort* (*rapport* [ræ'po:]), *ough* (*ought* [o:t]), *our* (*four* [fo:]), *wor* (*sword* [so:d]). Sound [o:] can be put in the neutral (*or* [o:]), opening (*all* [o:l]), central (*walk* [wo:k]) and ending (*door* [do:]) position of lexical units. Monophthong [o:] is represented by two vowel letters (*a, o*) and eighteen groups of letters (*al, aor, ar, au, ough, aw, awe, hau, oa, oar, oor, or, ore, orps, ort, ough, our, wor*). In two cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*au, oa*) and in sixteen cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*al, aor, ar, ough, aw, awe, hau, oar, oor, or, ore, orps, ort, ough, our, wor*).

Vowel sound [ʊ] can be represented by letters *o* (*bosom* ['bɔzəm]), *u* (*bull* [bʊl]) and by groups of letters *oo* (*nook* [nʊk]), *ou* (*haute couture* [əʊtko'tjʊə]), *oul* (*should* [ʃʊd]). Sound [ʊ] can be put in the opening (*Ugh* [ʊh]) and central (*butcher* ['bʊtʃə]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral and ending position of lexical units. Monophthong [ʊ] is represented by two letters (*o, u*) and three groups of letters (*oo, ou, oul*). In two cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*oo, ou*) and in one case by a group of vowel and consonant letters (*oul*).

Table 2. Ways of Graphical Spelling of Monophthongs [ɔ], [o:] and [ʊ]

Spelling	Monophthongs					
	[ɔ]	Example	[o:]	Example	[ʊ]	Example
Vowel Letter	a	squalor	a	alter	o	
	e	ensemble	o	porous	u	woman
	o	convert				
Vowel Letters	au	sausage	au	fraud	oo	foot
	ea	Sean	oa	broad	ou	haute couture
	ou	hough				
Vowel and Consonant Letters	ach	yacht	al	chalk	oul	would
	ho	hono(u)r	aor	extraordinary		
	oh	John	ar	ward		
	ow	knowledge	augh	fraught		
			aw	shawl		
			awe	awesome		
			hau	haut or haute		
			oar	roar		
			oor	door		
			or	porch		
			ore	ignore		
			orps	corps		
			ort	rapport		
			ough	nought		
			our	mourn		
			wor	sword		

Table 2 displays particular cases of monophthongs [ɔ], [o:] and [ʊ] represented by single letters and groups of letters in English lexical units.

Vowel sound [æ] can be represented by letters *a* (*acid* [ˈækɪd]), *i* (*meringue* [məˈræŋ]) and by groups of letters *ai* (*plait* [plæt]), *a'a* (*ma'am* [mæm]), *ua* (*guarantee* [ɡærənˈtiː]). Sound [æ] can be put in the opening (*act* [ækt]), central (*pad* [pæd]) and ending (*Nah* or *Nahh* [næ]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral position. Monophthong [æ] is represented by two letters (*a*, *i*), two groups of vowel letters (*ai*, *ua*) and a combination of a vowel letter and the apostrophe (*a'a*).

Vowel sound [e] can be represented by letters *a* (*ate* [et] or [et]), *e* (*peril* [ˈperəl]), *u* (*bury* [ˈberi]), *f* (*FOB* [efəʊˈbiː]), *l* (*LTD* [eltiːˈdiː]), *m* (*BMW* [biːemˈdʌbljuː]), *n* (*NGO* [endʒiːˈəʊ]), *s* (*SOS* [esəʊˈes]), *x* (*x-ray* [ˈeksreɪ]), *z* (*ZT* [zedˈtiː]), by French letter *é* (*apéritif* [əˈperətiːf]) and by groups of letters *ai* (*said* [sed]), *ea* (*pleather* [ˈpleðə]), *eg* (*phlegm* [flem]), *ei* (*leisure* [ˈleɪʒə]), *eo* (*jeopardize* [ˈdʒepədaiɪz]), *ie* (*friend* [frend]), *ue* (*baguette* [bæˈget]). Sound [e] can be put in the opening (*embassy* [ˈembəsi]) and central (*twenty* [ˈtwenti]) position of words. One does not meet it in the neutral and ending position of lexical units. Monophthong [e] is represented by four vowel letters (*a*, *e*, *u*, *é*), seven consonant letters (*f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *s*, *x*, *z*) and seven groups of letters (*ai*, *ea*, *eg*, *ei*, *eo*, *ie*, *ue*). In six cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*ai*, *ea*, *ei*, *eo*, *ie*, *ue*) and in one case by a group of vowel and consonant letters (*eg*).

Vowel sound [ə:] can be represented by groups of letters *ieu* (*milieu* [ˈmɪljəː]), *ear* (*pearl* [pəːl]), *eor* (*George* [dʒəːdʒ]), *er* (*tertiary* [ˈtɜːəri]), *ere* (*were* [wəː]), *err* (*inferred* [ɪnˈfɜːd]), *eur* (*amateur* [ˈæmətəː] or [ˈæmətə]), *ir* (*dirge* [dɜːdʒ]), *olo* (*colonel* [ˈkɔːnəl]), *or* (*attorney* [əˈtɔːni]), *our* (*courtesy* [ˈkɜːtəsi]), *ur* (*nocturnal* [nɒkˈtɜːnəl]). Sound [ə:] can be put in the neutral (*Er* [əː]), opening (*earnest* [ˈɜːnist]), central (*hurt* [ˈhɜːt]) and ending (*infer* [ɪnˈfɜː]) position of lexical units. Monophthong [ə:] is represented by 12 groups of letters (*ear*, *eor*, *er*, *ere*, *erre*, *eur*, *ieu*, *ir*, *olo*, *or*, *our*, *ur*). In one case, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by a group of vowel letters (*ieu*) and in 11 cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*ear*, *eor*, *er*, *ere*, *erre*, *eur*, *ir*, *olo*, *or*, *our*, *ur*).

Table 3 below displays particular cases of sounds [æ], [e] and [ə:] represented by single letters, groups of letters and the apostrophe in English lexical units.

Table 3. Ways of Graphical Spelling of Monophthongs [æ], [e] and [ə:]

Spelling	Monophthongs					
	[æ]	Example	[e]	Example	[ə:]	Example
Vowel Letter	a	distract	a	ate	-	-
	i	meringue	e	peril		
			u	bury		
			é	apéritif		
Vowel Letters	ai	plaid	ai	said	ieu	milieu
	ua	guarantee	ea	jealous		
			ei	leisure		
			eo	leopard		
			ie	lieutenant		
			ue	guess		
Vowel and Consonant Letters	-	-	eg	phlegm	ear	search
					eor	George
					er	percent
					ere	were
					err	inferred
					eur	amateur
					ir	stir
					olo	colonel
					or	world
					our	journey
Consonant Letter	-	-	f	FBI	-	-
			l	LLC		
			m	pm		
			n	NBC		
			s	NBS		
			x	XL		
			z	Z-axis		
Combination of the Apostrophe and Vowel Letter	a'a	ma'am	-	-	-	-

Vowel sound [ə] can be represented by letters *a* (*abrupt* [ə'brʌpt]), *e* (*fraudulent* [ˈfroːdʒələnt]), *i* (*principal* [ˈprɪnsəpl]), *o* (*custody* [ˈkʌstədi]), *u* (*focus* [ˈfəʊkəs]) and by groups of letters *ai* (*villain* [ˈvɪləɪn]), *ar* (*leopard* [ˈlepəd]), *ay* (*always* [ˈoːlwəz] or [ˈoːlweɪz]), *ea* (*sergeant* [ˈsaːdʒənt]), *eo* (*sturgeon* [ˈstɜːdʒən]), *eou* (*outrageous* [aut'reɪdʒəs]), *er* (*southern* [ˈsʌðən]), *er* or *re* (*fibre* or *fiber* [ˈfaɪbə]), *eu* (*pasteurize* [ˈpæstʃəraɪz]), *eur* (*chauffeur* [ˈʃəʊfə] or [ˈʃəʊfəː]), *gh* (*Edinburgh* [ˈedɪnb(ə)rə]), *hu* (*sorghum* [ˈsoːgəm]), *ia* (*initial* [ɪˈnɪʃəl]), *ie* (*sufficient* [səˈfɪʃənt]), *io* (*tension* [ˈtenʃən]), *iou* (*vicious* [ˈvɪʃəs]), *iour* (*saviour* [ˈservjə]), *iu* (*premium* [ˈpriːmjəm] or [ˈpriːmɪəm]), *oar* (*cupboard* [ˈkʌbəd]), *oi* (*tortoise* [ˈtoːtəs]), *or* (*tailor* [ˈteɪlə]), *ou* (*ominous* [ˈɒmɪnəs]), *ough* (*thorough* [ˈθərə]), *o(u)r* (*vigour* or *vigor* [ˈvɪgə]), *re* (*macabre* [məˈkɑːbə] or [məˈkɑːbr]), *ue* (*guerilla* [gəˈrɪlə]), *uer* (*lacquer* [ˈlækə]), *uor* (*liquor* [ˈlɪkə]), *ur* (*surmountable* [səˈmaʊntəbl]), *ure* (*torture* [ˈtoːtʃə]), *wer* (*answer* [ˈɑːnsə]), by a combination of the apostrophe ('), a consonant and a vowel letters '*re*' (*we're* [ˈwiə]), a vowel letter and the apostrophe *o'* (*o'clock* [əˈklɒk]). Sound [ə] can be put in the opening (*about* [əˈbaʊt]), central (*tenant* [ˈtenənt]), central and ending simultaneously (*opera* [ˈɒpərə]) and ending (*clever* [ˈklevə]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral position. Monophthong [ə] is represented by five letters (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*), by 30 groups of letters (*ai*, *ar*, *ay*, *ea*, *eo*, *eou*, *er*, *eu*, *eur*, *gh*, *hu*, *ia*, *ie*, *io*, *iou*, *iour*, *iu*, *oar*, *oi*, *or*, *ou*, *ough*, *o(u)r*, *re*, *ue*, *uer*, *uor*, *ur*, *ure*, *wer*), by one group of consonant letters (*gh*), by one combination of a punctuation sign (the apostrophe), a consonant and a vowel letters ('*re*') and by one combination of a vowel letter and a punctuation sign (the apostrophe) (*o'*). In 14 cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*ai*, *ay*, *ea*, *eo*, *eou*, *eu*, *ia*, *ie*, *io*, *iou*, *iu*, *oi*, *ou*, *ue*), in 15 cases by a group of vowel and consonant letters (*ar*, *er*, *eur*, *hu*, *iour*, *oar*, *or*, *ough*, *o(u)r*, *re*, *uer*, *uor*, *ur*, *ure*, *wer*), in one case by a group of consonant letters (*gh*).

Table 4 displays particular cases of phoneme [ə] represented by single letters, groups of letters and the apostrophe in English lexical units.

Table 4. Ways of Graphical Spelling of Monophthong [ə]

Spelling	Monophthong [ə]					
Vowel Letter	a	embassy	i	basin	u	census
	e	cancel	o	abandon		
Vowel Letters	ai	curtain	eu	pasteurize	oi	tortoise
	ay	always	ia	politician	ou	lustrous
	ea	sergeant	ie	patient	ue	guerilla
	eo	surgeon	io	decision		
	eou	outrageous	iou	ostentatious		
Vowel and Consonant Letters	ar	angular	oar	cupboard	uer	conquer
	er	matter	or	tailor	uor	liquor
	eur	chauffeur	ough	thoroughbred	ur	liturgy
	hu	sorghum	o(u)r	labo(u)r	ure	denture
	iour	behaviour	re	lucre	wer	answer
Consonant Letters	gh	Edinburgh				
Combination of the Apostrophe and Vowel Letter	're	we're				
	o'	o'clock				

**Diphthongoids**

Vowel sound [i:] can be represented by vowel letters *e* (*genius* ['dʒi:niəs]), *i* (*fatigue* [fə'ti:g]), by consonant letters *b* (*BBC* [bi:bi:'si:]), *c* (*CNN* [si:en'en]), *d* (*PhD* [pi:ɛɪt'di:]), *g* (*NGO* [endʒi:'əʊ]), *p* (*PA* [pi:'eɪ]), *t* (*t-shirt* ['ti:fə:t]), *v* (*VIP* [vi:ai'pi:]), *z* (*Zz* [zi:]), by French letter *ï* (*naïve* [nai'i:v] or [na:'i:v] or *naïve* [na:'i:v]), and by groups of letters *ae* (*algae* ['ældʒi:]), *ea* (*grease* [gri:s]), *ee* (*seethe* [si:ð]), *eh* (*vehicle* ['vi:ɪkl]), *ei* (*protein* ['prəʊti:n]), *eo* (*people* ['pi:pl]), *ey* (*key* [ki:]), *ie* (*retrieve* [ri'tri:v]), *oe* (*Phoenix* ['fi:nɪks]), *uay* (*quay* ['ki:]). Sound [i:] can be put in the opening (*eat* [i:t]), central (*scheme* [ski:m]) and ending (*payee* [pe'i:]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral position. Diphthongoid [i:] is represented by three vowel letters (*e*, *i*, *ï*), by eight consonant letters (*b*, *c*, *d*, *g*, *p*, *t*, *v*, *z*) and by 10 groups of letters (*ae*, *ea*, *ee*, *eh*, *ei*, *eo*, *ey*, *ie*, *oe*, *uay*). In nine cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*ae*, *ea*, *ee*, *ei*, *eo*, *ey*, *ie*, *oe*, *uay*) and in one case by a group of a vowel and a consonant letters (*eh*).

Table 5. Ways of Graphical Spelling of Diphthongoids [i:] and [u:]

Spelling	Diphthongs			
	[i:]	Example	[u:]	Example
Vowel Letter	e	concede	o	prove
	i	gasoline	u	truth
	ï	naïve		
Vowel Letters	ae	novae	eau	beautiful
	ea	beacon	eu	pharmaceutical
	ee	feeble	(o)eu	manoeuvre
	ei	conceive	oe	shoe
	eo	people	oo	poodle
	ey	keyboard	ou	wound
	ie	shield	ue	glue
	oe	Phoenix	ueue	queue
Vowel and Consonant Letters	uay	quay	ui	recruit
	eh	vehicle	ew	screw
			heu	rheum
			hou	silhouette
			ough	through
Consonant Letter	wo	two	q	ICQ
	b	NBC	w	WTO
	c	CNN		
	d	PhD		
	g	NGO		
	p	PPP		
	t	T-shirt		
	v	VCR		
	z	Zz		

Vowel sound [u:] can be represented by vowel letters *o* (*tomb* [tu:m]), *u* (*ruth* [ru:θ]), by consonant letters *q* (*IQ* [ai'kju:]), *w* (*WC dAblyu:'si:*) and by groups of letters *eau* (*beauty* ['bju:ti]), *eu* (*pharmaceutical* [fa:mə'sju:tikəl]), *eu* or *oeu* (*maneuver* or *manoeuver* [mə'nu:və]), *ew* (*screw* [skru:]), *heu* (*rheum* [ru:m]), *hou* (*ghoul* [gu:l]), *iew* (*review* [ri'vju:]), *oe* (*canoe* [kə'nu:]), *oo* (*maroon* [mə'ru:n]), *ou* (*acoustics* [ə'ku:stiks]), *ough* (*through* [θru:]), *ue* (*rue* [ru:]), *ueue* (*queue* [kju:]), *ui* (*bruise* [bru:z]), *wo* (*two* [tu:]). Sound [u:] can be put in the opening (*Oops* [u:ps]), central (*shrewd* [fru:d]) and ending (*bamboo* [bæm'bu:]) position of lexical units. One does not meet it in the neutral position. Diphthongoid [u:] is represented by two vowel letters (*o*, *u*), two consonant letters (*q*, *w*) and by 16 groups of letters (*eau*, *eu*, *eu*, *ew*, *heu*, *hou*, *iew*, *oe*, *oeu*, *oo*, *ou*, *ough*, *ue*, *ueue*, *ui*, *wo*). In ten cases, this phoneme is made in graphic spelling by groups of vowel letters (*eau*, *eu*, *eu*, *oe*, *oeu*, *oo*, *ou*, *ue*, *ueue*, *ui*) and in six cases by groups of vowel and consonant letters (*ew*, *heu*, *hou*, *iew*, *ough*, *wo*).

Table 5 displays particular cases of diphthongs [i:] and [u:] represented by single letters and groups of letters in English lexical units.

To sum up, we must note that the solution to the problem of graphic spelling of monophthongs and diphthongoids is still for the most part in its infancy. No single spelling rule can guarantee uniformed pronunciation of this or that vowel phoneme, that is why the best way to specify correct pronunciation of a lexical unit remains in looking it up in off-line and on-line dictionaries. However, the ways of graphic spelling of ten monophthongs ([ʌ], [a:], [ɪ], [ɔ], [o:], [ʊ], [æ], [e], [ə], [ə:]) and two diphthongoids ([i:], [u:]) described by us can simplify to some extent this process in the initial and further stages of teaching English at educational institutions in the Russian Federation.

Our brief outline of the modes of graphical spelling of the vowel sounds shows that further more careful and scrupulously detailed investigation is necessary to get the objective data by which we can more fully ascertain each method to render the vowel phonemes. Nevertheless, the research allowed us to work out and prepare for publishing a guide-book containing drills to consolidate the skills of spelling and pronunciation of lexical units.

The logical outcome of our work permits to state that the data of the review can be helpful in the pedagogical reality of Russian schools, colleges, universities when teaching English phonological and spelling nuances to students who master English as a foreign language. However, we cannot purport to have covered the entire range of variations of letters and groups of letters depicting monophthongs and diphthongoids. For this reason, we invite our fellow scholars to join us in further more thorough research of this issue.

#### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

#### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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