

Abstract

This paper deals with spelling pronunciation, a term coined by Emil Koeppel in 1901. Scholarly discussions provide several implications. Firstly, it is the relationship between phonemes and their graphic representation. In English, the phoneme-grapheme relations are in disbalance. This applies especially to vowels but also to several consonants, where digraphs, for example, are mostly ambiguous and very dependent on surroundings. A typical example of the poor grapheme-phoneme relations is represented by <ch>, which can be either [ʃ], or [tʃ], or even [k]. At the same time, spelling pronunciation is also regarded as a process of language change and it is believed that spelling pronunciation is also governed by analogy. It is generally believed by scholars that spelling pronunciation is more likely to occur in unusual structures or in words which have weaker 'oral tradition'. From the historical perspective, spelling pronunciation is very related to etymological respellings. One of the main premises is that spelling pronunciation is rooted in the notion that pronunciation should reflect spelling, which was most likely introduced and induced by 18th century orthoepists and standardisation of English spelling. Although much has been written about spelling pronunciation and its relations, no paper so far has dealt with spelling pronunciation to sufficient breadth. Aim of this paper is to provide a broader insight into the context of spelling pronunciation and to test the notion that spelling pronunciation is a return to earlier forms of pronunciation.