## Week 7. Historical change (ii)

**British prestige innovations**. More developments over the last few centuries: innovations represented in RP, but not everywhere in Britain, and not (as such) in General American:

1. **Vowels before** /r/ (NB: there was shared lengthening of [-hi] vowels /\_r, as *star*, *for*, *fur*)

a. Pre-r Breaking (16c)

$$\emptyset \rightarrow \mathfrak{I}$$
 / [-low, +long V] \_ r

b. Pre-schwa Laxing (18c)

$$V \rightarrow [-tense] / \_ \vartheta$$

	beer	chair	more	sure
Input	bi:r	t∫e:r	morr	∫u:r
Pre-R Breaking	bi:ər	t∫e:ər	moiər	∫u:ər
Pre-schwa Laxing	bıər	t∫εər	məər	∫ʊər
R Dropping	рıэ	t∫εə	məə	∫ʊə
(Monophthonging)	(bi:)	(t∫ε:)	mər	(ʃʊː)

2. a. **R Dropping** (18c)

$$r \rightarrow \emptyset$$
 except /  $\_ \#_0 V$ 

$$stork = stalk, mar = ma$$

b. R Insertion (?by 1800)

$$\emptyset \rightarrow r / [-high V] _ \#_0 V$$

$$(\rightarrow intrusive /r/)$$

Resisted in the West country, Scotland, Ireland, etc.

3. BATH and CLOTH

a. Pre-Fricative Lengthening (16c)  $[+low V] \rightarrow [+long] / [-voi, +cont]$ 

bath, pass, staff, raft, after cloth, cross, off, soft, often

(But not in *crass*, *riffraff*, *classic*, *passage*, *possible*. Not before /ʃ/: *dash*, *cosh*. In the twentieth century RP reverted to short /p/ in CLOTH, but retains long /q:/ in BATH. Conversely, GenAm has the reflex of long /p:/ in CLOTH but of short /æ/ in BATH.)

b. TRAP-BATH Split (by 19c)

$$a \rightarrow a$$
: /\_ns, \_nt, \_nt $\int etc.$ , in some words

chance, slant, branch

(But not, for example, in *cancel*, *pant*. Also in some cases of \_nd, \_mp: *demand*, *example*; but not *hand*, *ample*)

Resisted in the north of England

4. Glide Cluster Reduction (18c)  $hw \rightarrow w$ 

whine = wine

Resisted in Scotland and Ireland

5. Suffix vowel weakening (18c) [-stress V]  $\rightarrow a / Ci \#$ 

-ary, -ory, -ony (etc):

customary...,dormitory..., matrimony..., cemetery...,

(also: -berry, -borough/burgh,

-penny)

Variability in London etc.

(Read Accents of English chapter 3.2, pages 212-242.)