LESSON 1 – ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

LISTENING - a. Watch the video and answer the questions.

1. What are the major criticisms made to Received Pronunciation (RP)?
2. What is one of the effects of problems with RP?
3. What is the definition of Estuary English (EE)?
4. How did David Rosewarne describe EE?
5. What is Cockney?
6. Could you explain the difference between social dialect and regional dialect?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0ueYcG9npl&g=ANyPxKpCXqTaQxxhrz4UFp7dbojAidTNJIVFqkGPjYAfnNy0G4L_2MtQvmyMkOvmrWyNWaf9ibt7zchG_4wbxbBzsnq3b4Q

READING - a. What are the phonetic characteristics of Estuary English (EE)?

Many of the features that distinguish it from RP are features it shares with Cockney: things that may mark it as being distinctively south-eastern (as against RP, which is non-localizable within England). But these features are spreading geographically and socially, thus losing their localizability and thus to some extent justifying the claim that EE is ‘tomorrow’s RP’. Unlike Cockney, EE is associated with standard grammar and usage. But like Cockney it shows tendencies towards such phonetic characteristics as the following:

- l-vocalization, pronouncing the l-sound in certain positions almost like [w], so that milk bottle becomes ["mlok %bOto] (almost like ‘mikw bottoo’), and football becomes ["fU?bO:o] (‘foo’baw’). The l-sounds that are affected are those that are ‘dark’ [5] in classical RP, namely those which are not immediately followed by a vowel-sound, but rather by a consonant-sound or a potential pause.
- glottalling, using a glottal stop [?] (a catch in the throat) instead of a t-sound in certain positions, as in take it off [%teIk I? "Qf], quite nice [%kwAl? "nAl]s. This is not the same as omitting the t-sound altogether, since plate [pleI?] still sounds different from play [pleI]. Nevertheless, authors who want to show a non-standard pronunciation by manipulating the spelling tend to write it with an apostrophe: take i’ off, qui’e nice. The positions in which this happens are most typically syllable-final -- at the end of a word or before another consonant sound. London’s second airport, Gatwick, is very commonly called ["g?wIk] (‘Ga’wick’).
- happyY-tensing, using a sound more similar to the [i:] of beat than to the [i] of bit at the end of words like happy, coffee, valley. Many recent works on English phonetics transcribe this weak vowel as [i], which can then be interpreted in various ways according to the speaker’s accent. In strong syllables (stressed, or potentially stressed) it is crucial to distinguish tense long [i] from lax short [I], since green must be distinct from grin and sleep from slip. But in weak syllables this distinction does not apply -- the precise quality of the final vowel in happy is not so important.
- yod coalescence, using [tS] (a ch-sound) rather than [tj] (a t-sound plus a y-sound) in words like Tuesday, tune, attitude. This makes the first part of Tuesday sound identical to choose, [tSu:z]. The same happens with the corresponding voiced sounds: the RP [dj] of words such as duke, reduce becomes Estuary [dZ], making the second part of reduce identical to juice, [dZu:ss].

However, unlike Cockney, EE does not involve, for example,

- h-dropping, omitting [h], so that Cockney hand on heart becomes [%nd On A:] (‘and on ’eart); or
- th-fronting, using labiodental fricatives ([f, v]) instead of dental fricatives ([T, D]). This turns I think into [AI "fINk] and mother into ["mVv@].

Phoneticians at University College London have recently been attempting to fix a standard phonetic transcription for EE. This would open up the possibility of teaching it in the EFL classroom, if that were thought desirable. The main problems in standardizing a transcription relate to the notation of certain sequences of vowel plus the residue of vocalized /I/: in standardizing EE, for example, do we retain the RP distinctions fool vs full vs fall (["fu:l, fUl, fO:l]), or do we merge them all into [fOo] as many Londoners do?
Estuary English is a new name. But it is not a new phenomenon. It is the continuation of a trend that has been going on for five hundred years or more - the tendency for features of popular London speech to spread out geographically (to other parts of the country) and socially (to higher social classes). The erosion of the English class system and the greater social mobility in Britain today means that this trend is more clearly noticeable than was once the case.

Rather than try to adopt EE, perhaps a more realistic aim for EFL teachers and learners would be to make sure that our description of Received Pronunciation keeps up to date. It must not remain fossilized in the form codified by Daniel Jones almost a century ago. We must modernize it by gradually incorporating one or two of the changes typical of EE. To star’ with, we migh’ le’ people use a few glottal stops. Or would tha' not mee’ with everyone's approval?

**EXAMPLES: Does the English pop singer Adele speak Estuary English?**

a. Listen to the first stanza of Adele’s song ‘Hometown Glory’ and circle all the examples of glottal stops and vowel changes in the following tapescript.

http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/adele/hometownglory.html

I’ve been walking in the same way as I did
Missing out the cracks in the pavement
And tutting my heel and strutting my feet
"Is there anything I can do for you dear? Is there anyone I could call?"
"No and thank you, please Madam. I ain’t lost, just wandering."

b. **Pronunciation and Gender: Vocal Fry**