

The Recent Incorporation of EE Features into the Modernized Form of RP

Reasons, Conclusions and Suggestions*

Haifa Adnan Salman

Asst. Lect., Nineveh Teachers' Training Institute for Girls

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Abstract □

RP is an evolutionary type of pronunciation that requires coping with by its learners. It is obvious that it has witnessed many changes, and one needs only compare the so called "conservative" type of the 40s and 50s of the last century with the more "modernized" one.

The mass media and the great improvement of communication during the last score rendered many forms of pronunciation available, and this includes the RP accent. Through these media it has been easy for a keen listener to perceive radical changes in some phoneme realizations and vowel qualities in the speech of many native speakers of the accent. For instance, an Iraqi learner of the RP type of pronunciation, who expects to hear /nju:z/ for news; /pleɪ/ for play; /gəʊt/ for goat, will be surprised to hear the following pronunciations, instead: /nu:z/, /plΛɪ/, /gΛʊt/. Such pronunciations, which were typical of certain regional accents, have recently found their way into the speech of many native speakers of RP.

Since pronunciation is one of the most fleeting aspects of linguistic development, any recent changes in that aspect should not be overlooked by an EFL teacher or learner, for they may pave the way for a more modernized version of the accent adopted as a standard.

(*) Received: 14/06/2011, Accepted: 12/12/2011.

بما أن لفظ الكلمة هو أحد المجالات اللغوية الأسرع تغيراً فلا يجب الإغفال عن أية تغيرات قد تطرأ عليه، من قبل المعلم والمتعلم على حد سواء، ذلك لأن مثل هذه التغيرات قد تمهد الطريق لنوع أكثر حداثة وشيوعاً للهجة الإنكليزية المتبناة في برامج تعليم اللغة الإنكليزية كلفة أجنبية في العراق.

1- Received Pronunciation (RP)\ the BBC English

For five centuries, a notion has existed in England that among the varieties of accents used, there has been one which is more prestigious, and so preferable by people. Because of the influence of the court and commerce, it has been decided that the pronunciation of the SE of England, or rather of London region, is the one to which prestige should be attached (Gimson, 1980: 88).

The term Received Pronunciation– commonly abbreviated as RP– has been attached to the accent which has ever since been considered as that kind of British pronunciation which is “received”, i.e. accepted as a proper in the upper-class society or socially acceptable (McCarthy, 1978: 61; Fromkin and Rodman, 1983: 251). As such, several names have been attributed to it, among which are: Educated English, British English, English English, General English, PSP (Public Schools Pronunciation), and last but not least, the BBC pronunciation.

The BBC pronunciation is the most colloquial name that has been attributed to the accent (Trudgill, 1983: 19; Roach, 2000: 3). It is believed that the reason behind adopting it in this corporation is that the latter used to be run by members of upper-middle and upper classes who were either speakers of RP or one of the socially acceptable accents (Leitner, 1980: 84). As such, announcers, who by virtue of their background and education or their profession could speak RP naturally, were the only ones employed by the BBC.

1.1 RP and Evolution

A language is constantly undergoing change. This applies to pronunciation for the most part. RP has constantly changed, and the public school, which has long been considered as the nursery of the English culture, no longer imposes the old

uniformity in pronunciation. In this regard, (Gimson, 1996: 272) confirms:

It is now realistic to allow considerable dilution in the original concept of the RP speaker, with consequent admission into the permitted speech forms of certain variants until recently regarded as regional.

Like any other wider-based accent, RP is regarded as an evolving mode of pronunciation. This applies to its phonological system as well as its phonetic realizations. Actually, RP provides its learners with plenty of examples of change in pronunciation over a relatively short period of time. This is so because, as a regionals accent, RP has become less and less confined to an exclusive social class: its wide emergence in a wider section of population has allowed for a considerable dilution of the earlier form. This, in turn, has led to altering the quality of the sounds of some words in the last half century, and what used to be new and odd has become generally acceptable (Gimson, *ibid*: 273; 1964: 132).⁽¹⁾

It has been noticed that pronunciations typical of other regions have become acceptable as regional RP. This, for the most part, reflects current linguistic changes that keep taking place in RP. For instance, Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 10-16) list the following changes as part of the continuous innovations in RP:

- 1- The merger of /ʊə/ with /ɔ:/. Hence, the current situation is something like this:

(1) Except for the region less RP, all the other British varieties are said to be regional.

	paw	pore	poor
Middle-aged speakers	/pɔ:/	/pɔ:/	/pʊə/
Younger speakers	/pɔ:/	/pɔ:/	/pɔ:/

- 2- The replacement of /ɔ:/ by /o/ in *lost*, *froth*, *off*. Words like *salt* and *fault* are pronounced with /ɔ:/, but are often pronounced with /o/, too, by younger speakers.
- 3- The fronting of the back vowel /u:/ in *boot*, *move* by the younger speakers, except before /l/ as in *fool*, *cool*.
- 4- The spread of the intrusive /r/ as in *China r* and *India, the idea r of it*, though it had long been socially stigmatized in certain environments.
- 5- The realisation of the syllable-final /t/ before a following consonant as in *fi? them*, *ba?man*. This glottal reinforcement is heard mostly from younger speakers, and it occurs before /t/ and in certain consonant clusters, as in *chur?ch*, *bo?x*, *sim?ply*.

This latitude has also included the pronunciation of the vowel sound in words like *past*, *dance*, *ask*. The vowel which is pronounced as /ɑ:/ in RP has become /æ/ in many speakers of the accent. It should be mentioned that this kind of pronunciation is current in the North of England and in the widely based American accent called General American (GA) (Gimson, 1996: 272).

The pronunciation of the vowel sound at the end of *happy*, *busy*, *silly* represents another example of the accent evolution. This feature, which has been called “happy-tensing”, includes the replacement of the word final unstressed /ɪ/ by /i/, so that /'hæpi/ becomes /'hæpi/ (Roach, 2000: 84-85). It can be said that such an increasing use of this pronunciation is taking place widely among the young in the British society as only the most

recent edition of the Oxford Dictionary of Current English gives the above pronunciations to the aforementioned words. (See, for example, the 6th ed. of the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary). This viewpoint is further confirmed by Gimson (p. 277) who maintains:

The increasing use of a close vowel (i.e. a short /i:/) for final /ɪ/ amongst middle and young-generation speakers justifies its use by foreign learners, if it is found to be easier than the traditional /ɪ/, in such cases as happy, easy.

Other advanced pronunciations are also indications of how the RP system is changing and incorporating some regional phoneme realizations. This is mostly shown in the current realization of the centering diphthong /ʊə/ in such words as *moor*, *poor*, *tour*. There has been a progressive decline in the use of /ʊə/, and /ɔ:/ is increasingly replacing it (Gimson, 1981: 66; Jones, 1997: ix). Thus, words such as *sure* and *shore* are treated as homophones when the glide is leveled with /ɔ:/, resulting in /ʃɔ:/, for the two words (Gimson, 1980: 146; O'Connor, 1980: 87). For Ball (1984: 41), the reason behind such a merging is possibly phonetic, that is, as diphthongs are long, they have a tendency to monophthongize to long vowels, and this explains why the above merging is on the increase.

Monophthongizing the trip thongs /aɪə/ and /aʊə/ in *fire* and *tower* is becoming very common among RP speakers. Thus, pronunciations like /fa:/ and /ta:/ are very likely to be heard for the two words. A case which may result in homophony, for example, *far* can be understood for *fire* by a non-native speaker (Jones, 1997: vii; Roach, 2000: 25). On her part, Ward (1972:

123) seems to give a good solution to the problem when she states:

Speakers who use this pronunciation for fire (instead of the widely used /faɪə/) distinguish between it and far /fa:/, the tongue position in the former being a little further forward than in far.

1.2 Two Social Connotations of RP

1.2.1 A Class-Based Accent

In Britain, the dissemination of RP as a class pronunciation made it an accent of social layer. Hence, those who were eager for social advancement were obliged to adjust their accents in the direction of the more socially accepted one. In relation to this, Leitner (1980: 85) reports that RP “reflects upper-class interests to stabilize a particular social constellation. It is entirely class-based”.

1.2.2 A Minority Accent

RP is spoken natively by the minority of the English who live mainly in the south and the south-eastern (SEern) parts of London. In a survey of the SEern parts of that city, Trudgill and Hannah (1985: 9) report that the accent in question is used natively by only 3% of the population of England.⁽¹⁾ Thus, an EFL student who arrives in England for the first time may have a great deal of difficulty understanding the other 95% to 97% of the English population. This is further confirmed by Brown (1992: 2) who states “even generous estimates put the figure at less than 5 million worldwide”.

(1) The sample was taken from the city of Norwich and its vicinity, Chatham, Bath, Glasgow and Hall.

2- Estuary English\ EE

This section is devoted to the explanation of a more broadly based English form of pronunciation which is advancing on all fronts and obviously on many regional accents – including the non-regional RP – to become very popular among many English people. It is a variety spoken at the banks of the Thames Estuary, and is mostly associated with the lower middle-class accents of the Home Counties surrounding London: Essex and Kent which border on the Thames Estuary. What is interesting about this form of pronunciation is that it is believed to be behind the accents developments in the speech of millions in and around London (Schoenberger, 1997: 1).

2.1 Definition of EE

Many books, papers and lectures have been produced on a new English form of pronunciation which has characteristics typical of the accents of the London area. EE is “a speech influenced by the traditional accents found close to the river Thames near London,” (Roach, 1998: 1 of 1). It was mainly coined in the eighties by David Rosewarne, who at the time was a post-graduate student of Applied Linguistics at the University of London (Maidmant, 1994: 1). In his “Estuary English”, Wells (1992: 1) cites Rosewarne’s definition of EE as “a variety of modified regional speech, or a mixture of non-regional and local south-eastern English pronunciation and intonation”.

Nevertheless, the debate is still heated among phoneticians as to attributing a definite definition to EE. Wells (1997: 1) and Coggle (1994: 1 of 1; 1998: 1; 1999: 1) believe that it occupies a middle position and represents a continuum with the conservative RP and London speech at either end serving as a bridge between various classes in the SEern England. For this reason, Wells (1998: 1 of 1) would rather define it as “Standard

English spoken with an accent that includes features localizable in the southeast of England.” This is more sustained by Kerswill (1994: 1 of 1) who states that EE is a standardized type of speech characterized by SE phonology. As such, it is believed that EE represents another example of the regional arrogance of the SE England, to which, approximately, all changes in RP are attributed.

2.2 EE and the Modernized Form of RP

The following is an account of the phonetic and the phonological features of EE with reference to segmental phonology. This step is carried out to see how many of these features have been incorporated into the modernized type of RP, and how pronunciation is constantly in a state of flux; eventually, such changes should not be overlooked by the EFL teacher.

2.2.1 Word-Final and Pre-Consonantal Glottal Replacement

This involves the use of the glottal stop [ʔ] in the place of /t/ in such words as *treatment* /tri:ʔmint/; *bit* /bɪʔ/; *network* /neʔwɜ:k/, following Maidment’s rule:

**Substitute [ʔ] for [t] when BOTH
preceded by a vowel or /l/ or /n/ AND
followed by end of word or consonant
other than /r/. (Maidment, 1994: 2)**

It should be mentioned immediately that the replacement of /t/ by a glottal stop is not confined to EE; rather, some other English accents are much with the same feature. Among such accents is the broadly based Cockney, which is a dialect spoken in London, or the East End of London (Webster’s Third International Dictionary, 1971: 436).

This glottalisation is also common in many American accents. For instance, it regularly replaces the (tt) sound in New York City and Boston, e.g. *bottom* /ba:ʔəm/; *bottle* /ba:ʔl/, etc. (Fromkin and Rodman, 1983: 46; Trudgill and Hannah, 1985: 36). In GA, this final /t/ is often unreleased before a following consonant as in *that was it* /ðæʔwəz ɪt/ (Trudgill and Hannah, *ibid*).

Glottalisation is becoming more widely used in RP, especially in the pronunciation of younger speakers. In some speakers of this type of English, the glottal stop occurs before plosives or the voiceless affricate /tʃ/, which is the most widespread as in *nature* /neɪʔtʃəl/, *catching* /kæʔtʃɪŋ/, *riches* /rɪʔtʃɪz/, *actor* /æʔktər/, *football* /fuʔtb :l/ (Roach, 2000: 55-56).

2.2.2 Tense Vowel in “Happy”

EE speakers use a sound which is more similar to /i:/ of *seat* than to /ɪ/ of *sit* at the end of words like *happy* /hæpi:/, *coffee* /kofi:/, *valley* /væli:/ (cf. 1.1). Although such a difference in pronunciation between the EE vowel and the one used in RP does not affect intelligibility, since both pronunciations are often heard from many native speakers of RP, an EFL learner should be aware of this phonetic phenomenon (Wells, 1997: 2). This point was raised much earlier than that when (Jones, 1972: 236) stated that the tendency to lengthen short vowels was on the increase then, and it held true for some accents of American English. Jones (*ibid*) anticipated that if such a new system of vowel length were to become regular in RP, it would be necessary to introduce special letters to distinguish the sound pairs that were at the time distinguished by length marks.

There seems to be a possible and a more satisfactory solution to this problem, though it goes against the standard phoneme theory. The final weak vowel in the above words can

be symbolised as /i/ (Roach, 2000: 85). Hence, the aforementioned words are pronounced as /hæpi/, /kofi/ and /væli/.

2.2.3 Diphthong Shift in Face, Price and Goat

This is a phonetic feature which is becoming very noticeable in the speech of many speakers with the RP form of English, i.e. the changing quality of the diphthongs /eɪ, aɪ, əʊ/. Thus, words such as *face*, *price* and *goat* are pronounced by many young speakers as /fʌɪs, praɪs, gʌʊt/ (Wells, 1992: 1).

It might be noticed that confusion with the original RP diphthong /aɪ/ is likely to take place; hence, the EE realization of the diphthong in *price* has as more retracted first element as cardinal vowel no. 5 [a] so that EE *fate* /faɪt/ is kept distinct from *fight* /faɪt/ (Maidmant, 1994: 3). Figure (1) illustrates the starting points of the above EE glides.

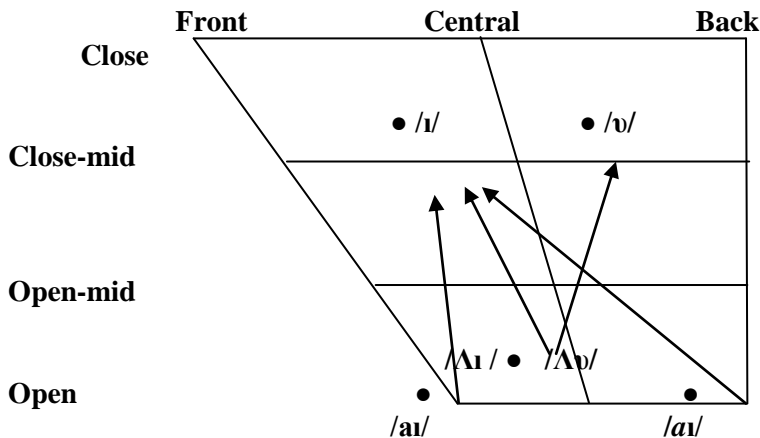


Figure (1)

Diagram illustrating the starting points of the EE glides for RP /eɪ, aɪ, əʊ/ (After Gimson, 1980: 129,131)

Still, the qualities given to the RP diphthongs may also result in homophony. For example, homophones like *way=why*, *say=sigh*, *oat=out* are likely to take place leading sometimes to ambiguity (Kohlmyr, 1996: 1); hence, much more burden is put on the context.

This new form of pronouncing these English diphthongs should not pass without notice by EFL learners and teachers because it corresponds to the dramatic change of vowels which took place between 1400 and 1600, known as the *Great Vowel Shift* though it affected the long tense vowels of Middle English which underwent an increase in tongue-height. Thus, the highest vowels /i:/ and /u:/ fell off to become /aɪ/ and /aʊ/, respectively (Fromkin and Rodman, 1983: 294). The following table illustrates the aforementioned change still further.

Middle English	Modern English	Examples
/i:/	/aɪ/	mice /mi:s/ → /maɪs/
/u:/	/aʊ/	mouse /mu:s/ → /maʊs/

2.2.4 /j/ Coalescence

EE shares RP the coalescence of alveolar plosives /t,d/ and the palatal approximant /j/ to produce the affricates /tʃ, dʒ/. One difference between EE and RP, regarding this merging, is the latter's tendency to confine this process to unstressed syllables, e.g. *constitute* /'konstitʃu: t/, *did you?* /'dɪdʒʊ/; whereas the former allows for such coalescence in a larger set of environments, e.g. *Tuesday* /'tʃu: zdeɪ/, *reduce* /rɪ'dʒu: s/, *tune* /tʃu: n/, *attitude* /'ætɪtʃu:d/, *duke* /dʒu: k/ (Maidment, 1994: 4; Wells, 1997: 2).

Obviously, the process of assimilating an alveolar plosive into the palatal approximant /j/ in stressed syllables is making

some impression on the RP type of pronunciation, for example, the word *during*, which has the stress on the first syllable can be pronounced as /'djʊərɪŋ/ or /dʒʊərɪŋ/ (see Hassan and El-Shayib, 2003: 126).

2.2.5 /j/ dropping

EE shares GA the process of dropping the /j/ after consonants, and as has been mentioned in (2.2.4) such words as *duke*, *tune* are pronounced as /dʒu: k/ and /tʃu:n/, respectively. In this connection, Schoenberger (1997: 1) reports that the /j/ dropping is now established even among speakers of current RP. Thus, /j/ is frequently dropped after /l/ in *absolute*, *revolution*, *salute*, producing such pronunciations as /'æbsəlu:t/, /revə'lu:ʃn/, /sə'lu:t/. In the same way, /j/ is commonly dropped after /s/ in *assume* /ə'su:m/, *suitable* /'su:təbl/ and *pursuit* /pə'su:t/.

It should be mentioned that this /j/ dropping is mostly connected with GA, or rather, the “trans-Atlantic” type of English in which *dew* rhymes with *do*, not with *few*; and *duty* with *booty*, not *beauty* (McCarthy, 1978: 60).⁽¹⁾ This, apparently, shows that the American type of pronunciation is making some impact on the speakers of the current type of RP.

2.3 Sociology and Accent Evolution

In the previous discussion, it has been stated that this new form of pronunciation is mostly practiced among the young who are responsible for much of accent evolution. As such, this rapid emergence of the EE features in the English speech relates to their popularity among the young for the very reason that they are said to obscure social origins. Thus, EE features are often adopted for reasons of increasing street-credibility among the young, including those from RP origins. In addition, these

(1) Trans-Atlantic speeches is a reference used by McCarthy (ibid) to stand for the type of English spoken in North America.

features of pronunciation have appeared in business circles where speakers in business opt for to be more consumer-friendly (Kohlmyr, 1996: 1; 1999: 4; and Schoenberg, *ibid*).

So far, it can be said that the incorporation of the London Estuary features is mostly practiced by the younger generation, who has always been involved in any accent evolution. Such an option might represent a protest against the social distinctions practiced on the basis of accent. In this regard, Ascherson (1994: 1) maintains:

For at least a century, accent in England has been two things: a vertical indicator about geographical origins, and a horizontal caste-mark separating “top-people” from the rest.

Obviously, the spread of the EE features among the young in England is mostly related to their need to obscure their class origins and maintain social equality between classes.

The sociolinguistic structure of the accent in England today is often described in terms of a cone. This cone (shown in Fig.2) consists of a combination of regional and social variation with its strongest expression at the bottom end. This variation keeps decreasing as one moves towards the top, which is identified with RP (Leitner, 1992: 190).

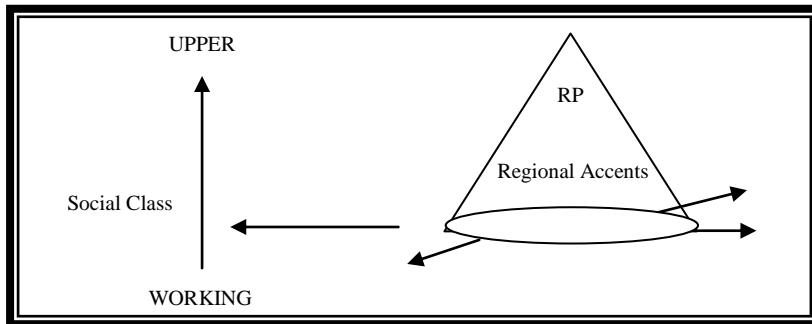


Figure (2)

**The conical nature of accent distribution in Britain
(After Montgomery, 1986: 69)**

3- Conclusions and Suggestions

3.1 Conclusions

- 1- It has already been stated that RP is an evolving model of pronunciation, which obliges its learners and teachers to keep pace with its constant process of change. Phonological features that were typical of other regions have recently been regarded as part of the new version of RP. Among such features are: inserting /r/ in phrases like *I saw it* /aɪ sɔːr ɪt/, *formula A* /fɔːmjələ ɜː/; glottalising the syllable-final /t/ before another consonant as in *seat belt* /si ː? belt/, *football* /fʊtˈbɔːl/; the merger of /ʊə/ and /ɔː/ as in *sure* /ʃʊə/ or /ʃɔː/, *poor* /pʊə/ or /pɔː/; replacing the word-final unstressed /ɪ/ by /i/ so that *busy* and *city* are pronounced as /bɪzi/ and /sɪti/; monophthongizing trip thongs in *fire* and *tower* producing such pronunciations as /faː/ and /taː/.
- 2- The form of pronunciation called EE has definitely affected some of the RP features producing a more modernized form of the accent, and although some of these features have not yet found their way to the English Pronouncing Dictionary,

they should be considered by an EFL teacher or learner. This is so, because they may pave the way for a new form of the accent, especially when recognizing that they have become noticeable in the speech of the young, and are “undoubtedly becoming more widely used in BBC pronunciation,” (Roach, 2000: 56). In addition to those mentioned in (1), the following features are also incorporated as part of the EE influence on the RP accent: the /j/ coalescence in stressed syllables as in *Tuesday* /tʃu:zdeɪ/, *reduce* /rɪ'dʒu:s/; the /j/ dropping in *assume* /ə'su:m/ and *salute* /sə'lu:t/; and the changing quality of the diphthongs in *same*, *mice* and *go* to become /sʌɪm/, /maɪs/, and /gʌv/, respectively.

- 3- The discussion also suggests that GA is, in a way or another, affecting the new version of RP since features like the glottalisation of the syllable-final and pre-consonantal /t/, and the /j/ dropping are very typical of the GA type of pronunciation. This is obviously related to the important role played by the mass media in developing and consolidating pronunciation habits. The same improved communication media which have made RP an available accent are responsible for making other accents common and in hand.
 - 4- Like any other linguistic aspect, pronunciation is much influenced by the social background of the speakers. It has been noticed that many of the EE features were incorporated into RP for social reasons. Among such reasons are: increasing the street-credibility among the young and maintaining social equality between classes which has long been distinguished on the basis of the accent used.
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3.2 Suggestions

The following are some suggestions that may be of use for an EFL teacher dealing with the pronunciation of English at the secondary schools or the teaching training institutes:

- 1- Since pronunciation is changing rapidly, the realistic aim for the teacher would be to make sure that the description of the accent adopted as a standard should be kept up-to-date. This necessitates that the model of pronunciation should not be fossilized in the form codified by Daniel Jones in the fifties of the last century. The reference, here, is to the most recent editions of Al-Hamash et al's The New English Course for Iraq (NECI) Books VII, and VIII, (1993, 1997); and Hassan and El-Shayib's English Pronunciation for Student Teachers (2003). The type of transcription used for the RP vowels in the above series is the one labelled 2L+ in which:
 - a- Long vowels are differentiated from their shorter counterparts in terms of length marks only. Consequently, qualitative differences are blurred. Thus, the difference in pronunciation between the first syllable and the second in *pretty* and *city* is almost lost when transcribing them as /'priti/ and /'siti/ (c.f.1.1 and 2.2.2).
 - b- The conservative RP form of the diphthong in *home*, i.e. /ou/, is still maintained though /ə/ is the current starting point of the diphthong.
 - c- There are rigid instructions practised in the pronunciation of the diphthong in *tour*, *moor*, *sure*. /ʊə/ is the only pronunciation accepted for the diphthong to keep these words distinct from *tore* /tɔ:/, *more* /mɔ:/, *shore* /ʃɔ:/ (see, for example, Hassan and El-Shayib, p.112). It is well-
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established that both /əʊ/ and /ɔ:/ are acceptable for the former words, and although the use of minimal pairs is very successful to distinguish between citation forms, the meaning of words can as well be decided when put in contexts.

- 2- Since the Iraqi EFL learners are liable to study the up-to-date Oxford system of transcription at the college, much of the gap can be bridged if the teacher gives them an idea of the system used in their textbooks, on the one hand, and the one they may come across when looking up a word in any newly published dictionary, i.e. the one labeled 9L+, on the other. For example, the teacher may start by explaining why the latter system has been adopted instead of the former after writing the vowel symbols of the two systems. The following table may do as a first step:
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System of transcription	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2L+ (Jones's)	/i:/	/i/	/e/	/a/	/a:/	/o/	/o:/	/u/	/u:/	/ʌ/
9L+ (Oxford's)	/i:/	/ɪ/	/e/	/æ/	/a:/	/o/	/ɔ:/	/ʊ/	/u:/	/ʌ/

System of transcription	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
2L+ (Jones's)	/ə:/	/ə/	/ei/	/ou/	/ai/	/au/	/oi/	/iə/	/eə/	/uə/
9L+ (Oxford's)	/ɜ:/	/ə/	/eɪ/	/əʊ/	/aɪ/	/aʊ/	/ɔɪ/	/ɪə/	/eə/	/ʊə/

- 3- It has been mentioned that the mass media has an important role to play in consolidating pronunciation habits. An EFL teacher should accept the fact that most –if not all– of his/ her students may be exposed to different types of English through such media, and may adopt word pronunciations or phoneme realizations from there. A safer step to be taken in this concern is to explain, for instance, that much of the native speaker's speech may be missed by the non-native learner as the former practices such processes as coalescence and /j/ dropping as in /dəʊntʃu/ and /rɪzu:m/ for *don't you?* and *resume*; the glottalisation of the pre-consonantal and final /t/ as in /mi:ʔ mai frend/ and /neʔwɜ:k/ for *meet my friend* and *network*.
- 4- The social factor cannot be overlooked when dealing with accent evolution. As such, the EFL learners may, as well, be given a hint that any accent evolution is mostly connected with the young generation for the reasons stated in (2.3).

A situation which has created a gap between what has been termed “conservative RP” and the one called “current RP”. Consequently, EFL teachers may find it easier to explain to their students that RP is a generalized pronunciation of English with some variation here and there, and which does not affect its intelligibility. As such, words like *goat*, *assume*, *cake*, *reduce*, *attitude* may be pronounced natively as /gəʊt/, /gəʊt/, /gʌʊʔ/; /ə'sju:m/ or /ə'su:m/; /keɪk/ or /kæɪk/ or /kʌɪk/; /rɪ'dju:s/ or /rɪ'dʒu: s/; /'ætɪtju: d/ or /'ætɪtʃu:d/, respectively. This suggests that the layer between the different forms of English is becoming thinner than it used to be, which, in turn, gives the Iraqi EFL teacher some more latitude as to what form of English pronunciation is to be adopted in class.

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- 5- In the normal run of things, all the above suggestions seem to be useless unless in-service training courses, for EFL teachers, are carried out making use of phonetics specialists' experience in the field. The up-to-date series of Iraq Opportunities focuses upon improving the learners' skills of communication, and this, consequently, necessitates resorting to such kind of courses.

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Abbreviations

BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
EE	Estuary English
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
GA	General American
NECI	The New English Course for Iraq
PSP	Public Schools Pronunciation
RP	Received Pronunciation
SE	South East
SEern	South Eastern