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## **PHONETIC AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SCOUSE AND COCKNEY ACCENTS**

Studying English in academic environment, we often hear Received Pronunciation. Meanwhile in the UK only a small percentage of people speak with such an accent. There are many accents on the territory of the British Isles, for instance in the north one can come across the Scouse accent, in the south - Cockney. These accents continue to be used by the population of the UK, and knowledge of the main features of the Scouse and Cockney accents will definitely increase the level of cultural competence of students of foreign languages department, which makes this research topical.

The aim of the research is to compare Scouse and Cockney accents from the point of view of phonetic and sociolinguistic aspects. The objectives of the research are to consider the main features of the accents under study, to conduct a sociolinguistic analysis of the accents, to make conclusions based on the information received.

### **PHONETIC ASPECT SCOUSE**

Scouse (/skaʊs/) is a local accent on the territory of the UK. It is also known as Liverpool English or Merseyside English, because it's originating in the northwest county of Merseyside [Collins B., 2008]. Merseyside English sounds strikingly different from other types of northern English, probably as a result of a massive influx of in-migrants over the last three centuries from two Celtic countries – southern Ireland and neighbouring North Wales that is why the study of the Scouse accent remains relevant. Let's examine how Scouse differs from other British accents.

Consonant sounds

Firstly, /t/ is pronounced with /s/ to make an affricate [ts] in Scouse: TEA, TALK, PART, WITTY. Moreover in short words ending /t/ like IT, THAT, NOT the final /t/ can be [h] as «You're not that good you know!».

Secondly, When /k/ appears in the end of a syllable in Scouse, it can be pronounced as a fricative [x] like KICK, ROCK, BACKGROUND, BLOKE.

The pronunciation of the /r/ is also different. /r/ is pronounced as a voiced tap [ɾ] RING, ARROW, FERRY, RIVAL – the tongue-tip touches the roof of the mouth behind the teeth very quickly. «It's rubbish! And very wrong of Rachel to write that».

Finally, the 'th' sounds can be pronounced as a dental [t] and [d] in Scouse, : THINK, THEATRE, THOSE, BOTHER instead of dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. «I think that's their brother».

#### Vowel sounds

The vowel sound in BIRD is made with the tongue further forward and the lips a bit rounded in Scouse [œ:]: SHIRT, SIR, TURN, and WORLD. «Bernard was the first person to learn the words».

In Scouse the long open vowel sound is made with the tongue forward [a:] in HARD, CAR, FATHER, PALM. «Half of the party was in the bar».

Moreover, In Scouse, the diphthong [aɪ] starts at the front of the mouth FLY, BUY, TIGHT, though if the word ends in a voiced consonant it can also be pronounced [a:] MINE, SIDE, TIMING. «Try reciting this in time.»

Also, In words ending with the long vowel sounds /i:/ or /u:/, the sound starts with an [ɪ]: BEE, FLEE, NEW, TRUE. This also occurs before /l/, so LIVERPOOL has a distinctive [ɪu] sound in the last syllable. «It's free to see the new zoo in Liverpool».

Finally, like other Northern English accents, /ʌ/ are not used at all, so FUN, SHUT, BLOOD, SON are made with /ʊ/.

#### COCKNEY

Cockney (/ˈkɒkni/) is an accent of the English language traditionally spoken by working-class Londoners. Cockney as an accent is most notable for its argot, or

coded language, which was born out of ingenious rhyming slang [Britannica, 2015]. Let's examine how Cockney differs from other British accents.

#### Consonant sounds

Firstly, London accent does not use the sound /h/ at all. In such words as HOPE, HAVE, HEALTHY, HAPPY, HOLIDAY, HANDSOME sound /h/ is silent.

Secondly, this is a really noticeable aspect of London accent, change /t/ sound for a glottal stop when it comes after a vowel and even between vowels. For example: BOTTLE, WATER, HAT, TOTTENHAM.

Moreover two dental fricatives are not pronounced in London accent, /θ/ is replaced with /f/ and /ð/ is replaced with /v/. THANKS FOR THE THEATRE, BROTHER.

Finally, the /ŋg/ sound is replaced with /n/ if it is at the end of a word. WE'VE BEEN FISHING, RELAXING, NOTHING EXERTING.

#### Vowel sounds

Usually /æ/ in «bat» is pronounced more like /e/ in «bet». For example: thanks, ham, sank, ran.

And /ʌ/ in FUN moves to a position more frontal like /æ/ in FAN: lovely, nothing, London, fun.

In London accent long vowel /i:/ starts with a neutral vowel, more like /əi:/: She needs some green leaves.

Moreover, sound /u:/ starts with a neutral vowel, more like /əu:/ : soon, few, shoe, choose.

Based on our data we can deduce that despite the fact that both accents belong to the representatives of the working class and are extremely different from standard British pronunciation, each of them has its own unique distinctive features. Accents are not similar to each other and do not have similar phonetic characteristics. This is justified by historical factors, such as isolation.

#### SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECT SURVEY

In addition, in the course of our research we interviewed 10 students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of NSPU. Interviewees were asked to listen to two tracks: one of Scouse accent (Voice of comedian John Bishop on BBC's program «Desert Island Discs») and one of Cockney accent (Voice of Michael Caine who grew up in Southwark, London, recorded from the BBC Radio program «Front Row») and answer some questions.

### Survey results

#### SCOUSE

- Do you find the sound of an accent pleasant?

40% - yes, respondents find the sound of Scouse accent pleasant; 60% - no, respondents find the sound of Scouse accent unpleasant.

- Is it possible to use an accent for a formal situation (conference, public speech)?

30% - yes, respondents consider using the Scouse accent possible for a formal situation; 70% - no, respondents consider using the Scouse accent impossible for a formal situation.

- Is the accent easy to hear?

20% - yes, respondents find Scouse's accent easy to hear; 80% - no, respondents find the sound of Scouse's accent difficult to hear.

#### COCKNEY

- Do you find the sound of an accent pleasant?

70% - yes, respondents consider the sound of the Cockney accent to be pleasant; 30% - no, respondents find the sound of a Cockney accent unpleasant.

- Is it possible to use an accent for a formal situation (conference, public speech)?

60% - yes, respondents consider using the Cockney accent possible for a formal situation; 40% - no, respondents consider the use of the Cockney accent impossible for a formal situation.

- Is the accent easy to understand?

80% - yes, respondents find the Cockney accent easy to understand; 20% - no, respondents find the sound of the Cockney accent difficult.

Respondents were also asked questions such as:

- Can you identify the accents on the recordings?

40% of respondents were able to identify the Scouse accent, they noted that they learned about the accent in phonetics classes, and also that the distinctive features of the accent are memorable (pronunciation of consonants).

10% of respondents were able to identify the Cockney accent, they noted that they learned about the accent on their own, being interested in the culture of London.

- Which speaker would you like to talk to?

50% of the respondents answered that it would be more interesting for them to communicate with the first speaker (Scouse accent), they noted that they would be interested in testing their ability to understand information by ear.

50% of respondents answered that it would be more interesting for them to communicate with the second speaker (Cockney accent), they noted that his speech is easier to understand, and the accent itself sounds more pleasant.

### Conclusion

Thus, the Cockney accent sounds more pleasant and easier to perceive than the Scouse accent. But the Scouse accent is more recognizable for its distinctive features than the Cockney accent. FFL students of the NSPU are equally interested in communicating with speakers of the Scouse accent and the Cockney accent, perhaps this is due to immersion in the linguistic field and an increased interest in languages, because usually people choose what is easier for them to perceive.

Scouse and Cockney are unusual and thus attract attention of learners of English. Knowledge and ability to identify different accents can contribute to the development of cultural competence in students.

### References

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