

AAE103

## L20 : Current Changes -- Sounds

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## language change

- the ability to change is a defining characteristic of a living organism
- all languages change
- only dead languages do not change

## current changes

- /æ/
- loss of /ʊə/
- vocalisation of /l/
- glottalling
- EE becoming increasingly popular?
- anglicisation of words

## /æ/

- /æ/ is becoming more open
- the Queen has [ɛ]

## /ʊə/

- according to Wells (2000), 82% of young BrE speakers have /ɔ:/ in *poor*
- for some speakers, /ʊə/ remains in *pure* and *cure*

## vocalisation of /l/

- historically, /l/ existed in all words where there is 'l' in the spelling: *calm, could, folk*
- this process is now affecting other words: *gold, school*
- Wells (1982: 259) suggests this may soon become the norm

## glottalling

- final /t/ is generally [ʔ] before another consonant: *network, at last*
- intervocalic glottalling (*city, water*) less common

## EE

- EE seems to have a strong influence on accent
- speaking RP sounds very old-fashioned
- Tony Blair has noticeable traces of EE

## how do you pronounce them?

- garage
- massage
- genre

## regularisation of sound contrasts

- historically, 'v' was only [v] intervocalically
- otherwise it was [f]
- currently, initial and final /ʒ/ sound foreign
- maybe one day, if we borrow enough words from other languages, /ʒ/ will become natural in all positions
- if that happens, all fricatives will have full voicing contrast

## Reading

- Wells, J C (1982) *Accents of English*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press