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Bachelor thesis

COCKNEY DIALECT

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I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by myself and that it has been neither presented nor previously published in its entirety or in parts. Any parts, words or ideas of the thesis which are quoted from or based on other sources have been acknowledged as such without exception.

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1 Abstract

This thesis aims to provide the reader with a comprehensive description of phonetic, lexical and grammatical variations of the Cockney dialect. Not only does it comment on the linguistic aspects of Cockney, but it also refers to the sociolinguistic point of view, offering a comparison of Cockney and the Queen's English based on Bishop and Coupland's sociological survey of English accents. Moreover, it gives the reader a historical overview of Cockney, presenting Cockney's development and its influence on the standard forms of English.

As an additional source of information, my own questionnaire research was conducted. The survey attempts to support the notion that Cockney with its long history is not a dialect that is dying out, but a dialect that still influences the speech of people outside London. The results of my survey confirm the relevant status of Cockney among modern British dialects.

Tato bakalářská práce podává čtenáři zevrubný popis fonetických, lexikálních a gramatických jevů Londýnského dialektu Cockney. Pouhý výčet lingvistických aspektů tohoto dialektu nestačí, a proto práce nabízí i sociolingvistycký pohled založen na výzkumu profesorů Bishopa a Couplanda, a srovnává Cockney s tzv. královskou angličtinou. Dále seznamuje čtenáře s historií Cockney a představuje jeho vliv na vývoj standadních forem anglického jazyka.

Jako doplňující zdroj informací jsem provedl vlastní výzkum pomocí dotazníků. Odpovědi mají sloužit k podpoření domněnky, že Cockney není dialektem, který by zanikal, ba co více, je dialektem, který ovlivňuje jazyk lidí i vně Londýn. Výsledky výzkumu dokazují, že Cockney mezi ostatními moderními britskými dialekty nese distinktivní charakter.

2 Introduction

Cockney is definitely not a word that would sound unfamiliar to most people. What comes to one's mind first is probably the rhyming slang. Nevertheless, the Cockney dialect as a whole offers much more than this. Besides the mentioned witty and amusing peculiarity, it includes various interesting variables at the levels of grammar, lexicology and phonetics. Further, the dialect seems to be a part of Cockney speakers' identities, and therefore, it unifies them socially. Another aspect that makes Cockney worth noticing is the fact that the London area, with its own particular dialect too, has always been considered the most influential point in the British Isles.

There has been a significant amount of research done previously in this field, some of which forms the basis of the thesis. In writing this thesis, the most inspiring work for me was Peter Wright's *Cockney dialect and slang*. It was probably the most comprehensive source, including all needed aspects, I had managed to find. Unfortunately, I was not able to get the books named *The Cockney* by Julian Franklyn and *Cockney, past and present* by William Matthews, which are thought to be the most detailed works on Cockney.

Other main sources of information with which this thesis deals were works by Trudgill, who compiled a number of publications devoted to dialects and accents in general. Among others, I would like to mention names such as Nielsen, Brook, Liberman, Wells, Coupland, Franklyn and Freeborn, whose works also informed the writing.

The primary aim of this thesis was to collect the available information about Cockney and coordinate it into a readable and understandable thesis, which informs the reader about all the important features signifying Cockney. The secondary purpose of this thesis is to find out what people know about Cockney and what their attitude to it is. This has mainly been done through two surveys, one of them being my own.

The body of the thesis consists of four main chapters. The first one offers an explanation of the basic dialectological terms used in the work. Next, it describes the standard forms of English, which means standard English for the dialect and RP for the accent.

Subsequently, it familiarises the reader with the results of a sociological survey which was run by Bishop and Coupland from Cardiff University and deals with 34 accents of English. Although this thesis focuses only on a comparison of Queen's English and Cockney, certain other conclusions were possible, e.g. regarding British accents, young people are not conservative any longer and for them RP has lost its prestigious position. Moreover, it has been found that the younger generation appreciates Cockney the most by far.

The second chapter provides the reader with the historical background of Cockney. Firstly, the etymological development of the word *Cockney* is discussed, and secondly, we show that the London area, and indeed Cockney too, has played a great role in establishing the standards of the English language.

The next section is linguistic. As has been said, after reading it the person should be familiar with all basic aspects of the Cockney language. The first sub-chapter offers a description of phonetic variations and proves that some Cockney features are spreading across the UK. The second and third sub-chapters are devoted to the lexical and grammatical varieties of this dialect. Just as in the first one, the grammatical section also gives examples of the Cockney influence on other dialects.

Finally, the last main chapter concentrates on my own survey. The purpose of it was to confirm what has been commented on above. This meant finding out what characteristics people attribute to Cockney, whether Cockney is still commonly used and by whom, and whether its lexical features really are spreading beyond London. The questionnaire did not ask for phonetic and grammatical comments. According to it, many non-Londoners are well-acquainted with Cockney and do use it, especially the rhyming slang in joking occasions.

The Appendix at the end of the thesis includes the blank questionnaire itself and two rewritten recordings of Cockney speakers that serve as textual evidence for the grammatical section.

3 Dialect and Accent

In this chapter we explain some basic terms connected to dialectology based on several books written by Peter Trudgill, J.K. Chambers and Jean Hannah

(1979;1980;1985;1994;1999). The following section deals with terms such as *language, dialect, accent, social varieties*, *regional varieties* and *regional* and *social continuum*, and at the end *standard dialect* and *accent* are presented. As Trudgill believes, people seem to care about where others come from and what language they speak. It is also claimed that where a person was born and spent a significant part of their childhood usually leaves a mark, and this identity reflects the way they speak. Trudgill adds that almost every Briton is distinguished by their accent and dialect, and therefore differs regionally and socially (1999:1). There are, of course, people who have regionless speech, namely those using RP, nevertheless, they make up only three to five per cent of the population (Trudgill 1985:9). RP will be commented upon later.

Trudgill proposes that it is necessary not to confuse the terms *dialect* and *accent*. For the first term, several definitions are given in Trudgill. *Dialect* often stands for any non-standard variety of one language, whether it is grammatical, lexical, or phonetic, and is often associated with lower social classes living in different regions of a country (Trudgill 1980:3). Trudgill warns us that every dialect should be treated equally, for no dialect is linguistically superior to any other (Trudgill 1994:2). *Accent*, on the other hand, refers to phonetic and phonological differences only (Trudgill 1999:2).

What seems to be the problem is the fuzzy border between *language* and *dialect*. As Trudgill points out, language might be characterized as "*a collection of mutually intelligible dialects.*" (Trudgill 1980:3) Nevertheless, there are examples of people of different nations understanding foreign languages, such as Swedes and Norwegians; and the opposite case of people coming from one nation, but their languages being unintelligible to each other, an example being the dialects of German (Trudgill 1980:4).

Having discussed the possible objections that may occur, we may say that language is not a linguistic term at all. Even though Swedes and Norwegians do understand each other, what distinguishes them are the political, historical and cultural features of their nations rather than the linguistic ones. What is more, people living in Sweden do believe that they speak a different language than Norwegians (Trudgill 1980:5).

Dialect and accent appear to overlap. If somebody speaks the Liverpool

accent they are very likely to use the Liverpool dialect as well (Trudgill 1999:2). Nonetheless, this does not always have to be true. There is a large number of people who speak standard English, but use a form of regional accents (Trudgill 1999:3).

Regional and social varieties are the object of the following section. Trudgill declares that, as has been said, a dialect is something that a person shares with other people from the same social class and region (Trudgill 1994:2). Therefore, we have the grammar of Northerners which is different from that of Southerners; however, since we are talking about dialects, they are mutually intelligible. Those are regional dialects or *geolects*.

We do not have to think of such extremes as North and South; as Trudgill adds, we come across differences even if we observe villages not far from each other. This is the so-called *geographical dialect continua* and Trudgill offers a theoretical example. If a person arranges several villages in a geographical line from A to Z and examines their speech, they are likely to find out that the speech changes. While the language of Village A is easy to understand by an inhabitant of Village B, both might experience difficulties understanding the language of Village M and the language of Village Z could be completely unintelligible to them. Consequently, the people from Village F would understand those of Village M, but would have problems with those of A and Z (Trudgill 1980:6).

The same notion works for social dialects, the so-called *sociolects*. As Trudgill notes, the higher a person's position on the social ladder, the less their speech differs from standard English (Trudgill 1979:12). This means that the speech of two workmen, or professors, is mutually more similar than that of a workman and a professor. An example given by Trudgill illustrates this.

In Jamaica, lower classes used to speak Jamaican Creole, which was based on English, yet varied a great deal, while on the other hand, higher classes spoke a form of standard English. While two workers did not have a problem understanding each other, if they were met by somebody speaking standard English, the communication might have experienced difficulties. The space between these two borders is called *social dialect continua*, being very similar to the regional one. The outer edges of this continua are the most different parts of the dialect (Trudgill 1980:9-10).

Let us take a closer look at the standard forms of English. For *dialect* we

shall be speaking about *standard English*, for *accent* we use the term *Received Pronunciation*. Standard English is spoken by approximately 12 to 15 per cent of the British population (Trudgill 1999:3) and it is the dialect having the highest prestige or status (Trudgill 1994:5). Furthermore, Trudgill mentions that standard English is predominantly used in books, newspapers and in educational systems all over the world (Trudgill 1994:5). What has to be born in mind is that standard English is not, unlike RP, attributed to a particular social class, but it is certain to be pronounced with other regional accents by educated people throughout the British Isles (Trudgill 1979:8).

RP is the standard accent of English. The term *received* comes from nineteenth century and means *adopted by the best society* (Trudgill 1979:2). Like standard English, it is the most prestigious accent, however, young people seem not to appreciate it as they did in the past (see 3.1).

Further, it is not a regional accent, but rather a social marker. However, from a historical point of view, some would object that the origins of it come from the London area (see 4.2). Therefore, it is quite impossible to tell where the speaker comes from when speaking RP, because it is not marked with regionality (Trudgill 1985:9). It has been also found that RP, being the accent taught at schools throughout the world, is spoken by only three to five per cent of the British population. Thus, a visitor to England might be surprised by how much they do not understand, were they to encounter the other ninety-five per cent. It is a social accent used by the upper and upper-middle classes and those who aspire to belong there (Trudgill 1979:9).

Trudgill asks why, then, RP is taught to foreigners as the proper accent, and answers that, besides its prestige, it is the most widely understood accent of all, so the chance of being comprehended is definitely higher than when speaking with any other accent. What is more, this accent is the most examined one of all (Trudgill 1979:3).

3.1 Brief overview of Attitudes to Accents in England

Below, the following paragraphs refer to the results of a survey that asked

5010 informants to respond to 34 English accents. Its name is *Voices* and it was run online in 2004 by Nikolas Coupland and Hywel Bishop from Cardiff University, in collaboration with the BBC. In the preface, the authors list some conclusions of the work.

Based on the survey, it has been found that accents associated with standard English received higher prestige and were socially appreciated more than other urban U.K. vernaculars, which, as they say, is nothing new, for it had been shown in several preceding surveys. On the other hand, new evidence claims to show that gender, region and age played a great role in the survey; for instance, people in general preferring their own accents, or young people appearing not to value standard English (Coupland 2007:74).

Some important keywords that occur below need to be defined. *Accent*, having been introduced in the previous chapter, is one of these. Subsequently, terms that are covered in this thesis include *prestige* and *social attractiveness*. As Coupland himself states in an e-mail that I received in reply to my enquiry on the difference between *prestige* and *social attractiveness*, the term *prestige* equals *status* and connotes a person's higher level of education, intelligence or higher social class. On the other side, *social attractiveness* signifies a person's solidarity, friendliness or likability (Garrett 2010:63). In other words, if somebody speaks Received Pronunciation in the British Isles, they are thought to be educated and to belong to a higher social class; however, they do not seem socially attractive to lower-class people. As Trudgill comments on RP "*...this form of pronunciation does sound affected to most British people...*" (Trudgill 1979:4). Therefore, two friends having a pint of beer would speak their regional and social accent rather than RP to show their trustworthiness and sincerity and to socially appeal to each other.

As has been shown above, a non-standard dialect or accent, whether regional or social, shows a person's lower position on the social scale. Nevertheless, since RP is spoken by only three per cent of the population in Britain (Trudgill 1985:9), for other accents it is very likely to become more dominant and, what is more, attractive. This thesis, being limited by its length and purpose, does not provide a comparison of all 34 accents, but only that of London and the Queen's English.

It takes into account factors such as *region*, *age*, *gender* and *diversity.* The latter, having been invented by the authors of the survey, refers to a sociolinguistic

index and consists of responses to the question of whether the people liked hearing a wide range of accents. Depending on the respondent's answer, diversity was marked *low*, *medium*, or *high;* the final group comprises people who do like hearing a variety of accents. What might have harmed the survey is that no factor of social class was included.

Queen's English reached first place in regard to prestige and seventh place with respect to social attractiveness. On the other side, Cockney, or the London accent, ended up in the sixth place for prestige and twenty-second for social attractiveness. It has to be noticed that this is the average and if, for instance, the age of the participant is taken into consideration, the matter becomes more apparent.

As for prestige, the fact that the London accent was ranked sixth proves the idea that Cockney is becoming *posh* nowadays and that people do associate Cockney with intellectualism. The theory that Cockney belongs exclusively to the lower working classes is losing its validity. Examining the individual factors more closely, we find that the typical person who rated Cockney the highest, from the prestige point of view, was a young female living, surprisingly, in Northern Ireland – South East of England was the second region with the most positive ratings – who likes hearing different accents of English.

On the contrary, a typical person most appreciating Queen's English was a male older than sixty-five coming from Wales. The other way around, when we ask for a typical person who deemed Cockney a low accent, we have a male older than sixty-five coming from the South West of England.

As for social attractiveness, Queen's English is most liked in the South-West of England by people older than sixty-five who do not like various accents. Young people proved, in this respect, not to value this accent any more, for they put it in eighteenth place, whereas Cockney was ranked fourteenth by people between the ages of 15 to 24. A typical person socially attracted to Cockney was a female aged between 15 to 24, living in the South East of England with a pleasure of listening to different English accents.

It has to be said that being in fourteenth place suggests that Cockney is approaching the standard accent and again confirms Coupland's words that the higher an accent is rated for prestige, the lower it becomes ranked for social attractiveness. From all the accents, the most socially attractive accents are

s*tandard English accent*, *accent identical to my own* and *Southern Irish*.

To summarize, older people seem to be conservative about accents and value the standard one. On the other hand, Cockney proved likely to be valued more than Queen's English by people aged 15 to 44 both from the point of view of prestige and social attractiveness. Females and people who enjoyed hearing more accents are those who preferred Cockney in both categories.

4 History of Cockney

Upon hearing the word *Cockney,* one will probably imagine either an inhabitant of the East End of London, or the peculiarity of the English language, including both the dialect and slang. Both these descriptions could be considered the loosest ones, for defining Cockney only by the above would not mirror reality, as the term *Cockney* involves countless areas of everyday life. Nevertheless, they are also the most recent, since all the records that have been found of this sense date after the year 1600 (OED 1997:*cockney* 4a).

As for the people, it is usually said that having been born or at least having spent a significant part of their life in London, but more often within the area where it is possible to hear the bells of the church called St. Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside, are the criteria for somebody to be regarded as a Cockney. In other words, to be within earshot of these bells means living about a quarter of a mile from the church, not far from London Bridge and the Mansion house. Since this district is to a minimal extent residential, the definition cannot be valid. Being out of earshot, but still considered Cockney are people living in Whitechapel, Golden Lane, Shoreditch, East Stepney, Hackeney, Poplar or Wapping (Wright 1981:11). However, some, being more strict, say that one has to be born during such a bell-ringing to be thought a true Cockney (OED 1997:*cockney* 4a). This is most certainly a myth, since the bells, having been destroyed during the second world war and not replaced until 1961, would have resulted in no Cockney being born for nearly twenty years (Swinnerton 2004:21).

Regarding the language, people agree that this characteristic mentioned at the beginning is connected with the East End of London and some of its features,

mainly phonetic, became wide-spread and are spoken in the whole London area (Wright 1981:12). Phonetic, grammatical and lexical variations will be discussed later on.

4.1 Cockney from the etymological point of view

As it is introduced in *OED*, there are several possible explanations of what the word *Cockney* might have referred to and where it has been derived from, but a number of debates have been held as to what it originally meant (OED 1997:*cockney*). Let us have a closer look at them one by one.

William Langland was the first author to use this word in his piece of writing called *The vision of William concerning Piers Plowman* in 1362. In Kane (1988:365) we read that when Piers is telling Hunger that he has nothing to share with him, he says:

> "*And yet I seye, by my soule! I haue no salt bacon,*
> *Ne no Cokeney, by Crist, Coloppes to maken!*"

Here the term identifies food, in more detail, an egg that is put together with bacon to make a traditional meal called Collop. As said in *OED*, it could also denote a small and defective egg that used to be believed to be laid by cocks and hence might metaphorically represent a poor meal (OED 1997:*cockney* 1). As Liberman points out, this use was quite rare and occurred mainly in fixed phrases such as *to be served a cockney* or *not to have even a cockney*; and there are only five examples of it cited in the OED (Liberman 2008:35). One of them being a part of Heywood's text *Proverbs and Epigrams*. "*Men say He that comth euery daie, shall haue a cocknaie. He that comth now and then, shall haue a fatte hen. But I gat not so muche in comyng seeld when, as a good hens fether or a poore eg-shel.*" (OED 1997:*cockney* 1).

J. Murray was the first writer to label *Cockney* as food in 1890; until that time it remained unclear. He also tried to join the reference of "a defective egg" to "a spoilt child", which brings the debate to another sense of *Cokeney*, which will be

discussed further (Liberman 2008:35, 38).

It was only twenty-four years after Langland's allegorical narrative poem when Geoffrey Chaucer in 1386, in his famous work *The Canterbury Tales*, namely in *Reeve's Tale,* came up with this word, despite giving it a different meaning from that mentioned above.

> *He auntred hym, and has his nedes sped,*
> *And I lye as a draf-sak in my bed;*
> *And when this jape is tald another day,*
> *I sal been halde a daf, a cokenay!*[1]

It is said by John, one of the main protagonists of the story, who laments how inefficient his actions have been so far; he has not accomplished a single thing to get revenge on the reeve for stealing wheat. Calling himself a "*cokenay*", he thinks that this is the appropriate label that will be given to him when the story is retold the next day.

This is the second listed item in *OED* and represents a pampered child brought up in a tender and guarded way, with the term being further applied to adults, connoting a weak, ineffectual person (OED 1997:*cockney* 2a). There seems to be no direct link between *Cokeney* being "egg" and this one. On the other hand, the relation between a misshapen egg and such a person might be explained by the theory that neither this egg nor this person has enough strength to achieve what they are expected to. A small egg will never become a powerful cock just as a weakling is not determined enough to be able to fulfil what they have resolved to do.

Some etymologists would also not agree with the statement that there is no link between the two. For instance John Murray, claiming that in fact the meaning of an abortive egg denotes senses ranging from a milksop, a pet or a spoilt child, to a Londoner, or further to a term used by country people to label a citizen of a town. Liberman shows that this raised a number of questions both in the UK and the USA, but objects to the connection, claiming that there would have been some traces of the connection (Liberman 2008:38).

As mentioned above, the food sense was exceptional; on the contrary, the

1Benson, L.D. "The Reeve's Prologue and Tale." *The Geoffrey Chaucer page*. The President and Fellows of Harvard College. Web. 10 April 2008.

sense of a spoilt child was abundant, another example being for instance: "*I speake nat this in dispraise of the faukons, but of them whiche kepeth them like coknayes."* (OED 1997:cockney *2a)*, or an often cited entry from Baret's dictionaries from 1580: "*A cockney, a childe tenderly brought up, a dearling...a cockney, after Saint Augustin, a childe that sucketh long.*" *(OED 1997:*cockney 2a). Liberman adds that from the semantic point of view it would have been necessary for the connection to cover the distance from *a bad egg* to *a bad child*, and that *a spoilt child* does not have to be *a weakling*, which he finds unaccomplished (Liberman 2008:38).

The next entry in *OED* that the thesis covers is *townsman.* It was spoken by people from the country to negatively depict a person who lived in a city, barely went to the countryside and therefore was not aware of the conditions that existed there (OED 1997:*cockney* 3). Robert Whittington is thought to have first brought in this denotation in his work *Vulgaria* in 1521. "*This cokneys and tytyllynges...may abide no sorrow when they come to age...In this great cytees as London, York, Perusy and such...the children be so nycely and wantonly brought up...that comonly they can little good.*" (OED 1997:*cockney* 3)

A New Dictionary of the Terms Ancient and Modern of the Canting Crew from around 1700, whose author is known only as B.E., gives another example of such meaning: "*Cockney...also one ignorant in Country Matters.*" (OED 1997:*cockney* 3)

Finally, the last sense of *Cockney* is to be specified in the following paragraphs. This one is very likely to have developed from the sense "townsman" and as it was mentioned above, *Cockney* can refer to an East End Londoner or to the dialect. The meaning has probably come into the public's awareness through an explanation which, while the least probable from an etymological point of view, is possibly the most memorable and entertaining, and is given in an famous old anecdote going back to Minsheu's work *Ductor in Linguas* in 1617 (OED 1997:*cockney* 4a).

According to him, a Londoner and his son visited the country and were riding horses there when one of the horses neighed. The child, hearing this sound for the first time, cried how strangely the animal had laughed, but his father warned him that: "*The horse doth neigh.*" The next morning when the day began with the cock's crowing, the boy asked: "*Doth the cock neigh too?* (Liberman 2008:36).

Thus, Cockney (*cock-neigh*) refers to a person not being conscious of the manners of the country, especially Londoners. One has to take for granted that this is told tongue-in-cheek; what is more, no Londoner could have grown up in the sixteenth century without seeing a horse.

This, however, was not the first use of *Cockney* for one having been born with the bell-ringing. Probably, the first one to use it was Samuel Rowlands in his *The letting of humours blood in the head-vaine* in 1600. "*I scorne...To let a Bow-bell Cockney put me downe.*" (OED 1997:*cockney* 4a)

"*Londiners, and all within the sound of Bow-bell, are in reproch called Cocknies, and eaters of buttered tostes.*" (OED 1997:*cockney* 4a) is another excerpt, confirming the idea of *Cockney* being a Londoner and comes from *An itinerary* from 1617 by Fynes Moryson.

Brierley views a Cockney person as: "*A man ut thinks hissel th'fust Englishman I' th'lond, but conno talk English. He coes everybody born eautside the seaund o' Big Ben a bladdy caintryman.*", which definitely cannot be regarded as a positive description, but could be seen as proof that Cockney was not a much-liked dialect in some parts of England; this was written by a Northerner (Wright 1981:12).

In this chapter we have seen the evolution of the word *Cockney*, shown four basic meanings and discussed several uses different in their senses. In the next chapter we will describe how the word has been formed.

As Liberman states, there have been several attempts to classify the term *Cockney* from the etymological point of view. The food sense of *cockney* seems likely to have come from the Middle English word *cokeney* or *cokenay*, but more spelling variations have occurred such as *kokeney*, *-ey*, *cokney*, *kok-*, or *coknaye*, Whatever the spelling was, it is a compound that consists of *coken*, the genitive case of "cock", and *-ey, -ay* being "egg", which is translated as *cock's egg* and therefore fully explains the first meaning given in 4.1. (OED 1997:*cockney*).

Some linguists and etymologists have tried to trace *Cockney* to Greek, Gaelic, Old Swedish, or Old Icelandic languages; nevertheless, Liberman finds the theories highly improbable, based on the following examples. *Caoch* meaning *empty* and *Neoni* indicating *nobody,* both rooted in Gaelic, according to Mackay, were the words that when combined gave the meaning *ignorant*. Another example

given by Thomson reveals his thought that *Cockney* comes from the Gothic *kauptona,* which relates to *emporium*, and *gawken,* being *foolish dandy* (Liberman 2008:35-36).

On the other hand, the sense denoting *simpleton* has probably been derived from the Old French participle *acoquiné*, meaning *spoiled*; nevertheless, as Liberman states, there are some phonetic problems that have not been solved yet (Liberman 2008:36).

Finally, Liberman then mentions that from the eighteenth century onward some have tried to connect the term *Cockney* with the expression used for the imaginary land of plenty and extreme luxury, *Cockaigne.* However, Walter Skeat has rejected this, claiming that semantically *a pet child* could hardly have developed from *an inhabitant of the land of plenty* (Liberman 2008:36). *Cockney* is probably not the etymon of *cock* or French *coquin*, being *beggar*, either.

4.2 London's influence on standard English

This section provides a closer look at how standard English has been influenced by the London dialect. The focus is mainly on the period beginning in the thirteenth century when London started to play a role in the evolution of the English language.

Since the British Isles experienced great dialectical diversity in the Early Middle English period, some dialects even being unintelligible to others, there began to appear calls for a standard form of the language. The question was what dialect should stand for the standard. It is very likely that people of the time thought that such a dialect must bear the prestigious level and must be spoken by politically and socially influential people. London and its inhabitants fulfilled this condition; the people were educated and the city carried a high status and was at the centre of government and trade, and as such, people began trying to copy its dialect (Freeborn 1998:224-225).

Nielsen names the Agreement to the Provisions of Oxford written by Henry III in 1258 as the first major official document written in the Early London dialect. After diagnosing the text, Nielsen said that the London dialect used in the

agreement is enriched with a number of East Midlands features and attributes it to the fact that there was enormous immigration to London from those areas of England (Nielsen 2005:126-127).

Nielsen reminds us that the great differences between the language of the North and the South were first noted in the early twelfth century by William of Malmesbury. He adds that from the early fourteenth century onward, some Northern poets tried to replace local expressions with Southern words, probably to make their works understandable to a greater part of the population (Nielsen 2005:129). This is, of course, another sign of the tendency to follow the most prestigious pattern.

Secondly, somebody who cannot be left out of consideration is definitely Geoffrey Chaucer, famous for his use of the London dialect and his tremendous linguistic interest. He was also one of those who were aware of the varieties. "*...ther is so gret diversite in Englissh and in writyng of oure tonge.*" (Nielsen 2005:129). As Nielsen states, he was the first writer to exploit dialects for narrative purposes and in *Reeve's Tale* he sets some characters off socially by using Northern idiom in their speech (Nielsen 2005:131).

As Nielsen mentions, in Chaucer's text we can find some features being more similar, or even identical to, Modern English rather than some Old English expressions. The final *s* as the plural marker is one of these examples (Nielsen 2005:137).

The following paragraphs focus on Chancery English. The Chancery used to be a medieval office responsible for the official writings that were possibly addressed to other kings of other lands. It was supposed to establish both the standard style of handwriting, the so-called *Chancery hand*, and the English vocabulary and grammar (Freeborn 1998:249). As Nielsen mentions, it is believed to be the basis of modern written English (Nielsen 2005:138).

The first texts that bore signs of Chancery English were over one-hundred letters sent between 1417 to 1422, in English instead of French or Latin, by Henry V. Indeed, the anti-French mood at that time might have also contributed to the issue. What has to be highlighted now is that neither the church nor the educational system helped to set up this kind of language. The number of administrative texts was so enormous that compared to literary English, which could hardly influence the oncoming standard, almost all varieties in written language had vanished by

1500 (Nielsen 2005:139-140).

William Caxton is another person that should be commented on. Freeborn (1998) states that he himself, having founded the printing press, edited a great number of books, in spite of being widely regarded as only a printer. In his prologues and editions he corrected many dialects different from Chancery English and by doing so, he pushed English towards standardisation. The differences made are well apparent from the following examples and the nature of the language became “more Middle English”. The first example is an excerpt of Trevisa's text taken from another manuscript, the latter is the version edited by Caxton. (1998:258)

As it is i-knowe how meny manere peple
beeþ in þis ilond þere beeþ also so meny
dyuers longages and tonges; noþeles
walsche men and scottes þat beeþ nou□t
i-medled wiþ oþer naciouns holdeþ wel nyh
hir firste longage and speche.

As it is knowen how many maner peple ben
in this Ilond ther ben also many langages
and tonges. Netheles walshmen and scottes
that ben not medled with other nacions
kepe neygh yet theyr first langage and speche /

Nielsen introduces the idea that the written language was standardised much earlier than the spoken language (Nielsen 2005:149). Freeborn gives an example of Puttenham's extract inciting authors to use the correct dialect, which was “*the usuall speach of the Court, and that of London and the shires lying about London within 1x myles, and not much aboue.*” (Freeborn 1998:224) He adds that by the end of the sixteenth century the language of educated Londoners was clearly established as the standard for writing (Freeborn 1998:312).

Nielsen mentions that spoken Southern English carried more prestige by far than the Northern idiom. We may judge so again from Puttenham, in the sentence

describing his will that people should: “*...speak but specially write as good Southerne...*” Nilesen ends with a thought that the spread of the London English through the mouths of educated people to the rest of the English lands is very plausible (Nielsen 2005:149-150).

As has been mentioned, written English was established much earlier than the spoken form. Santipolo claims that the first people who tried to have the pronunciation unified were orthoepists of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. J. Hart in his *Methode to read English* mentions: “*...the Court, and London speaches, where the generall flower of all English countrie speaches, are chosen and vsed.*“ (Santipolo 2003:407).

Subsequently, he comments on the developing standard made by Ellis: “*In the present day we may…recognise a received pronunciation all over the country… It may be especially considered as the educated pronunciation of the metropolis, of the court, the pulpit and the bar.*“ This was the first time that the term *Received Pronunciation* was used (Santipolo 2003:409).

Santipolo informs us that the turning point in the development of the standard accent might have been the publishing of Jones' *English Pronuncing Dictionary* (1917). In his work Jones describes the best English that is “*most usually heard in everyday speech in the families of Southern English persons whose menfolk have been educated at the great public boarding-schools…*“ On the other hand, Wyld objects to it, saying that the standard is heard without variation from educated people all over the country (Santipolo 2003:411).

In the end, in 1926 the BBC established a committee – G.B. Shaw being one of the members – which was supposed to look after the proper selection of BBC speakers and announcers, who were required to use RP. After World War II the committee provided the BBC announcers with guidelines on how to pronounce English properly (Santipolo 2003:412). By doing so, the BBC – an organization conservative about the proper accent nowadays as well – definitely helped RP to settle down, come into public awareness and become the most prestigious accent of English.

5 Cockney from the linguistic point of view

This part aims at naming the main linguistic features of Cockney that differ from standard English and to which the varieties are also compared. Firstly, it deals with the phonetic varieties of the London accent. Secondly, the lexical side of the dialect is taken into consideration and the work focuses on the most common expressions taken from basic lexical fields of everyday life. In the end, the grammatical variables of Cockney are commented on.

The language of Charles Dickens – more precisely, the language he put into the mouths of his Cockney characters – is used as a complementary example and as textual evidence in the grammatical and phonetic sections. Since Charles Dickens is known for his lifelong interest in the English language (Brook 1970:18) and is thought to have mastered the use of the Cockney dialect, mainly by observing ordinary people in London and reporting from the House of Commons (Wright 1981:14-15), his characters' speech can stand for real examples of the language.

The examples are taken from Brook's *The language of Dickens* and represent the speech of Sam Weller (SW) and Sarah Gamp (SG), for these characters represent lower-class inhabitants of London and therefore perfectly fit the needs of this thesis.

As Brook states, the most interesting feature of Charles Dickens' language is the wide variety of class dialects (Brook 1970:54) and at the beginning of the chapter devoted to Cockney, he introduces a paragraph that nicely draws the reader's attention to the issue.

" *'They're wot's left, Mr Snagsby,' says Jo, 'out of a sov'ring as wos give me by a lady in a wale as sed she wos a servant and as come to my crossin one night and asked to be showd this 'ere ouse and the ouse wot him as you giv the writin to died at, and the berrin-ground wot he's berrid in. She ses to me, she ses, 'are you the boy at the Inkwhich?' she ses. I ses, 'yes,' I ses. She ses to me, she ses, 'can you show me all them places?' I ses, 'yes, I can,' I ses. And she ses to me 'do it,' and I dun it, and she giv me a sov'ring and hooked it.'* " (Brook 1970:94)

From the preceding paragraph the reader learns of the special use of the relative pronouns *as* and *what*, the omission of the initial *h* as in *ouse*, irregularities in the standard use of past forms and past participles as *dun*, *giv*, *give*, or *come* for

single actions in the past, and the overuse of the narrative verb *to say* such as in *I ses* and *she ses.*

Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that the language of Dickens is over one-hundred years old. Therefore, it does not always have to reflect the real situation, particulary at the lexical level. Since Cockney, and language in general, is a living organism, it is very unlikely to stay the same for more than a few decades. On the other hand, the grammatical, and to some extent as well the phonetic, level have mostly prevailed up to now.

That is why other more recently published sources, such as Franklyn (1960), Trudgill (1979), Wright (1981), Wells (1986) and Cruttenden (2001), are also introduced. The final complementary source of information, which, however, might provide the most recent and most common examples, is my own survey – section 6.

5.1 Cockney from the phonetic point of view

This section informs the reader of all basic phonetic features of Cockney that differentiate it from RP. As has been mentioned, in speaking of pronunciation only, we speak about the accent. A sociological comparison of Cockney and RP has already been explored above. This part serves as the phonetic comparison. It uses publications by Trudgill (1979), Wright (1981), Wells (1986) and Cruttenden (2001). Firstly, we deal with consonants, and secondly with vowels.

London's speech of the upper classes, as it was said in 4.2, has established the basis for standard English and RP. Nowadays it is mainly the speech of the lower classes that is thought to be one of the most influential sources of the accent innovation in English on the British Isles (Wells 1986:301).

Wells refers to the London phonetic continuum, which stretches from RP through popular Cockney (London) and on to broad Cockney. Broad Cockney is considered to be the speech of working-class people, as Wells points out, being not only from the East End of London. Most lower-class Londoners regard themselves as Cockneys, despite not having been born within earshot of Bow Bells chiming; the accent is probably what unifies them. Popular Cockney, which is slightly closer to RP, with primarily diphthong shifts and glottal stops becoming less obvious, is is

then the accent of middle classes (Wells 1986:302-303).

Perhaps the most striking feature of Cockney when concerning consonants, which, however, appears in other dialects too, is glottalization /ʔ/. Glottalled or preglottalled, in broad Cockney, are usually the plosives /p, t, k/. Without any doubt, the most glottalled plosive is *t* in the middle and final position as in *whit* /'whɪʔ/ or /a 'lɪʔɪʔ/ in *I lit it.* Wells shows results from a survey run amongst East End children which says that /p, t, k/ are almost invariably glottalized in the final positions (Wells 1986:325).

Furthermore, not only these plosives are glottalled in Cockney. Wells informs of glottalling fricatives such as *f* or *v*, an example of it being *safer* /'sʌɪʔə/or *give him* /'gɪʔəm/ (Wells 1986:327).

Wright offers historical evidence, writing that professor D'Orsey in 1882 had problems distinguishing *light* and *like* in Cockney pronunciation. Moreover, in 1899 Richard Whiteing spelled Hyde Park as Hy' Par', which proves this variable to have begun very early, though it is generally thought to be a recent development (Wright 1981:136). Further historical evidence of this is presented by Brook, who notes that the final *t* is lost after a voiceless plosive such as in *kept* /kepʔ/, uttered by both SW and SG (Brook 1970:228). Trudgill confirms what has been written above, claiming that Cockney really is rich in glottal stops and shows examples such as *paper* /pæɪʔə/ and butterfly /bʌʔəflaɪ/ (Trudgill 1979:39).

Another very famous feature of Cockney is the so called h-dropping, which is the omission of the initial /h/ in words of various origin. In some French-loan words the omission is obligatory – *hour*, *honour.* Pairs such as *heat-eat* are then identically transcribed as /i:(ʔ)t/; nevertheless, there is a slight difference in pronunciation. Wells speaks about strong stigmatization of glottalling consonants, mainly at schools.

There is no pattern in h-dropping. This means that where RP has the initial *h*, Cockney does not always drop it and at the same time, where in RP there is no initial *h*, Cockney may put one there /'nʌʊ ɑɪ 'hʌɪnt/ *no, I ain't*; Sivertsen believes this is a result of emphasis (Wells 1986:322). Wright confirms this, mentioning that it usually arises from a vague knowledge that in English, many *h*s are spelled but not pronounced (Wright 1981:134).

To support this, Brook comes up with examples such as *'art* for *heart* or

'appines of SG or *hinfants* and *henemies* of SW. He mentions the hyper-correction of the initial *h* as well, introducing a self-explanatory example from Pickwick's Papers: "'*Allow me the honour,' said the gentleman with the whiskers, presenting his dexter hand, and aspirating the h.*" (Brook 1970:226-227) Trudgill adds that "*/h/ is almost invariably absent. When it is present it is likely to be in a stressed position (happened).*" (Trudgill 1979:39)

The next variation to be dealt with is th-fronting. Wright points out that by nature, dental fricatives /θ, ð/ are difficult to pronounce, but it is true that it occurs in London far more than elsewhere else (Wright 1981:137).

/θ, ð/ are replaced by the labio-dentals /f, v/, which makes for instance *thin* /fɪn/ a homophone of *fin,* or /brʌvə/ *brother* rhyme with /lʌvə/ *lover.* As Wells says, one has to bear in mind, however, that this does not mean that a Cockney speaker would not have /θ/ or /ð/ in their phonemic inventory.

Replacing the voiceless /θ/ for /f/ is definitely more common and done in all environments, on the other hand; putting /v/ instead of /ð/ is possible only in non-initial positions. Thus, we do not have /vɪs/ for *this* or /vəʊ/ for *though*. For initial /ð/, working-class people use mostly the post-alveolar plosive /d/ as in /di:s/ for *these*; occasionally, /l/ or /ʔ/ are also used (Wells 1986:328-329). Trudgill points out that the differences between /f/ and /θ/, /v/ and /ð/ are variably lost in all word positions (Trudgill 1979:39).

This feature dates back to the fifteenth century and H. C. Wyld in 1927 describes it as a low type of Cockney English; however, his attitude to it would probably be different nowadays. An example in Dickens is for instance *nuffin'* for *nothing* (Brook 1970:225-226).

Dark *l* is another very striking variable. As Wright claims, sometimes the dark *l* is "so dark" that it becomes a vowel, mostly /ʊ/ (Wright 1981:134). This is also confirmed by Cruttenden who introduces the allophone /ʊ/ (Cruttenden 2001:88). Therefore, Cockneys might pronounce *school* as /sku:ʊ/, *milk* as /mɪʊk/ or *shelf* as /ʃeʊf/. Wells mentions that /o/ and /ɤ/ as other realizations are also possible such as in /pɪipo/ for *people* or /fɪɤ/ in *fill* (Wells 1986:313).

Trudgill comments on this issue as well, coming up with the examples *Paul* /poʊ/ and *well* /weʊ/. He sets the limits for *l* to become a vowel. According to him, *l* turns into a vowel, mostly /ʊ/, when it precedes a consonant in one syllable, such

as in *silk*, or when it is a syllable itself as in *table* /taɪbʊ/ (Trudgill 1979:40).

The next realization that is different from the standard accent and is commented on here is *-ing*. There are two possible variants that may be applied to *-ing*. The first one is that a Cockney drops the final *g* and /ŋ/ becomes /n/, so *hunting* is pronounced /hʌntɪn/. The latter, especially in cases such as *something*, *nothing* and *anything,* is characterised by /ŋ/ replacing /ŋk/. This makes *think* and *thing* homophones /fɪŋk/ (Wright 1981:135). Brook and Trudgill come up with examples for both variations: *think* for *thing* by SG and *screamin'* or *missin'* by SW (Brook 1970:224) and *laying* /leɪn'/ and *something* as /sʌmfɪŋk/(Trudgill 1979:40).

Finally, the last variation that used to make Cockney famous was the confusion between /v/ and /w/. Brook adds that similar confusion could be found in, for instance, Norfolk, Essex or Kent. An example of Sam Weller is *one* /vʌn/, *inwenter* or *wisibly*. Brook mentions that /w/ for /v/ was more frequent, but *elsevere* also appears in Dickens (Brook 1970:223). Wright also matches this feature to Dickens, saying that nowadays it has prevailed only in the speech of some overseas immigrants, adding that the mass misuse of /v/ and /w/ died out at the end of the nineteenth century (Wright 1981:137-138).

As for the vowel system, Cockney and RP are considered very different, mostly in their realisations; as Cruttenden mentions, RP and Cockney have the same phonemic vowel inventory. Generally, the short front vowels tend to be closer, the long vowels are diphthongised and diphthongs themselves are often shifted (Cruttenden 2001:87). Firstly, we will look closer at monophthongs, than at diphthongs.

The first issue this thesis deals with are the short vowels. The realization of many of them is not different from those of RP in words such as kit /kɪt/, dress /dres/, trap /træp/, lot /lɒt/, foot /fʊt/. Vowels in *trap* and *lot* might be more open, as /ɛ/ and /ɔ/ respectively.

As Wells states, the most striking difference appears in a word such as *strut*, which in RP is /strʌt/, but in Cockney the vowel is fronted and more open /strat/. Further, it is mentioned that what in RP is known as the final /ə/ in *dinner* and *marrow*, in Cockney is realised as a more open vowel /dɪnɐ/ and /mærɐ/ (Wells 1986:305).

The long vowels /ɑ:/, /i:/, /ɔ:/, /u:/ and /ɜ:/ are described in the

following paragraphs. /ɑ:/ /u:/ and /ɜ:/ as in *start* /stɑ:t/, goose /gu:s/ and *nurse* /nɜ:s/ are, according to Wells, almost the same in RP and Cockney. Only /u:/ seems to be more fronted as in /gʉ:s/. More visible, or audible, is the turn of the front closed unrounded /i:/ in *fleece* /fli:s/ into a closing-fronting diphthong /ɪi/ or /əi/ in /flɪis/ or /fləis/. This feature has a long history, the oldest evidence possibly being Shaw's “Cockney alphabet” as *Ber-ee* /bəi/, *Ser-ee* /səi/, *Der-ee* /dəi/ etc. (Wells 1986:305-306)

Nonetheless, when /ɔ:/ comes into consideration, the change is really apparent. In words such as *thought* /tɔ:t/ and *paw* /pɔ:/ the long, back, half-opened, rounded vowel gives the variants of either the fronting diphthong /ɔə/ if it is in a free syllable, or the closing one /oʊ/ if in a checked syllable. Thus, we have the words *source*, *sauce*, *water*, *lord* pronounced as /soʊs/ for the first two, /woʊʔɐ/ and /loʊd/ respectively. On the other hand, *sore* - *saw* and *law* - *lore* are pronounced as /sɔə/ and /lɔə/. (Wells 1986:310)

Finally, this thesis deals with diphthongs whose shifts are very typical for Cockney. We will mainly focus on /eɪ/ (*face*), /ɑɪ/ (*price*), /əʊ/ (*goat*) and /aʊ/ (*mouth*), since /ɔɪ/ (*voice*), /ɪə/ (*near*), /ʊə/ (*cure*) and /eə/ (*square*) are pronounced, more or less, the same in RP and Cockney.

Words like *mouth* – *cow*, *how* and *brown* – may have two possible pronunciations and the way they are made distinguishes the speaker socially. When this diphthong is articulated as the long monophthong /æ:/ the speaker could be, based on his speech, classified as a member of the working class – in other words, as a broad Cockney. On the other hand, if /æ:/ is pronounced as the closing diphthong /æʊ/, the speaker's utterance might be identified as that of popular Cockney; to put it differently, he is a member of the middle class (Wells 1986:309).

Another very apparent diphthong shift is found in words such as *paper* and *mate*, which in RP are pronounced /peɪpə/ and /meɪt/. Broad Cockney speakers have, on the other hand, /paɪpɐ/ and /maɪt/. Popular London speech tends to be closer to Cockney with /pʌɪpɐ/ and /mʌɪ(ʔ)t/ (Wells 1986:309).

The second to last shift that is commented on begins with the RP /aɪ/ and continues from the popular Cockney /ɑɪ/ to the broad Cockney /ɒɪ/. Here the talk of the middle classes seems to stick to RP rather than Cockney. Therefore, words such as *pint* and *point*

appear to be very close in broad Cockney speech (Wells 1986:309). Trudgill also comes up with examples e.g. *inside* /ɪnsɒɪd/ (Wells 1986:308).

Finally, the last feature of Cockney concerning diphthongs that is worth noticing is the so-called GOAT split. Wells suggests that whether the diphthong is isolated or in final position, or whether it is before *-ing* or another word beginning with a vowel, matters, and defines its pronunciation.

The former case, present in words such as *roll, bold, goal, hole* or in the past forms and third person singular forms, is exemplified by *rolled* and *rolls* being pronounced as /ɒʊ/, thus /rɒʊłd/ and /rɒʊłz/. On the other hand, when the *l* has to be clear due to the -ing form or the suffix *-ly,* for instance *rolling* and *slowly,* it is pronounced /rʌʊlin/ and /slʌʊli/. (Wells 1986:312-313)

In this chapter we have shown that while in many cases RP is very different from Cockney, in a number of cases it is similar too. Thanks to Brook's examples, we can conclude that many realizations were spoken even in Dickens' time. It has been also pointed out that broad Cockney, the speech of the lower-working-class people, has, to some degree and mainly through glottalization and diphthong shifts, influenced the speech of the whole London area, which means the talk of the middle classes.

5.2 Cockney from the lexical point of view

A dialect is, as has been pointed out above, a mixture of lexical, phonetic and grammatical diversities, and Cockney is no exception. Lexical varieties are the features dealt with in the paragraphs below. This chapter consists of the selection of various lexical fields; in other words, it contains several basic spheres of people's life to which people usually refer throughout a day, such as people, food, etc.

As Wright claims, Cockney, indeed the whole South, is less influenced than the North by Scandinavian words such as *becks* or *gills*, which might be easily explained by the shorter geographical distance between the North and the Scandinavian areas. On the other hand, Cockney has borrowed words from a number of other various languages. Romany, interestingly enough, provided a number of very frequent words such as *bloke* or *pal*. Wright adds that, as above, it is

very common for slang words to be at the height of fashion for a period of time and then fall and disappear (Wright 1981:27). Therefore, we must take into account that the examples given below might have been forgotten some time ago, for the book by Wright with which this thesis deals was written in 1981.

The following lists focus on the mentioned lexical fields that represent *people*, *the body*, *work*, *house*, *common verbs*, *things in every day use*, *sayings* and *space-fillers*. In each chapter there is a list of the most frequent words given; nevertheless, they are not parts of Cockney rhyming slang, which is the content of the last lexical chapter.

People

bloke, mate, lad, pal – a friend, a colleague
boozer – an alcoholic
buggered – exhausted
copper, fuzz, pig – a police(wo)man
dry – thirsty
gut – a greedy person
old Dutch – a wife
old girl – a mother
old man – a father/husband
simple – a fool
soaked, stoned – drunk

The Body

bony – a thin person
conk, hooter – the nose
flappers – the ears
loaf, nut – the head
lofty – a small person
nanny – the beard
titchy – a tall person

Work

brickie – a bricklayer

dusty – a dustman

grafter – a hard-working person

hello-girl – a telephonist

chippie – a carpenter

lay-about – a lazy person

lumper – a dock worker

moonlighting – doing an additional paid job

news boy – a person selling newspapers

spark – an electrician

to get one's cards, to get the sack – to be dismissed

to give it the elbow – to have a doctor's note written not to go to work

to play it up – to stay away from work deliberately

HOUSE

frutty room – an untidy room

gutter-pipes – eaves

loo – toilet

lounge – living room

to live in digs – to lodge

VERBS

to be a goner, to kick the bucket, to push up daises, to turn one's toes up – to die

to come Yorkshire – to cheat

to dance the Paddington frisk – to be hanged

to do a Sheffield – to run away

to have a bun in the oven – to be pregnant

to Kew Gardens – to join a queue

to nick – to steal

to talk right cut-glass, to talk peas over sticks – to attempt to speak standard English

to Welsh – to refuse to pay

THINGS COMMONLY REFERRED TO

bin – a pocket

ding-dong – a party

elevenses – breakfast

Manchester sunshine – rain

nosh, tuck – a meal

old smoke, the city – London

quid – a pound

smother – a coat

SAYINGS

wotcher – (what cheer) hello

blimey – God blind me

SPACE-FILLERS

and that

kind of

like

sort of

well

you know

5.2.1 Cockney Rhyming Slang

This section provides the reader with a description of probably the most famous, striking and interesting feature of Cockney; Cockney Rhyming Slang. This chapter deals firstly with its structure and history; secondly, it offers several lexical fields – words of everyday use with their equivalents in Cockney rhyming slang – similarly to the main lexical chapter above.

As its name suggests, Cockney Rhyming Slang is a kind of slang that is usually based on two words, the latter rhyming with the one the phrase refers to. The two words in the phrase are very often semantically associated, such as *apples and pears* (stairs), *dog and bone* (phone), or *boat race* (face). It is quite common for

the words to be nouns and conjoined by the conjunction *and* as in *trouble and strife* (wife), but there are other types containing usually noun phrases such as *boat race* for *race*, or *field of wheat* (*street*).

Finally, proper names, usually of famous people, stand for a great number of words such as *Britney Spears* for *beers*, or *Aristotle* for *bottle*. Cockneys do not often say the latter word of the two, the one that rhymes with the idea of it, for instance: *to get a round of Britneys* or *I hurt my Gregory* (*Gregory Peck* for *neck*). The nouns in the slang phrase might also be used in different forms or as different parts of speech such as: *He kept rabbiting all day long*, where *rabbiting* is a different form of *rabbit* in *rabbit and pork* which means *talk*.

What must not be left out of consideration is the fact that Cockney Rhyming Slang has, in addition to a lexical level, a phonetic level as well. Had the slang phrases not rhymed with the words they were supposed to mean, the slang would have probably never come into public awareness. It would have definitely been much more difficult to remember the real ideas of it. Nevertheless, examples of imperfect rhymes exist, even though there is always some link that connects them, such as *Robin Hood* for *blood*, connected through the spelling, or *burnt cinders* for *windows*, which is a rhyme in Cockney pronunciation.

Franklyn believes that the need to use slang expressions comes out of the urge to have a secret language. She notes that it usually involves people from the same social groups, and gives an example of two thieves speaking in front of their innocent victim (Franklyn 2004:7).

However, she rejects the generally-acknowledged theory that thieves were the first to invent the rhyming slang in order to prevent eavesdroppers from understanding. According to her, there is a great difference between the cant of the underworld and the rhyming slang they adopted afterwards. While the former is harsh and humourless, the latter is witty and amusing, and more often than not, it is, at least to some extent, intelligible to non-Cockneys.

Mentioning the word *navvy*, she introduces the origin of Cockney Rhyming Slang. Navvies were unskilled labourers coming from the lower working classes, who in the early nineteenth century, in the era of development, were employed to manually shovel up the terrain needed for new construction. As Franklyn says "*the ranks were filled by brawny uneducated Cockneys and massive Irishmen*" (Franklyn

2004:8). When one ethnic group encounters another, it often results in a sort of clash. This time, it was a friendly verbal competition. They worked well together, made jokes and talked all the time. Cockneys wanted to somehow mystify their colleagues; therefore, they created rhyming slang. The Irishmen, of course, soon revealed the secret pattern and struck back with Irish phrases like *Roger O'More* for *door*, or *Dublin tricks* for *bricks*. Cockney could hardly know about famous Irish celebrities, Franklyn supposes, so this seems to be the only possible explanation as to how Irish phrases leaked into Cockney, and how it all began (Franklyn 2004:8).

Finally, below is a list of the most frequently-used Cockney expressions for some basic objects. The categories represent clothes, food and drink, the body, things commonly referred to and common verbs.

CLOTHES

almond rocks – socks
Dicky Dirt – a shirt
Dover boat – a coat
half a dollar – a collar
Jack the Ripper – slippers
Peckham Rye – a tie
sky rocket – a pocket
whistle and flute – a suit
Yorkshire blues – shoes

FOOD AND DRINK

Britney Spears, pig's ear – beer
fisherman's daughter – water
Joe Blake – steak
needle and thread – bread
rocking horse – sauce
Rosie Lee – tea
stand at ease – cheese
Tommy Tucker – supper

THE BODY

bacon and eggs – legs

Barnet Fair – a head of hair

bell ringers – fingers

boat race – the face

cry and tear – the ear

east and west – the chest

German band – the hand

chalk farm – the arm

loaf of bread – the head

Mary Rose – the nose

mince pie – the eye

north and south – the mouth

Things Commonly Referred To and Verbs

Adam and Eve – to believe

apples and pears – stairs

Aristotle – a bottle

Aunt Maria – fire

battle cruiser – a boozer

bees and honey – money

butcher's hook – a/to look

Cain and Abel – a table

captain Kirk – work

dog and bone – a/to phone

Duke of Kent – to rent

Duke of York – a fork

elephant's trunk – to be drunk

Gregory Peck – a cheque

laugh and joke – to smoke

Mickey Roon – a spoon

oily rag – a fag (cigarette)

Oxford scholar – a dollar

pork pie – a/to lie

rabbit and pork – to talk
Roger O'More – floor/door
saucepan lid – a quid
trouble and strife – the wife
uncle Ned – a bed

5.3 Cockney from the grammatical point of view

This chapter focuses on grammatical variations of Cockney and compares it to standard English. Further, it approaches and comments on five word classes: nouns, adjectives, pronouns, verbs and adverbs. As Wright warns, Cockney English is often accused of being bad and not following the standard rules. He rejects this idea, believing that every language and dialect must have its own particular form of grammar to combine its words and thoughts. Without it, it might not be possible to grasp the intended meaning, thus the word "bad" does not seem to fit (Wright 1981:114).

To support this, Trudgill points out that "*like all languages, English is very varied. It comes in many different regional and social varieties. All these varieties are linguistically equivalent. No variety of the language is superior to any other.*" (Trudgill 2004:1). Trudgill points to the case of double negation, which is widely used not only in Cockney; if a person judges this and deems it wrong, he says, their judgement is social rather than linguistic, for non-standard grammatical forms are usually typical for lower middle and working classes (Trudgill 1979:14).

This chapter is based mainly on Wright's publication and two records of Cockney speakers (both rewritten in the Appendix). Some of Trudgill's comments are shown as well, though they refer to dialects in general. It has to be noted that Wright, when using examples, presents, to some extent, spelled pronunciation; therefore, the reader may encounter words such as *free* meaning *three* or *lahst dahnce* standing for *last dance*, etc. As has been previously said, some examples of Dickens' characters' speech are also given as complementary examples. Sam Weller will be marked *SW* and Sarah Gamp *SG*.

The first difference Wright remarks on is word order. According to him, it is

just as crucial as in standard English. Cockney usually does follow the standard rules; nevertheless, there are some peculiarities that are worth noting. The rhema tends to come at the beginning of a sentence, which is in contrast to standard English and might sound strange to some, but to an East Ender, a sentence such as "*Anybody what narks my bird, I clobber 'em.*" would not seem unusual (Wright 1981:114). He adds that as a result, the main verb sometimes vanishes and the subject reappears in post-modification, an example being: "*A fair stunner, that drink what yer made*" (Wright 1981:115).

Afterwards Wright brings up redundancies and omissions, claiming that the first is quite rare and listing some examples of the doubling of conjunctions such as *so therefore* or *but however*. On the contrary, there are many cases of words being omitted. As far as the reader learns from Wright, these are mostly grammatical words such as auxiliaries, prepositions or pronouns (Wright 1981:115). This is very likely due to weak and strong forms of words in speech.

The next issue he addresses are nouns. First he mentions a structure that has existed since 1791, but is very rare nowadays. It is an extra vowel that used to be put after the pair of consonants *st*; *fistes* (fists) being an example. Plurals used after quantifiers, formed as if they were singular, on the other hand, are very usual. Hence, "*dis last free week*" is a noun phrase which could be heard in London (Wright 1981:115). On the other hand, as we find out in Trudgill, the so-called *unmarked plurality* is a widespread feature in many non-standard dialects (Trudgill 1979:19). This feature appears in Dickens as well, for example SW's "*eleven pair o' boots*" (Brook 1970:238)

Subsequently, the next section deals with adjectives. Trudgill (1979:18) and Wright (1981:121) both agree on the fact that the Cockney language is enriched with double-compared adjectives, and that it holds true in dialects other than Cockney. For instance, Shakespeare used it in *Julius Caesar*, depicting Caesar's dying: "*This was the most unkindest cut of all.*" (Trudgill 1979:18). Wright then speaks about adding a redundant adjective to an already present one with the same meaning in order to stress it, such as *the tiny little puppy.* There is also SW's example of "*worser*" and SG's "*favouritest*" (Brook 1970:239).

The pronoun is the next part of speech that will be taken into consideration. Cockneys are famous for swapping out possessive pronouns in favour of objective

pronouns (Wright 1981:116). In one sample of a Cockney speaker[2] this feature is very obvious. "*...me mum...me dad was one...*" He also remarks that some Cockneys, aware of making such a "mistake", tend to correct themselves in situations in which the objective pronoun is not appropriate.

What has just been described is so called hyper-correction, and Wright puts forth an entertaining story to explain this peculiarity. A London University professor arrived at work earlier than usual and found a Cockney cleaner still sweeping the floor behind a locked door. First he knocked on it, not to scare her by bursting in, and upon being asked who it was, he answered: "*It's me, professor Smith.*" The lady refused to let him in, assuming that such an educated person would have said: "*It's I, professor Smith*" (Wright 1981:116).

In Brook we find a number of examples of swapping the objective case for the possesive. Sam Weller utters one of these, saying "*me family ain't a goin' to be choked*" (Brook 1970:244).

Besides personal pronouns, we will focus on the specific use of relative pronouns. In standard English it is acceptable to use *who* for people, *which* for things and *that* for both. In Cockney, it is quite common for *what* or *as* to substitute for all three of the standard English relative pronouns and furthermore, the possessive *whose* and the objective form of who, *whom*. It is also possible for the relative pronoun to completely disappear, even though it represents the subject of the clause, but this might be seen as just an informal way of speaking in general, rather than a typical structure of Cockney (Wright 1981:117). What is more, Trudgill points out that these features have become widespread in a great number of parts of England (Trudgill 1979:17-18). Brook mentions that *as* is often used as the relative pronoun and gives examples. "*Vun o' the truest things as you've said for many a long year*" (Brook 1970:246).

Wright then reports on the use of special forms of possessives, derived from *mine* and *thine.* The final *n* is also added to other possessive pronouns such as *yourn*, *theirn* or *hisn*. He then mentions that in *Guildhall Library Pamphlet* in 1817, this use was regarded as an error in pronunciation and attributed to Londoners (Wright 1981:117). An earlier record commenting on its correctness is Greenwood's work: "*Hern, Ourn, Yourn, Hisn, for Hers, Ours, Yours, His, is bad English.*!"

2"Th-Fronting." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 10 Aug 2010. Web.

(OED 1997:*ourn*). Furthermore, as we learn from *OED*, some of these forms in dialect are typical for Midlands and South England; for instance Wycliff had already used it in 1382 in the OE form [illegible] (OED 1997:y*o*urn). Brook also gives several examples: "*he rashly coverted hisself easy...*" by SW and "*that friend of yourn*" of *SG*'s (Brook 1970:240).

*S*imilar to some other dialects, though indeed with the exception of standard English, Cockney differs in reflexive pronouns. To construct them, as Wright suggests, it is possible to use genitive pronouns with the suffix *self* for both the basic and emphatic function, hence *he hurt hisself* or *they did it all theirselves* (Wright 1981:117).

Finally, the last type of pronoun to be distinguished is the demonstrative. Trudgill presents his theory that contrary to standard English, demonstrative pronouns are replaced with objectives in a number of dialects, an example being "*Look at them animals!*" (Trudgill 1979:19) or in the Cockney record "*...and Wapping in them days really was one of the poorest parts of London.*"[3] Brook offers many examples of this kind of substandard grammar, one of them being SW's "*...open them ears o' yourn!*" Brook (1970:244).

Wright confirms this comment, adding that *this* is often used instead of the indefinite article (Wright 1981:117). This might be applied across the world, especially in North America, where we come across sentences such as *So I met this guy...* or *We went to this pub...*, with *this* very often referring to things for the first time.

Let us have a look at another word class, that of verbs. Cockney varies in many structures containing verbs; however, similarities can again be seen in other non-standard dialects. As we learn from the recording, the third person verb form is common for other persons as well, thus we have: "*...you was either East End respectable or you was sort of East End villain...*"[4]

Ain't is another verb whose use has become very wide-spread across English-speaking countries. It is the auxiliary used for all negative constructions such as *am not, aren't,* but also *haven't* or *doesn't.* In *OED* it is stated that it evolved from *an't* – contracted *are not*; the first records of it date back to the year 1706 (OED 1997:ain't). Further, it is claimed that it has been widely used in London

3"Th-Fronting." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 10 Aug 2010. Web.
4"Th-Fronting." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 10 Aug 2010. Web.

dialect and represents Dickens' Cockney English. “*There's two Governors, ain't there? One and one, two – Lawyer Lightwood, my first finger, he's one, ain't he?*” (Dickens 1869:193). Sam Weller, but many other Dickens' characters as well, use *ain't*: “*I ain't mistaken*” (Brook 1970:242).

Wright also brings up the special use of question tags. Cockneys tend use question tags in situations where the listener has no chance to react to them, because they do not know the answer (Wright 1981:120-121). An example of this is also given in Trudgill's recording: “*...but, blimey, before she went home, they were worse than the other pair, weren't they?*” (Trudgill 1979:42).

Another Cockney speciality is the overuse of the verb *say*, especially while narrating a story. This feature is very likely to be found throughout the world as well, and resembles the complementary stylistic meaning of *you know*, which often also refers to something the listener hardly knows; or it is used instead of interjections such as *erm, umm*, etc. to express hesitation (Wright 1981:120). The following citations completely confirm this idea.

“*I'd just changed my pyjamas so I said to Rene, I phoned Rene there, and I said, could bring me another one of my old pairs of pyjamas, I said, cos, I said, some stain had come through it, you know, how, you know...round the waistband and that.*” and “*...but anyway he said, well, he said, you don't seem to be weeping now...he said, I don't think it will weep any more, he said...erm...he said, well, if I let you go home, he said, he said, they will have to be dressed twice a day...he said, and he said...twice a day, he said, while it is...comes away a bit wet, he said, and once a day, he said, when it's dry, sort of thing*” (Trudgill 1979:42).

In the last place, differences in past and present participle forms will be described. For single completed actions in the past, Cockneys seem to use present perfect tense without the auxiliary or past participles instead of past forms. Therefore, sentences as *I done it yesterday* are common (Wright 1981:118). The recording in Trudgill also provides examples “*...so she done that, but it still didn't...*” or “*...it was a long while before this doctor come up...*” (Trudgill 1979:42). Trudgill also adds that in standard English, the two forms are usually somehow distinguished, but admits that in many non-standard dialects people bring irregularities into line with regular patterns and that past forms are variably swapped for participles or the other way round, and that sometimes people create

new words such as *writ* for *written* (Trudgill 1979:15). Brook introduces a large number of examples concerning past simple forms used as past participles and vice versa or wrong forms for both categories e.g. *undertook* instead of *undertaken* by SG or SW's *wrote* for *written* or *know'd* for *knew* (Brook 1970:240).

Wright lists some forms that are used incorrectly if compared to standard English. Some of these are *broke* for *broken, eat/ett* for *eaten, give* for all three forms, *knowed* for *known*, or *spoke*, *stole* and *stood* for their real participles, etc. (Wright 1981:119).

The last part of speech to be covered is adverbs. Both Wright (1981:121) and Trudgill (1979:19) agree on the fact that many adverbs are used like adjectives, which means without the suffix -*ly*. We continue with the multiple negation of Sarah Gamp: "*don't ask me whether I won't take none*" (Brook 1970:243).

Subsequently, Wright introduces the multiple negation caused by *never*, mentioning Chaucer's *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* and his description of the Knight:

> "*He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde*
> *In al his lyf unto no maner wight.*"[5]

As has been noted, Cockney shares a majority of the features mentioned above with most non-standard dialects. As we read in Trudgill, the higher a person's position on the social scale, the less his utterances are marked by dialect and differ from standard English (Trudgill 1979:10). The upper social classes tend to use RP as the correct accent and standard English as the proper dialect. In other words, some Cockney varieties could be seen as the common speech of lower social classes across the UK.

On the other hand, what must not be left out of consideration is that a great part of the variables above were first used around the London area – see 4.2. It is thanks to that that some might still remain now, because London talk has always been considered trendy and is likely to be imitated. It seems certain that other uses in other parts of England came later and are based on the London standard and Cockney.

5Benson, L.D. "The General Prologue." *The Geoffrey Chaucer page*. The President and Fellows of Harvard College. Web. 10 April 2008.

6 Survey

In the following section I report the results from my own survey that concerned Cockney. The questionnaire is included in the Appendix. The aim of the survey was to find out how much UK inhabitants use and know Cockney, and what attitude they have towards Cockney. The survey consisted of nine questions referring both to the Cockney dialect in general and to practical examples of Cockney Rhyming Slang. Below, I would like to present the questions one by one and comment on the answers to them. Nevertheless, I have to admit that I have managed to collect only eight completely filled-in questionnaires. Thus, the survey probably does not have great statistical value and therefore, it serves only as a complementary source of information.

The first question asks the informants where they come from and whether they consider themselves a Cockney. Asking this question I wanted to prove that people born in specific parts of London feel they belong to a particular social group, which they regard as prestigious status in the society. Whether they come from the South East England or not was actually the only social marker. As has been said, eight people took part in the project.

Five of the participants come from Nottingham, Manchester, the south-west coast of England and Wales; none of them calls themselves a Cockney. Two participants come from London; one was born in St. Bartholomew's Hospital and one is a resident of Bethnal Green, and both label themselves Cockneys. The last person who also claimed himself to be a Cockney is from Barking in Essex.

This is not surprising since the Essex dialect represents a part of so-called Estuary English, which is English spoken along the river Thames in South East England. Cockney dialect is also a part of it. This dialectical continuum of the South East England consists of Cockney at one end, Estuary English in the middle and RP at the other end. Therefore, a great number of Cockney phonetic and grammatical varieties are very similar to Estuary English and thus, a person might feel this sense of belonging with other Cockneys.

The second question was asked to examine informants' attitudes to Cockney.

What does Cockney mean to you? definitely evoked the East End of London. In all cases, the reply was that Cockney refers to that city area. Five, coming from the south-west of England, both Londoners and both informants from Nottingham, were more precise and said that it connotes a Londoner born within the sound of Bow Bells chiming. Two of the respondents, those coming from Bethnal Green in the East End and Barking in Essex, proudly claimed that Cockney is their roots, that it shows how British they are and that they are really proud of it.

The origin, history and main purpose of Cockney were the subjects of the third question. An interesting etymological thought is given by the Welsh who refers to Cockles, "*...a very popular and cheap sort of shell fish readily available in the East end of London, fished out of that area of the Thames estuary.*" One person from Nottingham thinks that "*it is said to have begun in the 1840s among market traders. Another idea is that it was developed among criminals after the formation of the Police Force.*" The resident of Bethnal Green says that "*rhyming slang was originated to stop people listening to private conversations e.g. in pubs from the police in Victorian times.*" The person from Essex remembers using Cockney Rhyming Slang when he was young at home and at school to make his conversation unintelligible to others who were around. This result again shows that Cockney is not foreign to people living outside the East End of London, which must lead to a higher level of prestige.

Question number four asks the informants whether they use Cockney and its rhyming slang and if so, in what situations. Only two persons answered that they never use it. Four people claimed that they use it in friendly or joking occasions. The remaining people, from Essex and Bethnal Green, said they use Cockney Rhyming Slang all the time. It again proves the idea that Cockney is spoken across the UK, even if it is just in high-frequency terms.

The fifth question asks the informants whether the use of Cockney Rhyming Slang is common. One of the Londoners thinks that Cockney is nowadays spoken mostly by "*psuedo-Cockneys who just want to appear to be Londoners, in a similar way to the psuedo-New Yorkers in their NY baseball caps.*" Four respondents, those coming from Nottingham, Manchester, London and Essex, said it is common in the East End of London, or in the south-west of England. The rest considered the use of Cockney rare.

The next question was supposed to find out who – in other words, what social class – generally uses Cockney Rhyming Slang. Four people said that Cockney connotes the speech of the working or lower social classes. On the other hand, the rest thought that Cockney is nowadays used by almost everyone, across the social ladder. The informant from Manchester claimed that it is used by "*all manner of people from all socio-economic classes*". Some of the respondents mentioned that they use Cockney, as has been said, in friendly and joking manners, which might be a way for Cockney to spread into all social classes. This is the evidence that Cockney is becoming, or perhaps has already become, a prestigious dialect. (See 3.1)

The seventh question was practical and tested the respondents on their knowledge of certain Cockney phrases for usual, everyday words such as *mate*, *money*, *dead/kill*, *police*, *taxi* and *beer*. Only one person, the one coming from Nottingham, was not able to translate a single word from the list.

As for *mate*, everybody but the Welshman, matched it to *china plate*. The Welshman translated it as *spanner*. *Money* was translated as *bees/bread/sugar and honey* in five cases, and the rest did not know. Four participants translated *dead* as *brown bread*. Translating *police,* the informants wrote *gavers* in two cases, *grasshopper* for *copper* in one case and *old bill* as the last translation. The remaining people did not know. As for *taxi*, only two respondents remembered famous *Joe Baxi*. *Andy McNab* and *Sherbet Dab* for *cab* are the other phrases that were mentioned. *Beer* was the last word to be translated. The informants mentioned *pig's ear, Britney Spears* as in *to get a round of Britneys in*, and *Roger Starling* for *carling*.

The eighth question asked the respondents which phrase is the most common, which is the funniest and which the latest. For the first criterion, the majority of participants, six people, wrote *apples and pears*, for *stairs*. *Dog and bone* for *phone*, *to use one's loaf* for *think*, *china plate,* or *to tell porkies* – the whole phrase is *pork pie* - *for lies* were the other ones. Phrases such as *to rabbit* for *talk* (*rabbit and pork*), *barnet fair* for *hair*, *boat race* for *face* and *Jack and Danny* for *fanny* were marked the funniest examples of Cockney Rhyming Slang. Five informants were able to label a phrase the most recent. *Nelson Mandela* appeared twice in the answers, once for *Stella*, the beer and then for *fellow*, likely to be

pronounced with final /□/. *Pete Tong* might occur in a phrase such as "*It's a bit Pete Tong*" meaning that it is getting late. *Wind and kite*, meaning website, was also labelled the most recent one that one person had heard. The last phrase that was commented on is *Tank* for *Yank*, which refers to an American.

The last question of the survey asked the participants whether they had ever invented any of their own Cockney Rhyming Slang. Only one respondent, from Manchester, answered that he had. *Nelson Mandela* for *fellow* is the phrase.

To summarise, this survey was conducted to find out if Cockney is still, or yet, popular among Britons. I also wanted to prove several theories presented in the thesis concerning the idea that people who were born Cockneys take fellowship into consideration and are definitely not ashamed of it, even though many people think of the Cockney dialect as one of the working-class. Next, I wanted to show that Cockney is becoming widespread in places other than South East England and that a number of UK inhabitants are aware of the presence of Cockney in modern English, know about its rules and history, and what is more, use it.

7 Conclusion

This thesis has been written mainly to inform the reader about all of the important features signifying Cockney. Since Cockney is a dialect, it was necessary to comment on every linguistic variable that differentiates it from the standard. I dare say that this purpose has been fulfilled and the reader is well-informed about the phonetic, lexical and grammatical aspects of the dialect. These linguistic disciplines have been commented on in Chapter 5. What could have been elaborated on in more detail are the phonetic and lexical section.

The phonetic part, the vowel system in particular, involves more realisations than were referred to. Had I organised my time more carefully, I might have been able to transcribe two recordings of Cockney speakers and could have proved notions claimed in the phonetic section. Nevertheless, they serve as additional examples for the grammatical part.

Regarding the lexicology, the sources I used were written approximately twenty years ago, and thus, some words mentioned might not represent the real

situation in the language today. On the other hand, however old the sources used for Cockney Rhyming Slang and the phonetic and grammatical variations may be, they do mirror real Cockney even nowadays.

A dialect is specified not only linguistically, but also socially and regionally. What Cockney means from both points of view has been described thoroughly in Chapter 3. In this part the reader finds evidence that, from the sociological standpoint, Cockney is widely connected to lower and working social classes; this notwithstanding the fact that it appears to be spreading into the speech of higher classes as well, and what is more, becoming prestigious. Speaking from the regional point of view, Cockney is no longer attributed only to the East End of London, as it has already spread over the entire London area and heavily influences Estuary English.

The sociolinguistic and regional aspects of Cockney that have just been mentioned were supposed to be proven by my own survey in Chapter 6. The survey points out that Cockneys are proud of their dialect and that they use it. Moreover, it also does show that Cockney is no longer restricted to the working-class East Enders.

Finally, to provide a more complete view of Cockney, the history of it had to be referred to as well. Section 4 describes the etymological development of the word *Cockney*, which before the year 1600 had nothing in common with London. Further, I have managed to demonstrate that since the thirteen century it is London speech, above all other dialects, that has had the most significant impact on the standard forms of English.

Appendix

Appendix I – THE SURVEY

- Where exactly do you come from? Are you a true Cockney?
- What does Cockney mean to you?
- If you know what Cockney is, can you comment on its origin/history/main purpose?
- Do you use Cockney? In what situations? (school, work, home, pub, family, friends, etc...)
- Do you think it is common to use Cockney rhyming slang?
- Who uses Cockney rhyming slang? (young, old, poor, rich, etc...)
- How would you translate following words?
  - mate
  - money
  - dead/kill
  - police
  - taxi
  - beer
- In your opinion, what phrase is
  - the most common/popular?
  - the funniest?
  - the most recent?
- Have you ever invented any?

Appendix II – TRUGILL'S RECORDING

I came back to the bed, like, after breakfast...I was just like laying on it a bit and reading th...the paper, and, I don't know, I thought to myself, I don't know, I feel wet in my pyjamas and I looked inside...and put my hand in it..it is wet wh...how...how the dickens...I ain't spilt any tea or anything down there. So I thought to myself, I know, I'll go out in the ablution place, like, there...they've got some little radiators...all little individual places...got a little radiator there...put my pyjamas on to dry, I just thought it was some water...of course when I got out there the dressing that was on me, that was soaked in a...yeh, like a...a watery blood...so, course I went and saw the sister and er...they put another dressing on it...they put another dressing on it...yeh...yeh...it wasn't...wasn't long before that was soaked and all, Fred...wasn't long before that was soaked...so of course I went and had another one done...so I said to the...the nurse..., I said–guess to what it was–it was like where they...they'd taken the tubes out, and I said to her have they opened up? She said no,there's nothing, like o...a...actually open...it's seeping...it was seeping through it, yeh. Well...I said, well, I said, if you put s...some, like, little butterfly stitches over that first of all...out of...er...er...plaster like...you know...hold that together. I said well then...put a dressing and a big plaster on it, so she done that, but it still didn't...yeh...it still seeped through...and course I begin to get worried, and when...when she done it, like, the third time...took it off–I'm laying there–I could see it, it was running away from me like tears. Yeh...but yeh, but anyway...yeh...yeh...that's what I say...and of course, what...what had happened, also, that was the Saturday, wasn't it?, yeh, I...er...had my pyjamas...I...I'd just changed my pyjamas so I said to Rene, I phoned Rene there, and I said, could bring me another one of my old pairs of pyjamas, I said, cos, I said, some stain had come through it, you know, how, you know...round the waistband and that. So she brought me in a new pair of 'jamas in the afternoon and I went and changed them and...and that...but, blimey, before she went home, they were worse then the other pair, weren't they? It'd come through and it had soaked right through and down the leg, and the other pair had dried off a bit in the back so I thought, well, I'll have to keep them, so...I did get it done again and er...I changed into pyjamas...well of course when it come to the Sunday, I'm going home Sunday, made arrangements for...she's

going to pick me up about ten...so of course I had to see the... the sister...and er...she said I'd like the doctor to see that...well...time's going on, so I phoned Rene in the morning and said don't pick me up ten, make it nearer twelve, sort of thing...it'd give a chance...and er...anyway...it was a long while before this doctor come up. It was only, like, the young one, see, weekend one. But anyway, the sister, she was getting a bit worried. She said he don't seem to be coming, so she had a look, and she said, well if it was my decision she wouldn't let me home...and er...anyhow I more or less pleaded with her, I said well they're coming here in a little while, I said, if you'd've told me before, I said, I would have made arrangements and cancelled it...anyway...she was still worried so she went and she found this young doctor. He come along...still laying there, you know, on my bed, sort of thing, surrounded. Eventually he comes ten to twelve...and he has a look and...he's, like, with the nurse there, he wasn't with the sister, but anyway he said, well, he said, you don't seem to be weeping now...he said, I don't think it will weep any more, he said...erm...he said, well, if I let you go home, he said, he said, they'll have to be dressed twice a day...he said, and he said...twice a day, he said, while it's...comes away a bit wet, he said, and once a day, he said, when it's dry, sort of thing.

Appendix III – WIKIPEDIA RECORDING

My dad came from Wapping and me mum came from Poplar. Me dad was one of eleven kids… and Wapping in them days really was one of the poorest parts of London. I mean they really didn't have shoes on their feet. I'm talking about seventy years ago now. Erm… and Poplar was… sli… just slightly a cut above Wapping; erm… you was either East End respectable or you was sort of East End villain, you know, and my family was respectable on both sides. But me father had a very tough time because his father died when he was nineteen, leaving him the only one working to bring up eleven brothers… ten brothers and sisters and on a Thursday night he'd sometimes go home and the youngest two would be crying in the corner and he'd say "What's the matter with them, ma?" "Oh, well, Harry, you know it's Thursday night, and you don't get paid till tomorrow." and they literally didn't have any food in the house.

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