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THE COCKNEY ACCENT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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For centuries, English has been one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, and due to its widespread use, various dialects have been formed, each of which has its own unique features and characteristics. The article is devoted to the cultural aspect in the translation process. The influence of social factors on language variation is emphasized. The author describes the problem using the example of Cockney accent. The article considers phonetic features, historical aspects of Cockney slang formation and provides examples of its rhyming.

Keywords: Cockney accent; Cockney slang; translation process; cultural aspect; British English.

One form of translation is localization. By "localization" in this context we should understand the need to consider cultural differences, both significant and minor, and the ability to integrate cultural aspects into the translated content. Since culture is inextricably linked with language, it is important for those learning English to understand that British English is a concept that includes a wide range of accents and dialects of the English language.

To understand people who live in the UK, especially in London, you need to know the cultural characteristics of the British accent. Unique phonetic features, intonation patterns and word stress explain the relationship between language and identity, shedding light on how variations in accent can reflect socioeconomic status, community affiliation and regional pride.

Cockney differs from Standard English on three levels: phonetic, lexical and grammatical. In this context Standard English is meant as the variety of English which is used with minor regional and national variations and is associated with formal schooling. The study of the Cockney accent provides valuable information about sociolinguistic dynamics and the influence of social factors on language variation. Researchers can study the correlation between Cockney accent characteristics and various social variables such as education, social status. This knowledge contributes to a broader understanding of how social factors influence linguistic characteristics.

Regionally, Cockney is an accent or dialect of the English language primarily spoken in London. Cockney can also be used as a demonym to refer to people who were born and live in the East End or as an offensive term for members of lower classes. Cockney is one of the most famous English accents. This accent is often associated with the working class and the use of rhyming slang. In addition, in the multimedia space there are actors, writers, directors who speak Cockney, for example: Guy Ritchie, Charles Hunnam and Jason Statham. This accent can be heard in such songs as Blur – Parklife, the songs of the Sex Pistols and The Clash, the

TV series "Peaky Blinders" and "Brassic". At the beginning of the 20th century, cockney went beyond London and began to spread to nearby areas. This type of slang was especially popular in counties such as Essex and Bedfordshire. However, the concentration of speakers in the southeast is still the largest.

Historical aspects of formation help provide insight into the linguistic evolution and development of English accents over time. The term was first discovered in William Langland's poem "Piers Plowman". In this poem it had the meaning of a small, shapeless egg. From Middle English cocken + ey literally means cock's egg. It suggests that the word was used in a negative sense, since it literally means an egg laid by a rooster. It is controversial, but it is generally accepted that the term "Cockney" comes from the Middle English word "Cockeney", which meant a spoiled child, a brash and self-confident person. Typically, the term was used to describe those born in the East End of London. In addition, cockneys were often associated with street traders, dock workers and other people engaged in manual labor. In the 17th century, traveler and writer Fiennes Morison noted that: "Londoners and all who are within earshot of the Bow bells are reproachfully called Cockneys." The same year John Minshew added the term to his book "Ductor in Linguas". The Cockney accent gained popularity and acceptance in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It became a symbol of working-class culture and was depicted in various works of literature, such as the plays of George Bernard Shaw and the novels of Charles Dickens. Cockney characters often portrayed a mixture of humour, wit and resilience, which further enhanced the influence and appeal of the accent. Despite its cultural significance, the Cockney accent has faced challenges, especially with the advent of more standardized forms of English. Factors such as increased mobility, migration and media influence have contributed to the decline of the traditional Cockney accent among younger generations. However, efforts are made to preserve and promote its unique heritage [1].

The main feature of the Cockney accent is pronunciation which sets it apart from standard English. Here are some notable peculiarities:

1. 'Th'-sound substitution: In Cockney, the 'th' sound is often replaced by an 'f' or a 'v' sound. For instance, "thank you" becomes "fank you," and "theatre" becomes "veatre."

2. Glottal stops: The Cockney accent is replete with glottal stops, where the 't' sound is dropped and replaced by a small pause in the throat. So, "bottle" might be pronounced as "bo'le," and "water" as "wa'er."

3. 'H'-dropping: A Cockney speaker tends to drop the initial 'h' sound in words, pronouncing "house" as "'ouse" and "happy" as "'appy." The 'h' sound may also be added to words where it's not present, as in "Cockney" becoming "Hockney."

4. 'R'-dropping: The Cockney accent often omits or softens the 'r' sound at the end of words. For example, "car" may sound like "cah," and "mother" like "mu-uh."

5. Vowel changes: Some vowel sounds undergo alteration in Cockney. The 'i' sound in words like "right" becomes an 'oi' sound, resulting in "roit." Similarly, the 'ei' sound in "face" turns into a short 'a' sound, making it sound like "fahce."

6. 'O'-vowel gliding: The letter 'o' in Cockney can glide towards an 'a' sound, particularly in words ending with 'er,' like "water" pronounced as "watah" [3].

Sentence example:
1. "I think I saw that film in the cinema yesterday."(standard English).
2. "I fink I saw that film in the cinemah yesterd'y."(Cockney Accent) [3].

Cockney accent's peculiarities add a distinct charm and character to London dialect. In addition, the special sound is complemented by rhyming slang, which makes speech even more unusual. The peculiarity of Cockney rhyming slang lies in its coded nature. Instead of using the actual word, a phrase or idiom is substituted, often based on a rhyme with the intended word. The key to understanding this slang is recognition of the second part of the rhyming pair, as the first part is usually dropped. This can be knotty for those unfamiliar with the language [2].

For instance, if a Cockney wants to refer to money, instead of saying "money," they might say "Bees and honey. In this example, the full phrase is "bees and honey," which rhymes with "money." However, in everyday conversation, they would only use the first part, saying "I need some bees." Similarly, if someone is tired, they may say, "I am Hank Marvin" – Hank Marvin being a famous musician, which rhymes with "starving" [2].

Here are a few more examples of Cockney rhyming slang which can be found in films such as "Green Street Hooligans", "Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels", "Snatch" : apples and pears – stairs ("I'm going up the apples"); trouble and strife – wife ("My trouble is out shopping)"; pork pies – lies ("Don't feed me porkies!"); dog and bone – phone ("Give us a call on the dog"); tommy tank – bank ("I need to sort out my Tommy").

An interesting aspect of Cockney rhyming slang is how its usage evolves and varies. Different social groups and communities may have their own phrases, and people often create new rhymes to keep the tradition alive. Furthermore, some words in rhyming slang have gone beyond the Cockney community to become widely recognized British slang, such as "trouble and strife" for wife.

To truly understand Cockney rhyming slang, one must immerse themselves in the language and spend time conversing with genuine Cockneys. It is an extraordinary linguistic tradition that adds charm and character to the lively East End culture, making it an intriguing subject for language enthusiasts around the world.

Learning the Cockney accent can provide numerous benefits to individuals. Firstly, it can enhance communication and social interactions, allowing individuals to connect with others on a deeper level and foster stronger relationships. Additionally, learning the Cockney accent can open doors to new opportunities, such as pursuing careers in acting, voice-over work, or even mastering various dialects. Moreover, understanding the Cockney accent can offer a unique insight into the rich history and culture of London, providing individuals with a deeper appreciation for the city and its diverse population. The importance of learning the Cockney accent lies not only in its practical advantages but also in the richness of the experience it offers in terms of personal growth and cultural understanding.

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