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ФЕНОМЕН СЛЕНГА «КОКНИ»

Цель данной работы – продемонстрировать сленг Cockney, который является неотъемлемым для восточной части Лондона и ее коренных жителей. А также в задачу вошло провести параллели между стандартным английским и Cockney, выявить, какой вклад внесло это английское наречие в мировую культуру, и выяснить происхождение самого слова “Cockney”.

Cockneys are the traditional working class inhabitants from the East End of London.

The word comes from “cockneys”(14th century) which means “eggs that are misshapen”, as if laid by a cock. It is a fairly wide term, meaning “the true Londoner” or “an old resident of the East End”.

The Cockney gift to the world culture is a phenomenon of the Cockney Rhyming Slang- a code of speaking when a common word can be replaced by the whole or abbreviated form of a well-known phrase which rhymes with that word.

It is not really a language since the words spoken are clearly English; on the other hand, it is not a dialect either, since the speakers of this slang also may not use it. There is a story running that this slang originated in the market place so that vendors could communicate without the customers knowing what was being said- you wouldn't want your customers know that you were going to lower your prices in ten minutes so you could go home early. Other versions say that it was spoken by the thieves of London to confuse the police. This was particularly useful when East Enders wanted to talk about illegal activities. Interestingly, in British crime films, criminals usually have a Cockney accent.

The problem in researching its origin is that it has always been a spoken language with very few written records. No matter where it comes from, the important thing is that it exists today just as it has for many, many years and can provide a wonderful, colourful language in everyday life.

We will try to describe what the Rhyming Slang is. Basically, you take a pair of associated words (e.g. fish hook), where the second word rhymes with the word you intend to say, then use the first word of the associated pair to indicate the word you originally intended to say. In the example listed above you are talking about a book. The rhyme is “fish book”, so the slang expression is “fish”, as in “I'd like to say a word about the new fish by Len Deighton”.

Or, imagine a conversation like this: “Got to my mickey, found me way up the apples, put on me whistle and the bloody dog went. It was me trouble telling me to fetch the teapots”, which really means: “Got to my house (micky mouse), found my way up the stairs (apples and pears), put on my suit (whistle and flute) and the phone (dog and bone) rang. It was my wife (trouble and strife) telling me to get the kids (teapot lids)”

Here are some examples from “My Fair Lady”. Eliza says: “Two bunches of violets trodden into the mud. A full day's wages”. In Cockney the [u] vowel is greatly labialised and retracted. Another typical feature of Cockney is the dropping of initial [h] sounds where they should be pronounced, and the insertion of the [h] in front of words beginning with a vowel sound. For example: “Oh, he's your son, is he?”

A Bystander: “There's a bloke there behind the pillar (...)” In Cockney “a bloke” means “a person”. Then, the Cockney spelling of “you” is “ye-oo”.

Here are some more examples of Cockney Rhyming Slang:

<i>Cockney</i>	English	Cockney sentence
Bacon and eggs	<i>Legs</i>	<u>She has such long bacons!</u>
Loaf of bread	Head	Think about it- use your loaf.
Mince pies	Eyes	What beautiful minces.
Rabbit and pork	Talk	I don't know what she's rabbiting about!
Bees and honey	Money	Hand over the bees.
Boat race	Face	I don't like his boat.
Dog and bone	Phone	She's on the dog.
Brown bread	Dead	His dad is brown bread.

Cocney rhyming slang is now so popular that Brits often invent some of their own using the names of famous people. Here are a few of these:

Benny Hills	Pills	I've got a terrible headache. Have you got any Benny Hills?
Bob Hope	Dope (=marijuana)	Do you fancy some Bob Hope? Yeah alright then...
Duke of Kent	Rent	Have you paid the Duke of Kent yet?
Brad Pitt	Shit	Phaw! It doesn't half stink of Brad Pitt around here!

A Cockney accent is now often called "Estuary English" because it comes from the area around the Thames Estuary.