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ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ТЕРМІНОЛОГІЇ БРИТАНСЬКОГО ДІАЛЕКТУ КОКНІ В РОЗМОВНОМУ ТА ХУДОЖНЬОМУ МОВЛЕННІ

FEATURES OF THE COCKNEY BRITISH DIALECT TERMINOLOGY USE IN SPOKEN AND LITERARY LANGUAGE

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The article provides a comprehensive analysis of the Cockney dialect as a unique linguistic and sociocultural phenomenon. It originated in London's East End and explores the specific uses of its terminology in spoken and literary language. The paper also examines the dialect's origins, evolution, and influence on the English language, as well as the social aspects associated with its speakers. It's important to note that the dialect's creation was closely tied to the processes of industrialization and migration. The East End became a melting pot of languages and dialects brought by factory workers from all over the world—from Essex and Ireland to Poland, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. This multiculturalism led to a rapid enrichment of the Cockney lexicon through the borrowing of terms from other languages and professional jargons, for example, from butchers and merchants. The article also considers how Cockney was reflected in literature, particularly in the works of Charles Dickens and Herman Melville. In contrast to the romanticized or distorted images created by some writers, the dialect is argued to be a reflection of not only linguistic features but also the code of conduct, moral values, and patriotism of its speakers. While the East End was often associated with poverty and crime, Cockneys had a strong code of respectability and an aversion to «the law», which they perceived as a tool of the privileged classes. In the modern era, the dialect has undergone significant social and economic changes, caused by the «slum clearance» program, the closure of the docks, and a new wave of immigration. These processes have led to the dispersal of traditional Cockney speakers and the emergence of «Multicultural London English», which is a blend of Cockney, Bangladeshi, and Caribbean accents. Despite predictions of its possible disappearance, the authors note that Cockney continues to exist, in part due to its presence in popular culture (TV shows, films) and its use by notable figures such as Prince Charles and David Beckham. While rhyming slang is not developing as actively as it once was, its influence is still noticeable. This dialect is not just a linguistic phenomenon, but a deep cultural code that reflects the history and character of London's working class.

Key words: the English language; the London dialect; terminology; speech; vocabulary.

Статтю присвячено комплексному аналізу діалекту кокні як унікального лінгвістичного та соціокультурного феномену, що сформувався у лондонському Іст-Енді та особливостям використання його термінології в розмовному та художньому мовленні. Звернено увагу на походження лондонського діалекту, еволюцію та вплив на англійську мову, а також соціальні аспекти, пов'язані з його носіями. Слід зауважити, що створення діалекту було тісно пов'язане з процесами індустріалізації та міграції. Іст-Енд став середовищем для змішування мов і діалектів, що привезли фабричні робітники з усього світу — від Ессекса та Ірландії до Польщі, Пакистану та Бангладеш. Ця мультикультурність спричинила швидке збагачення лексики кокні шляхом запозичення термінів з інших мов і професійних жаргонів, наприклад, від м'ясників і комерсантів. Розглянуто також як кокні відображався у літературі, зокрема у творчості Чарльза Діккенса та Германа Мелвілла. На відміну від романтизованих чи спотворених образів, створених деякими письменниками, діалект, як стверджується, є віддзеркаленням не лише мовних особливостей, але й кодексу поведінки, моральних цінностей і патріотизму його носіїв. Хоча з одного боку Іст-Енд асоціювався з бідністю та злочинністю, кокні мали сильний кодекс респектабельності та неприязні до «закону», який вони сприймали як інструмент привілейованих верств. У сучасну епоху діалект зазнав значних соціальних та економічних змін, спричинених програмою «очищення нетрів», закриттям доків, а також новою хвилею імміграції. Автентифіковано, що ці процеси призвели до розселення традиційних носіїв кокні та до появи «багатокультурної лондонської англійської», яка є сумішшю кокні, бангладешських та карибських акцентів. Незважаючи на прогнози щодо можливого зникнення, автори зазначають, що кокні продовжує існувати, зокрема завдяки своїй присутності у масовій культурі (телешоу, фільми) та використанню відомими особами, як-от принц Чарльз та Девід Бекхем. Хоча римований сленг розвивається не так активно, як раніше, його вплив все ще помітний. Цей діалект є не просто лінгвістичним явищем, а глибоким культурним кодом, що відображає історію та характер лондонського робітничого класу.

Ключові слова: англійська мова; лондонський діалект; термінологія; мовлення; лексика.

Statement of the problem. The Cockney dialect emerged in London's East End, historically a hub for the working class and immigrants. Its formation was driven by a blend of people from various English regions and immigrants from around the world. This diversity gave it a dynamic nature, allowing it to easily borrow and incorporate words from other languages and professional jargon. Cockney is more than just an accent; it's a distinct culture. It's characterized by a strong code of politeness, where the words «lady» and «gentleman» hold great significance. They treated a «lady» with respect, while the word «woman»

could be offensive. Cockneys were also known for their patriotism, shown through their resilience during wartime and their enthusiasm for royal celebrations, which were one of the few opportunities for the working class to visit the West End. They had their own view of the legal system, disliking the police and believing the law served the interests of the upper class. Slang terms for police officers, such as «cooper» or «the old Bill», were derogatory. Poverty and a lack of money were central to their lives, which led to a rich vocabulary of slang terms for money («a quid» - a pound) and its absence («skint» - broke). The dialect has been used in literature, though not always accurately. Charles Dickens, despite being seen as a champion of the poor, described the East End with disgust, and his working-class characters were often portrayed as swindlers or drunkards. In contrast, Herman Melville presented a more authentic depiction in his novel Omoo, which historian L. Mumford called «the first evidence of modern Cockney's existence in American literature». In modern popular culture, Cockney has gained popularity through TV shows like «Steptoe and Son» and «Only Fools and Horses». Celebrities such as Prince Charles, Hugh Laurie, David Beckham, and Adele also use it to add personality to their public image. There's even a term, «mockney», for a fake Cockney accent used for comedic effect, which shows its widespread recognition.

Today, Cockney is undergoing significant changes due to social and economic transformations. «Slum clearance» programs, the closing of the docks, and new waves of immigrants (especially from Bangladesh) have caused the traditional East End population to disperse to the suburbs. This makes Cockney less of a regional accent and more of a class-based one. Some researchers believe that traditional Cockney will disappear from London within 30 years, replaced by a «multicultural London English» that blends elements of Cockney with immigrant accents. Nevertheless, rhyming slang continues to evolve, albeit slowly. Modern examples primarily rhyme with celebrity names, such as «Barack Obama» (pajamas) or «Britney Spears» (beers). This suggests that the creative impulse that gave rise to Cockney is still alive, but its form is adapting to contemporary culture.

Objective. The objective of the article is to examine the features of the use of Cockney British dialect terminology in spoken and literary language.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The development of the Cockney dialect was considered by foreign scholars, such as: A. Ellis, E. Armstrong, R. Barltrop, L. Ashley, M. Guzzetti, S. Finch, D. Freeborn, S. Fox, J. Fowler, H. Kökeritz, T. Mcarthur, W. Matthews, and others.

Presentation of the main material. The Cockney dialect is one of the most well-known dialects in the English language today, and it has been a subject of study since the second half of the 19th century [1; 31]. It was formed in London's East End due to the diversity of its speakers. Especially during the Industrial Revolution, this area was populated by factory workers from all over the world. Today, it is home to descendants of families who came from Essex, Suffolk, and Hertfordshire to work in the docks, factories, and markets. Others trace their ancestry to the nearly five thousand Irish people who arrived in the 1840s. In the late 19th century, Polish Jews settled in the East End, followed later by Pakistanis and Bengalis. These immigrants, along with the local residents, created a remarkable foundation for the development of this accent.

Researchers R. Barlthrop and J. Wolveridge state that *«Cockney is the language of languages. Any likely word or fragment from another language or jargon is taken into it and given a new lease on life»* [2, p. 33]. Many of the borrowed and incorporated words come from immigrants. Cockneys are quick to add any term to their language that fills a gap or improves upon what they already have. For instance, during periods of economic instability (1914 and 1939), when unemployment was very high and young Cockneys often spent eight to twelve years in the army because it provided food, housing, and a salary, words like *«buckshee»* (meaning *«free»* in the sense of having zero cost) emerged. A vivid example of this word's use is the eponymous poem by the English writer, poet, and magazine editor Ford Madox Ford, known for his novel The Good Soldier. While the poem itself is more romantic than military in style, the author provides his own explanation of the word *«buckshee»* immediately after the title, defining it in his understanding as not only *«free»* but also something *«unexpectedly pleasant»*.

It should be noted that not only different nationalities but also different professions have their own slang, and Cockney has absorbed such words and expressions. For example, butchers were well known for their jargon (*«revil»*, *«tibbar»* and others), and this is where the word *«yob»* (meaning *«boy»*) comes from. Commerce was another sphere from which Cockney drew its vocabulary. Traders and dealers who came to the East End enriched the language and, in turn, borrowed some words from Cockney. For example, fairground slang had a large number of Cockney terms. Fairground auctioneers and Cockney barrow boys (as stall vendors are called) met and mixed at London markets and at gatherings. Here are some examples of words used between these two

groups: *«gelt» (money)*, as most fairground auctioneers were Jewish; *«homey» (man)*; *«gear» (grafter's stock)*, though this meaning later transformed into *«clothing»*; *«bevvy» (drink)*, etc. [2, p.7].

Renowned writers also used the Cockney accent. For instance, Charles Dickens made extensive use of it in his novels and was considered a champion of the poor. However, Dickens was born in Southern England, so he didn't truly encounter the destitute population firsthand. It's worth noting that this upbringing influenced his perception of London's slums, which he described with palpable disgust: *«Darkness had set in; it was a low neighbourhood; no help was near; resistance was useless. In another moment he was dragged into a labyrinth of dark narrow courts, and was forced along them at a pace which rendered the few cries he dared to give utterance to, unintelligible. It was of little moment, indeed, whether they were intelligible or no; for there was nobody to care for them, had they been ever so plain»*. Furthermore, most of Dickens's working-class characters were portrayed as swindlers or drunkards. A striking example is Oliver Twist, the protagonist of the novel by the same name, who is depicted as a poor child gradually drawn into the criminal underworld. Nothing else should be expected, as the author describes the streets of London (the city where the character grows up) from the very beginning of the work as a godforsaken place: *«The mud lay thick upon the stones, and a black mist hung over the streets; the rain fell sluggishly down, and everything felt cold and clammy to the touch. It seemed just the night when it befitted such a being as the Jew to be abroad. As he glided stealthily along, creeping beneath the shelter of the walls and doorways, the hideous old man seemed like some loathsome reptile, engendered in the slime and darkness through which he moved: crawling forth, by night, in search of some rich offal for a meal. He kept on his course, through many winding and narrow ways, until he reached Bethnal Green; then, turning suddenly off to the left, he soon became involved in a maze of the mean and dirty streets which abound in that close and densely-populated quarter»* [3].

Another writer was H. Melville, who visited London and spent time with sailors from the East End. This experience was later reflected in his second novel «Omoo», which features a scene where a Cockney is teased for his manner of speaking. The American historian L. Mumford noted that this novel might be *«the first testimony to the existence of modern Cockney in American literature and, along with London's novels, shows that the interpretations of Dickens and some other authors were simply inaccurate or even fictional distortions»* [2, p. 8].

It should be noted that Cockney is not just an accent, but also refers to the people who come from East London. Traditionally, Cockneys had a strong code of politeness and general respectability. The main words that every child was taught to use were *«lady»* and *«gentleman»*. The term *«lady»* referred to any adult woman for whom there was no reason to show disrespect. The word *«woman»* could be offensive and was used only to address dishonorable or completely unfamiliar women. On the other hand, *«man»* did not have the same offensive connotation when compared to *«gentleman»*. It was used to describe an unsympathetic person, such as a debt collector. East London also had a reputation for being patriotic, but not in the sense of admiring the ruling class (W. Churchill, for example, was deeply unpopular throughout East London). This was due to two main reasons:

1. Their resilience during wartime;
2. The Cockneys' enthusiasm for royal parades and celebrations.

During the war, East London was heavily bombed due to the concentration of industry and docks, and the Cockneys always aimed to put on a brave face and show a good sense of humor [4, p. 22].

At the beginning of the 20th century, a jubilee or a coronation was the only opportunity for the working class to visit the West End. It was also, perhaps, the only chance to see a pageantry and spectacle that would be remembered for a lifetime, and this was enough motivation to support the monarchy. The monarchy put on a good show, and the Cockneys enjoyed it [2, p. 85].

There was also another perspective on what a Cockney was supposed to be. It portrayed the East End as an area full of drunkenness, violence, and crime. It would undoubtedly be strange if there were no signs of such behavior, given that the area lived in poverty and degradation. However, this was not a characteristic feature of a true Cockney. In the past, just as it is now, the East End had both respectability and crime, but at all times, crime concerned only a small minority of the population, as it was and is in many other areas around the world. These two things are not mutually exclusive, but the Cockneys did not support crime for practical rather than moral reasons. Police attention was unwelcome. Cockneys disliked «the law» and believed that being a police officer was a disgusting job, and no decent and civilized person would spy on or inform on others. Cockneys also shared the theory that the legal system supported the upper and privileged classes against the poor. For example, no Cockney would use the affectionate word *«bobby»* to refer to a police officer, as all slang

terms and nicknames for the police were not affectionate. The universal word was *«cooper»*, sometimes *«flat»* (short for *«flatfoot»*) or *«the law»*, and also the somewhat new expression *«the old Bill»*. *«To nick»* means *«to steal»*, while *«lift»* or *«swipe»* are words that provide a clear description of the physical act of stealing.

When it comes to personal matters, Cockneys are very sentimental and open-hearted. They express affection publicly and collectively, especially toward those who have experienced misfortune. On the other hand, it is not considered appropriate to show affection for another person in public. In general, anything that contradicts the behavior of the upper class is accepted as proof of sincerity. «The fear of losing income; a woman's belief that her family would not survive if she wasn't there to do everything for them; a general fear of medical treatment and hospitals - were the main reasons for this feeling» [2, p. 85].

The most important topic among Cockneys was money. Its lack defined life in the East End. During the years of income verification, there were families of more than four people who lived on just thirty-two shillings (£5.00 today) a week. From this significant income, ten or twelve shillings went to rent, which made landlords almost as unpopular as debt collectors. It's no surprise that a whole dictionary of slang terms for money existed. For example, a pound was *«a quid»*, *«a nicker»*, *«an oncer»*, *«a sheet»*; a shilling was *«a bob»*, *«a deaner»*, *«an ogg»*, *«a chip»*, and so on. Along with slang for money, there was, and still is, slang for the lack of it. A person who is short on money is *«down and out»*, *«a bit short»*, *«on the rocks»*, *«on the ribs»*, *«on the floor»*, *«skint»*, *«stony»*, or *«hearts of oak»*. Euphemistically, one could say: *«things are 'a bit humpty' with him»* (also used for a sick person) and in truly desperate need: *«he is 'down on the knucklebones of his arse»* or *«he has only got a tanner between him and the workhouse or Tower Bridge»* (a place for suicide jumps) [2, p. 18].

Today, the social and economic situation in the East End has changed. Three main factors have influenced these changes. Firstly, there was the *«slum clearance» program*, which was part of the post – World War II reconstruction. Due to a housing shortage in the East End after the war, many of its residents were evicted and resettled in areas to the east, either in London suburbs like Barking and Havering, or in newly established towns such as Basildon and Harlow in Essex, and Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire. As a result, the East End's population declined after the war to the point where, in 1981, it was almost a quarter of what it was before the two world wars. Secondly, according to C. Fox, this is linked to the closure of the docks in Tower Hamlets in the 1970s, which led to high unemployment among dockworkers who were forced to seek work elsewhere. Many of them moved with their families to Tilbury, where the only remaining dock was located. In 1981, the government tried to rectify the worsening situation in East London's dock industry, and the Dockland Development Corporation was founded. The area began to thrive, and a new financial center was created. Consequently, many new housing complexes were built in the surrounding areas. These prestigious residential complexes attracted a community that belonged more to the middle class than to the traditional working class with which the area was primarily associated. Thirdly, the cause of social change in the area is the fact that London, and particularly the East End, has long been a point of arrival for many immigrants to Britain. The population growth in the East End since 1981 has largely been due to immigrants from Bangladesh. Bangladeshis now make up about a third of the traditional East End's population and are a significant part of the «new» working class [5, p. 2].

To add to this list of changes, it's worth noting that *«over the last two decades, there has been an increase in smaller immigrant groups from more diverse places of origin, and London is now home to people from at least 179 countries»*. Given the large-scale social changes in the traditional East End, it can be assumed that linguistic changes have also occurred in the area. The Cockney accent, as C. Fox argues, *«can no longer be confined to the area with which it is traditionally associated»* [5, p. 213]. Also, considering that Cockney is seen as more of a class-based than a regional accent, its future depends on whether the community and its culture survive.

Professor of Sociolinguistics P. Kerswill believes that Cockney will disappear from the streets of London within the next 30 years and be replaced by *«Multicultural London English»*, a mixture of Cockney, Bangladeshi, and Caribbean accents [6]. Researcher J. Orr quotes Professor D. Crystal: *«It's entirely possible for Cockney slang to disappear, but its significance indicates that the impulse that made us rhyme words is still with us. I have noticed that a fairly large number of people continue to invent new rhyming slang. Here is an example from the slang of the last 2-3 years: 'he was wearing his Barack Obamas,' where 'Barack Obama' means pajamas»* [7].

Thanks to well-known British TV shows like *«Steptoe and Son»*, *«Minder»*, *«Porridge»*, and *«Only Fools and Horses»*, Cockney has gained a certain popularity in the modern English-speaking world. Since the 1980s, there has been a sharp increase in the popularity of Cockney in Great Britain, accompa-

nied by the emergence of numerous new examples in everyday speech. Attempts were made at a national level to revise the style of language used by teenagers and young people who sought to stand out and emphasize their individuality by inventing new idiomatic expressions. However, there has been no rapid development of Cockney rhyming slang. For example, modern Cockney slang tends only to rhyme words with the names of celebrities or famous people. Obvious examples include the expressions described above: *«Brad Pitt» = «fit», «Al Capone» = «telephone», «Britney Spears» = «beers», «Jackie Chan» = «plan»*, and so on. Very few expressions using other words are emerging. The only such expression that is frequently used is *«Wind and Kite»*, which means *«website».*

Since Cockney is a fascinating part of British culture, it is often used by famous people in everyday conversation. Some of the most famous users of the Cockney dialect include Prince Charles, who famously used the term «apples and pears» in an interview, and actor Hugh Laurie, who often uses slang terms in the popular TV show «House». Many celebrities, including Kate Middleton, David Beckham, Adele, and even Barack Obama, have been known to use Cockney when giving interviews or speeches. While some people may be confused by this pronunciation, it is clear that many famous people enjoy using it as a way to add personality to their public persona. In addition, «some English-speaking actors use a fake Cockney-like accent for a comedic effect, which is quite often called *«mockney»* (from the English *«mock»*)» [8].

Thus, we can see that Cockney holds an important place in the history of the English language and the culture of Londoners. The dialect has undoubtedly left a deep mark on English and, to a moderate extent, continues to contribute to the emergence of new rhyming slang. However, as a result of the migration of Cockney speakers from London, its use has diminished. Researchers are convinced that a monocultural Cockney cannot exist in a multicultural London.

Conclusions. The Cockney dialect is a complex and fascinating linguistic phenomenon that has evolved from being a regional marker of London's East End to a cultural symbol in its own right. As this analysis has shown, its origins are deeply rooted in the area's history as a melting pot of working-class people and immigrants from various parts of England and beyond. This diverse foundation is what gave Cockney its dynamic nature, allowing it to easily absorb new words and phrases from different languages and professional jargons.

Beyond its linguistic features, Cockney embodies a distinct culture with its own set of values and social codes. The traditional Cockney ethos emphasized respectability and politeness, with terms like «lady» and «gentleman» holding significant weight. This cultural identity was also marked by a strong sense of patriotism, which was demonstrated through the community's resilience during wartime and their enthusiasm for royal celebrations—events that offered a rare glimpse into the glamorous world of the West End. At the same time, Cockneys held a deep-seated distrust of the legal system and the police, viewing them as instruments of the upper class. This worldview, shaped by widespread poverty and hardship, is reflected in their rich vocabulary of slang for money and its absence.

The representation of Cockney in literature has been varied, and not always accurate. The dialect is currently facing significant threats to its traditional form. Cockney is increasingly becoming a class-based, rather than a regional, accent. Sociolinguists like Professor Paul Kerswill predict that traditional Cockney may disappear from London within the next 30 years, giving way to «Multicultural London English», a hybrid accent that blends Cockney with accents from immigrant communities.

Despite these changes, the creative impulse that gave rise to Cockney continues to adapt. While the rapid development of new rhyming slang has slowed, modern examples still emerge, often rhyming with the names of celebrities. This suggests that while the dialect's form may be changing, its essence—the ability to innovate and adapt—remains.

In conclusion, the Cockney dialect is a living testament to London's history, reflecting the resilience, humor, and unique culture of its working-class population. Its future is uncertain as the city undergoes profound social and demographic shifts, but its legacy is firmly established in the history of the English language and British culture. Whether it survives as a distinct accent or evolves into a new linguistic form, its contribution to literature, television, and everyday speech will not be forgotten.

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