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VÝZNAM COCKNEY VE VYBRANÝCH BRITSKÝCH FILMECH

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THE ROLE OF COCKNEY IN SELECTED BRITISH FILMS

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ABSTRACT

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The object of this undergraduate thesis is to cover the role of Cockney in British history and mainly in the British cinematography. Furthermore, this thesis should also sum up the basic differences which could be found in comparison with the Standard English. Not only are the differences in vocabulary, grammar and phonetics discussed in this work, but also the social background of Cockney in the historical development of London. Eventually, I have also included a brief summary of the future development of Cockney dialect.

The thesis is divided into two major parts. The first part describes the development of Cockney and it is followed by the depiction of differences in already mentioned grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Moreover, in the vocabulary part, slang which appears in Cockney is studied to further dept, along with Cockney rhyming slang. Examples from publications are given throughout the thesis, to support the studied topics. In the second part of this thesis, there are analysis of British films, dealing with Cockney speech and the social aspect. The films were selected accordingly to their date of publication, as there was an effort to include films from different historical periods of the British cinematography. Moreover, the amount of Cockney expressions played role when choosing the particular films. These expressions served the role as examples for further examination of Cockney dialect. Eventually, all the achieved aims and learned facts are provided in the conclusion part of the thesis. The audio recordings from the films are placed on the CD in the appendix of the thesis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cockney is considered to be a part of London and its history. It is probably no accident that it sprung up in one of the largest cities in the world. This city has always been under major influence by the migrating inhabitants, and only in such an atmosphere can a new dialect evolve and prosper. Whether Cockney is really a dialect or should be considered more as a speech of a social group is a question for prominent world linguists. One thing is for sure, that any dialect cannot be invented over night, thus as Macbride (1910) writes: “they do not come up in a night like mushrooms.” (p. 7).

Mcbride then refers to migrants as people who have been influenced by London, rather than their influencing the London speech. He refers to the greatness of the big cosmopolitan city, which has its fast heartbeat. Nevertheless, as he mentions, Cockney left a mark on London and it became the trademark of city’s speech.

On the other hand, Cockney was labelled as form of speech which was foolish and it was looked down on as inferior. Furthermore, it has been associated with filth and poverty, which was present in the ‘East End’ of London. The term East End itself, which was ‘a creation of the nineteenth century’ (Ackroyd, 2001, p. 675), was sometimes referred to as ‘the abyss’. Ackroyd depicts the slight shift from a region where trade was made and commerce was prosperous, as it came from the river to a place which was steadily becoming industrialised by the mid seventeenth century. As such industries as dye works, chemical works, manure factories, lampblack factories, manufacturers of glue and of paraffin, producers of paint and bonemeal grew, they marked out the East End as a place of labour, and thus of the poor. As Ackroyd notes: “It was the area of London into which more poor people were crammed than any other, and out of that congregation of poverty sprang reports of evil and immorality, of savagery and unnamed vice.” (2001, p. 678). Furthermore, he even mentions the series of murders, which were committed by the famous Jack the Ripper; concluding it with a statement that East End was the ‘Ripper’ itself. Even the famous Czechoslovakian playwright Karel Čapek mentioned his observation in his travel book *‘Anglické listy’* (1924), about East End in the early twentieth century, suggesting: “I have seen worse places. But it is not that. The horrible things in east London is not what can be seen and smelt, but its unbounded and unredeemable extent.” (www.guardian.co.uk).

Nonetheless, as Cockney accent was bombarded by all these negative attributes, it has never disappeared and as Ackroyd (2001) writes:

> "Yet it is still a remarkable record of continuity; native London speech has survived all the incursions of intellectual fashion, educational practice or social disapproval and has managed to retain its vitality after many centuries of growth. Its success reflects, and indeed may even be said to embody, the success of the city itself. Cockney grew, like London, by assimilation; it borrowed other forms of speech, and made them its own." (p. 166)

As Ackroyd further mentions that every city need to have its dark side, even London.

The major purpose of this thesis is to follow Cockney in its development and to track the mark, which it left on the face of the movie industry. Furthermore, with the knowledge of historians and linguists this thesis should sum up the basic grammatical, lexical and phonetic differences in the historical development of this language and in the selected British films. Moreover, it should cover the social aspect, as Cockney concerned especially the lower class.

2. ORIGINS OF THE TERM

2. 1 Historical Background

Cockney has a long history and development throughout the British history. The term Cockney was firstly used around the 14th century in William Langland´s poem, *Piers Plowman* (1362), as 'cokeneyes', which meant small or misshapen eggs. Another example is to be found in Geoffrey Chaucer´s *Canterbury Tales,* specifically in his 'Reeve´s tale', where: "the Reeve uses cokenay in the sense of a mother's darling or milksop." (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 224). During the 16th and 17th century the term slightly narrowed from a meaning person who lives in a larger city, this was brought up by the country folk, to a term which was more specific to one place, and that was 'Bow-bell Cockney'. As Mcarthur states, this happened around 1600 and in the following years a definition was written for this term. The definition was written by John Minsheu in 'The guide into tongues', which was written in 1607:

> "A *Cockney* or *Cockny*, applied only to one borne within the sound of Bow-bell, that is, within the City of London, which tearme came first out of this tale: That a Citizens sonne riding with his father into the Country asked, when he heard a horse neigh, what the horse did his father answered, the horse doth neigh; riding father he heard a cocke crow, and said doth the *cocke neigh* too? and therefore Cockney or Coknie, by inuersion thus: *incock*, q. *incoctus* i. raw or vnripe in Country-means affaires." (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 225)

One interesting fact about this definition is that the term and the Cockneys were then identified as being born within the earshot of 'Bow-Bells'. This meant the bells of St. Mary-le-Bow Church, which is located in Cheapside, East Central London. Nevertheless it might not be true nowadays, because the district around the church is not residential.

The usage of Cockney was widely discussed by John Walker during the 18th century. He was the one to set out the main differences ('faults' as he himself have called them) of other English dialects and during that time, he focused on Cockney and listed the four main differences of this divergent accent. The first of these 'faults' was the pronunciation of words like *fists, posts, wastes* as two syllables. Pronouncing it like there was a /*e*/ sound between the final /*s*/ and the /*t*/. Another fault that he mentioned was the pronunciation of /v/ for /*w/* and

vice versa. This appeared in words like *wine* or *veal*; this made them sounded like *vine* and *weal*. He called this, “a blemish of the first magnitude” (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 225). The third difference of this language was the usage of *h* after *w* in the words like *while*, *where* and *whet*. The last mistake or fault was dropping the *h* in the beginning of words, which is a trademark of Cockney pronouncing *heart* as *eart*. (He also mentioned the opposite case, where *h* is added in the beginning of words to emphasise them, word *arm* sounds like *harm*).

It can be proven that any language or dialect has several layers and that it undergoes some kind of evolution. Summarizing these four mistakes, Crystal (2004) concludes in his book ‘The Stories of English’, that the only one which is still strongly present is the *h* issue. Other differences either disappeared or became a part of the standard accent. He continues, “Curiously, no mention at all is made of the glottal stop” (Crystal, 2004, p. 410).

2. 2 Spreading of Cockney

Cockney underwent some major changes in the 18th century, especially when Samuels Johnson´s Dictionary of English Language was published. It indicated that a decent Londoner or any Englishman should be not only educated, but also articulate in speech. Consequently, Cockney became a dialect of the lowest - the thieves, the working-class and the poorest people in London, and it was looked upon as a negative influence on the language. Considering how Cockney was viewed, it does not come as a surprise that movie directors, centuries later, choose Cockney actors to play almost always villains or negative characters.

Charles Dickens had many characters which were not afraid to speak in Cockney and in his *Pickwick Papers* (1837), he introduced Samuel Weller who called himself Samivel Veller. Walker proved that this *w* for *v* style of speech has existed before Dickens, but it was Dickens who made it to a literary stereotype. Nevertheless, this Sam Weller dialect had disappeared from Cockney throughout its evolution.

In the 20th century Cockney was spread not only by Charles Dickens but also by George Bernard Shaw. These two writers produced characters, which were famous for their Cockney accent. In Shaw´s play *Pygmalion* (1913), in which Cockney is regarded as a ‘gutter language’ or ‘gutter Cockney’, Eliza Doolittle can be seen as a flower girl, who needs help from phonetician Henry Higgins. This play inspired the famous musical My Fair Lady, which was made into a movie as well as Pygmalion, both to be discussed later on. This play suggested that Cockney was a negative aspect of language and that it was spoken only by

uneducated folk on the streets of London. Not only did Shaw write plays he was also, on the BBC committee for pronunciation; he tried to record Cockney on paper and devised "a new alphabet of 40 symbols to cope with all the sound of Standard English." (Wright, 1981, p. 19).

During the twentieth century Cockney spread throughout the London counties, especially thanks to the younger population, although it was still perceived as language which is far removed from Standard English and depicted as the speech of working-class living in the East End of London. As Mcarthur (1981) notes on these viewpoints, "...degrees of Cockneyhood are commonly perceived in the London area, according to such factors as class, social aspirations, locality, and education." (p. 226).

3. COCKNEY AND ITS VOCABULARY

Cockney vocabulary, which is formed by both slang words and borrowed words, grew as London itself. Words from all over Europe, e. g. Dutch, Spanish, Arabic, Italian, French and German, were borrowed and Cockney transformed them into their own. Moreover, Cockney was influenced by the cant of thieves and the argot of prisoners. Not only were these influences the source for the colourful language of Cockneys. London dialect has also taken words and phrases from boxing rings, army, navy and in modern decades from Americanisms. All these influences are a reminder that, as Ackroyd writes, 'the language thrives' (2001, p. 166).

As Wright indicates, some words have been borrowed from the Romany language. There are some words which are used in Romany and supposedly were borrowed by Cockney of unknown origin such as 'cock' or 'bloke', which might come from Dutch or Anglo-Saxon. On the other hand there are words which are true gipsy like 'cosh' (from the word 'koshter', meaning a 'stick') (Trudgill, 1990, p. 113), 'cove' 'dekko' 'lolly' 'pal' (Wright, 1981, p. 27).

Another influence on the Cockney vocabulary was the language of the Jews. The East End was a common destiny for immigrant groups and as Miller (2001) writes in the Los Angles Times: "As it turns out, the population of East London always has been fluid." He describes the immigration of Jews in the 18th and 19th century, and how they settled as market vendors and traders. Their population in East End grew and their language influenced the neighbouring Cockneys. They spoke Yiddish, a mixture of German and Hebrew. To give some examples of this influence, there were words like 'shicksa' (non-Jewish young woman), 'shekels' (coins) or 'bagel' (roll), 'shtook' (financial trouble), 'gelt' (money), which were all from Yiddish or German. (Trudgill, 1990, p. 113). Some words were borrowed, and as Wright pointed out, they were borrowed just because they 'sounded worse'. (1981, p. 42). A word like 'Schmuck!' sounds stronger than any other English equivalents.

Vocabulary differs across generations; the younger generation uses different terms as the older generation, some words come to fashion and some are forgotten. This fact is not unique to Cockney speech; nevertheless the vocabulary of Cockney has changed in the twenty-first century and as Peter Ackroyd states: "There are still speakers of modern or standard Cockney but among younger Londoners it has become milder or at least more subdued" (2001, p. 165). He accredits this change to better formal education and to the general diminution of local or native dialects as a result of mass media communication.

Nevertheless, the slang continues to thrive thanks to television, popular music and cinema, which are the biggest propagators of such slang.

Not only did the vocabulary changed thanks to new words, which were brought to London by overseas immigrants, but also, this changed the Standard English grammar and pronunciation. Therefore, as Wright (1981) mentioned, "...it will be quite clear that to lump all London English speaker irrespective of race, religion and colour into two sharply defined categories of true Cockney and non-Cockney is well-nigh impossible" (p. 46).

Vulgar expressions, according to the discussed films, are used more frequently by Cockney characters; this could be also observed with shortenings and nicknames. Vulgar words like 'bloody' and 'bleedin' are used so extensively that they stop having their initial meaning. Nicknaming is often used to describe people for example 'papper-boy', 'barrer-boy' or 'Danny-boy'. Moreover nicknames for policeman and thieves like 'co(pp)ah' in the older days or 'pigs' and 'fuzz' nowadays and 'muggah' or 'gonov' for thieves. There are also great numbers of names for people in general. Therefore, there are slang words for people like, 'geezer', 'bloke', 'kid', 'tallyman' (Wright, 1981, p. 91). Wright introduces all these words, and all these words can be observed in films. Nevertheless, some of them alter, due to the continuing migration in East End. Several authors even go further to claim, that true Londoners are extinct in terms of their speech. One such author is Craig Taylor (2002), who focused on the overall impression on London and its migration. He claims that: "Over the last decade, the foreign-born population reached 2.6 million, just about a third of the city. In addition to longstanding Irish, Indian, Jamaican and Bangladeshi communities, there are now many new immigrants from Nigeria, Slovenia, Ghana, Vietnam and Somalia." These migration changes influence the vocabulary and the speech of modern East Enders. Nevertheless: "Cockney talk may be based primarily on modified Standard English with a large mixture of slang, but its historical dialect element cannot be ignored." (Wright, 1981, p. 29).

4. COCKNEY SLANG

Slang goes hand in hand with vocabulary in any language; it is a very delicate piece of language and is changing rapidly as people are always trying to come up with new words to substitute for the old expressions. Therefore: “Slang by its very nature is particularly difficult for outsiders to understand” (Wright, 1981, p. 85).

The slang in Cockney could be divided into orthodox Cockney slang, rhyming slang, back slang and other types of slang. Overall, according to Wright, there have been five main sources of Cockney slang.

1. Boxing slang – *‘bread basket’ (stomach), ‘kisser’ (mouth), ‘conk’ or ‘snitch’ (nose), ‘pins’ (legs), ‘hammer’, ‘lick’, ‘paste’, ‘whack’ (words for beating), ‘scrap’ (fight)*
2. Army slang - *‘blotto’ (drunk), ‘buckshee’ (free), ‘jerry’ (German), ‘muck in’ (to share), ‘scrounge’ (to steal)*
3. Nautical language - *‘rope in’ (to include), ‘shove yer oar in’ (to interfere), ‘shove awf’ (go away), ‘mate’ (friend)*
4. Thieves language – *a lot of slang for steal (‘nick’, ‘lift’, ‘pinch’), swindle (‘chisel’), catch (‘nab’),* also words like: *‘nark’ (spy),* or *‘rum’ (strange);* it goes hand in hand with the prison dialect
5. American slang - *‘bunk’ (nonsense), ‘boy-friend’ and ‘girl-friend’, ‘wise-guy’, ‘poor sucker’ (dupe), ‘a goner’ (dead man), ‘phoney crook’ (false villain)*
   (Wright, 1981, p. 87-88)

The slang words, which include many words from Romany, Yiddish, euphemisms, slang brought by Asian cultures, abbreviations, and other words which are considered to belong to this category, make the face of Cockney and it is particularly these words which make this dialect interesting.

All of these and much more illustrates the diversity and the evolvement of slang words within a dialect. But maybe the most famous and discussed slang in Cockney is the rhyming slang.

4.1 Rhyming Slang and other coded language

This type of speech is very specific for London and its roots are deep in its history. The slang possibly originated in the 18th century amongst the thieves' culture. It was thieves' cant, which might have been used to prevent others from understanding the language. The history is unclear though and it has never been fully widespread to be called a code in its full right. As McArthur writes: "If it was once so used by traders, entertainers, thieves, and others, the secret has been well kept" (1992, p. 227). Wright on the other hand states that the rhyming slang was born from the navvies' language, which was then taken over by thieves. He also gives few examples of different users of this slang, such as, bricklayers or beggars. Nevertheless, the association with thieves is the most common.

Rhyming slang is not only used in London, but all over Britain, there are forms of this slang even in USA and Australia. It became widespread after the 1930s and after the Second World War it was exploited by media and television.

Cockney rhyming slang could be described as a word-play which consists of two or sometimes more words which rhyme with the word which is being conveyed. Moreover, there is also a provocative social aspect, which could describe the word. Rhyming slang like: 'artful dodger', which stands for lodger; or 'trouble and strife', which stands for wife. (Wright, 1981, p. 97). These examples show the social aspect of rhyming slang; therefore, it could be said, that every marriage could bring trouble and strife.

Cockney speech could be described as fast, short and hard to understand for a foreigner. Contradictory to this is the rhyming slang, which tends to make the speech impossible to understand and also makes it longer and more complicated. The speaker must use wit and quick agile thinking. One example containing these attributes is given by Wright (1981). Nevertheless to understand this example there should be given a translation first:

> "I got up, put on my vest, pants, shirt, tie and my best suit. I had a shave and went down the stairs, grabbed some bread and cheese. Then I left the old house and went up the road to catch the bus."

This sentence makes complete sense and it could be understood by almost every English speaking person. On the other hand in Cockney rhyming slang it would sound like this:

> “I got up, put on mi *east an’ west*, *fleas an’ ants*, *Dicky Dirt*, *fourth of July*, an’ mi best *whistle an’ flute*. I ’ad a *dig in the grave* and went dahn the *apples an’ pears*, grabbed some *needle an’ thread* and *bended knees*. Then I left the ol’ cat *an’ mahs* and went up the *frog an’ toad* to catch the *swear an’ cuss*.” (p. 100)

This example proves how hard it is to understand to an experienced Cockney Rhyming slang speaker. Mastering such slang is not easy, yet that is just that thing, which makes it fun and popular amongst people. Rhyming slang’s popularity was not only achieved by the fact it is a coded, hard-to-understand language, but also by its ability to function as a brain teaser. Some of these rhyming words are sufficiently popular, to have become rooted in informal British English; for instance, expressions like ‘cobblers’ or ‘butchers’ are used in everyday normal speech by both Cockney and non-Cockney speakers. (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 227).

Rhyming expressions which are used for one particular word might have numerous alternatives. Therefore, there could be several expressions for one word, e. g. the word ‘beer’ could be expressed as, ‘pigs ear’; ‘Cherlie Freer’; ‘red steer’ (Wright, 1981, p. 99). The slang is not always two words but the truest orthodox rhyming slang has only two stressed syllables. This makes it easier to remember thus repeating it in the future. It could be said, that stress and alliteration is remembered easier than rhyme itself. Therefore words like: ‘Jem Mace’ (face); ‘pot and pan’ (old man), are much likely to be remembered than words, which might not even rhyme. (Wright, 1981, p. 98).

Actually, some of the older Cockney rhyming slang did not rhyme. However, the expressions rhymed to a Cockney speaker. The pronunciation differed from the standard accent of that time; therefore, such word as ‘Charing Craws’ for ‘horse’ were pronounced with an /*aw*/ sound.

Cockney rhyming slang could be shortened and become even harder to understand. This shortening is generally preferred by many Cockney speakers. The shortened version of rhyming slang would sound like the above mentioned ‘cobblers’, derived from ‘cobblers awls’, meaning ‘balls’ (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 227). This short version of rhyming slang is easier to pronounce and it reduces the time of speaking. Cockney speakers would use the whole expressions to emphasise their statements. Nevertheless, there is a group of words which cannot be shortened; these are names, e. g. ‘Aunt Maria’ (fire), ‘Uncle Willy’ (silly) (Wright, 1981, p. 107).

Cockney rhyming slang is not the only one which is being used in London and its surroundings. There are several other types of coded language to which bingo rhyming slang or back slang belong.

Bingo rhyming slang is nothing more than rhyming slang, which is used to describe numbers, as the name ‘bingo’ suggests. Furthermore the same rules are applied as in regular rhyming slang, e. g. ‘buttered scone’ (1); ‘me and you’ (2); ‘you and me’ (3); ‘door to door’ (4), etc.. (Wright, 1981, p. 109). Nevertheless, there is not a complete set of numbers in bingo rhyming slang.

Back slang is a much more difficult system to understand to. This slang could be divided into two partial back slang and full back slang. The partial back slang uses expressions where the word’s first letter is put after the rest of the word and an extra syllable is added. If the sound *–ay* is added to a word ‘Watch!’, it becomes ‘Otchway!’ (Wright, 1981, p. 110).

Full back slang, on the other hand, uses words which are pronounced completely back to front, e. g. ‘yob’ for boy, and ‘talf’ for flat. (Wright, 1981, p. 110). Wright continues and suggests that this particular type of slang have originated at Billingsgate fish-market. It was the speech of market porters, costermongers, butchers and other local food traders. The reason for this language was probably entrenched in the protection of the business provider in order to communicate over the head of the customer.

5. GRAMMAR

5. 1 General overview

Wright notes that: "Cockney is being often accused of having 'no grammar'" (1981, p. 114). This statement could not be entirely true. Every spoken language, whether it is a proper language or only a dialect, needs to have grammar. Therefore, the absence of proper grammar in Cockney, as well as in many dialects, indicates a certain lower social status. There are some specific differences in Cockney grammar which could be investigated in greater depth.

For the most part Cockney obeys the structure of sentences and the word-order. Nevertheless, the emphasis of some words may cause distress for an inexperienced listener. Some words tend to pop up due to this emphasis, e. g.: 'A ree-u (real) beauty it was.' (Wright, 1981, p. 114). Furthermore, Cockney tends to omit words rather than let some words to be added. Wright gives some examples: 'Tha' i', love?' (Is that it, love?) or 'Ah far yer (you are) goin', gel?' (p. 115). Also there is no distinction to be made, as far as part of speech goes, between Standard English and Cockney. Thence both of these have the same parts of speech.

5. 2 Nouns

In Cockney nouns have differences in the pronunciation of endings. Therefore, if a Cockney uses words ending in *st*, he will make an additional vowel after this sound, thus making word like 'posts' sound like 'postes'. One common feature, is the unchanged ending after plural numbers; as in words like: 'three mile', 'dis last free week' (Wright, 1981, p. 115).

The nouns in Cockney might be considered as vivid and descriptive, especially when dealing with compound nouns, which are used with certain fondness. This type of speech, using compound words, is quite popular in the chosen films (such as *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; Snatch; Football Factory, etc*...). Therefore, words for persons, nicknames could be heard more frequently, than the names themselves. Although, this feature is not unique to Cockney accent, Cockney speakers often incorporate them in their speech. Words like: 'News-boy', 'papper-lad', 'barrer-boy', could be heard for men and their profession, as for their attitudes: 'know-all', 'clever-britches' (p. 115).

5. 3 Pronouns

Firstly, when dealing with personal pronouns in Cockney, there is a slight difference in putting the accusative form for the subject of a sentence. E. g.: ‘Me and mi brovver was born ’ere’ (Wright, 1981, p. 116). Nevertheless, this feature appears in other dialects as well as in Cockney. Secondly, *us* is sometimes used for *me,* which is similar to the royal *we* for *I*. Hyper-correction, which can also occur in Cockney, is a correction of *me* to *I*. Therefore if it is overused it could lead to sentences, which are sounding to correct: ‘Between you and I’; or ‘I´ve told you about my brother and I’. Sometimes the personal pronoun may even appear twice. Therefore using ‘he’ and ‘she’ more than once, thus: ‘’E´s a right layabaht, ’im’(Wright, 1981, p. 116)

Relative pronouns are frequently misused, especially *what*, which could stand for *who(m)* or *which*. E. g.: ‘Im what´s talkin (He who is talking)’; ‘a chap what I noo (whom I knew)’; ‘E´re´s somefink what´ll ’elp yer (something which)’. Also relative *as* which is used instead of *which* could be found in Cockney speech, thus: ‘that noise as (which) you ’eard’ (Wright, 1981, p. 116).

Possessive pronouns as *yours, hers, his, ours, theirs* might occur with an ending *–n*. This feature was typical in East Midland dialects and it could be heard in Cockney as well. To give some example: ‘It´s not yourn, it´s ourn.’; and as Wright comments on this feature: “...errors of pronunciation and improper expressions used frequently and chiefly by the inhabitants of London” (p. 117). Also the pronouns ending in *–self* also differ in Cockney speech. There are forms like *myself, theirselves and ’isself.* All these have been used by Dickens in his books. These words can be used in two ways. Firstly, as emphatic pronouns for stress, such as: ‘She told me so ´erself’. Secondly, as reflexive pronouns, thus: ‘Yer´ve cut yerself shavin’’ (Wright, p. 117). Another abnormality of some similar pronouns can appear in words like ‘each other’. Therefore ‘*one annover*’*,* which can be heard mutually with singular form for plural, such as: ‘Be´ave yerself (yourselves)’ (Wright, p. 117).

The indefinite pronoun does not differ from the Standard English in grammar as in pronunciation. ‘Nothing’ becomes ‘*noffink*’ and ‘something’ is pronounced as ‘*somefink*’ or sometimes the letters in the middle are swallowed.

Demonstratives might include *this* which is used for pointing out something which is not yet been specified. However this is practiced mainly by the younger generation, e. g.: ‘We went to this show’ (Wright, p. 117). A more common element is the usage of *them* for *those* as in ‘them books’.

5. 4 Verbs

There are several irregular features of Cockney verbs. The most ear-striking element, which is the *–s* ending, could appear in normal present tense conversation, e. g.: ‘They keeps stoppin’, or ‘I lives in Stepney’ (Wright, p. 118), though according to Wright this practice is dying out rapidly. Given the publication date of Wrights book the assumption could be made that this feature is now almost dead.

Sometimes the change of plural and singular is also present in Cockney speech. Therefore the mixture of the singular *is* for the plural *are*, or the singular *was* for the plural *were*. This feature can also occur in reverse. There are plural verbs which are changed to singular forms; an example could be given from the film *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*: “Right, where was we?” (Ritchie, 1998).

5. 4. 1 Past tenses and past participles

Cockney speech uses a considerable number of irregular past tenses and past participles. E. g.: ‘I know ’e done it’ (Wright, p. 118). This example shows a contradiction; it is not clear whether the sentence contains a genuine past or if there should be an *´s* after *he*. Also many of the Cockney verbal parts, such as ‘growed’, ‘knowed’, ‘throwed’, which were originally strong verbs have become simple by adding *–ed*. Cockney, however, makes some past tenses and past participles which are not even used in Standard English, e. g.: ‘builded (built)’, ‘drahnded (drowned)’ (Wright, p. 118).

Cockneys tend to mix past tenses and past participles. Moreover they tend to mix more tenses together, when speaking about historical events in present tense: “I sees (saw) this feller, so I goes (went) up to ’im an’ I tells (told) ’im, an’ ’e turns (turned) rahnd an’ says (said)...” (Wright, p. 120). A repetition of the word *to say* could be observed in the given example. This shows the Cockney speakers use repetition not only when using tag questions.

5. 4. 2 Auxiliary verbs

In auxiliary verbs there occurs another type of repetition and that is with the personal pronoun, e. g. ‘E says to me, ’e says’; or ‘Took me for a porter, he did.’ (Wright, p. 120). This repetition was popular during the early days of Cockney, yet it can still be heard nowadays.

Another famous feature of Cockney is the phrase *ain’t.* This could be called the shortening of an auxiliary verb. It could be used both, before the main verb or as an enclitically ending tagged to the sentence. This shortening came from *am not* which became

ant and *aint*. There are different forms of this expression such as ‘innit’ or ‘ennit’. More auxiliary verbs are shortened in Cockney speech, words like, ‘Wonn it? (wasn´t it?)’; ‘Wun it? (wouldn´t it?)’; ‘Don it? (Don´t = Doesn´t it?) ’ (Wright, p. 120). All these auxiliary verbs are used in tag-questions on which the listener can not find an answer. Moreover these tag-questions are used to grab the listener and to force him to listen. These shortenings could be compared to expressions as *you see* or *you know*.

5. 4. 3 Other verb differences

The first difference is the subjunctive, which is not present in Cockney speech after *if*, e. g. ‘If I was you, I´d hop it (run away)’. In Standard English, instead of the expression ‘was’, ‘were’ would be used in the case of second conditional.

The second difference would be the strong stress which could disorder the verbs in a sentence. Expressions like, ‘There had use to be...’, which should be ‘there used to be’. This example shows the non-standard choice of verbs, which may cause confusion when listening to a Cockney speaker.

5. 5 Adjectives and Adverbs

Double comparatives appear in adjectives occasionally. Nevertheless this change happens in most English dialects. There are expressions as ‘more safer’ or ‘more faster’; moreover, adjectives which are redundant appear, as ‘a great big’.

An element which occurs in Cockney and which could be considered as ‘parasitic’ is the multiplication of negatives. This is called double negation and it is not only typical for Cockney, yet extensively used. However, this effect of using more than one *no* does not mean a definite *yes*, it just intensifies the negation. Multiplication of negatives as Wright quotes has been used by G. Chaucer, who lived in London, in his *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*:

> “*He never yet no villainie ne’er said*
> *In al his life, unto no maner wight (no kind of person).*” (p. 122)

Double negation is not only used by Chaucer, it was also reported in works from Ascham, Shakespeare and Pope. Nevertheless, double negatives are also used in modern Cockney, e. g. ‘I ain´t got none’; ‘I never done it nowhow’. There can even be examples of a triple negative such as: ‘We wouldn´t never let ’im, not on yer life.’ (Wright, p. 122).

Intensifiers are used in Cockney with intensity. Several intensifying words for 'very' are commonly used in Cockney; thus words like 'ree-u (real, very)', 'It´s a tidy good (very long) way to walk', etc... (Wright, p. 123).

My further research into British films, especially ones dealing with thieving life and crime in London, proved the usage of swear adjectives. The directors might use these words to sharpen the language and situations. It is a tool which has been used for ages and as nytimes.com writes in their article *'Almost Before We Spoke, We Swore'*, swearing is a psychological natural reaction. (Angier, 2005). Usage of such adjectives is ineffective nowadays for most of these expressions lost their original meaning thanks to its overusing. There were examples already used in the previous chapter and many more will be given in the next one when talking about films.

5. 6 Conjunctions

The conjunction which is used in a different way in Cockney is 'than', which becomes shortened to *an* and it could even become *nor*. E. g.: 'owder an (older than) me'; 'worse nor (than) that' (Wright, p. 123).

5. 7 Prepositions and Exclamations

The most characteristic preposition of not only Cockney, but the South-East parts is *awf of* meaning *off*. This is used to strengthen the position of the word, e. g. 'Get awf of the bus.' (Wright, p. 124).

There is also a mix-up with prepositions like *to* and *at*, which are often dropped in relation to places. E. g. 'I´m going down (to) the pub'; 'He´s round (at) his mate´s.' (McArthur, p. 226).

Exclamations, which are mostly represented by shouts and swear words, are commonly used almost in every dialect and language. Therefore, Cockney has no differences in such words, thus: 'Cor'!; 'Gawd'!; 'Oi'!

6. THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COCKNEY

The way in which humans speak usually conveys socially important information. There can be made some major social prejudice which can influence thoughts just from the way someone speaks. In 1972 Labov introduced the term ‘linguistic insecurity’, which basically meant: “some people who are socially subordinate think they speak badly” (Hudson, 1996, p. 210). The study, of pupils in the East End suburb of Newham by Greg Smith (1979), evaluated the importance of self-belief based on language and accent. The test consisted of taped voices and their evaluation. Cockney and other standard accents were compared and as a result the Cockney recorded voices of the pupils received mostly negative evaluations, while the recorded voices of pupils with standard-accents received positive ones. The test was concentrating on such stereotypes as friendliness, intelligence, kindness, hard-work, good looks, cleanliness or honesty. Furthermore, this evaluation proved quite shocking, because of the pupils giving negative attributes to their own accent. This showed that the self-image is being influenced highly by the way people speak.

Cockney as a trademark dialect of East End Londoners has been under some negative criticism from not only the upper-class folk living in London. The research, revealed more negative attributes than positive ones. Cockney was compared by Wright (1981): “with the dreadful sameness of the housing projects and towering office blocks in London”. (p. 142). Wright thus compared Cockney speech to the monotonous London housing and landscape. This negative picture of the East End might come from the historical development around the Thames River, as Ackroyd suggests: “There is one interesting and significant feature of the eastern area which suggests a living tradition stretching back beyond the time of the Romans. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was found evidence of a great ‘wall’...” (2001, p. 675). He then explains how this wall’s function was to protect the land from the tidal river. Apparently, this became the historical landmark which separated East End from London. The industrial change which occurred on the banks of the Thames River made it into a place of shipping and labour. Even George Orwell noticed the poverty of East End and described it as: “quieter and drearier than the equivalent poor areas of Paris.” (Ackroyd, 2001, p. 681).

Perhaps all these historical events and prejudices against eastern Londoners gave birth to the phenomenon of Cockney. The creation of a Cockney stereotype as being chirpy and lively can in some measure be ascribed to the music halls. Ackroyd describes them as places

of violent delight as well as roughness and coarseness, most of them being located in the East End parts of London. The music halls represented the East End area in the nineteenth century. This time period could also be associated with Cockney humour, which is considered to be consisting mostly of beggar implicitly mocking the gentleman. This parody type of humour is most common to be associated with Cockney.

Cockney was influenced by the constant migration of people in East End. In the 20th century, especially after World War II, the East End population was offered new housing in the suburbs by the government. This offer was embraced by many cockneys and the movement gave chance to new immigrants. Henceforth, as Miller (2001) claims, the area of the docks and the industries were closed and the shift from London's industry to commerce began until the government began to develop the docklands section in the 1980s. As the author continues, just then the markets, which were previously Jewish, became Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani. Still the transformation of Cockney speech continues and also is being influenced by more migrants coming to London. As various sources claim, Cockney may not be considered as a trademark of Londoners in the future. The *Daily Mail* (2010) wrote:

> "For ever-increasing numbers of people in the capital are speaking what linguists have dubbed multicultural London English – or 'Jafaican'. Experts say the new hybrid speech, created by successive waves of immigration, is a mixture of Cockney combined with Bangladeshi, African and West Indian..."

To support their claims, they use the words of a professor of sociolinguistics Paul Kerswill who adds: "People in their 40s will be the last generation to speak it and it will be gone within 30 years." By this he means gone form London because his studies of Cockney speech are showing a slight movement of Cockney to Essex and Hertfordshire.

7. PRONUNCIATION

Cockney pronunciation is fascinating and has some features which are distinct from other dialects. The most common of these is the /*f*/ and /*v*/ sound, which is used instead of /Ɵ/ and /ð/. Another feature would be the 'h-dropping', which is used in many varieties of English in England. A third example would be 'diphthongs'. As Mcarthur (1992) mentions in his book, Cockney uses elongated diphthongs in the vowel sounds, e. g. 'daownt', which should stand for 'don't' (p. 226). All the distinctive diphthongs include /əi/ for /i:/ (beet, seat); /ai/ for /ei/ (fate, great); /oi/ for /ai/ (high, why) and also the /a/ sound and /au/ sound (about, thousand). (Mcarthur, 1992, p. 226). The fourth feature of Cockney pronunciation is the 'glottal stop', which is going to be described in the next chapter. The last two most distinctive features of cockney pronunciation, according to Mcarthur, are the 'linking R' and the 'syllable final L', which is vocalised as /w/ sounds. Examples of these features and more of these differences will be given in the following practical part about British cinematography.

7. 1 Glottal stop

The glottal stop is one of the most recognized features of a regional accent. This phenomenon could be heard all over the English speaking world. The term, 'glottal stop', describes both the location of the sound in the vocal tract and the type of sound it is. Therefore, the sound originates by stopping the out coming stream of air from lungs. 'Glottis' is the space between the vocal cords, which is located behind the Adam's apple in the throat. The 'stop' is a sound, which is made when two vocal organs come tightly together and then releasing them, we can hear this sound when pronouncing /p/ or /b/.

Nevertheless, this feature is used quickly and often, that it is not easily noticeable. Glottal stop could be mostly spotted in the pronunciation of /t/. Hence it is sometimes characterized as leaving out the 'ts'. The /t/ sound is actually not omitted; it is just replaced with the 'air stopping sound'. In words such as: 'better', 'water', 'what', we get 'be'er', 'wa'er' and 'wha' (Trudgill, 1990, p. 74)'. It could stand in the middle of the word but also at the end.

Such an element as a glottal stop substitutes the sound (consonant), but sometimes it could function as reinforcement of the sound. Words ending with a sound like /t/, /k/, /p/, or /tf/, will be often heard with a glottal reinforcement of the final consonant, e. g. hot - /ho't/. For example this feature is noticeable with the Geordie accent in Newcastle.

Moreover, the glottal stop has no ordinary spelling; there is no letter of the alphabet to describe it. Therefore, a symbol is used instead: [ʔ]. This 'question mark like' symbol is sometimes substituted with an actual question mark [?].

The glottal stop has deep roots in the English language, and it has even gone into Received Pronunciation. There are other aspects, such as the pronunciation of the voiced and voiceless sound of /th/, which are interconnected with glottal stops, and could be also commonly heard in the speech of not only Cockney speakers.

Unvoiced /th/ sound becomes /f/ and the voiced one becomes /v/, e. g. 'fanks (thanks)'; 'I fought (I thought)'; 'bof fings (both things)'; 'me ovver brovver (my other brother)'; (Wright, 1981, p. 137). These examples occur with many English speakers, and they are very common in London speech. Particularly this feature can be heard in the speech of the younger generation, hand in hand with the poor pronunciation of short useful words such as: the, this, that, these, those, etc… For example 'this' could be sometimes pronounced as 'dis' or 'vis'.

7. 3 Speed of talk

Cockney speech does not only differ in vocabulary, grammar or phonetics. It is also known for its speech speed, which is quite fast. This leads to a certain 'stereotyping' and it makes Cockney speakers look interesting and amusing. (Trudgill, 1990, p. 14). On the other hand, the hard understanding makes it annoying for some and Cockneys might be viewed as arrogant and dominant in speech. "East Anglians are correspondingly perceived by Londoners as being taciturn and unfriendly." (Trudgill, 1990, p. 14). In the following section about films this fast pace of speech is often observed with certain Cockney Characters.

8. COCKNEY IN FILMS

8. 1 Pygmalion and My Fair Lady

Pygmalion was shot about 25 years earlier than My Fair Lady, yet both films are based on the same storyline of a play written by G. B. Shaw. While Pygmalion (the movie from 1938), had its screenplay written by Shaw himself, My Fair Lady, was based on his book and made into a musical. Furthermore, from this musical and partially from the script of Pygmalion a movie version of My Fair Lady appeared in 1964.

Pygmalion, which is older, had its share of critical successes. It was filmed by Anthony Asquith with the help of Leslie Howard (who also played Henry Higgins). Despite the movie being older it does not lack quality. The script for My Fair Lady which came from Pygmalion does not differ in many details, apart from the songs.

Surprisingly, both female actors, Wendy Hiller (Cheshire) and Audrey Hepburn (Brussels), are not born in London, thus Cockney. They are both trying to achieve a Cockney accent during their Pygmalion/My Fair Lady performance. Hepburn, a Hollywood star by the time of My Fair Lady, does not actually sing in the movie, nevertheless, she speaks the Cockney accent on her own. From my point of view Wendy Hiller is better in her Cockney accent and her Cockney personification of a poor flower girl (Appendix – CD, track 1). The colour of her voice was more believable, Hepburn on the other hand sounded more posh. Therefore, Hepburn depicts a better transformation from a gutter Cockney girl into a refined lady, due to her skill to act and talk more like a lady, rather than Hiller.

Eliza Doolittle is a famous Cockney character, with her, as Henry Higgins says: "deliciously low speech". To complete her transformation from a 'guttersnipe', she has to overcome her Cockney pronunciation, in order to become a lady. Eliza pronounces some vowels, diphthongs and consonants in a different way, e. g. the sound in the word Captain of /ae/ is closer to /e/ in 'Cheer up, *Captain*, buy a flower off a poor girl.'[1] Another such difference would be the sound /æ/ instead of /i/ in words as 'lady' or 'pay'. Moreover, Eliza's consonant /Ɵ/ is sometimes heard as /f/, e. g.: "But I ain't done noffink (nothing) wrong by speakin' to the gentleman!"[2] Furthermore, the *–ing* ending is often heard without the /g/ sound making it sound *–in'*. The last sound is swallowed so words as going and paying are pronounced as 'gowin' and 'payin'. Also glottal stops appear, both in the end of words (but,

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[1] 00:06:23, (Howard, Asquith, 1938)

[2] 00:06:50, (Howard, Asquith, 1938)

what), but also in the middle of words such as Buckingham Palace, which becomes 'Bucknam Pelis' in Eliza's speech. Missing /h/ sound in the beginning of words is omitted in her speech. The pronunciation of 'aitches' (/h/) at the beginning of words is often omitted by Eliza. This phenomenon of h-dropping is shown in the scene, where Eliza learns how to pronounce them. Henry Higgins gives her an example sentence: "In Hartford, Hereford and Hampshire hurricanes hardly ever happen." However, what Eliza produces sounds as following: "In 'artford, 'ereford and 'ampshire 'urricanes 'ardly hever 'appen."[3] Not only she misses all the /h/ sounds, she even ads an /h/ in front of ever, which could be observed sometimes with Cockney speakers. Nevertheless, this only appears in My Fair Lady version, in Pygmalion the h-dropping is present only with the last three words. In My Fair Lady this effect is emphasised possibly for its theatrical script. (Appendix – CD, track 2)

Not only are these differences in pronunciation made by Eliza Doolittle, also grammar differences, which are made, are typical of Cockney. One of the most common in her speech is the use of double negative and the form *ain't*, with which it is often accompanied. *Ain't,* which could stand for 'are not', 'is not' or 'am not', could also stand for the auxiliary verb *have*, this example was already given in the pronunciation part: "I ain't done nothing wrong...". Very common is the auxiliary *have* omitted in present perfect tense, which results in such sentences as: "I always been a good girl, I 'ave."[4] This shows not only the auxiliary *have* problem, but also the repetition, which is used vigorously by Eliza. A scene showing more grammatical difficulties was found after hour and a half of the movie. In this scene, where Eliza is tested on her reformed language skills in front of Henry's mother, few slang words and grammatical anomalies could be heard. Her pronunciation is no longer a problem; nevertheless, she still uses slang vocabulary and ungrammatical expressions, e. g.: "Them what pinched it, done her in."[5] This example shows more than one non-standard feature. Firstly, the demonstrative pronoun *them* should be *those*, and the word *what* should be *who;* hence 'those who' instead of 'them what'. Secondly the word phrase 'pinched it' is a slang form for 'to steal'. Thirdly the expression 'done her in', which is also from slang, should stand for 'do somebody in', which means 'to kill somebody'.

Cockney is seen in these two similar films as the language of the poor, especially thanks to the character of Henry Higgins, who gave Cockney most negative nicknames. Such

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[3] 01:05:20-23, (Cukor, 1964)

[4] 00:37:18, (Cukor, 1964)

[5] 00:44:56, (Howard, Asquith, 1938)

expressions such as: “You incarnate insult to the English language!”[6], give an idea how important speech was in London, and how a person was looked down upon if she did not know proper English. The works of Shaw’s generation were more concerned with polite proper English as the medium of enlightenment. Thus as Ackroyd (2001) writes*:* “in that context the Cockney accent becomes absurd, and deplorable.” (p. 163), he then continues: “Since ‘London English’ had become the standard of ‘proper’ English, so in turn the native dialect of London was all the more strongly condemned. It became the mark of error and vulgarity.” (p. 163).

Lastly, a difference in these two films could be seen in the scene where Higgins presents Doolittle to his mother. The scene ends with Eliza (in *Pygmalion*) using the expression: “Not *bloody* likely. I’m taking a taxi.”, which could be considered offensive in those days. Nevertheless, as Howse (2012) writes: “when the film *My Fair Lady* came out, ‘bloody’ would do the trick”; therefore, she used the expression: “Move your bloomin’ *arse*!”

8. 2 Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels and Snatch

These two motion pictures are both from a criminal environment. Both revolve around money, drugs, stealing, guns and especially violence. Moreover, these two films show the criminal underworld activities in London. Both are directed by Guy Ritchie, a famous film maker and Cockney propagator.

8.2.1 Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels

The film turns around four friends, living in East End London, trying to sell stolen goods to ear some money. They enter a secret high-stake game of poker, where one of them, Eddie (Nick Moran), who could be called the main actor of the movie, loses half a million pounds to a crime boss called Hatchet Harry (P. H. Moriarity). The film then goes on to reveal more gangster groups trying to steal from one another, creating confusion until the final scene, where all groups interfere with each other in the final “shootout”. Guy Ritchie found some new actors for this film. Additionally, he even found real criminals which he cast in his movie. In his search for actors, Guy Ritchie managed to find Jason Statham (nowadays a famous actor), Sting (famous pop singer) and Vinnie Jones a famous ex-football player.

[6] 00:13:16, (Cukor, 1964)

Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels is a movie which is primarily aimed at younger male audience. This could be supported by the fact that there are not many female characters in 'Lock Stock'. Actually, there are only three females throughout the film, one being the dealer of the poker game, the second a pole dancer/stripper and the third a girl who is high on drugs and therefore, just lying numb on the sofa. This fact only supports the appeal of young men towards the movie.

The Cockney accent is strong in this movie, almost every actor uses Cockney speech and pronunciation. Jason Statham (Appendix – CD, track 3), who plays the role of Bacon, a little thief, who is selling stolen items in the first scene of the movie, uses expressions which are trademarks of Cockney pronunciation, e. g. he pronounces 'right' as 'roight[7]'. In Cockney this sound /i/ almost becomes an /oi/ sound, amongst the long vowels this is the most noticeable feature of Cockney speech, it is called diphthongization of /i:/ which becomes /əi/. Another example of a difference amongst the consonants, which is also most noticeable, is the omission of /*h*/ and also the replacement of /Ɵ; ð/, the 'th' sound, by /f;v/ sound.

Example of /h/ omission: "if you can't see value *'ere* (here) today"[8]; "standing out there like 1:00 *'alf* (half) struck"[9]; "*'Atchet 'Arry* (Hatchet Harry)"[10].

Examples of the 'th' consonant replacement: "Well, *brovver* (brother), *movver* (mother), any *ovver* (other) sucker"[11]; "I don't normally *'ave* (have) *anyffink* (anything) to do *wiff* (with) weed."[12]

Another Cockney feature, which could be observed in Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels, is the glottal stop. As Jason Statham is considered (by me), as the most Cockney in the whole movie, hence his expression: "He then proceeded to ba[tt]er poor Smiffy to deaff wivv i[t]'"[13]. Example of the glottal stop in 'batter' is used so strongly that the /t/ sound is not heard at all. Also the ending 'it' has a reduced /t/ sound, which makes it hard to understand to if it is used in the middle of the sentence.

The vocabulary of the film is nasty, vulgar and untidy. Apart from the rude vocabulary, Cockney Rhyming slang occasionally appears. Not all the words are coarse

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[7] 00:00:43, (Ritchie, 1998)

[8] 00:00:49, (Ritchie, 1998)

[9] 00:01:43, (Ritchie, 1998)

[10] 00:06:52, (Ritchie, 1998)

[11] 00:42:06, (Ritchie, 1998)

[12] 00:43:37, (Ritchie, 1998)

[13] 00:32:30, (Ritchie, 1998)

words, but just for illustration the 'f word' appears 125 times throughout the movie. Even the film is shot in such a fashion that it appears dirty and vulgar; not even mentioning the actions of the main character which are definitely not legitimate. Not all words are rude though, some appear more than once, such as 'geezer' or 'cozzers' (police officers, from the Hebrew 'chazer', which means pig), which are commonly used in Cockney slang.

Also the usage of slang for numbers associated with money is used in the film. Words such as 'nine hundred *nicker'*[14] (money); 'a *ton'*[15] (hundred pounds); '3,5 *grand* a key'[16] (3,5 thousand pounds a kilo); or 'over a *monkey'*[17] (over 500 pounds).

Some expressions in the film are in contradiction with Standard English grammar. For example: "Right, where *was* (were) we?"[18] 'Were' should be used, because the 2nd person singular form of the verb 'to be', has to be in the form of 'were' and not 'was'. Another expression which has debased grammar: "*Give us it here*, dozy bastard."[19] In this example an individual speaks to a group of people. Nevertheless, he uses 'us' instead of 'me'. Moreover, the position of direct and indirect object is switched (us = indirect object; it = direct object). There is also an ellipsis of 'to'. If corrected the phrase should be, 'Give it to me.' Another anomaly would be shortening such as: "...and you *give i' 'em*"[20] The end of the sentence should sound 'give it to them'; therefore an ellipsis of 'to' can be observed again. The whole expression is shortened in pronunciation, the ending in the pronoun 'it' has a swallowed /t/ sound and the beginning of the word 'them' has the /th/ sound left out.

An important scene for Cockney rhyming slang in this movie is a scene where actor Danny John-Jules tells Tom (Jason Flemyng) about the major character Rory Breaker, a gang leader. This scene has just over one minute; nevertheless, there are several examples of rhyming slang in it. Moreover, the speech of John-Jules is fast, which underlines the effect of Cockney rhyming slang. The whole scene according to original subtitles sounds as following:

> "A few nights ago Rory's *Roger iron rusted*. He's gone down the *Battle Cruiser* to watch the end of a football game. No one's watching the *custard*, so he switches the channel over. The fat geezer's *north* opens. And he wanders up and turns

[14] 00:03:58, (Ritchie, 1998)

[15] 00:04:19, (Ritchie, 1998)

[16] 00:43:42, (Ritchie, 1998)

[17] 00:14:23, (Ritchie, 1998)

[18] 00:16:26, (Ritchie, 1998)

[19] 01:17:57, (Ritchie, 1998)

[20] 01:18:08, (Ritchie, 1998)

the *Liza* over. Now fuck off and watch it somewhere else. Rory knows *claret* is imminent, bud doesn't want to miss the end of the game. So calm as a coma, picks up a fire extinguisher, walks straight past the jam rolls who are ready for action and plonks it outside the entrance. He then orders an *Aristotle* of the most *ping-pong tiddly* in the *nuclear sub* and switches back to his footer. That's fucking it says the geezer. That's fucking what? says Rory. And he gobs out a mouthful of booze covering Fatty. He flicks a flaming match into his *bird's nest*, and the geezer's lit up like a leaking gas pipe."[21]

The words in italics in this sequence stand for rhyming slang. Translation from Cockney Rhyming slang:

Roger = Rodger Melly = telly (television)
Iron rusted = busted (broke down)
Battle Cruiser = boozer (pub)
Custard = Custard and Jelly = telly (television)
North = North Pole = hole (mouth)
Liza = Liza Minnelli = telly (television)
Claret = slang for blood (not rhyming slang)
Aristotle = bottle
Ping-pong = strong
Tiddly = short for tiddlywing = drink
Nuclear sub = pub
Bird's nest = chest

Rhyming slang appears not only in this one scene, it is spread throughout the movie, e. g.: "Now, Mr. Bubble and Squeak, you may enlighten me."[22] Mr. Bubble and Squeak in this sentence standing for 'Greek', as the character is called Nick the Greek. Another example would be: "... look slapped all over your Chevy Chase."[23] Chevy Chase is a rhyming slang for 'face'. One more example of this phenomenon is: "All right, all right keep your Alans on."[24] The expression 'Alans' is short for 'Alan Wicker's', which is slang for 'knickers', meaning underpants.

[21] 00:44:35 – 00:45:28 (Ritchie, 1998)

[22] 01:15:38, (Ritchie, 1998)

[23] 01:15:02, (Ritchie, 1998)

[24] 00:04:12, (Ritchie, 1998)

8.2.2 Snatch

The film Snatch, also directed by Guy Ritchie, strongly resembles Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels. Not only has the director used similar actors, even the plot turns around illegal activities, violence and the criminal underworld. Guy Ritchie chose Jason Statham to play his main characters for his films. Moreover, also Brad Pitt makes an appearance in this film, thus making it one of the most famous pictures made by Guy Ritchie. The plot turns around illegal, bare-knuckle boxing matches, which are being organised by Brick Top (Alan Ford) (Appendix – CD, track 4). Jason Statham plays a lowlife character, who supplies the boxing matches with boxers; hence he works as a boxing scout along with his friend Tommy (Stephen Graham). There is also a second plot, which includes a diamond robbery. I chose this movie to make a comparison with ‘Lock Stock’; they both have plot twists, which are similar in almost ‘every-guy-for-himself’ way. All the characters are trying to outsmart their opponents and trying to obtain as much money for themselves. In addition all the groups come together in the final shootout as in Lock Stock.

The robbery of the diamond is performed by a group of four henchmen disguised as Jewish people. Their leader Doug the Head (Mike Reid), acts like he is Jewish, because he thinks that it is good for the diamond business. Therefore he sometimes uses words, which are from Yiddish, and which are sometimes used in Cockney speech, e. g.: ‘schtrops’ (meaning ‘useless’ = shit). He also uses words such as ‘kosher’, which is not typically Cockney, although used in other dialects and even other languages. It is even used in the Czech Republic as ‘košér’, while having the same meaning.

There are many Cockney characters in this movie. The most Cockney would be Jason Statham, Alan Ford or Lennie James, who are all born in London. They use many features of Cockney speech, such as glottal stops, h-droppings, slang and cockney diphthongisation, sometimes rhyming slang, like in Brick Top’s speech: “Stop me again whilst I’m walking and I’ll cut your fucking Jacobs off.”[25] He uses the expression ‘Jacobs’, which is rhyming slang for ‘Jacob’s Crackers’ rhyming with ‘knackers’ (testicles).

[25] 00:41:20, (Ritchie, 2000)

8. 3 Football Factory and Green Street Hooligans

Both of these films revolve around football fans and their hard lives. They both focus on football hooligans and fighting between rivalry teams. A strong element of slang is presented in these films. Yet both of these two are different in Cockney usage thanks to the main actors playing the Cockney characters.

8. 3. 1 Football Factory

This movie was made by Nick Love a London born director. The main actor of this film is Danny Dyer. He was born in the east side of London in Canning Town, which was a poor dock area. He is considered a big fan of football in general and he has taken part in documentaries on Discovery Chanel, which were discussing football violence. Danny is also a great fan of West Ham United a famous East End football club. He still lives in East London nowadays. Other actors in this movie such as Tamer Hassan and Frank Harper are both well known for films which are considering soccer and violence in general. All these actors are valued for their strong Cockney accent. I choose this film both for, my passion for football and the regional accent.

The movie, as previously stated, revolves around football violence. The main character Tommy Johnson, played by Dyer, is enjoying life as a football hooligan, spending his weekends having casual sex, taking drugs or fighting. His obsession with violence turns into paranoia over his life and he starts to think about his meaningless existence (Appendix – CD, track 5).

There are plenty examples of Cockney pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary in Football Factory. Moreover, it even portrays the social life amongst football hooligans. The movie shows how hard it is to live in London as a football hooligan, and it portrays the life in the lower classes.

Vocabulary which is specific for these types of films is influenced by the football background. Henceforth, there are many words which are associated with soccer and even some examples of Cockney Rhyming slang could be heard in the film. There is also a lot of profanity and words like ‘fuckin’’, ‘wanker’, ‘cunt’ or ‘prick’, are often used. All these words are commonly used in speech of such people, but there is no need to examine them in this thesis any further. There are some less vulgar words though, which are said during the movie,

yet they are still associated with a violent lifestyle, e. g. 'mug'[26], or its version 'muggy'[27] which could be compared to thief, thieving. Football related vocabulary appears throughout the picture, e. g. 'firm'[28], which is used for a particular group of fans, cheering for one club. Another example, which appears not only in this movie, is 'geezer', which is used commonly for a weird person or instead of 'bloke'.

In this movie there are more examples of Cockney expressions, some of them are even used in other English dialects:

Slang Expression	Meaning	Time in the film
Open *you* ***up***	beat you / cut you with a knife	00:12:09
Someone just ***done him around the canister*** *with a cricket bat.*	Someone hit him in his head	00:22:58
Cor	God	00:46:22
Complete ***nutter***	Crazy person	00:34:17
Other ***gaff***	Place of residence / house	00:20:48
Smashed ***out of me tree***	drunk	01:00:55
You buy ***Charlie*** *off a white man*	Drugs / cocaine	00:44:46
No, the ***gavvers*** *are over there*	Police officers	00:35:29
Zeberdee and those ***chavvies***	kids	01:03:11

There are few examples of Cockney rhyming slang throughout the picture, e. g.: "It was only a bubble"[29] Bubble in this sentence stands for 'bubble bath', which in Rhyming slang stands for 'laugh'. Another example is: "On the Rory"[30]. This expression, in the context of the movie, means 'get down on your knees'. This developed from Rory Mcgrath, which

[26] 00:09:53, (Love, 2004)
[27] 00:06:59, (Love, 2004)
[28] 00:10:00, (Love, 2004)
[29] 00:11:51, (Love, 2004)
[30] 00:35:13, (Love, 2004)

stands for ‘half’, as in half way down; as the main actors tries to avoid to be seen. One more rhyming slang example could be: “Don’t get lemon”[31], as in ‘lemon tart’, which means ‘smart’.

8. 3. 2 Green Street Hooligans

This film has been chosen only to be compared to The Football Factory. It is an example of a film in which the Cockney speaker is being played by someone who is not a natural born Cockney speaker. The main actor, Charlie Hunnam who was born in Newcastle, tries to imitate the Cockney accent. He even uses rhyming slang, though not often during the film. His attempt of Cockney is considered by critics as not crafty enough. Nevertheless the actor proclaimed: “I just have an innately malleable accent that allows me to more easily step into other accents.” (Chilton, 2011). On the other hand other film critics reacted to his pronunciation: “sounded more like someone just out of root canal surgery” (Mckay, 2009). In my opinion his performance was not so well played and the Cockney accent sounds a little forced. The actor even ended in the ‘Cinema’s Worst Cockney Accents, which was done by Mckay (2009); Hunnam ended in second place, right after Dick van Dyke, taking the first place for his performance in the film *Marry Poppins*.

This gave me a reason not to include any examples from Green Street. Although the film depicts football hooligans in their rough and noisy nature, it does not give and example of typical Cockney speech. Nevertheless the name of the movie is connected to Cockney world, as the ‘Green Street’ is an actual street in London and it is located in Newham. The street has it fame and it even has its own website. Apart from many shops owned by migrants, a stadium of the football club West Ham United is located right on this street. That is why in the film, the actors support West Ham and fight other rivalry football firms.

[31] 00:44:29, (Love, 2004)

8. 4 Oliver Twist

This film is based on a book written by Dickens and it had about a dozen other film adaptations. In this adaptation done by Roman Polanski, Cockney characters appear sporadically. Nevertheless it portrays a good deal of London background of the poor streets during the 19th century. The scene in which Oliver comes to London for the first time depicts how the poor people lived in the hazy London and in the tight streets. Interestingly enough, the film exteriors were shot not in London, but in the Czech Republic.

There is also the famous character, the 'Artful Dodger', which itself is a rhyming slang for 'lodger'. This character, played by Harry Eden, uses h-dropping, glottal stops and Cockney rhyming slang, e. g. "Where you from then?" an omission of the verb 'are' is almost evident also: "I expect you want grub? And you shall 'ave it. Come on, up with you, on your pins."[32] He uses the word 'grub' which is a slang word for 'food'. Furthermore he uses the expression 'on your pins' where 'pin pegs' is a rhyming slang for 'legs'. Artful Dodger also uses the word 'beak' which is a slang word for 'magistrate'.

Other notable Cockney characters are Bill Sykes and his lady friend Nancy (Leanne Rowe), Sykes being played by the actor Jamie Foreman who also appeared in the film Football Factory as a racist taxi driver (Appendix – CD, track 6).

8. 5 Michael Caine

Michael Caine used his Cockney speech in many films throughout his career as he was born in the south London, which made him a Cockney low-class actor. He is best known for his Cockney accent in the film *Alfie* from 1966 (Appendix – CD, track 7). He became popular in USA thanks to this film and also thanks to his Cockney accent (apart from his acting). People in US claimed that they could not understand him in his earlier films. Caine is capable of switching from his Cockney accent to a more Standard English accent. In the interview with Jones (2010) he commented: "...after I made *Alfie,* it was very popoular, and then suddenly they said, "You've got to redo 122 lines", because *Alfie* was being released in America. And that's where my voice came from, the one I have now." He also added that he had to speak slowly, due to the fact that if you are a Cockney you speak twice as fast than Americans. Moreover, he kept his accent to prove that even a Cockney speaking actor can become famous; he even became knighted in 2000 for his contribution to British cinema.

[32] 00:27:32, (Polanski, 2005)

Other Caine notable films: *The Ipcress File; Funeral in Berlin; Billion Dollar Brain; Midnight in Saint Petersburg* and a comedy Cockney play *Next Time I'll Sing to You.*

8. 6 Other Cockney films

There are definitely more notable films in British cinematography in which Cockney appears. One of them being the film *Limey* which is a movie about a London's citizen who goes to the United States and often uses Rhyming Slang, which causes dramatic and amusing situations. Another notable film is the *Mean Machine*; it is an example where many dialects and accents could be heard in one place. The main actor, previously mentioned Vinnie Jones, represents an ex-football star that is sent to prison. He uses Cockney along with some of the actors playing the inmates. There are few other films, which I would like to mention such as, *Love, Honour and Obey; The Martins; Nil By Mouth* or *Marry Poppins*. Furthermore, Cockney is also heard in many film adaptations of various novels done by Dickens.

Although these films depict Cockney, they were not selected to be discussed further, due to their inaccurate depiction of Cockney characters, for example already mentioned Dick van Dyke who plays the role of a chimney sweep in Disney's kids story *Marry Poppins;* as Acommando (2012) illustrates: "His attempt at a British cockney accent was deemed so awful that the term 'Van Dyke accent' is used in England to describe failed attempts by Americans to sound British."

9. CONCLUSION

The major purpose of my thesis was to describe the phenomenon of Cockney in British cinematography throughout its development. In order to clarify what is meant by the term "Cockney", a description of the main features of this dialect is also provided. Geographically, from the earliest days of Cockney, 'being born within the ear shot of Bow Bells' served as a distinctive sign of one's social position and true Cockneyism. As regards the linguistic aspect, the thesis contains a basic description of Cockney grammar, vocabulary and phonetics, along with information on rhyming slang, which is regarded as one of the most notorious features of Cockney. This background research helped me to identify the major film works of British cinematography containing Cockney elements; these are discussed in the second part of the thesis. An understanding of Cockney linguistics also served for a better appreciation of the social classes in Britain and how they are portrayed in the films which formed the basis of my analysis.

It has been ascertained that Cockney originally became well-known as the speech of London's poor and the lower working class; subsequently it was transformed hand in hand with the city and; such change, which is present even nowadays, may turn Cockney into a different type of speech thanks to newcomers migrating to London. In fact, it is no mystery as to why the speech is changing at such a rapid pace; it is due to the position of the United Kingdom as being, in the past, the rulers of almost half the world with many colonies. Such change is only natural for a city like London with its multicultural diversity; thus it is not inconceivable that Cockney could cease to be a trademark of Londoners at some time in the future. The speech is shifting from London and the city is becoming more diverse.

Nevertheless, it is likely that Cockney speech will continue to fascinate people, at least sufficiently in order to inspire directors to shoot films in which Cockney characters appear. Although Cockney has been looked down upon throughout its history, it made it on to the silver screen and has remained there. Interest in this dialect is still present and in response to any current claims that Cockney is practically dead or even already extinct, it could be said that in reality it had only once again changed its face.

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SUMMARY IN CZECH

Cílem této bakalářské práce je popsat úlohu Cockney v historickém vývoji Británie a to především v Britské kinematografii. Navíc by tato práce měla shrnout základní rozdíly, které se v tomto dialektu vyskytují v porovnání se spisovnou angličtinou. V této práci nejsou rozebírány pouze rozdíly gramatiky, fonetiky a slovní zásoby, ale také rozdíly v sociálním pozadí Cockney a v jeho historickém vývoji v Londýně. Také jsem uvedl stručné shrnutí budoucího vývoje tohoto dialektu.

Bakalářská práce je rozdělena do dvou hlavních částí. První část popisuje historický vývoj Cockney a následuje vyobrazením rozdílů v již zmíněné gramatice, fonetice a slovní zásobě. Kromě toho se v kapitole o slovní zásobě hlouběji zkoumá slang, který se objevuje v Cockney spolu s rýmovaným slangem. V práci jsou průběžně uváděny příklady z odborných publikací za účelem přiblížení tématu. V druhé části bakalářské práce jsou uvedeny analýzy Britských filmů zabývajících se Cockney a jeho sociálním aspektem. Filmy byly vybrány na základě jejich data výroby, díky snaze zahrnout co nejrozsáhlejší časové období Britské kinematografie. O výběru konkrétních filmů rozhodovala i frekvence výskytu dialektu Cockney. Výrazy z filmů posloužili jako pomůcka pro další rozbor tohoto dialektu. Závěr bakalářské práce shrnuje dosažené cíle a zjištěná fakta. Zvukové stopy z filmů jsou uloženy na CD v apendixu bakalářské práce.

APPENDIX

The compact disk with the examples of Cockney speech from the selected British films is enclosed in order to illustrate the given subject.