The London Cockney Dialect

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ABSTRAKT
Bakalárská práca sa zaobera londýnskym dialektom Cockney a je rozdelená do dvoch častí. Prvá, teoretická časť sa zaobera jeho definíciou, gramatickými a lexikálnymi súčasťami, stručným historickým prehľadom a opisom dialektu Jafaican. Taktiež v nej boli uvedené aj príklady na slávny rýmujúci sa slang. Druhá, praktická časť pojednáva o tom, aký status v súčasnosti Cockney prislúcha.
Bola vypracovaná na základe dotazníkového výskumu, na ktorý odpovedali ľudia z celej Británie a ktorý pomohol určit aktuálnu pozíciu Cockney v porovnaní s jeho najväčším súčasným konkurentom, novo sa objavujúcim dialektom Jafaican.

Klíčová slova: Cockney, súčasná pozícia, jazykové rysy, Rhyming Slang, Jafaican,

ABSTRACT
The bachelor’s thesis in hand deals with The London Cockney Dialect and it is divided into two segments. The theoretical segment deals with its definition, grammar and lexical features, its brief historical development and with the description of Jafaican dialect. It also provides examples of the famous rhyming slang.

The practical segment of the thesis deals with Cockney’s status nowadays. This part was elaborated according to the questionnaire research method carried out amongst people around the United Kingdom. This questionnaire was to identify Cockneys status and popularity nowadays and compare it to its biggest rival – a recently emerged Jafaican Dialect.

Keywords: Cockney, current position, linguistic features, Rhyming Slang, Jafaican
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INTRODUCTION

A lot of people learn foreign languages nowadays. For several reasons people do this to communicate with people in other countries. Some people want to communicate with other people in other countries for their work or simple in order to make new friendships. An important reason for learning a foreign language could be a yearning for getting to know about other cultures. Whatever the reason is, if someone wants to bring their skills to a higher level, they should know how native speakers of the particular language speak among themselves. To know the language as taught according to the standards in school does not seem to be enough. To reach this goal, a learner has to focus on dialects and accents.

Cockney is not an ordinary example of a dialect. Origins of the rhyming slang, that is an inseparable part of Cockney, can be traced back to the ages, when it was spoken only by people involved in criminal activities – Cockney was born as an argot. It was a “secret code” in a way. It enabled people to communicate without being inferred by others. Later on Cockney became popular amongst broader population of Londoners and it managed to survive till the present days.

Apart from its origin, attention has been paid to Cockney’s formal features such as changes in grammar, pronunciation, spelling and vocabulary, because these are also phenomena that make Cockney unique.

Unfortunately, it was recently rumoured that Cockney was being swept into the periphery replaced by new slang – Jafaican. Therefore a short questionnaire based survey was conducted in order to find out the truth.

The work in hand familiarises the reader with Cockney’s roots as well as its development across many centuries, including periods of popularity and periods of neglect. However, Cockney is still alive and after 150 years it is surprisingly thriving. Will this trend continue well in the 21st century?
I. THEORY
1 DIALECT VS. ACCENT

Before we will be able to immerse deeper into London Cockney and its features, we should be sure that we can distinguish two crucial terms that appear throughout this work. These terms are “Dialect” and “Accent”. Almost all of us use some kind of dialect.

1.1 Dialect

“According to the New English Dictionary, the oldest sense, in English, of the word dialect was simply “a manner of speaking” or “phraseology”, in accordance with its derivation from the Greek “dialestos” – a discourse or way of speaking; from the verb “dialegesthai”, to discourse or converse. The modern meaning is somewhat more precise.” (Skeat 1912, 7)

It can be said that dialect is a variety of a language that is distinguished from other varieties of the same language by phonology, grammar and vocabulary. (Dictionary.reference 2011)

Dialects are usually related to some geographical area, but there can be also a connection between a person’s social background (class dialect - sociolect) or occupation (occupational dialect - jargon). Nevertheless, while dialects of the same language differ, they still possess a common core of features. (Britannica 2011)

1.2 Accent

“An accent is a variety of speech whose peculiarities exclusively concern phonological features. That means that a particular language style differs from others only in its pronunciation and not in its syntax or vocabulary. In other words, an accent is “a pattern of pronunciation used by a speaker for whom English is the native language or, more generally by the community or social grouping to which he or she belongs””. (Kohlmeier 2003, 4)

From what has been stated above it can be deducted that Cockney is a dialect due to its distinctive terminology and grammar deviation.
2 HISTORY

There are no doubts that history of this world-known dialect is even more fascinating than its present features. It could be hardly imagined that in the early ages this dialect was not as famous and popular as it became later on. This thesis deals with Cockney as a wide spread and respected phenomenon. Would anybody be able to imagine that the first Cockney speakers did not want Cockney to be understood, let alone spoken by everybody else around? There is an unsupported theory that in its beginning, Cockney speakers were persecuted.

2.1 Etymology and meaning of word “Cockney”.

Briefly, Cockney could be labelled as the broadest London working-class speech. According to Wells (Wells 2004) the first recorded use of “Cockney” can be found in a masterpiece of William Langland from 1362 and where it stood literally for “cock’s egg”.

However, “Cockney” as a word can have more than one exact meaning today. In general, it can refer both to inhabitants of certain London areas (According to the BBC Web site, the best known of them are probably East End districts Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, Stepney, Spital Fileds, Wapping, Limehouse, Mile End, Isle of Dogs) and also to a form of English language spoken by this group. Of course, Cockney has broken these limits and spread into many more areas throughout London, and also crossed the continents.

Focusing on the geographical meaning of this word, one can discover that it has a very poetic background. Duncan Wherrett (Wherrett 2010) says term that the term “Cockney” originally meant someone, who was born within the sound of the Bow Bells of St. Maryle-Bow Church in Cheapside, London. According to the Churches website, this church was completely destroyed by the great fire of London in 1661 and rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren. Unfortunately, the bells had been destroyed again in the World War II., and were not replaced until 1961. But luckily, after several renovations, the Church can be found standing on its original location, just a short distance from St. Paul’s Cathedral. For those people interested in linguistic, particularly in Cockney, this place can be considered a pilgrimage site.

However, Duncan Wherrett in his Dictionary of Cockney Rhyming Slang (Wherrett 2010) stated that it is unlikely that a lot of people would be born in this area today. The reason is very simple. Residential premises have been replaced by banks, financial
institutions and offices. Therefore, Cockney is presently most likely to refer to people speaking in this dialect but not people born in this particular area.

2.2 Cockney dialect and Cockney Rhyming Slang

As indicated on the Phespirit Web site, probably the biggest Cockneys contribution to world culture is the phenomenon of Cockney Rhyming Slang. If the London Cockney Dialect is considered as a whole it is not just an ordinary linguistic entry, but it also represents the foundations which London Rhyming slang emerged from. It is surely interesting, in contrary to the Cockney Dialect, which is perfectly common and which does not differ a lot from other dialects from a linguistic point of view that Rhyming Slang stands out from the crowd and that it has been spread and successfully adapted (even with many local variations) in several English speaking countries.

2.3 Introduction of Cockney Rhyming slang

“Generally, rhyming slang means taking phrases or expressions which rhyme with a certain word and then using those expressions instead of the chosen word. For example the word “look” rhymes with “butcher’s hook”. (cockneyrhymingslang 1998-2011) The interesting thing is that the rhyming word is often omitted – so you will not find too many Londoners (or Cockney users) having a “butcher’s hook” at this work, but you might find a few having a “butcher’s”. However, the same source also claims that it is not the official rule, so Cockney expressions and phrases can vary in their construction, and it is simply a matter of convention which version is used. It means that you can find someone having a “butcher’s” as well as someone having a “butcher’s look”. (cockneyrhymingslang 1998-2011)

Cockney Rhyming slang is dealt with as a very interesting phenomenon in the chapter “Cockney Rhyming Slang” later on.
3 COCKNEY FEATURES

As in every other dialect, London Cockney also differs from the standard version of the language. Dialect as a whole differs from the Standard English as much as Cockney accent differs from “RP” – Received Pronunciation, or “Queen’s English”. People certainly would not be successful in a job interview for the BBC using Cockney Dialect.

Wherrett (Wherrett 2010) claims that as a dialect, Cockney is similar to much local non-standard English, though with its additional features such as a rhyming slang. As an accent, Cockney is perceptibly south-eastern. Phonologically, it is largely innovatory: in comparison with Received Pronunciation, Cockney reflects nearly all the latter historical innovations plus several more of its own.

When dealing with Cockney on paper, there is a chance one can come across some grammatical changes that are not so difficult to figure out. In most of the cases, proper meaning can be found quite easily. Written Cockney can leave one surprised, amused, but seldom confused.

However, listening to original Cockney speakers can cause profound confusion. The next chapters are dedicated to various language changes within Cockney, and deals deal with the Cockney features that are most likely to surprise people when dealing with it.

3.1 Pronunciation

Although all the following features will be listed as typical for Cockney, many of them have already found their way also into RP. According to Ulrike Altendorf, /l/-vocalisation or /l/-glottalling are already used by upper-class speakers as well as by those middle- and lower-class ones. On the other hand, “th” fronting has not officially entered RP yet, so we may say it serves as a “boundary marker” between these two phenomena. (Altendorf 2011)

a) **H-dropping** (in content words)

According to bookrags webpage, H-dropping is a phenomenon when the phoneme /h/ in words is omitted. Although h-dropping is widespread in England, it is considered standard only before w. (bookrags 2011)
H$\rightarrow$ Ø, for example in *hammer* or *hit*

Let us analyse changes in the following sentence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hand on heart</td>
<td>/ˈhaend ɒn ˈhaːt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/ˈænd ɒn ˈaːt/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Altendorf 2011; Wells 2004)

b) TH fronting

“Both voiced /ð/ and voiceless form /ð/ of “the” are frequently replaced by v /v/ and f /ʃ/.” (Recknagel 2006)

Silja Recknagel (ibit 2006) also mentioned consequences of th fronting, that are to be seen in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maths</td>
<td>/mæɵs/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/mæfs/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bother</td>
<td>/ˈbɒð.ər/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/ˈbɒvə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thistle</td>
<td>/ˈƟɪs.l/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/ˈfɪs.l/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Cambridge dictionary Online 2011)

c) L–vocalization

L-vocalization can appear in various forms. Examples supported by l-vocalization Web site are to be found below:

i) /l/ sound occurring at the end of a word

In cases when /l/ sound occurring at the end of a word is replaced by /o/ or /ʊ/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>/ˈmɪd.l./</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/mɪdo/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(l-vocalization 2011)

ii) /l/ sound occurring before a consonant

In cases when /l/ sound occurring before a consonant, /l/ is replaced by /ʊ/ /?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>/mɪlk/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/miʊk/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ibid 2011)
iii)  *Phonemic mergers*

In case of Cockney, according to a webpage dealing with l-vocalization vowels before vocalized /l/ can be accompanied with phonemic merge; it means that words like “fail” and “fowl”, which sounds different within Standard English become homophones in Cockney. (ibid 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>/feɪl/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fowl</td>
<td>/faʊl/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Wells 1982)

d)  *Glottal stop*

In this case, glottal stop is described as a particular characteristic of Cockney. Glottal stop can be manifested in several ways, for instance:

i)  /p, t, k/ glottaling in final position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wait</td>
<td>/weɪt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>/stɒp/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look</td>
<td>/lʊk/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During rapid speech, glottalization can be replaced by glottal stop in all three cases. (Wells 1986)

ii)  *intervocalic /t/*

Intervocalic /t/ is realized as a glottal stop alone, as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>/ˈwɔː.tər/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>/ˈsɪt.ɪ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kreidel 2004)
e) Other vowel changes

It is clearly visible in the following paragraphs that the smaller amount of differences between vowels of RP and Cockney is, the biggest is the importance of existing ones.

i) final position of /ə/

In final position, very open realizations of /ə/ can be found, such as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>/ˈdɪn.ər/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrow</td>
<td>/ˈmær.əʊ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Wells 1986)

ii) Occurrence of triphthongs

Triphthongs realization is considered to be a strong feature of cockney, see examples below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floors</td>
<td>/flɔːz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upstairs</td>
<td>/ʌpˈsteəz/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ibid 1986)

Beside triphthong occurrence, also other sound shifts and changes are characteristic feature of the Cockney dialect. Another popular example of this phenomenon can be seen in the following paragraph.

iii) The diphthong shift

Inevitable part of the Cockney dialect is undoubtedly its accent. Paul Kerswill et al. claim in their presentation on phonological innovation in London teenage speech, that the diphthong shift means to substitute certain group of sounds by another one, according to this pattern:

RP

\[
\text{i: } \quad eɪ, aɪ, əɪ, aʊ, æ \quad \text{to} \quad əi, aɪ, əi, oɪ, æ, aʊ
\]

Cockney

(Kerswill et al. 2007)
As has been said before, according to this pattern, the sounds in the words are changed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Standard pronunciation</th>
<th>Cockney pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fleece</td>
<td>/fliːs/</td>
<td>/fləis/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day</td>
<td>/deɪ/</td>
<td>/daɪ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td>/ˈklaɪ.mət/</td>
<td>/ˈklɒɪ.mət/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toy</td>
<td>/tɔɪ/</td>
<td>/toi/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>/bəʊl/</td>
<td>/ba-ʊl/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2 Grammar

“Past and present tense, participle, and preterite are devastated in Cockney grammar” (Recknagel 2006, 8)

Although this statement may seem to be a bit exaggerated, it is actually true to a certain degree. Cockney tends to ignore a lot of rules of Standard English. The following chapter deals with some of the most interesting ones. Some of them are not strictly bound to Cockney and can be possibly found also in other dialects across Britain. (ibid 2006)

a) Regular and irregular verbs forms are conjugated according to the same pattern

This is a special phenomenon when past tense of irregular verbs is formed by adding an -ed suffix, normally possible just with regular verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Standard grammar</th>
<th>Cockney grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grow</td>
<td>Grew</td>
<td>Growed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build</td>
<td>Built</td>
<td>Builded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However some forms appearing in cockney grammar are considered to be correct also in Standard English, e.g. learned. (Recknagel 2006)

b) Misusing of the third-person-singular-s

This is an interesting grammar feature of Cockney (besides also some other dialects). Silja Recknagel states in her work that in this case instead of omitting it, third-person-singular-s is usually added to all forms of the verb. This rule can be applied also for “have”, as long as it is a strong verb. When used as an auxiliary, all its forms are conjugated correctly. (Recknagel 2006)
Here are some examples provided by Silja Recknagel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard grammar</th>
<th>Cockney grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go</td>
<td>I go, we go, he goes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>I drive, we drive, he drives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have</td>
<td>I have, we have, he has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have (AUX)</td>
<td>I have gone, he has gone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ibid 2006)

c) Using double negative

“The mathematical axiom that multiplication of negatives results in positives has never recommended itself to Cockneys” (Recknagel 2006, 8)

Recknagel demonstrates the negative forms of the following sentence in Cockney and in Standard English: I have got a dog in my car.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard grammar</th>
<th>Cockney grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I haven’t got a dog in my car</td>
<td>I haven’t got no dog in my car.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can see that in contrary to Standard English where using a double negative would not be tolerated, Cockney breaks this rule and it is also very popular among its speakers.

d) Me vs. my

According to Robert Beard, (Beard 1997) in many cases, possessive pronoun “my” is replaced by objective pronoun “me”. However, you cannot use “my” instead of “me”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard grammar</th>
<th>Cockney grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I live with my mother</td>
<td>I live with me mother</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Beard 1997)

However, people can say “I live with me mother”, but to say “Do you like my?” instead of “Do you like me?” would not make any sense.
3.3 The Cockney Rhyming Slang

The following chapter deals with the most exciting phenomenon of Cockney dialect - The Cockney Rhyming Slang.

3.3.1 History

Generally, from 16th to 18th century, rhyming slang was considered to be an inseparable feature of the thieves’ cant and according to Hotten, it is strictly separated from London street costermongers’ talk. (Ayto 2003)

According to Ayto, Camden Hotten was the author of the first written record referring explicitly to “The Rhyming Slang”. His book The Slang Dictionary released in 1859 says: “The cant, which has nothing to do with that spoken by the costermongers, is known in Seven Dials (18th and 19th century Holborn [area in central London]) and elsewhere as the Rhyming Slang, or the substitution of words and sentences which rhyme with other words intended to be kept secret...” (ibid 2003, 7)

So knowing Hotten mentioned “the Rhyming Slang”, it can be assumed that it was already an establish language phenomena with certain rules and status, mostly used as an argot by criminals and down-and-outs of central London. It also indicates that although Hotten had been the first to make written record of the use of Rhyming Slang, it had already been in use a long time before his book was released. (ibid 2003)

3.3.2 How did the Rhyming Slang come into its existence?

According to Wherrett’s dictionary, rhyming slang as a linguistic phenomenon first appeared at the turn of the 19th century. (Wherret 2010)

Although it was noted as thieves’ cant three hundred years ago, actual theories of its origin differ. All of them are rather interesting, but it cannot be said with certainty that this is how the rhyming slang really began. Various scholars and students show preference for various theories. (ibid 2010)

The following paragraph deals with the three most popular theories.

- The first theory claims that rhyming slang was developed as a good-humoured joke by Cockneys so that outsiders, such as groups of Irish navvies working on canal and railway construction, could not understand them. (ibid 2010)
• The supporters of the second theory believe that rhyming slang was developed from the argot used by thieves and criminals to communicate in public in order to not to be understood by outsiders. (ibid 2010)

• The last of these theories suggests that rhyming slang was invented by oppressed minority as their own language to give them a bit more inner strength. (ibid 2010)

Let us explore the first theory that says rhyming slang was a good way to prevent Irish workmen to understand what was going on in discussions among Cockneys. This theory may probably be supported by the simple fact that also words of Irish origin are to be found in Cockney Rhyming Slang, such as Rory O’More, that means door, or Chocolate trifle, which stands for rifle. (Wherrett 2010)

However, most of sources support the second theory according to which Cockney is developed from the argot used by thieves and criminals to communicate in public in order to not be understood by outsiders.

3.3.3 Evolution through the centuries

“In the 1950’s, rhyming slang had very little or no public profile, but by the beginning of the 20th century it was a star.” (Ayto 2003, 8-9)

On the previous page, it was mentioned that in 1859 rhyming slang was specifically distinguished from the talk of costermongers. However, according to Ayto J.W. Horsley’s book I remember (1911) claims that Rhyming Slang was widely used by street traders, for whose “daisy roots” was a substitute for the word “boots”. It is clear now, that in 1911, the Rhyming Slang was not the privilege of just thieves and costermongers, but was also used by ordinary people from all Britain. (ibid 2003)

This breakthrough was probably caused by increased mobility at the end of the 19th century, which in fact spread the language of Londoners to the ears of people from all over the Britain, who adapted it very successfully. Eric Porridge in his dictionary of Forces’ Slang (1948) claims: “Before the First World War,[rhyming slang] was in common use in the Forces, even in Scottish regiments, such was the influence of Cockney.” (ibid 2003, 9)

It can be said, that at the turn of the 19th century (19th and 20th), Cockney’s role as a cant (or a code language) of thieves and down-and-outs was fast fading. However, it may have been the matter of jollity of the rhyming slang or its relative approachability for the
uninitiated outsiders what made Cockney so popular among ordinary people as well. Most linguists nowadays believe that Cockney came through transformation from argot to become an enormously popular dialect. (ibid 2003)

In the first half of the 20th century, the Rhyming Slang was successful enough to infiltrate the works of famous writers, for example George Orwell in his *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). However, in the second half of the same century some signs of its decline started to appear. Various voices predicted a very short and unsuccessful future for the rhyming slang. Fortunately, these predictions turned out to be wrong, as it is now the 21st century and new rhyming slang is still being created. (ibid 2003)

### 3.3.4 Categories of the Rhyming Slang

“Body of the British rhymes as they currently exist is not a homogeneous one, analogous to other elements of English vocabulary” (Ayto 2003, 9)

**a) Old words**

Ayto says that words that can be found in this group (also called “classic rhyming slang” or “museum pieces of rhyming slang”) originated in the 19th century. Their characteristic features are:

- They are not used actively in today’s vocabulary
- Almost all English-speakers know their meaning
- If you ask for any example of rhyming slang, the words from this category are first ones that come into mind of English-speakers, even if they do not know any other rhyming expressions.

Examples: *Adam and Eve (believe) Apples and pears (stairs), frog and toad (road), tea leaf (thief), etc* (Ayto 2003)

**b) Middle group**

This group is characterised by words of various degrees of antiquity, which can still appear in active language, but in a kind of odd or limited way. There are two main reasons of their existence. One of the reasons why these words have survived is their usage in certain environments, situations. For example, *clickety-click* instead of sixty-six can be heard in bingo, so in certain way, we can refer to them as jargon. Another reason for their participation in an active language is their revival, for example *currant bun* (sun). This
expression started to be used again thanks to the appearance of the Sun newspaper at the end of previous century. (Ayto 2003)

c) New coinages

According to Ayto (Ayto 203) people are still keen on contributing with their own coinages into this group. Popularity of this activity is shown in the great number of new words which emerged in the final decades of the 20th century.

“As The Sun reported last week:’ Holidaymakers could fly to Gary Barlow (Monte Carlo) or have a Noel Gallagher (a week in Malaga). And don’t forget your Billy Ocean (suntan lotion). After a couple of Britneys (beers) a Jay Kay (takeaway) might be SClub7 (heaven)’. “(Ayto 2003, 11)

3.3.5 Example of Cockney Rhyming Slang

The following text was used in my public awareness questionnaire. In it can be found some of the most popular expressions of the Rhyming Slang.

“You’ll never Adam and Eve what happened to me the other day. As I was walking down the frog and toad, I saw a tea leaf trying to steal a jam jar. Well, my jam tart was racing, so I rushed up the apples and pears and got on the dog and bone to the police, but the line was brown bread.” (Todd 2007, 67)

Glossary for better understanding:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adam and Eve – Believe</th>
<th>Jam Jar – Car</th>
<th>Dog and bone - Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frog and Toad – Road</td>
<td>Jam Tart – Heart</td>
<td>Brown Bread - Dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Leaf – Thief</td>
<td>Apples and Pears – Stairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(cockneyrhymingslang 1998-2011)

3.3.6 Legacy of the Rhyming Slang

Vocabulary of an English speaker is sometimes related to the Rhyming Slang more than people would imagine. The Rhyming Slang can be used either in its full form, i.e. containing both (all) words of the phrase, or shortened to just first part of it (the second form is supposed to be used more often). And as a result of these shortenings, completely new words are entering our vocabulary. (Todd 2007)

As a perfect example, Richard Todd (ibid 2007) chose phrase “rabbit on” (as in my mother is always rabbiting on about her posh friends from the grocery – she does not stop
The word *rabbit* comes from Cockney rhyming slang. Its origin can be tracked to phrase *rabbit and pork*, which rhymes with talk and is shortened to just *rabbit*. Parents can hear children talking about “making a raspberry” (raspberry tart = fart) noise. On the other hand, if someone is told he has big jugs (jugs of beer = ear), he would most probably think of his ears; however jugs is also slang for breast, like jugs of milk. (ibid 2007)

The icing of the cockney cake is the word “Plaster” which stands for arse. See the reason below:

“Plaster comes from Plaster of Paris, which rhymes with Aris, which comes from Aristotle, which rhymes with bottle, which comes from bottle and glass, which rhymes with arse.” (ibid 2007, 68)
4 CURRENT SITUATION

Despite the fact that Cockney was a hugely popular phenomenon at the end of the previous century, it cannot be said with certainty that its status is unchangeable or that Cockney will be here forever. In present days, various threats in the form of other dialects are trying to displace Cockney from its position. Dialect Jafaican, which was first noticed a few years ago could happen to be its deadly rival. From its first appearance at the beginning of the 21st century, Jafaican’s popularity has risen quickly and all researchers more-or-less agree that Cockney could be in danger.

4.1 What is Jafaican?

Certain rumours state that Jafaican is just a pure product of white young people who are trying to be cool. (Clark 2006)

However, if it is necessary to characterize this phenomenon from the linguistic point of view, it has to be stated that it is a dialect consisting of English, Jamaican (dialect from Jamaica), West Indian and Indian language elements. (urban dictionary 2011)

According to Laura Clark, Jafaican means “fake Jamaican” and surprisingly, this term was not coined by linguists in research rooms, but emerged from the streets. However, linguists prefer the term “Multicultural English”, although both these words carry the same meaning. (Clark 2006) However, “Multicultural English” can be used as an umbrella term for various ethnically influenced dialects. Laura Clark also points at fact that Jafaican appeared within the Cockney boundaries in London. Origins of this slang are in mutual coexistence of white students with their Asian and black inner-city classmates. Spending a lot of time in this environment, white youths are exposed to a mixture of second-language English and local London English, and as a result, they pick up the speech patterns of their classmates. (ibid 2006)

An important source for the Jafaican vocabulary and its features is Jamaican Creole, from which Jafaican borrowed number of words that are now being used unchanged. Other important sources are also Bangladeshi and West African, with a little South American and Arab thrown in. (ibid 2006)
II. ANALYSIS
5 INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICAL PART

In the previous, theoretical part, the basic introduction into the London Cockney has been offered with its history, development throughout the centuries of its existence and also the most important or interesting features that make Cockney so unique and strong. The past ends by introducing its biggest rival, Jamaican slang.

The practical part is to focus on the current status of Cockney. Are all its features alive in the present London speech or are they continually being replaced by elements of new slangs and dialects emerging on the streets? Is there a possibility that Cockney is getting out of fashion?

The practical part is based on a survey carries out amongst Londoners and British citizens in order to find about out their general knowledge about The Cockney Dialect and the current status of London Cockney Dialect among them.
6 DEGREE OF PUBLIC AWARENESS

I would like to start with a brief overview of the people participated in the questionnaire based survey. The questionnaire has been sent to few hundreds of people; however, only 41 respondents replied. Some of the responds could have not been used due to an unsuitable origin of the respondents.

The following charts show age, gender of respondents, as well as their birth place and current citizenship. This short chapter also contains charts showing the ratio of respondents from London to respondents who live in England.

![Pie chart showing age distribution](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Figure 1: Age of respondents**

As you can see, the smallest part of the respondents was under the age of 20 (about 8%). As well, there was a small amount of people between 30 and 40. On the other hand, there was a big portion of responding people between 20 and 30 (about 27%), and moreover, surprisingly, most people on Internet who found their time to fill in my questionnaire were between 40 and 50 years (almost one third of all respondents).

Let us move to the next criterion of the survey – the age of the respondents. As you can see in pie chart on the following page, the bigger part of the pie belongs to males (about 55%) to females (about 45%).
Geographically the respondents have been divided into groups according to 4 British countries: England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

6.1 Place of birth

As you can see, according to the pie chart above, the biggest amount of the respondents have their roots in England (about 83%). The smallest part of the respondents have their birth place in Northern Ireland (only about 3%).
Below, you can see the chart focusing on people born in London. These respondents represent almost 30% of the all people born in England, it means approximately a bit more than 25% of the surveyed sample.

![Chart of place of birth](image)

Figure 4. Place of birth 2

Of course, if we make a chart based on current citizenship of respondents, we get absolutely different numbers and locations.

### 6.2 Place of residence

![Chart of place of residence](image)

Figure 5. Place of residence
The biggest number of respondents resides in England in present day. However, 30% of respondents born in England live abroad. Moreover, few of the respondents live in absolutely different locations now, such as Czech Republic, Italy or China.

If we want to find out how many of these people now live in London, let us have a look on the following chart.

![Where do you reside?](image)

Figure 6. Place of residence 2

However, compared to the complete sample, Londoners represents only about 23% of the respondents from this point of view.

### 6.3 Education

Regarding education, as results from the following chart show, almost two thirds (about 63%) of respondents achieved tertiary education, secondary education was accomplished by some more than one third of the respondents (about 37%).
From the data collected during the survey, we can summarize describing the sample as a group of people, who were born in Britain and their mother tongue is English. Majority of them is formed by males (considering gender) and people above 40 (considering age; about 55%). Regarding the respondents’ education, majority of them achieved tertiary education. Most of the respondents come from England, and nowadays, approximately 23% of them reside in London.
7 AWARENESS OF THE TERM “COCKNEY”.

The next part of the questionnaire consisted of basic questions about Cockney focusing on its origins, development, popularity and current status.

a) “Are you aware of term “London Cockney”?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>85,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have already heard of it, but don’t know exactly what it stands for</td>
<td>9,8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Awareness

More than 85% of respondents know exactly what the term “London Cockney” stands for and almost other 10% of them are aware of its existence, however, do not know exactly what it refers to. It points on the fact that London Cockney is a strong phenomenon well known among people around Britain.

b) “Do you consider yourself to be a Cockney speaker?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>97,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2,4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Cockney speaker

In the previous table, it was discovered that almost all the respondents know what Cockney is. On the other hand, however, huge majority of them do not consider themselves to be Cockney speakers. One of the respondents who labelled themselves as Cockney speakers (from London, of course) said: “...That’s how I was taught to speak. I’m proud of my London Roots.”

This pride in national identity leads us to the next question of the questionnaire.
c) “Do you happen to be ashamed of London Cockney?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, sometimes</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Cockney Pride

Almost 95% of respondents claim they are not ashamed of using Cockney in any situation. This result shows us how popular this dialect is and that despite the fact that it was considered “not very intelligent” to speak some other dialect than Standard English just few decades ago, let alone dialect with argot origins, people are proud of their roots in present days and they are not afraid to demonstrate their origin. One of the most obvious ways to do so is with their language - so everybody can hear and instantly know where the speaker is from.

To complete this question, I asked also for the reasons of respondents answers. The most interesting answers were chosen to appear in this work, stated below:

i) Group of positive opinions on Cockney

- “My father and mother were 'born within the sound of Bow bells': which makes them true Londoners, and my father in particular used to use Cockney rhyming slang fairly often.

  My husband's dad was also a Londoner and so he knows a fair amount of slang too. It is really a fun thing amongst family, because they have all heard it to some degree and it brings back nice memories of my dad. I think I use it more often in passing than I realise though. Just the odd phrases.”

- “I'm proud to be British & it's a part of the London culture. “

- “It's a respected lingo of the 'geezer' that suits a certain mood/situation very well.”

   i) Group of negative opinions on Cockney

In the previous question (c), I stated a quote by one of the respondents proud of his dialect. You can see in the following example, how much do individual answers differ from each other. One of the respondents said:

- „I would be (ashamed) if it was my actual accent, but it isn't. “
d) “How often do you use Cockney Dialect?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>61,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>36,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>2,4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Cockney usage

The number of respondents never using Cockney reached almost one third of the whole, 36,6%. As well, those people who use Cockney on the daily basis form a small group of approximately 2,5%.

On the other hand, almost two thirds of responding people stated that they use Cockney occasionally, so the following question was focused on the situations or places, when they are proud or not ashamed of speaking in this dialect.

e) “If you use Cockney Dialect, in which situations do you do so?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I use it only for fun</td>
<td>45,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never use it</td>
<td>30,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place doesn’t matter, I use Cockney only when speaking to my friends</td>
<td>10,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>7,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the time</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Cockney places

The biggest portion of respondents claims that they use Cockney only for fun. The interesting thing is that although almost 37% of people claimed they never use Cockney in the previous question, only 30% of respondents stated they never use it in the actual question.

Cockney usage was restricted to some places as well, you can see that almost 5% of respondents use it only in pub or work, so it means that they dare to use Cockney only
among specific people, or it is necessary for exercising of their professions. On the other hand, 7.5% of respondents stated they use Cockney only with their family members.

That means that they use Cockney usually only when talking to their parents or grandparents who are older people who may speak Cockney naturally, or to their cousins and siblings with whom they probably share common experiences and childhood. 10% of the respondents stated that place does not matter and they speak Cockney when they are talking to their friends.

On the other hand, the fact that 45% of respondents claim that they use Cockney only for fun, and this fact indicates two things: either they consider this dialect not worth being part of their vocabulary, or they use it in special situations, when usage of Cockney suits the mood (to some extent, one of the quotes on the previous page seems to be confirming this statement).

f) “Do you think London Cockney is still alive?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barely, it is slowly disappearing</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of course it is, a lot of people speak Cockney</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Is Cockney alive?

Asking this question, I tried to find out whether English speakers consider Cockney being an appropriate part of their vocabulary and if they come across Cockney on the streets or during dialogues with their friends. Positively, more than 60% of respondents answered they have no worries about Cockney as a wide spread phenomena. On the other hand, almost 40% of respondents claim that Cockney is slowly disappearing. The interesting fact is that only one person belonging to the latter group currently lives in London, but was not born there. None of the respondents born in London suggest Cockneys downfall.
g) “Is the Cockney dialect popular?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For certain groups of people</td>
<td>47,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In some part of London</td>
<td>35,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>5,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Cockney’s popularity

As I have mentioned in the previous paragraph, more than 60% of respondents think London Cockney is still alive. It seems to be very similar in this particular case, as 95% of respondent stated that London Cockney is to some extent still popular. However, only 12% of them were willing to say that Cockney is popular without any doubts, in any environment, in all social groups. It is interesting that this claim was not supported by anybody from London; however, people belonging to this group come from all over England and, surprisingly, Scotland. Remaining 83% were divided into two kinds of responds. Almost 50% of responding people said that Cockney is popular only for certain kind of people. The statement that London Cockney is popular in some parts of London gained 35% of votes. Only 5% of respondents expressed opinion that London Cockney is not popular at all.

h) “In your opinion, is London Cockney used more by older or younger people?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hard to say</td>
<td>61,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older (50 and above)</td>
<td>29,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>9,8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Age of speakers

The results of this question can tell us more about future Cockney development. If Cockney was used more by younger people, we could say that it is on its way to conquer also 21st century without any problems. However, as the result was opposite, there would be a possibility that Cockney is slowly disappearing, used only by older people, who would become the last generation of Cockney speakers.
In the survey conducted for this thesis, almost 30% of respondents said that Cockney is used more by older people (in this particular case, it means older than 50). Not even 10% of respondents expressed the opinion that Cockney is mostly used by younger people. This ratio would predict very gloomy future regarding Cockneys further existence. However, more than 60% of respondents answered, that they cannot say surely whether it is used more by the former or latter group. It gives us hope and suggests that Cockney is widely used by members of all generations of English speakers and for now, it seems to be entering the 21st century very successfully.

i) “London Cockney dates back to...?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15th century</td>
<td>44,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th century</td>
<td>29,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th century</td>
<td>26,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Cockney's origins

Paradoxically, the smallest amount of people knew the right answer, a bit more than 26%, as Cockney was first described in the 17th century.

j) “Do you think that people speaking Cockney Dialect are also able to understand its Rhyming Slang?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutely yes</td>
<td>35,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just few of them</td>
<td>25,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority of them</td>
<td>40,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolutely no</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10. Rhyming Slang

The results of this question can show not just whether people using Cockney dialect are aware of its most interesting feature - the rhyming slang, but also if they are able to understand it. 75% of respondents stated positive answers – 35% of responding people think that no Cockney speaker would have problems understanding the rhyming slang, and 40% of them claimed that majority of them would undoubtedly understand as well.
Only 25% of respondents think that only few people understand rhyming slang nowadays. No response people supported the last possible answer saying that nobody of Cockney speaker would understand the rhyming slang.

After evaluating this question, we can say that the rhyming slang is still at least as popular as Cockney in these day. One of the objectives of the survey was to find out how familiar English speakers are with expressions and phrases of the rhyming slang and it will be dealt with in one the following chapters.

7.1 Awareness of the term “Jafaican”.

This part of the questionnaire focused on the degree of public awareness regarding the new slang emerging in London streets – Jafaican.

a) “Are you aware of a new slang called Jafaican?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>87,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11. Jafaican

More than 87% of responding people stated that they do not know at all what the term Jafaican stands for. Only a bit more than 12% of respondents is aware of the existence of Jafaican. The following paragraph shows how much the English speakers realize its impact on Cockney.

b) “Do you agree with claim that Jafaican is slowly replacing Cockney?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do not know</td>
<td>78,0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not at all</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are kind of blending</td>
<td>7,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, and it is a shame</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, but I don’t care</td>
<td>4,9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12. Jafaican importance
As can be clearly seen from the table above, almost 80% of responding people cannot say properly whether there were any changes regarding the Cockney dialect. They are probably not aware of term Jafaican, as the number is very similar to the percentage of respondents who did not know anything about Jafaican (see the preceding paragraph).

### 7.2 Rhyming slang

This part of the thesis deals with general understanding of the phrases and expressions of the Cockney rhyming slang among Britons. In the questionnaire, I asked the respondents to match certain slang expressions with their proper meanings. Some of the mentioned expressions were basic ones, well-known; it can be said popular terms that almost everybody must have come across with.

On the other hand, I decided to choose also less known expressions to make this survey more relevant. This first part of this chapter starts with the most popular ones and continues to the least known (according to the survey results). The chapter ends with answers of respondents regarding the punch line of a text containing rhyming slang phrases.

Proper meanings of the rhyming slang expressions in this part of thesis can be found in the complementary text under the particular tables.

- **a) Adam and Eve**

  Proper meaning: Believe  
  Slang expression: Adam and Eve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam and Eve</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13. Adam and Eve

This is probably the best-known example of the Cockney rhyming slang, as it was the first expression I came across during my exploration of this topic (not just because of the alphabetical order of the words in dictionary). This is really the example of the words belonging to the group “classical rhyming slang”. Although it was not recorded before 1920s, it was probably in use in the 19th century. It is mainly used to express surprise in a humorous way. In contrary to “believe”, only a few people know about another meaning of this phrase: “leave” (Ayto 2003; Puxley 2008)
b) Bacardi Breezer

Proper meaning: Freezer
Slang expression: Bacardi breezer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bacardi breezer</td>
<td>97,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples and pears</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14. Bacardi Breezer

This expression that is based on the popular alcopop can indicate popularity of Cockney, as it has been created just recently. Up to 97,5% of respondents chose the correct answer in this case. 2,5% respondents answered “Apples and pears”, which means that this expression is not as well-known as it seems to be. (Puxley 2008)

c) Apples and Pears

Proper meaning: Stairs
Slang expression: Apples and Pears

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples and pears</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Mumba</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15. Apples and pears

According to my own research, this is surely one of the most popular expressions as well. This piece of slang definitely fits into the group “classical rhyming slang”. It is first recorded in the 1850s, however, apple instead of apples is used. This expression is often shortened to just apples. The American variant is “peaches and pears”. The amount of 90% of respondents knowing the correct answer was hence no surprise at all. (Puxley 2008)
d) Tommy Tank

Proper meaning: Bank
Slang expression: Tommy Tank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Tank</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacardi breezer</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples and pears</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Tommy Tank

Again, a big amount of respondents was able to answer this question correctly. Again, it is visible that we cannot take success of the most popular phrases for granted.

e) Samantha Mumba

Proper meaning: Number
Slang expression: Samantha Mumba

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Mumba</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Tank</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apples and pears</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17. Samantha Mumba

This rarely used slang expression might have confused respondents, because it can be seen that apples and pears has appeared as a one of the responses. Beside this fact, up to 90% of the respondents know the correct answer and it is considerably a high number. As to the origin of this phrase, sources differ.
f) Brighton Pier

Proper meaning: Queer
Slang expression: Brighton Pier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brighton pier</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Fred</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiggle and Jog</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18. Brighton Pier

Expression often used in its shorten form Brighton was not created just so – it refers to the Sussex seaside town Brighton as a gay capital. It was first recorded in the 1950s; however the expression itself dates back to 1850s, when it rhymed with queer in the earliest sense – “ill”. (Puxley 2008)


g) Sweaty Sock

Proper meaning: Scot
Slang Expression: Sweaty sock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweaty sock</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiggle and Jog</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhole cover</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton Pier</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Sweaty Sock

This expression is popular as a taunt among English football players. A few of the respondents were from Scotland and one was witty and brave enough to add a short note to his answer about his residency: “Fort Williams, Scotland. Makes me a sweaty sock (Jock)”. It is obvious that this slang expression was created in order to insult people of Scotland who however show a decent amount of tolerance and sense of humour. (Puxley 2008)
h) Manhole Cover

Proper meaning: Brother
Slang expression: Manhole Cover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manhole cover</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Fred</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton pier</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiggle and Jog</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20. Manhole Cover

As in the “Jiggle and Jog” case, these two expression do not seem to rhyme, but the connection between them is to pronounce word “Brother” according to Cockney pronunciation rules (as a / brʌva/), and suddenly “Cover” and “Brother” seem to rhyme. This phrase is usually shortened to manhole. (Puxley 2008)

i) Uncle Fred

Proper meaning: Bread
Slang expression: Uncle Fred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Fred</td>
<td>76.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighton Pier</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhole Cover</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiggle and Jog</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweaty sock</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21. Uncle Fred

This expression is used mainly among children; its Australian form is Uncle Ned. (Puxley 2008)
j) Jiggle and Jog

Proper meaning: French
Slang expression: Jiggle and Jog

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiggle and Jog</td>
<td>70.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Fred</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweaty sock</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhole cover</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22. Jiggle and Jog

Without a knowledge of Cockney, this slang word would be hard to guess, because it is “double rhymed”. Jiggle and Jog does not rhyme with French, however, rhymes with “frog”, and the origin of the slang is quiet obvious. French are thought of as frog-eaters not only in the United Kingdom, so knowing this kind of etymology, you can figure out the proper meaning. (Puxley 2008)

7.3 Comprehension of the Text with the rhyming slang expressions

One of the features of the questionnaire I spread among Britons was a text containing expressions of the rhyming slang. Some of them were mentioned also in other questions, evaluated in the previous chapter. The purpose of the text was to test the speakers’ ability to understand a story told in Cockney. I decided to make their task simpler by giving them 4 possible answers, out of which one was correct.

Here is the preview of the text:

“You’ll never Adam and Eve what happened to me the other day. As I was walking down the frog and toad, I saw a tea leaf trying to steal a jam jar. Well, my jam tart was racing, so I rushed up the apples and pears and got on the dog and bone to the police, but the line was brown bread.” (Todd 2007, 67)
The results of the comprehension test where the speakers were to summarise the story can be found in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWERS OF RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A thief trying to steal a car</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much he loves dog bones</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This article is an excerpt from a cook book</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(apples and pears, jam jar...)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A thief trying to steal a jam jar</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23. Comprehension Test

This comprehension test clearly proves that the English speakers all around Britain are aware of the existence of the Cockney rhyming slang and are able to understand this simple story, although some of the proper expressions were replaced by phrases of the rhyming slang. Some of them, maybe as a prank, chose the answer considering this text to be about process of making jam because of numerous expressions regarding to various fruits. Positive fact is that up to 90% of polled people are able to figure out the meaning of the text despite the rhyming slang expression present. It proves that London Cockney is a well-known and wide-spread phenomenon and has not lost popularity since the last century.
CONCLUSION

The aim of this Bachelor thesis was to offer basic information on Cockney and to find out more about its current status and position among other British dialects.

Before I actually started to work on my thesis, I had to make a small research on my own – I had to find relevant sources for I could use. At the beginning, I was really excited as I could find quiet a lot of them (mostly online) and I have been immersed deep in all new information on English language that I learned from various web pages or books. The most suitable one appeared to be book by John Wells Accents of English: The British isles, Volume 2, that can be found accessible on internet; however only to some extent. Very useful were also web pages containing Rhyming Slang dictionaries and brief overviews.

The opening of the theoretical part introduced Cockney in general, with a brief historical overview, describing its development and basic grammatical features. A special chapter was dedicated to the inseparable Cockney feature - the rhyming slang as well. This part of the thesis deals with history of the rhyming slang and also some examples of the slang words are mentioned there.

According to the gathered data in the conducted questionnaire based survey, it was learned that Cockney is a strong linguistic phenomenon also in the present days. People of all ages, education levels and social groups proved that the thesis statement was correct. Cockney appears to be as successful as it was in the previous centuries. Its vocabulary is growing and the amount of its speakers is also rather high. People all around the Britain showed their awareness of the term Cockney and to some extent also knowledge of its history.

It has not been proved that Jafaican is replacing Cockney.
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APPENDICES

P I Questionnaire.
The following survey is being carried out among Britons, especially Londoners, to find out a degree of public awareness of London Cockney.

Please, take 2 minutes of your time to help me write my BSc thesis on Cockney. Thank you for your help. :)

* Required

**What is your age?**
- [ ] >20
- [ ] 20-30
- [ ] 30-40
- [ ] 40-50
- [ ] >50

**What is your gender?**
- [ ] Male
- [ ] Female

**Education:**
- [ ] Primary
- [ ] Secondary
- [ ] Tertiary

**Where were you born? Town/country?**
Where do you reside? Town/county? *

Are you aware of term “London Cockney”? *
- Yes
- No
- I have already heard of it, but don’t know exactly what it stands for

Do you consider yourself being a Cockney speaker? *
- Yes
- No

How often do you use Cockney dialect?
- Daily
- Weekly
- Occasionally
- Never

If you use Cockney dialect, in which situation do you do so?
- School
- Pub
- Work
- Family
- All the time
- Place doesn’t matter, I use Cockney only when speaking to my friends
- I use it only for fun
- I never use it

Do you happen to be ashamed of using Cockney?
- Yes
- Yes, sometimes
- No

State your reason:
In your opinion, is Cockney used more by older or younger people?
- Older (20 and above)
- Younger
- Hard to say

Do you think London Cockney is still alive?
- Of course it is, a lot of people speak Cockney
- Barely, it is slowly disappearing
- Does not exist in reality

Is the Cockney dialect popular?
- Yes
- No
- In some part of London
- For certain groups of people
- Media

Do you think that people speaking Cockney Dialect are also able to understand its Rhyming Slang?
- Absolutely yes
- Absolutely no
- Just few of them
- Majority of them

Please, match the following slang expression with their actual meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apples and Pears</th>
<th>Samantha Mumba</th>
<th>Adam and Eve</th>
<th>Bacardi Breezer</th>
<th>Tommy Tank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freezer</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stairs</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please, match the following slang expressions with their actual meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jiggle and Jog</th>
<th>Sweaty Sock</th>
<th>Brighton Pier</th>
<th>Brother</th>
<th>Bread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Queer</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Fred</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sock</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhole Cover</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You'll never Adam and Eve what happened to me the other day. As I was walking down the frog and toad, I saw a tea leaf trying to steal a jam jar. Well, my jam tart was racing, so I rushed up the apples and pears and got on the dog and bone to the police, but the line was brown bread. Author was talking about:

- A thief trying to steal a jam jar
- A thief trying to steal a car
- How much he loves dog bones
- This article is an excerpt from a cook book (apples and pears, jam jar...)

Are you aware of a new dialect called Jafaican?

- Yes
- No

Do you agree with claim that Jafaican is slowly replacing Cockney?

- Yes, but I don't care
- Yes, and it is a shame
- No, not at all
- They are kind of blending
- Don't know

London Cockney dates back to

- 15th century
- 16th century
- 17th century