变化中的英语导学

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电大英语专业本科导学系列丛书编委会

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前　言

　　"电大英语专业本科导学系列丛书"是人才培养模式改革和开放教育试点项目中以课程为单元的多种媒体教学资源一体化建设的有机组成部分。"导学"为文字辅导教材,与主教材及录音、录像、VCD、CAI、网络等多种媒体相辅相成,指导开放教育的学习者自主学习,并进行自我评价。同时,也可以供辅导教师参考使用。

　　"电大英语专业本科导学系列丛书"由中央广播电视大学外语部和全国电大英语教研中心组共同策划并制订编写方案。编写者都是全国电大开放教育第一线的英语教师,他们既熟悉教材又熟悉学生,这样,由他们所编写的材料具有实用性、针对性和可操作性;学习内容的设计力求新颖、真实、贴近生活;编写中把握"实用为主,够用为度"的原则,尽量不加重学习者的学习负担。

　　本导学系列丛书不同于传统意义上的教学辅导,是对现代远程开放学习环境下教学模式的实践和探索。在编排设计上突出"导、学、评"三个字。导即辅导(tutor)、指导(guide),根据每单元的话题,重点辅导学生在学习中遇到的疑难问题,进一步指导学生完成各项语言技能的评价。学即学习,包括学生自主学习(autonomous learning)、小组学习(group learning)和面授辅导课的学习活动。体现个性化学习方式和做中得学(learning by doing)的学习理念,通过完成相关的学习任务,保障学习过程的落实。评即评价(assessment),书中设计的各种评价项目,都与每单元的学习过程同步,可用于自我评价(self assessment)、同学互相评价(peer assessment)和教师评价(tutor assessment)。

　　《变化中的英语》具有如下两个方面的特点:第一,专业性强。从整体上来看,该教材基本上属于历史语言学的范畴,其中涉及到了与历史语言学有关的诸多方面的知识和概念。对于这些知识和概念,编者力求使其通俗化,然而由于内容本身具有极强的专业性,通俗的阐释其实并不能有效地解决学习者在学习过程中所遇到的困难与障碍,他们对所学的内容常常有一种陌生感和距离感。以"方言"(dialect)这一基本概念为例,在接触本教程以前,"方言"一词对他们来说一般意味着地理性方言,然而在本教程中,"方言"一词的外延还包括"历史方言"(historical dialect)、社会方言(social dialect 或 sociolect)、"个人方言"(individual language 或 idiolect)等,所有这些术语都会令学习者无所适从,而即使以专门的"变体"(variety)一词取而代之,学习者依然会有如坠云雾的感觉。第二,信息量大。在该书各单元中,都出现了大量的与历史语言学有关的专业性知识和概念,

就教学对象而言,这些概念不仅数量众多,而且大都是前所未闻的。尽管编者在解释过程中一直努力对这些概念进行通俗化讲解,但在讲解的同时反而使知识点更加分散,从而增加了理解和掌握的难度。凡此种种,无疑为教师的辅导与讲解以及学生的理解和掌握造成难以逾越的障碍。

正是基于上述思考,我们才编写了这本"导学"。本书的编写目的在于帮助学习者从整体上把握教材的内容,从而使他们更有效地将教材中涉及到的语言点和知识点谙熟于心。

本导学由两部分组成。第一部分为"学习导读",其中包括三项内容:"内容介绍"、"语言点注释"和"概念解释"。通过内容介绍,学习者基本上能全面了解本单元所学知识,从而对教材的内容形成一个整体的印象;语言重点和难点注释能帮助学习者熟悉并领悟和掌握重要词汇和惯用法的正确使用方法,这样能从一个侧面提高学习者的语言表达能力;概念解释是导学中最为重要的内容之一,只有充分了解和掌握这些概念,学习者才能把所学单元的内容贯穿起来,这一点是单元学习中不可或缺的环节。

第二部分是为学习者设计的训练内容,其中包括五个项目。第一项是问题讨论,讨论内容是本单元出现的语言点或基本概念,这一部分学习者可以单独完成,也可以以小组讨论的形式完成。第二项为写作练习,内容也与所学单元有关,根据要求,学习者应该根据所给出的题目撰写出两百单词左右的文章,撰写过程中可以参考各种资料,但必须用自己的语言进行表述。第三项为概念解释,其目的是帮助学习者对所学概念进行深化并最终理解和掌握。第四项为概念填空练习,其目的也是为学习者提供更多的复习机会,从而使其将所学内容烂熟于心。第五项是基本语言能力训练,其中包括语法词汇多项填空、段落综合填空和阅读理解,该部分练习的设计目的是为那些即将参加专业英语四级考试的学习者提供训练的材料。

在本导学编写过程中,我们参阅了大量的报刊书籍和网页资料,某些参考资料书后有所提及,但由于种种原因,我们无法将所有参阅的资料一一列出,只能在此对所有作者深表谢意。

由于编者水平有限,本书难免会出现这样或那样的不妥之处,恳切希望读者提出建议和意见。

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编　者
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Contents

Unit 1

Section 1   Learning Guide

I. Contents of the unit

This unit serves as an introduction to the new course. It tries to explain the fact that

1. Languages change as time passes by.
2. Languages change as people change.
3. Languages have different varieties in different places.

All languages, as we know, have been undergoing changes as time passes, i. e. every language has a history of its own although speakers of it are seldom aware of the changes as they are continually occurring. The changes are sometimes slow and sometimes fast, but they can become more dramatic after longer periods of time. This is of course also true of English. As Bernard Comrie puts it, modern English readers may require notes to understand fully the plays written by William Shakespeare during the late 16th and early 17th centuries and the English of 14th-century poet Geoffrey Chaucer differs so greatly from the modern language that most readers prefer a translation into modern English. The "Englishes" used in different historical periods are usually included in historical variations.

It is true that few of us know much about the historical changes of languages. It is also a fact that not many of us are clear about the number of those distinct languages being still used by people at present. Most experts estimate that there are between 4,000 and 5,000 languages in use in the world today. However, nobody can give the exact number because it depends on what counts as a dialect and what counts as a language; besides, some languages have disappeared, and we know nothing about them. To put it metaphorically, the disappeared languages are called "dead" because no one is using them now.

But why are languages disappearing? The most fundamental reason is increased contact among formerly isolated human societies. Languages need isolation to develop and to maintain their distinctive characteristics. When isolation ends, local languages tend to disappear together with the traditional ways of life and unique cultural identities associated

with them. (Bernard Comrie)

Narrowly considered, the individual language or idiolect of a person also changes. In the process of using languages, people keep adding to them and forgetting some parts of them. The rate of adding and forgetting is also not always the same. That is to say, we do not inherit our mother tongue from our parents. As we grow older, we meet different people and have different experiences. So, our language changes unnoticeably and there are differences between the languages used by different generations. As time goes by, the differences become greater and greater.

Languages have not only historical variations but also regional or geographical variations. Take English as an example, we can find variations of American English, British English, Australian English, African English and Singaporean English, and so on. It is generally noticed that even a native speaker of English from one place may not be able to understand the language spoken in another English speaking area or country.

The differences in regional variations exist chiefly in speaking. As far as Written English is considered, it scarcely differs from place to place. That is to say, people do speak English with regional dialects, but if they speak to well-educated people, no matter whether they use Received Pronunciation (RP) or Educated American English (Network English), they will be well understood.

What is stated above shows that language changes vary in different places and at different times. However, it is noticeable that the linguistic changes are not always even and steady. Sometimes they happen quickly, and sometimes slowly. What is also worth our attention is that the changes in language are correspondent to those in our lives. New words enter the language to match new experiences and the latter call for new expressions to have themselves crystallized.

Languages change for many reasons. One of the typical examples is found in the lexical changes due to borrowing. Studies show that many changes in one language can result from contact with other languages. Linguists use the terms borrowing and loan to refer to instances in which one language takes something from another language. The most obvious cases of borrowing are in vocabulary. English, for example, has borrowed a large part of its vocabulary from French and Latin. Most of these borrowed words are somewhat more scholarly, as in the word "human" (from Latin), because the commonly used words of any language are less likely to be lost or replaced. However, some of the words borrowed into English are common, such as the French word "very", which replaced the native English word "sore" in such phrases as "sore afraid", meaning "very frightened." The borrowing of such common words reflects the close contact that existed between the English and the French in the period after the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. (Bernard Comrie)

(Based on the Learning Guides by CRTVU)

II. Notes

1. She doesn't like jokey names for classroom subjects – these make her feel old, and shut out from the *company* of Tim's friends. (p. 10)

Tim is using students' slang in the conversation and Mrs. Robinson thinks it is disrespectful for Tim to use such unserious expressions as "stink" (for chemistry) and "bilge" (for biology). She also thinks Tim has kept her out of the company of his friends. This phenomenon shows the generation gap in linguistic communication.

The word company here means one's companions or associates, the state of friendly companionship, fellowship or a gathering of people. For example:

He kept me *company*. 他陪伴我。

I had no *company* on the journey. 我旅行中没有同伴。

"Two's *company*, three's none." 两人成伴，三人不欢。

A man is known by the *company* he keeps. 观其友知其人。

2. New words come into use. Old words are forgotten. (p. 10)

These two sentences tell us the fact that lexical changes have been occurring in a language. Here are some examples.

In English, the original meaning of harvest is autumn. But since autumn was borrowed from French, harvest began to be used to refer to gathering of crops.

Another example is found in the word Teflon. Teflon is a thin plastic coating. It was first discovered by the Du Pont chemist Dr. Roy Plunkett in 1938. As the slipperiest substance in the world, it is widely applied to industrial machine surfaces to reduce stress and is also applied to cooking utensils to render them non-stick. Not long ago, the word began to be used metaphorically, meaning slippery, immune to blame or responsibility. For example:

The *Teflon* presidency is ending with President Reagan at the top of the greased pole and his critics politically and legally in a frustrated heap at the bottom. (John Hall, *Richmond Times Dispatch*, January 8, 1989)

3. *My word* Tim! (p. 12)

"*My word*" is usually used to show one's great surprise. For example:

My word, what a nasty look she gave you!

Pay attention to the expressions similar in collocation but different in meaning:

upon *my word* (my word upon it): indeed, assuredly

Upon *my word*, I never heard of such a thing.

4. We play *rugger*, not *soccer*. (p. 12)

Rugger is a slangy word meaning rugby (橄榄球), a form of football in which players

on two competing teams may kick, dribble, or run with the ball and in which forward passing, substitution of players, and time-outs are not permitted.

Soccer (英式足球) is a game played on a rectangular field with net goals at either end in which two teams of 11 players each maneuver a round ball mainly by kicking or butting or by using any part of the body except the arms and hands in attempts to score points.

5. (*cuts* Mrs. Robinson *short* at this point) Don't worry about Tim. Learning Latin is quite hard－but it never *killed* anybody!

To cut somebody short is to interrupt somebody as in "The chairman had to cut short the proceedings."

To kill doesn't have its literal sense here. It means to exhaust or to tire out completely. For example:

The trip to work, and the boredom and nervousness of jobs, *kills* me. (Jimmy Breslin) 上班的往返、工作的乏味和紧张状态使人筋疲力尽。

Be careful about the use of "kill" in the following sentences:

Too much garlic *killed* the taste of the meat. 太多的蒜破坏了肉的味道。

The rain has *killed* the motor. 雨水使马达熄火了。

They had to *kill* a few hours before the flight by sightseeing. 他们在登机前观光消磨了几个小时。

My shoes are *killing* me. 我的鞋把我折磨死了。

The outstanding final *killed* the audience. 引人注目的决赛征服了观众。

6. Mark said he had trouble understanding the American English of the *Deep South*. (p. 18)

Deep South (南方腹地) refers to a region of the southeast United States, usually comprising the states of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

7. Ok or Okay (p. 26)

The word "okay" is known and used by millions of people all over the world. Still, language experts do not agree on where it came from.

Some say it came from the Indian peoples. When Europeans first came to the Americas they heard hundreds of different Indian languages. Many were well developed.

One tribe especially had a well developed language. This was the Chocktaw tribe. There farmers and fishermen who lived in the rich Mississippi valley in what is now the state of Alabama. When problems arose, Chocktaw leaders discussed them with tribal chief. They sat in a circle and listened to the wisdom of the chief.

He heard the different proposals, often raising and lowering his head in agreement, and saying, "Okeh," meaning "It is so."

The Indian languages have given many words to English. Twenty four of the American states－almost half－have Indian names－Oklahoma, the Dakotas, Idaho, Wisconsin,

Ohio and Tennessee. And the names of many rivers, streams, mountains, cities and towns are Indian.

Nevertheless, there are many who dispute the idea that "okay" came from the Indians. Some say President Andrew Jackson first used the word "okay". Others claim the word was invented by John Jacob Astor, a fur trader of the late 1700s who became one of the world's richest men. Still others say a poor railroad clerk made up this word. His name was Obadiah Kelly and he put his initials, O. K., on each package people gave him to ship by train.

So it goes; each story sounds reasonable and official.

But perhaps the most believable explanation is that the word "okay" was invented by a political organization in the 1800s.

Martin Van Buren was running for President. A group of people organized a club to support him. They called their political organization the "Okay Club." The letters "o" and "k" were taken from the name of Van Buren's home town, the place where he was born, Old Kinderhood, New York.

There is one thing about "okay" that the experts do agree on: that the word is pure American and that it has spread to almost every country on earth.

There is something about the word that appeals to the peoples of every language. Yet, here in America it is used mostly in speech, not in serious writing. Serious writers would rather use "agree," "assent," "approve," "conform" and so on.

In recent times, "okay" has been given an official place in the English language.

But it will be a long time before Americans will officially accept two expressions that come from "okay." These are "oke" and "okeydoke." (*Words and Their Stories*)

III. Important concepts

1. Dialect
The definitions of dialect can be simple or complex and here are two of them.

(1)

Variation of a spoken language shared by those in a particular area or a particular social or ethnic group. The term is used to indicate a geographical area (northern dialects or Brooklyn dialect) or social or ethnic group (African-American dialect).

Geographically, dialects are the result of settlement history. As populations spread over the land, some communities will have been separated by mountain ranges and rivers. In communities between which communication is difficult, differences in dialect can develop. The study of linguistic geography shows that the distribution of dialects is strongly associated with the topography of the landscape, dialect maps can in fact be drawn to

identify areas that share certain linguistic features.

Social factors also strongly influence dialect, the way one speaks depends on family, background, occupation, level of education, and so on.

– Hutchinson Encyclopedia

(2)

A dialect is a variety of a language spoken by an identifiable subgroup of people. Traditionally, linguists have applied the term dialect to geographically distinct language varieties, but in current usage the term can include speech varieties characteristic of other socially definable groups. Determining whether two speech varieties are dialects of the same language, or whether they have changed enough to be considered distinct languages, has often proved a difficult and controversial decision. Linguists usually cite mutual intelligibility as the major criterion in making this decision. If two speech varieties are not mutually intelligible, then the speech varieties are different languages; if they are mutually intelligible but differ systematically from one another, then they are dialects of the same language. There are problems with this definition, however, because many levels of mutual intelligibility exist, and linguists must decide at what level speech varieties should no longer be considered mutually intelligible. This is difficult to establish in practice. Intelligibility has a large psychological component: If a speaker of one speech variety wants to understand a speaker of another speech variety, understanding is more likely than if this were not the case. In addition, chains of speech varieties exist in which adjacent speech varieties are mutually intelligible, but speech varieties farther apart in the chain are not. Furthermore, sociopolitical factors almost inevitably intervene in the process of distinguishing between dialects and languages. Such factors, for example, led to the traditional characterization of Chinese as a single language with a number of mutually unintelligible dialects.

Dialects develop primarily as a result of limited communication between different parts of a community that share one language. Under such circumstances, changes that take place in the language of one part of the community do not spread elsewhere. As a result, the speech varieties become more distinct from one another. If contact continues to be limited for a long enough period, sufficient changes will accumulate to make the speech varieties mutually unintelligible. When this occurs, and especially if it is accompanied by the sociopolitical separation of a group of speakers from the larger community, it usually leads to the recognition of separate languages. The different changes that took place in spoken Latin in different parts of the Roman Empire, for example, eventually gave rise to the distinct modern Romance languages, including French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and Romanian.

In ordinary usage, the term dialect can also signify a variety of a language that is

distinct from what is considered the standard form of that language. Linguists, however, consider the standard language to be simply one dialect of a language. For example, the dialect of French spoken in Paris became the standard language of France not because of any linguistic features of this dialect but because Paris was the political and cultural center of the country. (Solveig G. Fisher)

– Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia

2. Variety and Variation in a Language

Variety is a term in sociolinguistics for a distinct form of a language. For example, American English, Legal English, Working-class English, Computer English, BBC English, Black English, South Asian English, Scientific English, and so on and so forth.

Varieties fall into two types: (1) User-related varieties, associated with particular people and often places, such as Black English and Canadian English. (2) Use-related varieties, associated with function, such as legal English and literary English.

Users and uses of English can be characterized in terms of variation in region, society, style, and medium. Regional variation is defined in terms of such characteristics as phonological, grammatical, and lexical features, as when American English is contrasted with British English. Social variation represents differences of ethnicity, class, and caste, as in Black English and Chicano English in the US and Anglo-Indian English in India. Stylistic variation is defined in terms of situation and participants (such as formal vs. informal usage, colloquial vs. literary usage) and function (as with business English and the restricted variety known as sea speak).

– The Oxford Companion to the English Language

Within a language, there are subdivisions traditionally known as dialects, increasingly as varieties, which are most commonly geographical but may also be social. A dialect is more than a simple difference of pronunciation. In the British Isles, many people speak the same dialect of English, but with different accents. Sometimes, one dialect becomes socially prestigious and is adopted as the norm; it is then usually referred to as the "standard" language. Social variation in language may be due to social class, ethnic origin, age, and/or sex, and within these, to the level of formality employed at any time. Sometimes this variation remains stable, but is often the forerunner of a change. Language shift usually appears as variation within a community, one variant increasing in frequency of use and in its distribution.

– The Oxford Companion to the English Language

3. Idiolect

An idiolect is a variant of a language or dialect unique to an individual. It is manifested by patterns of word selection and grammar, or words, phrases or idioms that are unique to that individual. (That is, every individual has an idiolect; the grouping of

words and phrases is unique, rather than individuals using specific words that nobody else uses.) An idiolect can easily evolve into an ecolect – a dialect variant specific to a household.

<div align="right">– Wikipedia Encyclopedia</div>

That is to say, the term "idiolect" is intended to mark the notion of a language which is not the language of a community (sociolect) but rather of an individual. Idiolects more than sociolects have been the focus of much philosophical interest in recent years because of the close connection between the language or meanings of an individual and his intentional states. Idiolects are the place where philosophy of language and philosophy of mind meet.

<div align="right">– The Oxford Companion to Philosophy</div>

4. Sociolect or Social Dialect

Sociolect is a blend of socio- and dialect. It is a social dialect or variety of speech used by a particular group, such as working-class or upper-class speech in the UK. To put it another way, it is a form of speech associated with a social class or similar group within a society, as opposed to a dialect in the ordinary sense, associated with a geographical place or region.

5. Educated English and Uneducated English

Educated English is also educated usage. It is the usage of speakers and writers of English who have been educated at least to the end of secondary level. The term is sometimes used as a synonym for Standard English. Social levels of English shade gradually into one another. But we can recognize three main levels. At the top is educated or Standard English; at the bottom is uneducated English, and between them comes the vernacular.

Uneducated English is that naturally used by people whose schooling is limited and who perform the unskilled labor in country and city. Certain grammatical features, such as the double or multiple negative are common to most regional varieties of American English.

<div align="right">– The Oxford Companion to the English Language</div>

6. Educated and Uneducated

Educated and uneducated are contrastive terms especially in sociology and linguistics, used to refer to people who have or have not had formal schooling, and to their usage. The contrast is often used to suggest a continuum (more educated/less educated), and there are three broad approaches to its use: (1) That the terms are self-evidently useful and do not risk either the self-esteem of the people discussed or the reputation of those engaged in the discussion. (2) That they can sometimes be helpful but should be used with care, because they are at least as much social as scientific judgments. A precaution often taken is to place

the terms in quotation marks: an "educated" speaker of English. (3) That they are best avoided unless they can be rigorously defined for certain purposes, because they risk oversimplifying or distorting complex issues and relationships and may in effect be euphemisms for distinctions of social class. The phrase an educated accent is widely used to denote the accent of someone educated to at least college level, and implying (especially in Britain) that such an accent is not marked as regional, lower-class, or non-standard.

<div align="right">– The Oxford Companion to the English Language</div>

7. Nickname

A nickname is an informal name used in place of, or together with, a formal name: for example, the short form Ed for Edward, or Lefty for someone left-handed. Nicknames are most common for persons, but are also used of places: the Big Apple for New York City, the Smoke for London, Mile-High City for Denver, Colorado, and the Eternal City for Rome. Nicknames tend to suggest that their user is on familiar terms with the bearer of the name, although the familiarity may be equivocal (affectionate, disdainful, defamatory, even a mix of these). A common form of nickname is a modification of the formal name by clipping alone (Ed for Edward), clipping and adaptation (Ted and Ned), clipping and diminutive suffix (Eddy/Eddie, Teddy, Neddy), sometimes with many variations (Eliza, Liza, Lisa, Liz, Lizzie, Betty, Bess, Beth, and Betsy for Elizabeth). On occasion, the modification can lead to an entirely different form, such as Polly from Mary and Peggy from Margaret. Another form of nickname is the descriptive epithet, on its own (Shorty for someone short, or ironically for someone tall; chalky, applied in BrE to someone whose surname is White; Bluebeard, someone with a beard dyed blue, or a menace to women, like the original holder of the nickname) or following the given name (Ivan the Terrible, Richard Lion heart). Nicknames are informally given, as opposed to the ritual naming ceremonies typical of formal names, as in christening ceremonies or launching ships. They have, however, sometimes been adopted as regular names, as with such surnames as Bright and Daft.

<div align="right">– The Oxford Companion to the English Language</div>

8. Academy of Language and Language Planning

By making the Language Planning, the Academy of Language attempts to control the use, status, and structure of a language through a language policy developed by a government or other authority. Normally carried out by official agencies, such planning usually passes through several stages: a particular language or variety of a language is selected; codification is undertaken to stabilize it, for example by agreeing writing conventions for previously non-literate languages; the codified language is adjusted to enable it to perform new functions, for example by inventing or borrowing scientific vocabulary; and mechanisms are devised, such as teaching syllabuses and procedures for

monitoring the media, to ensure that the language is used in conformity with the policy. This sequence is rarely appropriate for English, whose dominant role in the world gives it a unique position, but English is nonetheless officially planned into national education systems in various ways. In Britain, Welsh has been promoted through the National Curriculum in Wales as a subject to be compulsorily learnt within Wales, but is not compulsorily available to Welsh speakers or others outside Wales. In post-colonial nations the relationship of English to indigenous languages is often carefully defined: as the language of secondary and tertiary education in Tanzania while Kiswahili is the national language; as an official language recognized for legal purposes in India; as a library language in some subjects in some South American universities. Planning policy may be achieved through agencies at a number of levels in a state hierarchy. Governments may define their language policy throughout a country, ministries of education may define it within education, and institutions may contribute to planning through their own policies: for example, in the UK in the 1980s, local education authorities and individual schools attempted to define the roles of various especially migrant languages like Punjabi and Cantonese within particular regions or institutions.

– The Oxford Companion to the English Language

9. Acronyms and initials

Either acronym or initials refers to an abbreviation formed from the first letters of a series of words and pronounced as one word: NATO from North Atlantic Treaty Organization, pronounced "Nay-toe"; radar from radio detection and ranging, pronounced "ray-dar". Some lexicologists regard the acronyms as a kind of initials; others see it as contrasting with initials, in which case that term is restricted to abbreviations that are pronounced only as sequences of letters: for example, BBC as "bee-bee-cee". In this entry, acronyms and initials are treated as distinct.

– The Oxford Companion to the English Language

10. Accent

Accent refers to the way of speaking that identifies a person with a particular country, region, language, social class, or some mixture of these.

Accent refers to features of pronunciation, variations from standard grammar and vocabulary are dialects. People often describe only those who belong to groups other than their own as having accents and may give them special names for example, an Irish brogue, a Southern accent. In England, Standard English is not considered to identify the speaker's place of origin.

– Hutchinson Encyclopedia

11. Cockney

Cockney is spoken by working men and women living in the East End of London.