

1. Preparation

In preparation for the class I would like you to do the following assignment:

- a. Watch and record on video one (or more) of the following episodes of the BBC soap series *Eastenders*
 - Monday, 21.00-21.30, BBC1
 - Tuesday, 20.30-21.00, BBC 1
 - Thursday, 20.30-21.00, BBC 1
 - Friday, 21.00-21.30, BBC 1

Eastenders is set in an area of London that is well known for the Cockney accent that is spoken there. In the soap series some of the actors/characters have quite a broad Cockney accent, some speak somewhat less broad Cockney, a few have a different non-standard English accent and some hardly have any non-standard features at all.

- b. Listen carefully to the accents of the actors/characters in the episode(s) that you have recorded. Where you find their accent differs from the standard British accent, **try to explain in writing, as carefully as you can, how their accent differs from the standard.** A way of doing this would be to choose a number of words that the actor/character uses and to describe in what way(s) the words are pronounced differently.
- c. Bring your written list with findings to the class. Choose a clip from your recording which illustrates one or more of the non-standard features that you observed. Also bring the video tape with the recording to the class. We will watch in class some of clips that you have chosen for illustration, so please make sure that your video tape is right at the point where the clip starts.

2. Class (10.00-13.00)

In the class we will:

- discuss your findings on the Cockney accent;
- consider some of the features of a number of other English accents and dialects, including for example northern British varieties and Scottish English, on the basis of audio- and video material;
- consider the issue as to how we can describe the features of different accents and dialects;
- consider the question as to how the features of different accents and dialects may be explained (Where do these features come from? Why do we have different accents and dialects at all?)

At the end of the class you will be given an assignment.

3. Lunch (13.00-14.00)

4. Conducting the assignment (14.00-15.30)

5. Discussion of the assignment (15.30-16.30)

If you have any questions about the preparation work for the class, please do not hesitate to contact Laura Rupp at l.rupp@let.vu.nl.