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Ey up mi duck?

Awareness and commodification of local dialect in the East Midlands

The specific language used in the East Midlands can be hard to recognize (Braber 2015). Even people from the region find it difficult to pinpoint where exactly it is used. It appears that the East Midlands does not form a distinctive region in the mental maps of people outside the region – it is “neither here nor there” (Wales 2000: 7–8). An important reason for this may be that the East Midlands lacks representation in popular media. There are almost no soap operas, dramas or reality TV programmes set in the region and only few celebrities represent it.

This paper aims to examine the occurrence of East Midlands local dialect in a variety of pop cultures – such as literature, poetry and music, and how it has been represented to wider audiences, for example in dialect literature. At the same time, it will also examine the increase of commodification of local dialect in products sold in the region and how this can be used to illustrate which features of language are seen as being “local”.

Commodification of the local language is relatively recent in Nottingham and falls behind other varieties in the UK (see for example Beal 2000). There is now some merchandising available in local shops (and one shop *Dukki*, which specialises in such products with local slogans and words on mugs, pens, towels, etc.) but this is not yet found widely across the region.

References

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