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Dialects, Standards, and Vernaculars

Most of us have had the experience of sitting in a public place and eavesdropping on conversations taking place around the United States. We pretend to be preoccupied, but we can't seem to help listening. And we form impressions of speakers based not only on the topic of conversation, but on how people are discussing it. In fact, there's a good chance that the most critical part of our impression comes from *how* people talk rather than *what* they are talking about. We judge people's regional background, social stat us, ethnicity, and a host of other social and personal traits based simply on the kind of language they are using. We may have similar kinds of reactions in telephone conversations, as we try to associate a set of characteristics with an unidentified speaker in order to make claims such as, "It sounds like a salesperson of some type" or "It sounds like the auto mechanic." In fact, it is surprising how little conversation it takes to draw conclusions about a speaker's background – a sentence, a phrase, or even a word is often enough to trigger a regional, social, or ethnic classification.

Video: What an accent does

Assessments of a complex set of social characteristics and personality traits based on language differences are as inevitable as the kinds of judgments we make when we find out where people live, what their occupations are, where they went to school, and who their friends are. Language differences, in fact, may serve as the single most reliable indicator of social position in our society. When we live a certain way, we are expected to match that lifestyle with our talk. And when we don't match people's expectations of how we should talk, the incongruity between words and behavior also becomes a topic for conversation.

Language differences are unavoidable in a society composed of a variety of social groups. They are a "fact of life." And, like other facts of life in our society, they have been passed down with a peculiar mixture of fact and fantasy.

1.1   Defining Dialect

Given the widespread awareness of language differences in our society, j just about everyone has some understanding of the term "dialect." However, the technical use of the term in linguistics is different from its popular definition in some important but subtle ways. Professional students of language typically use the term DIALECT as a neutral label to refer to any variety of a language that is shared by a group of speakers. Languages are invariably manifested through their dialects, and to speak a language is to speak some dialect of that language. In this technical usage, there are no particular social or evaluative connotations to the term – that is, there are no inherently "good" or "bad" dialects; dialect is simply how we refer to any language variety that typifies a group of speakers within a language. The particular social factors that correlate with dialect diversity may range from geographic location to complex notions of cultural identity. Furthermore, it is important to understand that socially favored, or "standard," varieties constitute dialects every bit as much as those varieties spoken by socially disfavored groups whose language differences are socially stigmatized. The technical definition of dialect as a variety of a language typical of a given group of speakers is not rigorous or precise, but it is a sufficient starting point in discussing language variation.

1.2   Dialect: The Popular Viewpoint

At first glance, the differences between popular and technical uses of dialect seem inconsequential, but closer inspection reveals that its popular uses often carry assumptions that conflict with its technical meaning. At the same time, its popular use gives insight into how language variation is perceived in our society. Consider some commonly held beliefs about dialects conveyed in the following quotes:

1   "We went to Boston for a vacation and the people there sure do speak a dialect."
2   "I know we speak a dialect in the mountains, but it's a very colorful way of speaking."
3   "The kids in that neighborhood don't really speak English; they speak a dialect."
4   "The kids in this school all seem to speak the dialect."

In one popular use, the term "dialect" refers simply to those who speak differently from oneself (Quote 1 above). When the authors of this book were children, growing up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, respectively, they didn't necessarily realize that they spoke dialects; they presumed they spoke "normal" English and that dialects were spoken by people from other areas. Of course, we came to realize that this perception

could be a two-way street when we attended college in different states and classmates pointed out how different our dialects were to them.

The perception that only other people speak dialects is obviously shaped by personal experience, as one group's customary way of speaking often turns out to be another group's language peculiarity. Southerners use of *might could* in sentences such as *I might could do it* sounds strange to people from the North, but a sentence like *The ho use needs washed* sounds just as strange to people from the South even though it is perfectly "normal" to people in Western Pennsylvania and Ohio. Most people are surprised when they go to a different region and are told that they speak a dialect, since they take for granted that it is other people who speak dialects. But we all routinely speak dialects whether we recognize it or not. It is impossible, for example, to say a word like the THOUGHT vowel in *caught* or *bought* without choosing a pronunciation associated with some variety of English. Some people might pronounce *caught* the same as *cot*; others might use a "broken" or glided pronunciation like *cawt* closer to the MOUTH vowel, common in the rural South; and still others might use more of a stereotypical New York City pronunciation, as in something like *cowt* for *caught* or *cowffee* for *coffee*. No matter what, it is impossible to pronounce this word without selecting a vowel production associated with a dialect. Or, we may order a *soda, pop, coke, co-cola, tonic*, or *soft drink* along with our *submarine sandwich, sub, hoagie, grinder, torpedo* or *hero,* but we won't eat unless we make a dialect choice in ordering our sandwich and carbonated drink. Dialects are inevitable and natural, and we all speak them.

Exercise 1

Listen to the following audio clip of speakers pronouncing words with the THOUGHT vowel (i.e., *bought* and *talk*).

[Audio: Outer Banks experiment](#)

Based on his/her pronunciation of the THOUGHT vowel, where do you think each speaker is from? Which speaker's pronunciation is closest to your own pronunciation of the THOUGHT vowel?

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In another common use, the term "dialect" refers to those varieties of English whose features have, for one reason or another, become widely recognized—and usually stereotyped ("We speak a dialect."). In the United States (and beyond), people widely recognize a "Southern drawl," a "Boston accent,", or a New York City accent. If a language variety contains some features that are generally acknowledged and commented upon, then it may be recognized as a dialect even by the speakers themselves. If someone keeps telling you that you speak a dialect, after a while you start to believe that you

do. Thus, native New Yorkers often believe that they speak a dialect, because their dialect has become a topic of widespread public comment in American society. Similarly, speakers of an Appalachian dialect, or "Mountain Talk," might recognize that they speak a dialect because of the caricatures and comments that so often appear in the media. On the other hand, the same perception does not hold true of middle-class residents of Ohio or Oregon whose speech does not receive popular attention. For a variety of historical and social reasons, some dialects have become much more marked than others in American society, and speakers of those varieties may therefore accept the dialect label assigned to their speech.

In the most extreme case ("don't really speak English; they speak a dialect") dialect is used to refer to a kind of deficient or "corrupted" English. In this case, dialect is perceived as an imperfect attempt to speak "correct" or "proper" English. If, for example, members of a socially disfavored group use phrases like *three mile* instead of the *three miles*, or *Her ears be itching* instead of *Her ears always itch*, it is assumed that they have attempted to produce the standard English sentence but simply failed. The result is incorrectly perceived as a "deviant" or "deficient" form of English. Based upon the careful examination of the structures of these varieties, however, dialectologists have demonstrated that dialects are *not* deviant forms of language, but simply different systems, with distinct subsets of language patterns. When we talk about language patterning, we are referring to the fact that language features are distributed in systematic and orderly ways rather than used randomly. That is, for any given language feature, systematic rules govern where it may be used. The appendix of the book describes many of the patterns or "rules" that apply to the use of different dialect forms.

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Exercise 2
An Exercise in Dialect Patterning

In rural dialects of the United States, including in Southern Appalachia, some words that end in *-ing* can take an *a-*, pronounced as *uh*, attached to the beginning of the word (Wolfram 1980, 1988). We call this *a-* prefixing because the *–a* attaches to the front of the *-ing* word. The language pattern or "rule" for this form allows the *a-* to attach to some words but not to others. In this exercise, you will figure out this fairly complicated rule by looking at the kinds of *-ing* words that *a-* can and cannot attach to. Use your inner feelings, or "gut reactions," about language. These inner feelings, called INTUITIONS, tell us where we *can* and *cannot* use certain structures. As linguists trying to describe a dialect, our task is to figure out the precise structural reasons for these inner feelings and to state the exact patterns that characterize the usage pattern.

Look at the sentence pairs in **List A** and decide which sentence in each pair sounds better with an *a-* prefix. For example, in the first sentence pair, does it

sound better to say *A-building is hard work* or *She was a-building a ho use*? For each sentence pair, j just choose one sentence that sounds better with the *a-*.

List A: Sentence pairs for a- prefixing

1 a _____   Building is hard work.
   b _____   She was building a house.
2 a _____   He likes hunting.
   b _____   He went hunting.
3 a _____   The child was charming the adults.
   b _____   The child was very charming.
4 a _____   He kept shocking the children.
   b _____   The story was shocking.
5 a _____   They thought fishing was easy.
   b _____   They were fishing this morning.

Examine each of the sentence pairs in terms of the choices for the *a-* prefix and answer the following questions.

Do you think there is some pattern that guided your choice of an answer? You can tell if there is a definite pattern by checking with other people who did the same exercise on their own.
Do you think that the pattern might be related to parts of speech? To answer this, see if there are any parts of speech where you *cannot* use the *a-* prefix. Look at *-ing* forms that function as verbs and compare those with *-ing* forms that operate as nouns or adjectives. For example, look at the use of *charming* as a verb and as an adjective in sentence 3.

The first step in figuring out the pattern for the *a-* prefix is related to the part of speech of the *-ing* word. Now let's look at another difference related to prepositions such as *from* and *by*. Based on the sentence pairs in **List B**, state whether or not the *a-* form can be used after a preposition. use the same technique you used for **List A**. Select the sentence that sounds better for each sentence pair and say whether it is the sentence with or without the preposition.

List B: A further detail for a- patterning

1 a _____   They make money by building ho uses.
   b _____   They make money building houses.
2 a _____   People can't make enough money fishing.
   b _____   People can't make enough money from fishing.
3 a _____   People destroy the beauty of the mountains through littering.
   b _____   People destroy the beauty of the mountains littering.

We now have another detail for figuring out the pattern for *a-* prefix use related to prepositions. But there is still another aspect to the pattern of *a-* prefix use. This time, however, it is related to pronunciation. For the following *-ing* words, try to figure out what it is about the pronunciation that makes one sentence sound better than the other. To help you figure out the pronunciation trait that is critical for this pattern, the stressed or accented syllable of each word is marked with the symbol ´. Follow the same procedure that you did above and choose the sentence in each pair that sounds better.

List C: Figuring out a pronunciation pattern for the a- prefix

1 a _____   She was discóvering a trail.
   b _____   She was fóllowing a trail.
2 a _____   She was repéating the chant.
   b _____   She was hóllering the chant.
3 a _____   They were fíguring the change.
   b _____   They were forgétting the change.
4 a _____   The baby was recognízing the mother.
   b _____   The baby was wrécking everything.
5 a _____   They were décorating the room.
   b _____   They were demánding more time off.

Say exactly how the pattern for attaching the *a-* prefix works. Be sure to include the three different details from your examination of the examples in **Lists A**, **B**, and **C**.

In **List D**, say which of the sentences may take an *a-* prefix. use your understanding of the rule to explain why the *-ing* form may or may not take the *a-* prefix.

List D: Applying the a- prefix rule
1 She kept handing me more work.
2 The team was remémbering the game.
3 The team won by playing great defense.
4 The team was playing real hard.
5 The coach was charming.

There have been heated debates in American society about the linguistic integrity of socially disfavored language varieties at various us times over the past half-century. For example, during the late 1960s and 1970s, there were many debates in educational circles over the so-called "DEFICIT–DIFFERENCE CONTROVERSY," with language scholars arguing passionately that dialect variation was simply a matter of *difference*, not *deficit*, while some educators argued that variation from the socially accepted standard constituted a

fundamental deficiency in language. In the mid-1990s, the debate flared up again, this time centered on the stat us of the ethnic variety African American English, or Ebonics, as it was referred to in this debate. This time, the controversy even spread as far as a US Senate subcommittee hearing on the topic and state legislation about the legitimacy of this variety in school settings.

When dialect differences involve groups that are unequal in their power relations, it is quite common for the PRINCIPLE OF LINGUISTIC SUBORDINATION to come into operation (Lippi-Green 2012:70) and for the language varieties of subordinate social groups to be relegated to subordinate linguistic status. When this happens, "ordinary" people feel insecure about their linguistic usages and come to rely on the authoritative guidance offered by language "experts"—those well known for good writing or familiarity with prescribed rules. In the process, misinformation about the presumed *linguistic* logicality and clarity of *socially* preferred forms may be perpetuated in order to validate evaluations of linguistic usages and language varieties that are actually grounded in social inequities. Most of us were instructed to avoid double negatives such as *She didn't do anything* because "logic" dictates that two negatives equal a positive. In reality, though, language doesn't work like math, and what we are really being taught is to avoid using language structures associated with the language varieties used by socially disfavored speakers. (In fact, in some other languages, for example Spanish, French, and Italian, double negatives are perfectly acceptable, indeed the only way to form negative sentences "correctly."). When the dialects of socially disfavored groups become subordinated to the language forms preferred by the "right" people, non-mainstream dialects are trivialized or marginalized, and their speakers considered quaintly odd at best and willfully ignorant at worst. Furthermore, linguistic subordination comes with explicit promises and threats; opportunities will arise when we use a "standard" variety and doors will close when we speak a socially disfavored one. According to this principle, the speech of a socially subordinate group will be interpreted as linguistically inadequate by comparison with that of the socially dominant group.

Linguists, who study the intricate patterning of language apart from its social evaluation stand united against any definition of dialect as a corrupt version of the standard variety. Thus, a resolution adopted unanimously by the Linguistic Society of America at its annual meeting in 1997 asserted that "all human language systems – spoken, signed, and written – are fundamentally regular" and that characterizations of socially disfavored varieties as "slang, mutant, defective, ungrammatical, or broken English are incorrect and demeaning."

When the term "dialect" is used to refer to a kind of corrupt or unworthy English, it obviously carries very strong negative connotations. A clause such as "but it's a very colorful way of speaking," as in Quote 2 above, may soften the negative associations, but such statements must be made explicit to

mitigate the commonly held assumption that some dialects aren't as good as others. Typically, the popular use of the term dialect carries connotations ranging from mildly to strongly negative.

Finally, the term "dialect" may be used popularly to refer to a specific, socially disfavored variety of English. A person speaking a recognized, socially stigmatized variety of English may be said to speak "the dialect" ("The kids…speak the dialect"). Such designations have, for example, been used to refer to the speech of low-income African Americans or rural Appalachians as a kind of euphemistic label for the varieties spoken by these groups. With the inclusion of the definite article, "the dialect" functions more like a proper noun than in the generic, neutral sense in which the term is used by linguistic scientists.

1.3   Dialect Myths and Linguistic Reality

What do these popular uses of the term "dialect" say about the general public's perception of dialect, especially as it differs from the neutral technical definition presented earlier? As the preceding discussion points out, there is a popular mythology about language differences that is at odds with the linguistic facts about language diversity. Following are some of these myths, as they contrast with linguistic reality:

MYTH: A dialect is something that *someone else* speaks.

REALITY: Everyone who speaks a language speaks some dialect of the language; it is not possible to speak a language without speaking a dialect of the language. Some dialects get much more attention than others, but this social recognition is unrelated to dialect status.

MYTH: Dialects result from unsuccessful attempts to speak the "correct" form of a language.

REALITY: Dialect speakers acquire their language by adopting the speech patterns of those around them, not by failing in their attempts to adopt mainstream language features. Dialects, like all language systems, are systematic and regular; socially disfavored dialects can be described with the same kind of linguistic precision as socially favored, prestigious language varieties.

MYTH: Dialects in the United States are receding due to the influence of the mass media and population mobility.

REALITY: Dialects are dynamic; while some once-isolated dialects are receding, others are intensifying and diversifying. While island dialects on the Eastern coast of the United States are receding, new dialects on the West Coast are developing, for example in California, Oregon, and

Washington. In addition, major United States dialect divisions, especially that between the North and the South, are deeper and the dialects are becoming more rather than less different from one another.

MYTH: Speaking a dialect limits a person's ability to express precise ideas and abstract constructs.

REALITY: All language systems enable the expression of precision, complexity, abstractions, and artistry.

Though most dialect myths have negative connotations, there are occasional positive associations, though these are often based on idealized, rather romanticized notions of "quaint" or "pure" dialects. For example, some people believe that dialects in historically isolated regions, such as those in the Appalachian Mountains and in the islands along the Southeastern coast of the United States, preserve Elizabethan or Shakespearean English. Though some features from older forms of English may endure in these varieties, these dialects are constantly undergoing change as well. In fact, sometimes small, relatively isolated dialects may change more rapidly than more widespread language varieties. Language is a dynamic phenomenon, and the only static variety of language is, in reality, a dead one.

[Video: Old English myth](#)

As we see, the popular uses of the term "dialect" strongly reflect the attitudes about language differences that have developed in the United States over the centuries. For this reason, some groups of educators and language scientists prefer to avoid the use of the term dialect, using terms such as "language difference," "language variety," or "language variation" instead. Regardless of the label, we still have to confront the significant discrepancy between the public perception of linguistic diversity and the linguistic reality. In fact, given popular attitudes about dialect diversity, there is a good chance that whatever euphemism we use will eventually take on the kinds of pejorative connotations that are associated with the current popular uses of the term dialect. Throughout this book, we will use the term dialect in its linguistically neutral sense and confront the issue of public education about language diversity as a separate matter. For the time being, it is sufficient to set forth the technical and popular uses of the dialect label and see how its popular uses have come to reflect some predominant attitudes and beliefs about dialect diversity in American society.

1.4   Standards and Vernaculars

In the preceding discussion, it was difficult to avoid some reference to the dialect of English often referred to as STANDARD AMERICAN ENGLISH or MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH. The notion of a widespread, normative variety, or "standard dialect," is an important one, but it is not always easy to define in a precise way—especially for American English. In some countries, such as France and Spain, language academies have been established and these institutions are responsible for determining what forms are considered acceptable for the normative "standard." They determine, for example, which new words are allowed to be included in official dictionaries and which grammatical forms and pronunciations are to be recognized as standard. In the United States we do not have such an institution, and various attempts to establish this type of agency have failed repeatedly (Heath 1976). Labels such as "standard English" and popular terms such as "correct English," "proper English," or "good English" are commonly used but not without some ambiguity. At best, we can discuss how the notion of Standard American English, or Mainstream American English, is used and then offer a reasonable definition of the term based on how it seems to operate practically in our society.

Exercise 3

Common popular labels for what we call SAE or MAE are "correct English," "proper English," "good English," and "grammatical English." What do these labels tell United States about the public perception of standard dialects in terms of the myths about dialects we discussed above? What do they say about the ideology that informs the interpretation of dialects in our society? By LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY here, we mean ingrained, unquestioned beliefs about the way the world is, the way it should be, and the way it has to be with respect to language. What implications do these terms have for those dialects that are considered "corrupt," "bad," or "ungrammatical" versions of the standard?

   Before we get too far into this discussion, we should note that language standardization of some type seems inevitable, whether or not there are specific institutions for establishing language norms. Ultimately, we can attribute this to underlying principles of human behavior in which certain ways of behaving (dressing, speaking, treating elders, and so forth) are established as normative for a society.
   As a starting point, it is helpful to distinguish between how the notion of standardness operates on a formal and informal level. In formal standardization, language norms are prescribed by recognized sources of authority, such as grammar and usage books, dictionaries, style guides

produced by publishers, and institutions like language academies. In the United States, we don't have a language academy, but we have many grammar and usage books and websites, and well internet grammar sites that people turn to for the determination of "proper" forms. The key words here are "prescribed" and "authority," so that the responsibility for determining standard forms is largely out of the hands of most ordinary speakers of the language. Whenever there is a question as to whether or not a form is considered standard English, we can turn an "authoritative" guide. If, for example, we have a question such as to where to use *will* vs. *shall*, we simply look it up in our usage guide, which tells us that *shall* is used for first person questions (*Shall I go?*) and *will* is used in other contexts (*He will go*). At that point, the question of a particular usage is often settled.

FORMAL STANDARD ENGLISH, or PRESCRIPTIVE STANDARD ENGLISH, tends to be based on the written language of established writers and is typically codified in English grammar texts. It is perpetuated to a large extent in formal institutions, such as schools, by those responsible for English language education. It also tends to be conservative and resistant to changes taking place within the language, and for some features, the prescribed usage will border on obsolescence. For example, the subjunctive use of *be* in sentences such as *If this be treason, I am a traitor* is a structure that is largely obsolete, yet this use can still be found in some prescriptive grammar books. Similarly, the maintenance of the singular form of *data* as *datum*, or even the *shall/will* distinction, has largely disappeared from spoken language, but it is still prescribed in many usage guides and maintained in written language. As set forth, formal standard English is most likely to be exemplified in impersonal written language and the most formal kinds of spoken language occasions, especially where spoken language has been written first.

If we took a sample of everyday, ordinary conversational speech, we would find virtually no speakers who consistently speak the variety of English prescribed in grammar books. For example, one of the prescribed formal English rules prohibits the use of a pronoun following a subject noun, as in *My mother, she took me to the movies*, and many teachers will correct children who use this form. Yet we have documented these same teachers using sentences such as *The students who returned late from recess yesterday and today, **they** will have to remain after school* within a few minutes of correcting children for using similar types of sentences. The point of these ill lustrations is not to expose as hypocrites those who assume responsibility for perpetuating English language norms, but to show that the prescribed formal variety is, in reality, not maintained consistently in natural spoken language. Does this mean that standard English does not exist in our society, and that we should stop talking about this variety as if it were a real entity? On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence that people in our society make judgments about other people's speech, including evaluations of "correctness" and "standardness" based on every day, natural speech. So there appears to be

another, more informal level, of standardness that operates in American society.

INFORMAL STANDARD ENGLISH, is much more difficult to define than formal standard English because we can't simply refer to a prescriptive authority. A realistic definition has to take into account the actual kinds of assessments that people make as they judge other speakers' levels of standardness. As a starting point, we m must acknowledge that the informal notion of standardness exists on a continuum, with speakers ranging along the continuum between the standard and nonstandard, or vernacular, poles. Informal standard English is a continuo us rather than categorical notion and speakers may be judged as more or less standard. For example, speakers may be placed at different points on a standard–nonstandard continuum as in figure 1.1, with Speaker **A** using few, if any, nonstandard forms, and Speaker **E** using many.

Figure 1.1   A continuum of standardness

Ratings not only exist on a continuum, but they can be fairly subjective and flexible as well. Based on different experiences as well as different regional and social dialect backgrounds, one listener may rate a particular speaker as standard while another listener rates the same speaker as nonstandard. For example, a Northern-born middle-class African American might rate a Southern white speaker as nonstandard, while a native of the South might rate the same speaker as standard. By the same token, a person from the Midwest might rate a native of New York City as nonstandard while another New Yorker might rate the same speaker as standard. Further, preconceptions and prejudices about how different groups of people are expected to speak come into play as well. For example, people may judge the *same voice* as "standard" or "nonstandard" depending on which video image it is paired with (e.g. a European American vs. African American face).

Though there is certainly a subjective dimension to the notion of standardness, there tends to be consensus us in rating speakers at the more extreme ranges of the continuum. Thus, virtually all listeners will rate Speaker **A** in Figure 1.1 as a standard English speaker and Speaker **E** as a nonstandard English speaker. On the other hand, there might be considerable difference in the ratings which Speakers **B** and **C** receive in terms of a simple classification into standard or nonstandard categories. Furthermore, we have found that the classification of speakers at the extreme poles of the continuum (such as Speakers **A** and **E**) tends to be consistent regardless of the socioeconomic class and education level of the speaker.

Classifications of standardness will also be somewhat flexible with respect to the specific features of the regional variety being judged. Thus, the merger of the THOUGHT and LOT vowels of words like *caught* and *cot* and their distinct pronunciation will not typically have an effect of a rating of standardness, and people may *go to the beach*, *go to the shore*, or *go to the ocean* for a summer vacation without fear of being stigmatized. On this informal level, the notion of standardness is a pluralistic one, at least with respect to pronunciation and vocabulary differences within Standard American English (SAE), or as we prefer to refer to it in this book, Mainstream American English (MAE). Regional standards exist for the South, for the Midwest, for the West Coast, and for New England, though they may differ in terms of the particular items.

What is it about a speaker's dialect that is critical in determining whether the speaker will be judged as standard or not? There is no simple answer to this question, and people tend to give overall impressions, such as "quality of voice," "tone of expression," or "correct grammar," when they are asked to explain their judgments. Despite the vagueness of such responses, there do seem to be a few relatively specific criteria that people use in judging a person's speech as standard. For one, MAE seems to be determined more by what it is *not* than by what it is. To a large extent, American English speech samples rated as standard by a cross-section of listeners exhibit a range of regional variation in pronunciation and vocabulary items, but they do *not* contain grammatical structures that are socially stigmatized. If native speakers from Michigan, New England, and Arkansas avoid the use of socially stigmatized grammatical structures such as "double negatives" (e.g. *They didn't do nothing*), different verb agreement patterns (e.g. *They's okay*), and different irregular verb forms (e.g. *She done it*), there is a good chance they will be considered standard even though they may have distinct regional pronunciations or lexical items. In this kind of assessment, informal standard American English is defined in more of a negative than a positive way. In other words, if a person's speech is devoid of socially stigmatized structures, then it is considered standard.

The definition of informal standard English as a variety free of stigmatized features tends to be supported by an additional observation about Americans' attitudes toward dialects. For the most part, Americans do not assign strong positive or prestige value to any particular dialect of American English. The basic contrast in the United States exists between negatively valued dialects and those without negative value, not between those with prestige value and those without. Curiously, Americans still assign positive value to British dialects, which are not even viable options for wide-scale use in the United States and Canada. It is difficult to say exactly why Americans look upon British English so favorably, but one possibility is a lingering colonial effect. If so, this demonstrates how enduring traditional language attitudes can be, even a couple of centuries after the United States gained its independence from British rule. Americans, in commenting on different dialects of American English, are much more likely to make comments about nonstandardness

("That person doesn't talk correct English") than they are to comment on standardness (e.g. "That person really speaks correct English"). The notion of a standard is certainly operative in American society on an informal level, but it differs considerably from the formal standard English norm that is often taught as *the* standard. For the purposes of our discussion throughout this book, we will refer to this more informal definition of the standard language rather than the formal one, since it is the informal version that has a more direct bearing on our everyday lives. In this book, we prefer use the MAE because it doesn't carry some of the associated connotations that SAE does, though labels cannot be stripped of the social valuation embedded in ideologies about language.

Exercise 4

There are a couple of levels of standards that seem to be noticeable to people when they listen to speech. We don't usually comment on MAE, but we may comment on a person's speech if it is not considered standard. It is, however, possible to call attention to speech because it sounds too formal or "proper." Forms that are too standard for everyday conversation are sometimes referred to as HYPERSTANDARD ENGLISH. In the following sets of sentences, identify which sentences characterize (1) vernacular or "nonstandard" (2) informal standard English or MAE, and (3) hyperstandard English. What forms in the sentences are responsible for your assessment? Are there any sentences you're not sure about? Why?

1 a He's not as smart as I.
  b He's not so smart as I.
  c He ain't as smart as me.
  d He not as smart as me.
2 a He's not to do that.
  b He not supposed to do that.
  c He don't supposed to do that.
  d He's not supposed to do that.
3 a I'm right, ain't I?
  b I'm right, aren't I?
  c I'm right, am I not?
  d I'm right, isn't I?
4 a If I was going to do that, I would start right now.
  b If I were going to do that, I would start right now.
  c Were I to do that, I would start right now.
  d I would start right now, if I was going to do that.
5 a A person should not change her speech.
  b One should not change one's speech.
  c A person should not change their speech.
  d A person should not change his or her speech.

Why do people sometimes comment about other people's speech because it sounds too proper?

1.5   Vernacular Dialects

Varieties that seem to be typified by the use of structures that are not mainstream or "standard" will be referred to in this book as VERNACULAR DIALECTS. The term is used in much the same way that the term *vernacular language* is used to refer to local or native languages of common communication which contrast with the official language or languages of a country. Vernacular varieties have often been referred to as "nonstandard" or "nonmainstream" dialects, but we prefer the term *vernacular* because it seems more neutral than these alternatives.

As with standard dialects of English, there are a number of different social and regional factors that go into the labeling of a vernacular, and any attempt to define a vernacular dialect on a single dimension is problematic. Vernacularity, like standardness, exists on a continuum so that particular speakers may exhibit speech which is more or less vernacular. Thus, Speaker **D** in Figure 1.1 may or may not be classified as a vernacular dialect speaker, but we can expect a consensus of listeners to recognize Speaker **E** as a representative of some vernacular variety. Even listeners who themselves speak vernacular varieties tend to identify paradigmatic speakers of vernacular dialects in a way that is analogous to the way that we can identify representatives of standard dialects.

Unlike standard varieties, which are largely defined by the *absence* of socially disfavored structures of English on an informal level, vernacular varieties are typically characterized by the *presence* of socially conspicuous structures – at least to speakers of MAE who do not typically use them. In other words, vernacular varieties are the converse of standard dialects in that an assortment of marked nonstandard English structures sets them apart as being vernacular. Not all speakers of a given dialect necessarily use the entire set of structures associated with their dialect, and there may be differing patterns of usage among speakers of the variety. In fact, attempts to isolate *the* common core of structures for a particular vernacular often lead to heavily qualified, imprecise descriptions. In Chapter 7, we will discuss the notion of ETHNOLINGUISTIC REPERTOIRE, where a fluid set of linguistic resources can be used to index linguistic identity of members of an ethnic group, offering an alternative to defining a unitary system that characterizes a community of vernacular speakers.

We can summarize the features that set apart standard dialects and vernacular dialects as follows:

FORMAL STANDARD: applied primarily to written language and the most formal spoken language situations; objective standards prescribed by language "authorities"; standards codified in usage books, dictionaries, and other written materials; conservative outlook on language forms.

INFORMAL STANDARD/MAINSTREAM ENGLISH: applied to spoken language; determined by actual usage patterns of speakers; listener judgment essential in determining socially acceptable norms; multiple norms of acceptability, incorporating regional and social considerations; defined negatively by the avoidance of socially stigmatized linguistic structures.

VERNACULAR: applied to spoken language; determined by usage patterns of speakers; listener judgment essential in determining social unacceptability; Usage defined by the presence of a set of socially stigmatized linguistic structures.

Since both formal and informal standard varieties are usually associated with socially favored, mainstream groups, they are socially respected in American society, but since vernacular varieties are associated with socially disfavored groups, they are not considered socially respectable. This association, of course, simply reflects underlying values about different social groups in our society, a product of the principle of linguistic subordination. In the final analysis, the social unacceptability of vernacular varieties is not about language *per se*, but about the valuation of the people who speak vernacular dialects.

1.6 Labeling Vernacular Dialects

Although the choice of a label for a particular vernacular language variety may seem relatively unimportant, it can become a very important consideration when the broader social, political, and cultural considerations associated with naming are taken into account. For example, in the past half century, the vernacular dialect associated with African Americans has had the following labels, given here in approximate chronological sequence: *Negro Dialect*, *Substandard Negro English*, *Nonstandard Negro English*, *Black English*, *Afro-American English*, *Ebonics*, *Vernacular Black English*, *African American (Vernacular) English,* and *African American Language*. And believe it or not, this is not a complete list. On one level, one can correlate some of these name changes with changes in naming practices that have taken place in American society. But there are also more subtle dimensions, such as the choice between African American Language versus African American English. In this instance, the term "language" is used because of the legitimacy ascribed to languages as opposed to dialects. Furthermore, there are often strong emotional associations related to particular labels. The label *Ebonics*, originally introduced in the early 1970s, gained great notoriety in the mid-1990s in connection with a highly publicized resolution by the Oakland

Unified School District Board of Education. As a result of the controversy, the label evoked many negative comments and derogatory parodies (Ronkin and Karn 1999). Labels are always tricky because it can be difficult to delimit their referents in a precise way and because they may carry such strong emotional connotations. Terms for vernacular dialects, like other aspects of behavior, do not exist in an ideological vacuum and often reflect underlying attitudes about social and linguistic differences and divisions, including the linguistic subordination of vernacular dialects, as well as the social inequities underlying this subordination.

In this text, we use the term AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH (often abbreviated AAE) to refer to a variety spoken by and considered to index the ethnic heritage and cultural identity of many people of African descent in the United States. The term actually encompasses a number of sub-varieties, since there is variation in African American English based on region, social class, and style, among other factors. We choose this label chiefly because of its neutrality and its widespread usage in current linguistic scientific studies, while recognizing that other labels may be equally appropriate, or perhaps more so, for different purposes (e.g. for promoting African American cultural heritage or sociopolitical equality). Our choice of label should not be taken as any sort of statement regarding whether AAE should be considered a "language" or a "dialect," since the distinction between "language" and "dialect" cannot be made on purely linguistic grounds but is intricately tied to sociopolitical and sociocultural considerations. In addition, decisions as to whether a particular variety constitutes a language in its own right can change over time. In recent decades in the former Yugoslavia, Serbo-Croatian, once regarded as a single language, has come to be regarded as at least three separate languages: Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian, largely as a result of recent political rather than linguistic changes.

Parallel to the term "African American English," we use the term "African American" to refer to people of African descent in the United States, most often those with historic or cultural ties to the slave trade. It is not easy, however, to determine the precise population(s) covered by the label "African American." It is unclear whether the term should be applied to recent immigrants from Africa and their families; it is also not clear whether it includes those from North Africa (e.g. Egypt) or only those from Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, many African Americans self-identify as "Black" rather than, or in addition to, "African American." Further, the classification of particular people as "African American" may be different in different regions or among different social groups and may change over time; and people may even feel different degrees of "African-American-ness" in different situations – for example, when talking with family members about ethnically sensitive issues vs. participating in a classroom discussion about linguistics with people of various ethnicities.

Labels for other ethnic and social varieties of English are introduced in subsequent chapters with definition and discussion where appropriate. The

United States has always been a country of rich ethnic and social diversity, and it is important to recognize and gain greater understanding of the many cultures and language varieties that have shaped American society and American English and continue to shape them today.

1.7   Why Study Dialects?

There are a number of reasons to study dialects. To begin with, our natural curiosity is piqued when we hear speakers of different dialects. If we are the least bit interested in different manifestations of human behavior, then we are likely to be intrigued by the facets of behavior revealed in language. We have become accustomed to, if somewhat wary of, the responses of people at casual social gatherings when people find out that we study dialects for a living. Such responses range from challenges to identify where people originally come from (guaranteeing instant credibility) to the question of why particular groups of speakers talk as they do. Furthermore, it is not uncommon to encounter individuals from varied walks of life who profess an interest in dialects as a "hobby" simply because dialects are so fascinating to them. As discussed at length above, any speaker of a language can make observations about and comments on variation within that language, but these observations are often clouded by pervasive and unfounded beliefs and assumptions regarding the nature of dialect variation. Thus, it is important to approach the study of dialect variation, whether formal or informal, from an informed perspective – one in which the regularly patterned nature and linguistic equality of all language varieties and their speakers is recognized as a fundamental fact from which all other observations should follow. On the one hand, language variation is so transparent that it can be assumed that most speakers of English will readily notice these differences. Not only do people notice language diversity; they feel free to make pronouncements about the status of these language differences, creating a good-news-bad-news scenario in which natural observations about language diversity are often accompanied by uninformed opinions espoused as fact. In one form or another, most professional students of dialects have simply cultivated the natural interest that resides within us all.

    As a manifestation of human behavioral differences, dialects may be studied because they provide the opportunity to extend social science inquiry into language, a quite natural application for fields such as history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, cultural studies and geography. One of the most extensive series of studies ever conducted on the dialects of American English, the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada*, carefully charted the geographical distribution of various forms in American English as a kind of DIALECT GEOGRAPHY. At the same time, these studies attempted to trace the English settlement patterns of America through language differences, as a kind of history. Further, these studies noted the

distribution of forms in different social categories of speakers as a kind of sociology. It is easy to see how dialect differences can be seen as a natural extension of a number of different fields within the social sciences since these differences are so integrally related to all aspects of human behavior.

Other studies have shown how the cultural and historical heritage of particular cultural groups has been maintained through their dialects, such as the cultural detachment historically linked with regions such as Appalachia and the island communities along the Eastern seaboard of the United States – for example, Tangier Island off the coast of Virginia, the Outer Banks off the coast of North Carolina, or the Sea Islands along the South Carolina and Georgia coast. From this perspective, interest in dialects may derive from a basic concern with humanities studies such as folklore, history, and English.

Motivation for studying dialects may naturally go beyond social science inquiry and the description of different social and ethnic heritages. In some cases, dialect differences may be studied as a part of growing self- or group awareness. Members of a particular social group may seize upon language differences as a part of their identity and sense of place. It is no accident that language and gender issues have become an important topic in the last several decades, as attention has been drawn to gender-differentiated social roles and asymmetrical power relations based on sex and gender in our society. Similarly, a rise of interest in African American English coincided with the general development of cultural consciousness in other spheres of life in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The emphasis on the identificational issues surrounding English dialect variation might strike members of the majority population or socially dominant cultural groups as somewhat overstated, until we realize how central language is to the identification of self and group. Issues of nationalism and identity often come to a head over language, as demonstrated by the attention paid to the issue of French versus English in Canada or the status of the Dutch-based language Afrikaans in South Africa. Language issues reflect deeper issues related to political and ethnic self-determination. In these cases, the conflicts are not about language *per se*, but the power of language to serve as a proxy for broader sociopolitical and cultural issues. The transparency of language as cultural behavior makes it an ideal stage for acting out much more fundamental issues and conflicts among different groups in society.

In the United States, the notion of American English itself was strongly tied to nationalism historically. Noah Webster, the parent of generations of English dictionaries, issued the declaration that "as an independent nation, our honor requires United States to have a system of our own, in language as well as government" and that "a national language is a bond of national union." In this context, studying American English as compared with British English might be motivated by a feeling of patriotism and loyalty to the United States. It is easy to compile an extensive list of cases in which nationalism and group consciousness movements were motivating factors for studying languages and dialects.

In linguistics, the study of dialect differences might be justified on a theoretical basis. Scholars may examine language variation in an effort to understand the basic nature of language as a cognitive and human phenomenon. This theoretical concern may range from the investigation of how language changes over time and space to how language reflects and affects the cognitive capabilities of a speaker of a language. In this context, the examination of dialects may provide an essential and unique database. William Labov, a pioneer in modern sociolinguistics, articulated a linguistic scientific motivation for studying dialects in the published version of his doctoral dissertation, *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*, when he stated that "my own intention was to solve linguistic problems, bearing in mind that these are ultimately problems in the analysis of social behavior" (Labov 1966: v–vi; see also the second edition of this book, published in 2006). Empirical data from the study of dialects thus may contribute to our understanding of some central issues concerning the nature of language variation. For example, data from the study of variation within language increase our understanding of the kinds and amount of variation which may be contained within a single language and those which may not.

Finally, there is a practical, applied motivation for studying dialects. Many students in education and the health professions have become interested in dialects because of the "usefulness" of the information as it relates to another primary activity such as teaching, health care, legal issues, and so forth. Virtually all fields of education focus on language-related activities, including reading, language arts, and language service professions such as speech and language pathology, have recognized the need to understand both general principles governing language differences and specific descriptive details of students' dialects. In fact, in one landmark legal case in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1979, the judge ordered teachers to attend workshops on dialects because of the potential impact of such information on the interpretation of reading behavior by vernacular-speaking students. Similarly, a widely publicized resolution adopted by the Oakland School Board in 1996 maintained that an understanding of the vernacular variety spoken by African American students should be used as a bridge for teaching proficiency in standard English. In the early 2000s, several widely publicized cases of "linguistic profiling" once again raised the issue of discrimination based on dialect differences (Baugh 2003). Speakers identified as African American over the telephone were informed that apartment vacancies were already filled, while European American callers were invited to visit the advertised vacancies. Such cases remind us that language and dialect discrimination in one form or another is still a social and legal problem in American society.

After reading the previous paragraphs, we might wonder if there is any justifiable reason for not studying dialects. The glib answer to this question is, "Probably not!" However, when we consider the full range of reasons for studying dialects, as well as the fact that there is a rich historical tradition underlying each motivation, it is easy to see why there are scholars who feel

that knowledge about dialects should be as fundamental as any other traditional topic covered in our education.

Exercise 5

In *linguistic profiling,* vocal cues are used to identify the probable ethnicity or social affiliation of a person (often over the telephone) and then acting on the basis of this ethnic identification. Such linguistic profiling, with potential subsequent discrimination against those profiled as belonging to the "wrong" ethnic or socioeconomic group, can happen in many contexts, especially in employment and housing. It is estimated that between two to four million cases annually of linguistic discrimination related to housing (between 6000 and 15,000 cases per day) take place in the United States, a violation of the Fair Housing Act: Sec. 804. [42 U.S.C. 3604 b] that states that it is unlawful "To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status, or national origin."

Watch the advertisement about linguistic profiling produced by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in consultation with sociolinguist John Baugh, at

Video: Linguistic profiling

Have you experienced or heard about experiences involving linguistic profiling? If so, discuss your observations. What kinds of differences in profiling might occur when people hear voices they judge to belong to non-native speakers of English versus native speakers of vernacular dialects of English?

1.8   A Tradition of Study

There is a longstanding tradition of collecting and studying data on variation in English, guided by the motivations cited above. As we already mentioned, some of the earliest collections of American English were concerned with those aspects of American English that set it apart from British English, particularly with respect to vocabulary. Vocabulary is one of the most transparent ways in which dialects differ, and vocabulary studies are a common way in which dialect differences are profiled. Typical of relatively early works on dialect differences was John Pickering's 1816 work entitled *A Vocabulary, or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been Supposed to be Peculiar to the United States of America to which is Prefixed an Essay on the Present State of the English Language in the United States*. Some of the

early studies of the dialect structures of American English *vis-à-vis* British English were based largely on vague impressions, but others represented fairly meticulous and exhaustive approaches to the cataloging of dialect differences. In addition, politicians and social leaders often became involved in language issues. Benjamin Franklin suggested an early spelling reform, and John Adams proposed an academy for establishing an American standard as differences between British and American English began to emerge and the social and political implications of this divergence were considered.

As the United States became securely independent, the focus changed from the relationship between American and British English to the diversity within American English itself. The American Dialect Society was formed in 1889 for "the investigation of English dialects in America with regard to pronunciation, grammar, phraseology, and geographical distribution" (Grandgent 1889). This concern with geographical distribution coincided with a period of fairly widespread migration and resettlement and was motivated by a strong historical rationale, as dialectologists began to fear that the original American English dialects would fade away as old boundaries to intercommunication were erased. As we shall see later, this has hardly been the case, and some modern dialect boundaries still reflect the earliest European American settlement patterns. The initial hope of the American Dialect Society was to provide a body of data from which a dialect dictionary or series of linguistic maps might be derived. A considerable amount of data towards this end was published in the Society's original journal, *Dialect Notes*, but it was not until 1928 that a large-scale systematic study of dialect geography was undertaken, titled the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada*. Along with the historical goals already mentioned, this survey aimed to correlate dialect differences with different social classifications, an incipient stage in the development of a field of study that would blossom fully several decades later. A comprehensive set of *Linguistic Atlas* surveys for different areas of the United States and Canada was proposed and the initial survey of New England undertaken. As one of the nation's initial areas of settlement by English speakers, New England was a logical starting place, given the project's focus on historical settlement patterns. Fieldworkers combed the region looking for older, lifetime residents from whom they might elicit particular items of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Quite typically, the fieldworkers ended up recording up to ten or twelve hours of elicited forms. Of course, in the early stages these recordings consisted of on-the-spot phonetic transcriptions without the aid of any mechanical recording equipment. Some of this work is still ongoing, with appropriate technological upgrading. Over a century after the establishment of the American Dialect Society, one of its major goals has finally been realized, namely, the publication of the *Dictionary of American Regional English* (Cassidy 1985; Cassidy and Hall 1991, 1996; Hall 2002, 2012, 2013). The entire dictionary was finally completed in 2012, more than a half century after the surveys started. This much-heralded, comprehensive work dates its modern history to 1962, when

Frederic G. Cassidy was appointed general editor. It taps a wealth of data sources, including its own extensive dialect survey of the United States, the various *Linguistic Atlas* projects, and the publications of the American Dialect Society, among others. The American Dialect Society remains a small but active organization concerned with language variation in American English. Each year in January, when it announces its annual "Word of the Year" award, the organization receives its "15 minutes of fame" in national media attention. Its regular publication of the quarterly journal, *American Speech*, has been a staple of dialectology for more than three-quarters of a century.

William (Bill) Labov, the undisputed pioneer of the field of language variation over the past half-century, has now published with his colleagues (Labov, Ash, Boberg 2006) the *Atlas of North American English* (ANAE), the most comprehensive pronunciation-based survey ever published to complement other surveys, providing a rich base of data about language variation in North America.

The Atlas of North American English

Beginning in the 1960s, research on dialects in the United States started focusing more specifically on social and ethnic variation in American English than on regional variation. Part of this emphasis was fueled by a concern for language-related social problems, particularly problems related to educational issues concerning America's lower social classes. Some linguistic descriptions of vernacular dialects such as African American English and Appalachian English became the basis for programs which sought to remedy educational inequalities. The use of sociolinguistic data and engagement of sociolinguists in addressing social and educational problems remains a continuing concern. For some investigators, however, following the pioneering work of William Labov, the fundamental nature of linguistic variation as a theoretical issue in linguistics became a rationale for sociolinguistic inquiry. Although some current investigators motivate their dialect studies exclusively on a theoretical basis, the more typical rationale combines theoretical and applied or social perspectives. Since the 1970s there has been an unprecedented proliferation of studies of vernacular varieties of English. In fact, by 1974 (Brasch and Brasch) over 2,400 entries related to African American speech were listed, while another annotated bibliography of Southern American English (McMillan and Montgomery 1989) listed over 3,800 works, the majority of which relate to the vernacular dialects of the South. A more recent annotated bibliography (Rickford, Sweetland, Rickford, and Grano 2013) dedicated to the role of vernacular language varieties in education includes more than 1,600 references pertaining to the application of knowledge about language variation. The range of vernacular dialects considered over the past several decades has been extended to include both urban and rural varieties of American English, as well as English varieties developed from contact situations with other languages. Both newly developing and older, vanishing varieties of English

are included in this focus. Indeed, no vernacular dialect seems safe from descriptive scrutiny, and no social or ethnic group is assured of sociolinguistic anonymity given the current state of dialectology in the United States.

Methods of data collection and the kind of data considered necessary for adequate analysis have also shifted drastically during the past several decades. Casual conversation has become a key source of data for analysis, replacing the earlier emphasis on direct probes to elicit particular forms. Some fairly creative techniques were devised to enhance the possibility of recording good "naturalistic" data, aided by advancing technology in audio and video recording equipment. In addition, more careful and systematic attention has been given to an array of social and interactional factors, ranging from membership in broadly defined social groups (e.g. ethnic groups, gender groups) to the relationships and practices of members of localized groups who share network ties and common practices, to the social, relational, and sociopsychological factors that affect individuals' speech in unfolding conversational interaction. Such developments naturally were aided by perspectives from other fields in the social sciences such as psychology, anthropology, and sociology. In addition, researchers in recent decades have been making increasing use of data from various media sources (e.g. film, internet), as well as compiling and utilizing large computer-searchable data collections.

Advances in the analysis of data now incorporate more rigorous quantitative methods, including the use of state-of-the-art automated search and analysis methods, statistical procedures, and mapping techniques. At the same time, increasing emphasis is now being placed on developing and implementing methodologies that will yield results superior to those achieved by impressionistic observations and anecdotal evidence concerning the patterning of isolated language forms. A traditional dialectologist, frozen in the time frame of a half century ago, would hardly recognize what constitutes dialect study today. The underlying motivations for studying dialects in the present day may be well established in the historical record, but the field has undergone some profound changes in its focus and methods. Finally, current dialect study is characterized by more of an "entrepreneurial" spirit than in the past. Specialists in different areas of dialect study have carved out productive and useful niches for the application of information gleaned from the study of dialects, ranging from educational applications as noted above, to dialect training programs for actors projecting different regional and social roles, to consultation services offering the analysis of language features for various legal purposes. And the range of applications for dialect study continues to expand.

1.9   Further Reading

Bauer, Laurie, and Peter Trudgill (eds.) (1998) *Language Myths*. New York: Penguin. This collection of articles exposes myths about language and language diversity that are perpetuated in popular culture. Among the myths relevant to this book (each discussed in its own chapter) are "New Yorkers can't talk properly," "Black Americans are verbally deprived," "Southern speech is slovenly," and "Shakespearean English is spoken in the mountains."

Labov, William (1972d) The logic of nonstandard English. Chapter 5 in *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 201–40. This influential article, which appears as a chapter in Labov's *Language in the Inner City*, deals with basic misconceptions about vernacular dialects. Historically, it was a critical argument for the linguistic integrity and conceptual adequacy of vernacular dialect. It has been reprinted in numerous anthologies, including the *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1972) under the title "Academic ignorance and Black intelligence."

Lippi-Green, Rosina (2012) *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States,* second edition. New York/London: Routledge. Lippi-Green offers an insightful description of linguistic subordination that ranges from language ideology in the United States to institutional and personal discrimination based on language differences. The second edition includes a useful companion web site where various audio and video vignettes offer important supplements to the text.