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The Names of Us English: Valley Girl, Cowboy, Yankee, Normal, Nasal, and Ignorant

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THE NAMES OF US ENGLISH:
 VALLEY GIRL, COWBOY,
 YANKEE, NORMAL, NASAL
 AND IGNORANT

Laura C. Hartley and Dennis R. Preston

1 Standard US English

A commonplace in United States (hereafter US) linguistics is that every region supports its own standard; none is the locus (or source) of *the* standard. Historically that is a fair assessment, for no long-term centre of culture, economy and government has dominated in the US. Falk puts it this way:

In the United States there is no one regional dialect that serves as the model. What is considered standard English in New York City would not be considered standard in Forth Worth, Texas. Each region of the country has its own standard.

(Falk 1978:289)

It is doubtful, however, that non-linguists in the US believe that there is no region which is more (or less) standard than others. Falk's position is a confusion of a sophisticated linguistic relativism, deriving from well-intentioned attempts to debunk notions of so-called primitive and deficient linguistic systems, with what she believes to be popular perception. The latter, of course, is the point which deserves investigation, for, at least in the US, it is not linguists who define language standards.

Other introductory texts propose a mysterious, nonexistent variety:

SAE [Standard American English] is an idealization. Nobody speaks this dialect; and if somebody did, we wouldn't know it because SAE is not defined precisely. Several years ago there actually was an entire conference devoted to one subject: a precise definition of SAE. This convocation of scholars did not succeed in satisfying everyone as to

what SAE should be. The best hint we can give you is to listen to national broadcasters (though nowadays some of these people may speak a regional dialect).

(Fromkin and Rodman 1983:251)

From this it is clear that Fromkin and Rodman contrast the standard with regional varieties, and they earlier show that they find some regional varieties distinctly non-standard:

It is true that many words which are monosyllabic in Standard American are disyllabic in the Southern dialect: the word *right*, pronounced as [rayt] in the Midwest, New England, and the Middle Atlantic states and in British English, is pronounced [rayt] in many parts of the South. [N.B.: This pronunciation is, in fact, not disyllabic. Why a centering glide, not there in most varieties of Southern speech anyway, produces two syllables and a rising one does not is a mystery to us.]

(*ibid.*: 249)

Fromkin and Rodman here come much closer to a popular description of a standard as their own prejudices peek through. SAE exists in the Midwest, New England and the Middle Atlantic states (and even British English is sanctioned), but the South does something else—by implication, not standard. Falk would correctly accuse Fromkin and Rodman of linguistic prejudice, but a legitimate search for the source and locus of SAE will have to consider just such prejudices. What non-linguists believe constitutes precisely that cognitive reality which needs to be described—one which takes speech community attitudes and perceptions into account.

Fromkin and Rodman err by stating personal folk beliefs cloaked in the mantle of linguistic expertise. If they want to report what attitudes people hold about varieties, they should make it clear either that they have that information from research or that they cite it as their own belief (or what they suspect about others' beliefs). To do otherwise confuses scientific reporting with linguistic prejudices. At least Langacker appears to be citing what he believes many people may believe (albeit without documentation) when he observes the following:

British English enjoys special favor in the eyes of many Americans. Boston English is considered by many people to be more prestigious than Southern speech or Brooklynes.

(Langacker 1973:55)

This must be true for Fromkin and Rodman, for they believe that some Southern vowels, despite their use by educated and uneducated speakers alike, are not standard.

More recent introductions to general linguistics do not contain such glaring errors as those cited from Fromkin and Rodman, but, like Falk, they continue to exhibit the linguist's laudable but unfortunately minority relativistic

attitude towards the question of standardness and geographical variety. In O'Grady et al. (1993), for example, one is told the following:

While sociolects are defined by linguistic differences associated with definable social groups in a single geographical area, regional dialects are associated with the linguistic traits shared by social groups in a single geographical area.

(O'Grady et al.: 426)

We might ignore the linguistic inaccuracy here, for, as Trudgill (1995:29) points out, the general rule of regional distribution is that the lower the social status, the greater the regional difference, but it is difficult to excuse the continuing linguistic ignoring of the fact that social ('standard', 'correctness') issues of language for non-linguists have clear geographical correlates. Again, linguists are simply not making clear the distinction between their professional attitude and the prevailing popular one. Although one might not criticise geologists, chemists or astronomers, for example, for failing to make folk beliefs about their areas of study explicit, perhaps even in introductory texts, in a 'human science' like linguistics, it seems far less reasonable to exclude a careful explication of the tension between the scientific and folk views.

Language attitude studies have explored affective dimensions of diversity, beginning by sampling attitudes towards different languages (Lambert et al. 1960) and moving on to different varieties of the same language (see, for example, Tucker and Lambert 1969). Giles and associates (summarised in Ryan and Giles 1982) have investigated a large number of reactions (to taped voices) and have suggested a general pattern: speakers of regional varieties (where that implies non-standardness) find speakers of their own varieties warm, friendly, honest, sympathetic and trustworthy, but often slow, unintelligent and plodding; they regard speakers of the standard as cold, dishonest and unsympathetic, but quick, intelligent and ambitious. To the extent that listeners find their own varieties less prestigious, they suffer from what Labov (1966) called 'linguistic insecurity'. Some of this insecurity doubtless has its source in speakers' awareness of the fact that the local variety will not serve extra-regionally. That is, it will not convince outside listeners that the intelligence, education and authority of the speaker or writer are high, and it will not, therefore, inspire confidence in the content of some messages. There are exceptions: information of the sort most likely to be delivered in a local or non-standard variety (street-wise facts, farming information, sports calls and expressions, hunting and fishing facts) might, indeed, be seen as more trustworthy if delivered in a non-standard variety, but the evaluation of other ('intellectual') characteristics of the speaker would continue to be low.

Language-attitude studies confirm, then, that regional varieties are not all equal, even when only phonological features are contrasted (that is, when lexicon and grammar are not variables). Such findings help establish the basis for another perspective on varieties, an essential one for languages with no clear-cut standard model—an account of what speakers of various regions (and classes and sexes and ethnic groups and ages and so on) believe about linguistic variety. Language-attitude surveys hope to avoid the observer's paradox (Labov 1972), which here includes the effect awareness has on respondents' reactions to, as well as on their performances of, language. The general approach taken here—generally 'folk linguistics', more specifically 'perceptual dialectology'—seeks to discover, on the other hand, the overt categories and definitions speakers have of such linguistic matters.¹

2 The perception of regional variety

Folk dialectology first intrigued Europeans, who sought the degree of difference which respondents felt existed between their home areas and nearby ones (see, for example, Rensink 1955). That work has had a continuing influence in Europe (see, for example, Daan and Blok 1970; Kremer 1984) and in Japan (see, for example, Grootaers 1959).

Preston began looking at such data from a purely dialectological point of view (see, for example, Preston 1982) by asking respondents to draw and label US speech areas on a relatively blank map. He soon found, however, inspired partly by the labels which are the focus of this paper, that there was more *pre*-scripture than *description* in such folk accounts and began seeking data other than respondent beliefs about where different varieties exist. Several of these approaches and findings are summarised here.

If, for example, speakers are presented with the task of identifying the areas of the US where the most 'correct' English is spoken, how will they respond? If they are all relativists like Falk, they will simply indicate that the task cannot be done, claiming that each area supports a standard. If, however, as Fromkin and Rodman show and Langacker claims, they have regional linguistic prejudices, they will readily rank areas of the country for language correctness. If Langacker is right, there should also emerge some preference for 'British' speech (however that may be represented) and a preference for Boston over Brooklyn and the South; if Fromkin and Rodman's prejudices are widely represented, a preference for Eastern and Midwestern speech over Southern should also emerge.

Additionally, if the studies by Giles and associates apply to US varieties, one might also find that speakers who consider their accents to be 'non-standard' (i.e. who suffer from linguistic insecurity) will rank their home areas lower for correctness. On the other hand, since Giles and his associates found that there was a decided preference for the local area along affective dimensions, one should find such a preference for the local area in a ranking task

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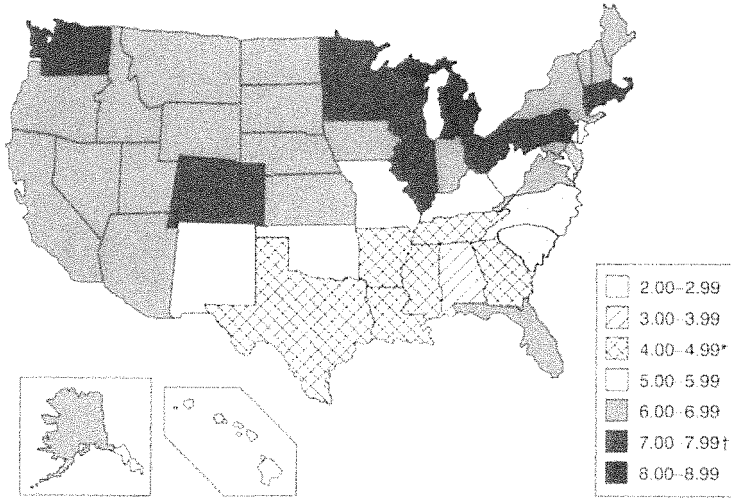


Figure 9.1 Mean scores for language 'correctness' by MI respondents for US English (on a scale of 1 to 10:1 = least correct and 10 = most correct)

Note: * New York City
 † Washington, DC

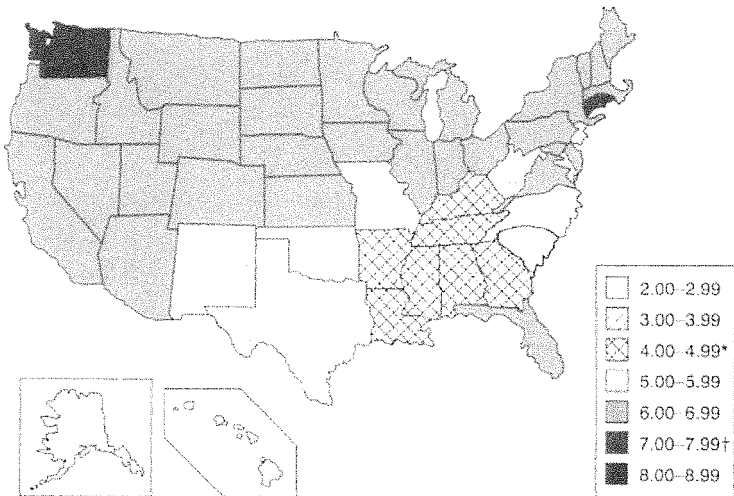


Figure 9.2 Mean scores for language 'correctness' by IN respondents for US English (scale as in Figure 9.1)

Note: * New York City
 † Washington, DC

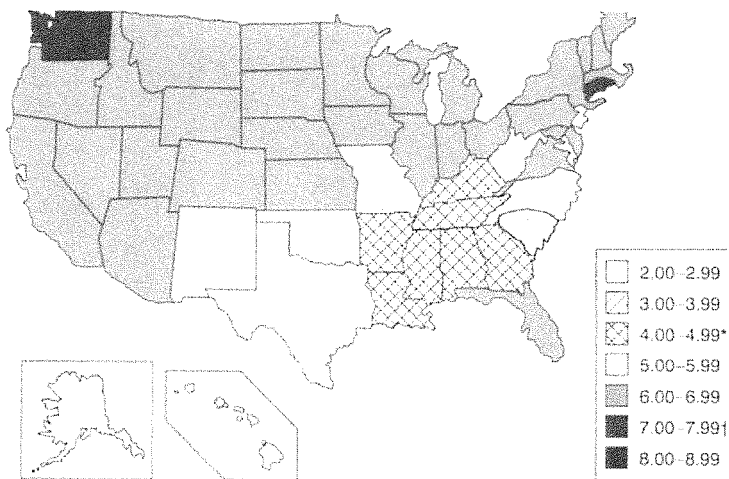


Figure 9.3 Mean scores for language 'correctness' by S respondents for US English (scale as in Figure 9.1)

Note: * New York City
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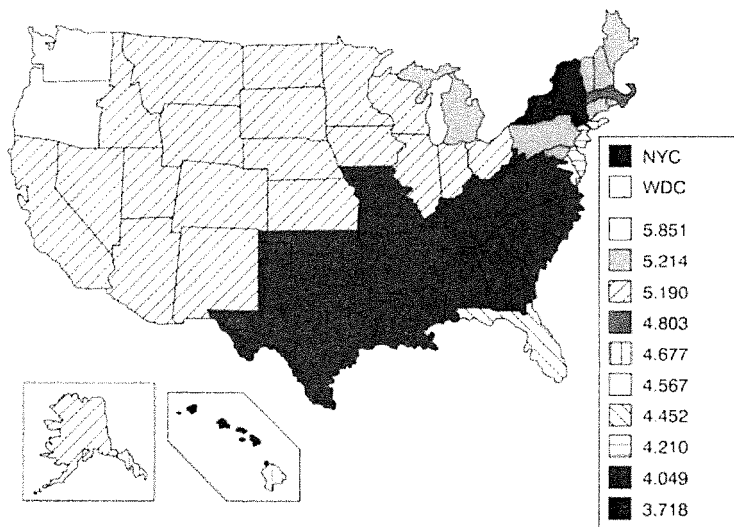


Figure 9.4 Regions ranked for language 'correctness' by OR respondents (based on a scale of 1 to 7; 1 = least correct and 7 = most correct)

Note: * New York City
 † Washington, DC

which asks where the most 'pleasant' variety is spoken. Figures 9.1 to 9.8 summarise findings from 'correct' and 'pleasant' ratings of US speech areas by respondents from the four areas which will be the focus of this chapter. The following abbreviations are used: MI for southeastern Michigan, IN for southern Indiana, S for the South, and OR for Oregon.²

These folk evaluations of US English mirror the finding from many language attitude studies that there are two sorts of admired language. The first is the standard, prescribed, educated variety; the second, the often proscribed but cosy home style of one's own area (see, for example, Ryan et al. 1982:8). A linguistically secure region like MI assigns evaluations as shown in Figure 9.1. For MI residents, the best English is spoken in the Great Lakes area, most specifically in MI itself; the worst is in the South—the farther south and the more central, the worse.

Figure 9.2 shows correct ratings from IN, an area of considerably less linguistic security, due, no doubt, to its proximity to the prejudiced-against US South. Local speech is not bad, but it is not so uniquely correct as the linguistically secure MI raters believe theirs is. IN speakers see themselves as part of a huge, apparently undifferentiated, more-or-less correct northern and western area of the entire country. Doubtless southern IN speakers are eager to cut themselves off from the nearby stigmatised South, showing that the traditional dividing line of the Ohio River is still powerful for the folk, in spite of the minor role it plays in traditional dialect studies.

The Southern map of correctness (Figure 9.3), however, does not reveal an unequivocal pattern of linguistic insecurity. Some Southerners do not find themselves any less well-spoken than the southern IN respondents did, giving SC, NC, VA and WV ratings (see Appendix for full forms of abbreviated state names) in the 6.00–6.99 range and, even though 'homeland' parts of the South are rated low (5.00–5.99), these ratings are assigned to many 'non-southern' parts of the country. New York City (NYC) and NJ are the only big Northern losers, but such ratings are ubiquitous. The interesting 4–00–4.99 incorrectness zone seen here is the 'western' South—MS, LA and TX. In summary, although their linguistic insecurity is supported by the low home-area scores, Southerners 'deflect' some of this 'correctness insecurity' by assigning similar low scores to a large area (including areas outside the South) and by finding an even 'worse' South (the western areas).

Finally, as Figure 9.4⁴ shows, OR is only very slightly different from MI, allowing only neighbouring WA to bask in the relatively unique glory of its 'correctness'.

'Pleasantness' ratings often reverse these patterns. Figure 9.6 shows that the linguistically insecure IN respondents rate their own territory as uniquely pleasant, just as the MI raters did theirs for correctness. They do not, however, rate southern states any lower for pleasantness than they do northern states, a hint that, in their heart of hearts, they know that there is southernness on their tongues. In contrast, Figure 9.5 shows that the linguistically secure MI

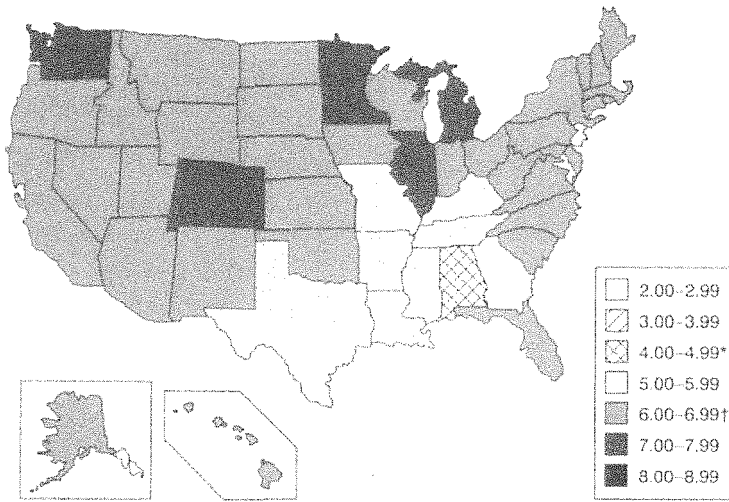


Figure 9.5 Mean scores for 'pleasant' English by MI respondents (ratings as in Figure 9.1)

Note: * New York City
 † Washington, DC

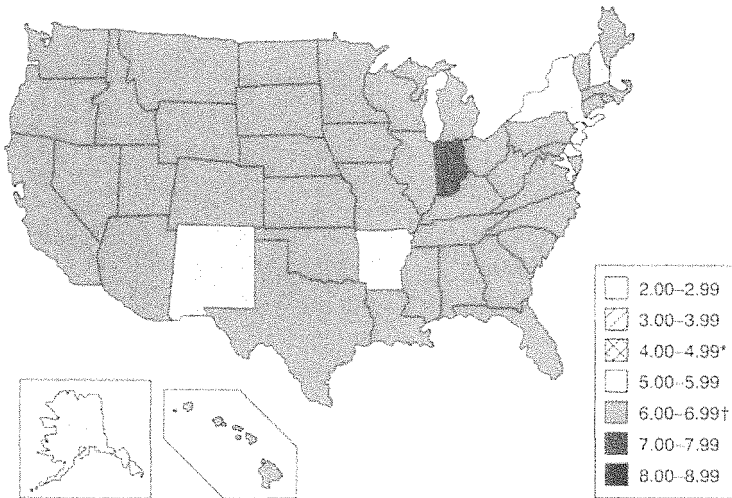


Figure 9.6 Mean scores for 'pleasant' English by IN respondents (ratings as in Figure 9.1)

Note: * New York City
 † Washington, DC

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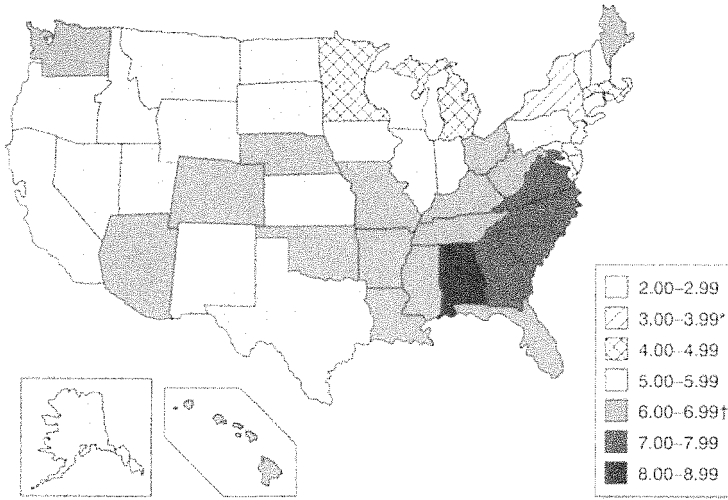


Figure 9.7 Mean scores for 'pleasant' English by S respondents (ratings as in Figure 9.1)

Note: * New York City

† Washington, DC

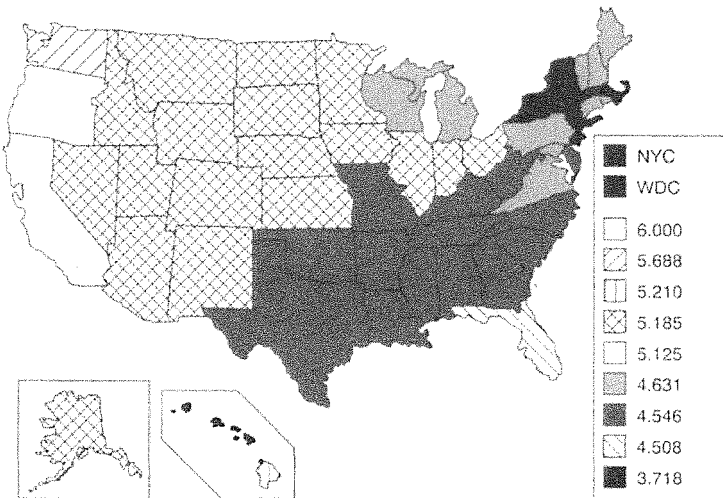


Figure 9.8 Ratings for 'pleasant' English by OR respondents (ratings as in Figure 9.4)

Note: * New York City

† Washington, DC

raters give nearby IL and MN (and distant CO and WA) as high scores for pleasantness as they give the local area, but the South remains bad—AL downright awful. Southern raters (Figure 9.7) rate the entire Southeast very high, but, like the IN raters, elevate AL (the site where the ratings were done) to 8.00–8.99, a level paralleled only by MI's evaluation of its own correctness. Southern 'unpleasantness' ratings are harsh. The only 2.00–2.99 rating in any of these studies shows up for NJ; NYC and even NY are given a 3.00–3.99; MA, MI and MN are assigned 4.00–4.99, a rating reserved by MI raters for only the 'worst' Southern state (AL) and IN raters for only NYC in the same task. OR, nearly uniquely correct, is in fact uniquely pleasant (Figure 9.8), although WA is seen to be nearly as pleasant. This pattern is somewhat different from that of other linguistically secure areas (e.g. MI).

These ratings provide confirmation of the general patterns of linguistic security and insecurity outlined above. Areas with greater insecurity focus on regional solidarity (as expressed in 'pleasantness') to express local identity. Areas with considerable security do not use local speech to express such identity, for their 'uniqueness' is already taken up in the expression of status rather than solidarity matters. Only the OR ratings (where nearly unique local high assessments for both 'correctness' and 'pleasantness' emerge) break this pattern somewhat, suggesting, perhaps, that these categories are less salient in western areas of the US (Hartley 1996).

The evaluative influences which seem to guide these tasks are further confirmed when a rather different approach to folk perception is used. These same respondents were asked to characterise the degree of difference (e.g. Grootaers 1959) or similarity (e.g. Rensink 1955) between home and nearby areas, and no voice stimuli were provided. Each rated the fifty states—and New York City (NYC) and Washington, DC (WDC)—for their degree of difference from the home site on the following scale: 1 = same, 2 = a little different, 3 = different, 4 = unintelligibly different.

Figures 9.9 to 9.12 show that most raters seem to be operating in general on their perceptions of pleasantness (Figures 9.5 to 9.8) rather than on those of correctness (Figures 9.1 to 9.4) in the assignment of '1'—'the same'. Although IN respondents rate IL and OH 'the same', theirs is still an extremely local area. MI raters, on the other hand, see exact similarity between themselves and a relatively large upper midwestern or 'Great Lakes' area.

IN raters treat the South, however, from a correctness rather than pleasantness perspective. Figure 9.6 shows that they do not distinguish between it and much of the West and Midwest for 'pleasantness', while Figure 9.2 shows that the South is distinct for its incorrectness and is two degrees different in the task shown in Figure 9.10. Since MI raters find the South distinct on both pleasant and correct dimensions, it is not possible to tell which caricature is at work in Figure 9.9, for they still find it distinct. Additionally, they locate their only '4' ratings ('unintelligibly different') in the core South,

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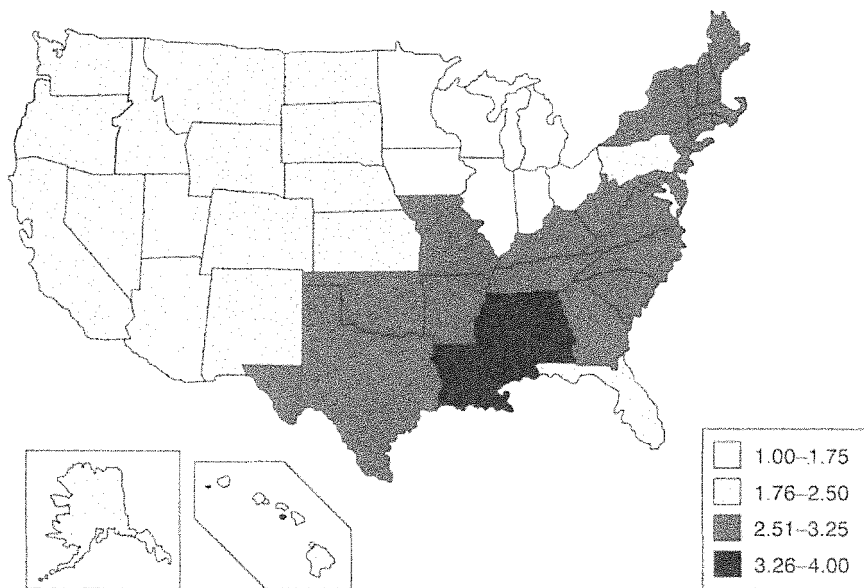


Figure 9.9 Degree of difference between MI (the home area) and the fifty states, NYC and WDC (scores converted to means ranges)

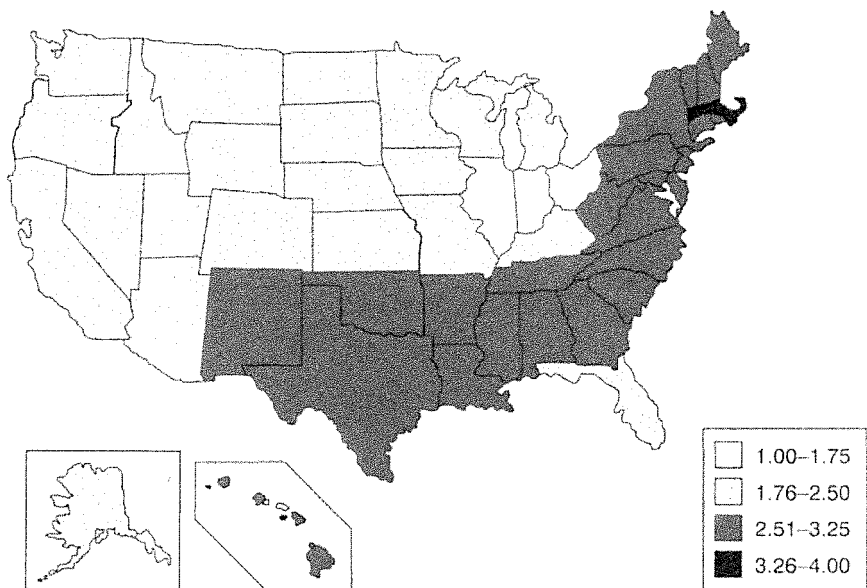


Figure 9.10 Degree of difference between IN (the home area) and the fifty states, NYC and WDC (scores converted to means ranges)

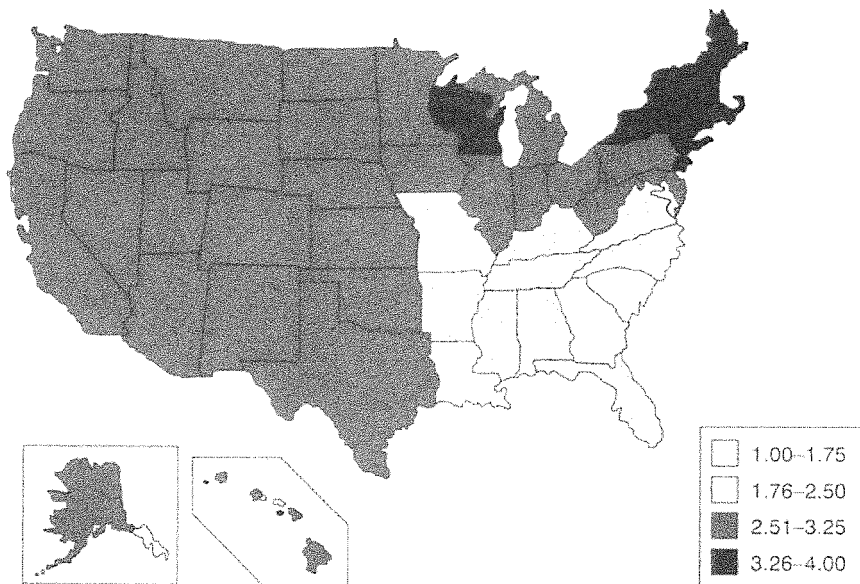


Figure 9.11 Degree of difference between S (the home area) and the fifty states, NYC and WDC (scores converted to means ranges)

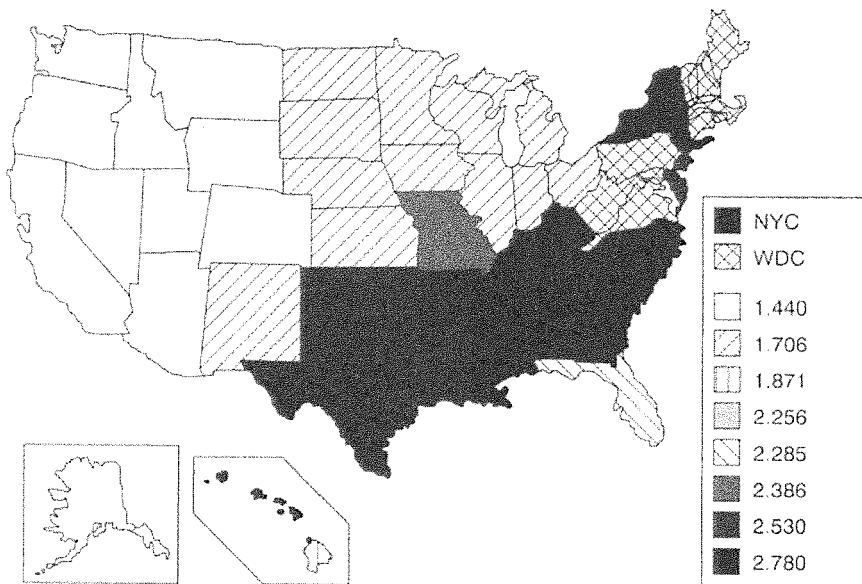


Figure 9.12 Degree of difference between OR (the home area) and the fifty states, NYC and WDC (scale as in Figures 9.9 to 9.11; ratings as in Figure 9.4)

but, since AL was singled out for special treatment on both the correct and pleasant tasks by MI raters, it is not possible to tell which protocol is at work here either.

Perhaps most interesting is the fact that IN raters, who found MA no different from IN in correctness (Figure 9.2) and only one step down in pleasantness (Figure 9.6), find only it unintelligibly different. The cluster of poorly rated Northeastern states on the pleasantness dimension, however, is the clue for this IN response. There is perhaps further dislike (a sort of *covert prestige*) on the part of the linguistically insecure against those varieties which may be felt to be 'excessively' correct, and that is a frequent caricature of New England speech. Since it is safe to assume that southern IN linguistic insecurity has its source in its association with the South, it is perhaps enough for those respondents to indicate that the South is simply 'different'.

For southern IN, the more linguistically insecure area, both extreme degree of difference categories are reflections of pleasantness judgements. For the more linguistically secure respondents from MI, the pleasantness dimension is most important for exact similarity, but pleasantness and correctness converge in the characterisation of unintelligible difference.

Figure 9.11, the Southern raters' map of degree of difference, although more like the IN map in one important way, is different from the two earlier difference maps in a number of ways. Like IN raters, Southerners find the heart of major difference in the Northeast, but they expand the zone of unintelligibility to include the entire area, and they expand it all the way west to WI (although MI just misses being included). Like MI raters, therefore, their zone of unintelligibility is larger, suggesting that the 'Midland' position of IN is less likely to produce such radical evaluations.

Again like IN raters, the Southerners have their own core zone of similarity (GA and SC, oddly since many are from AL), but, unlike IN or MI raters, they expand it to a secondary 'local' zone. Like many of the maps from every region and for every task, it excludes LA and TX; however, unlike nearly all the generalisations about the South shown so far, it includes FL, MO and AR. For these Southern raters, the large Western zone of states is all lumped together, but it is a '3', not a '2' as it was in the IN and MI surveys. The two-level differentiation within the South seems to have promoted more distinctive ratings of all non-southern areas—the West, North and Northeast.

The OR raters (Figure 9.12) are the odd ones out in this survey so far. Although they exhibit relatively 'exclusivist' characterisations of their own 'correctness' and 'pleasantness', they seem to be able to operate on a more 'objective' level when asked to rate 'degree of difference'. As Figure 9.12 shows, they rate themselves together with a large western group of states. Hartley (1996) suggests that the historical knowledge of the various immigrant streams to the West helps explain this apparently contradictory rating.

The last task in this review of perceptual findings from four areas suggests that conclusive research on attitudes towards varieties cannot be done without

knowledge of what regions exist for the respondents. If we play a sample of a South Midland voice for respondents who judge it to be thus, and so on any variety of attitudinal measures, we are not completely justified in saying that those attitudinal responses are the respondents' attitudes towards a South Midland voice. Why not?

First, unless we ask (and surprisingly few studies of language attitude have), we do not know where the respondents believe the voice is from. A report might accurately state that respondents had certain attitudes towards a South Midland voice sample, but the respondents might have gone home believing that they had heard an Inland Northern one.

Second, we do not really know where our respondents believe voices can be from, for we do not know their taxonomies of regional speech areas, in which such professionally determined areas as Inland Northern, South Midland and the like may not exist. That would be a trivial objection if folk taxonomies of speech regions simply had different names from those assigned by professional dialectologists.

Figures 9.13 to 9.16 show the results of research which addresses this problem of taxonomy. Respondents from the areas discussed here outlined and labelled speech regions of the United States. Computer-assisted digitisation of the hand-drawn maps allowed a quantitative generalisation of where the respondents felt significant differences exist (Preston and Howe 1987) in Figures 9.13 and 9.14. A hand-count assessment of areas included in the drawings (introduced in Preston 1982 and refined in Hartley 1996) was used to produce Figures 9.15 and 9.16.

It should come as no surprise that the South is the most salient area for all groups of raters (i.e. the area outlined most frequently). On the other hand, the unique correctness self-assessment by MI raters, the unique pleasantness self-assessment by IN speakers and the nearly unique assessment on both measures by OR raters did not cause any of these states to be singled out as a separate dialect area (as, for example, Texas clearly is). On the other hand, Southerners' distinctions within the South, seen in all the above tasks, are also evident here.

These hand-drawn map data show that the study of attitudes to regional speech requires knowledge not only of evaluative caricatures of dialects but also of what possible areas for classification lie behind such caricatures (a suggestion repeatedly urged on the field; see, for example, Preston 1989: 3). Basing research on scholarly intuitions about folk categories or on the results of scientific dialectology alone may result in serious misinterpretations.

These several approaches show that affective dimensions, at least in US English, are notions which, for non-linguists, have geographical significance. Though it is not easy to arrive at the folk perception of such concepts, it is important to seek it out, since it represents a set of beliefs both strongly held

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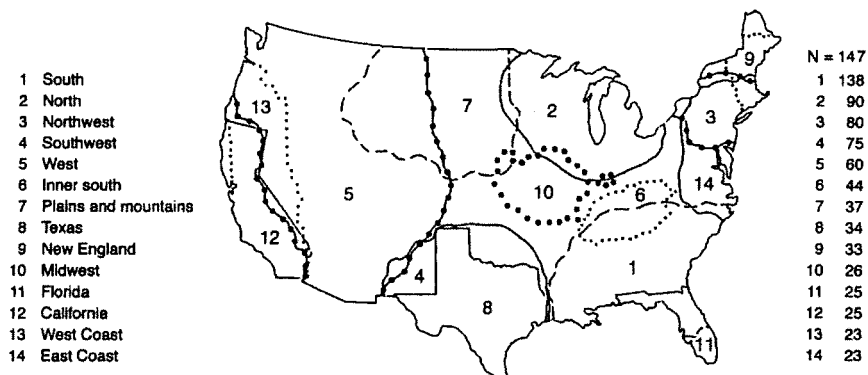


Figure 9.13 Computer-assisted generalisations of hand-drawn maps showing where MI respondents believe speech regions to exist in the US

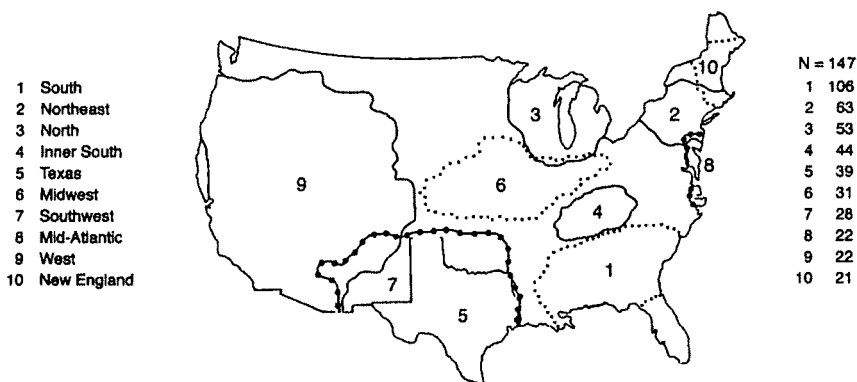


Figure 9.14 Computer-assisted generalisations of hand-drawn maps showing where IN respondents believe speech regions to exist in the US

and highly influential in the linguistic life of speech communities. As with other folk linguistic matters, such a multidimensional approach to what are ultimately folk questions provides a surer consideration of the limited data gathered in language-attitude surveys and from anecdotal and participant observer information. It serves, moreover, to help build a more complete and accurate picture of the regard for language use and variety within a speech community, providing questions about such issues as language standards with answers from the communities themselves.

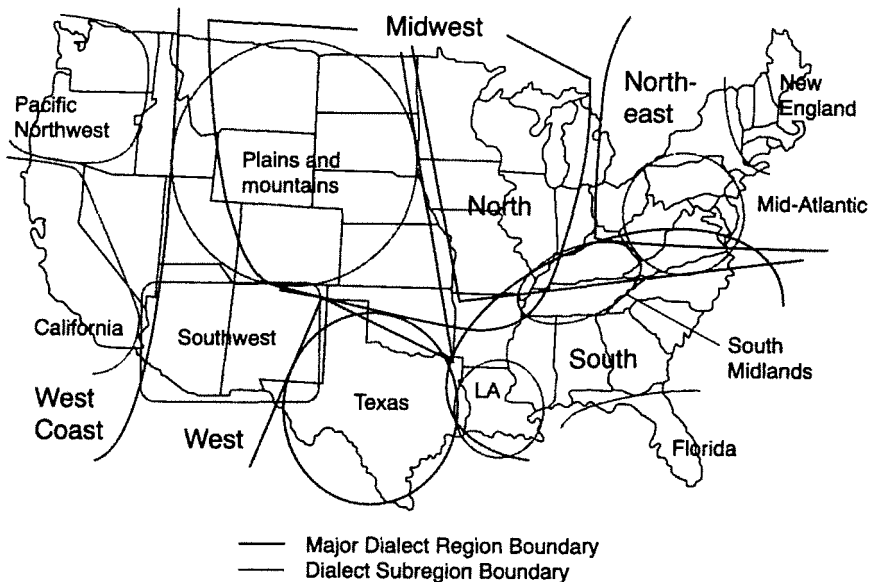


Figure 9.15 Hand-counted generalisations of hand-drawn maps showing where SC respondents believe speech regions to exist in the US

The names of US speech regions

As noted, a feature of this research which suggested, in the earliest map-drawing studies (Preston 1982), that prescription was perhaps the greatest force behind folk notions was the presence of labels assigned areas (and their speakers). We turn our attention to a study of such labels for the four groups whose general perceptions are outlined above. In every case except for the southern data, the respondents' labels reported on are from a random subset of fifty individual hand-drawn maps drawn by the same respondents as those who provided the degree of difference, pleasantness and correctness assessments given above (see Notes 2 and 4).

Three previous studies focus on labels: Coupland et al. (1995), Hartley (1996) and Preston (1982), and in any such study, there are two principal classificatory problems: the labels and the regions. Before we describe how we have dealt with both, we present, in Figures 9.17 to 9.20, four hand-drawn maps, one from each of the regions focused on here, to illustrate the source (and 'spirit') of our data.

We freely confess that these four maps were not randomly chosen (although the subsets of fifty from each area were so selected); some of these are particularly rich in the labels we intend to investigate here. Many we looked at were not, but a very large number contained just the sorts of geographic and

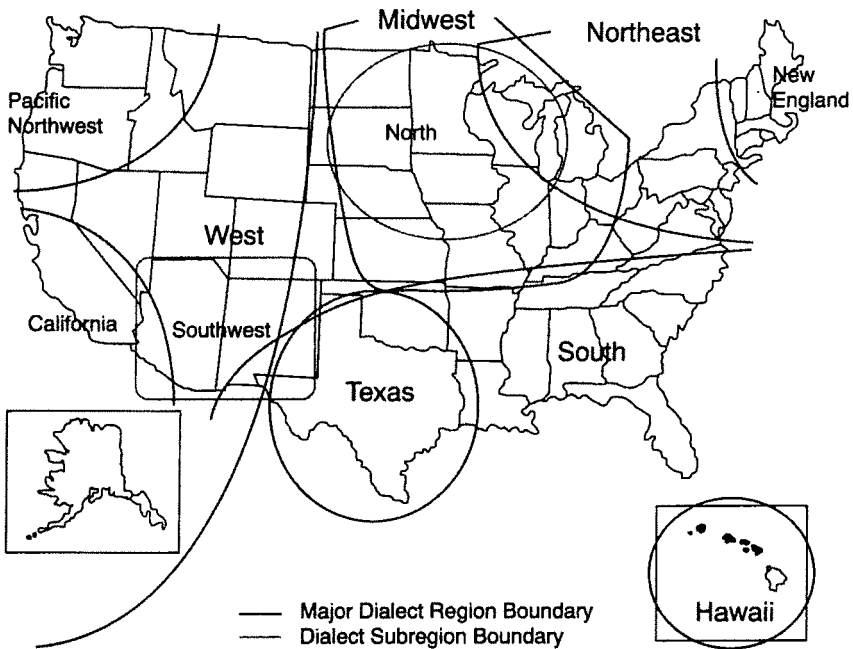


Figure 9.16 Hand-counted generalisations of hand-drawn maps showing where OR respondents believe speech regions to exist in the US (Hartley 1996:78)

linguistic labels so evident in these, and we turn now to the problems of their classification and their placement in geographic space; the latter first.

A sense of the problem emerges immediately from an investigation of Figures 9.17 and 9.19. For the Michigander, the 'Boring Midwest' is MI, WI, OH, IN, IL, most of MO, the eastern one-third of KS and IA. For the South Carolinian, the area labelled 'Midwest bland' is ND, SD, NE, the southwestern half of MN, most of IA, the northeastern half of MO, most of KS, CO, most of NM, the northeastern one-quarter of AZ, the eastern half of UT, WY and the southeastern one-third of MT. In short, very little overlap. It is clear, therefore, that there must be some 'unifying' classification of areas, one which allows us to say where areas were drawn and what labels were assigned to them. As the above illustration shows, that unifying classification cannot come from the labels assigned to the areas by the respondents themselves.

Cultural geographers know that the question of 'regions' is a complex one of mental maps (see, for example, Gould and White 1974) and a host of other cultural, political, topographic and other factors. Preston (1986) resolves this difficulty in part by relying on Zelinsky (1980), an ingenious compilation

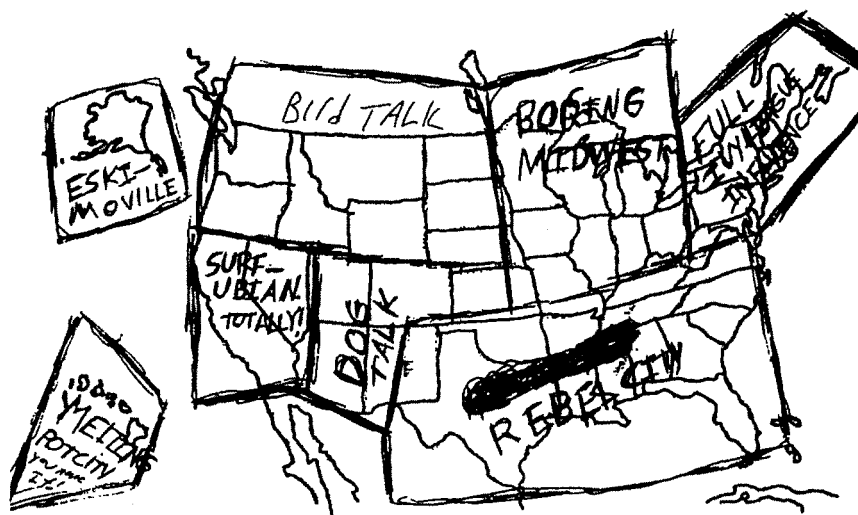


Figure 9.17 Hand-drawn map by an MI respondent

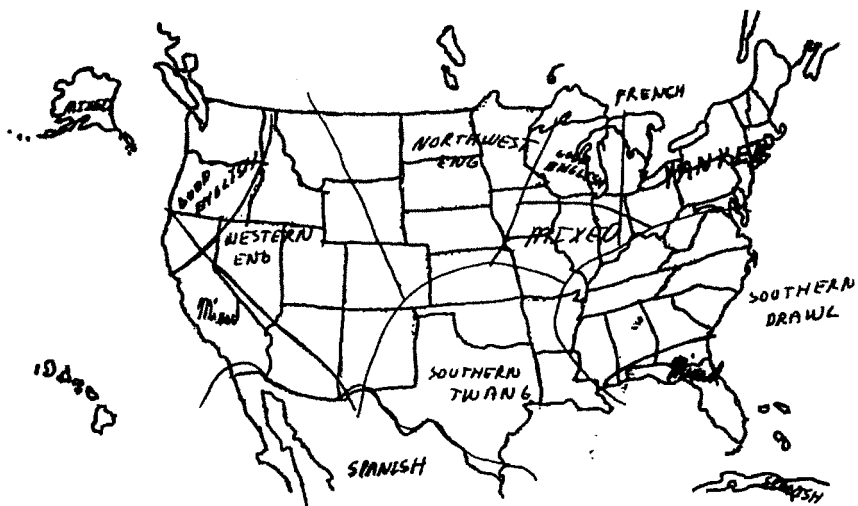


Figure 9.18 Hand-drawn map by an IN respondent

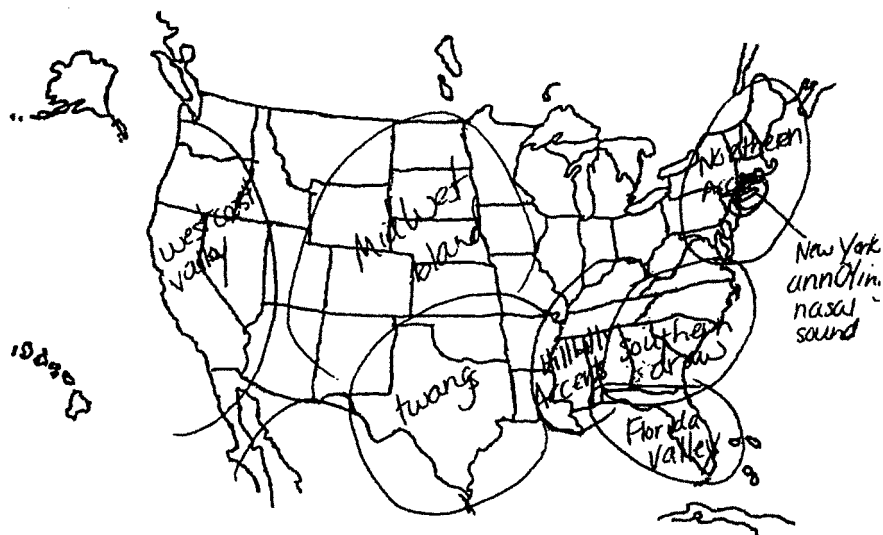


Figure 9.19 Hand-drawn map by an SC respondent

of US areas based on self-naming of regions in the 'yellow pages' of business and professional listings in telephone directories. We have been guided in part by such cultural, physical and political labels, but we have modified our need for regions by the areas our respondents have drawn. For example, Zelinsky does not report any internal divisions of the South, but the maps we have worked with indicate a need for a 'South Midland' or 'Outer South' (as dialectologists would have it) or an 'Appalachia' or 'Upland South', as most topographical and/or cultural geographers would likely designate it.

In fact, Figures 9.13 to 9.16 also reflect a similar resolution of this problem, for the generalised areas represented there are determined from the outlines that the respondents drew, not from the labels they assigned. In this presentation, the main difference is that we have not based the regions on data from any one of the four areas but on data from all four. If we had chosen regions based only on the need indicated by, for example, OR data, we would have needed no 'West Coast' or 'Mid-Atlantic' areas. Figure 9.21 displays the regions which we eventually decided on as the basis for this study. Although the areas are complex (especially the overlaps among 'Plains and Mountains', 'Midwest' and 'North'), they capture not only the diversity of regional outlines from these studies but also the generalisations reached by such cultural geographers as Zelinsky (1980).

When we say, therefore, that the label 'Hillbilly' applies to the area 'South Midland', we refer to the area designated by that latter term in Figure 9.21.

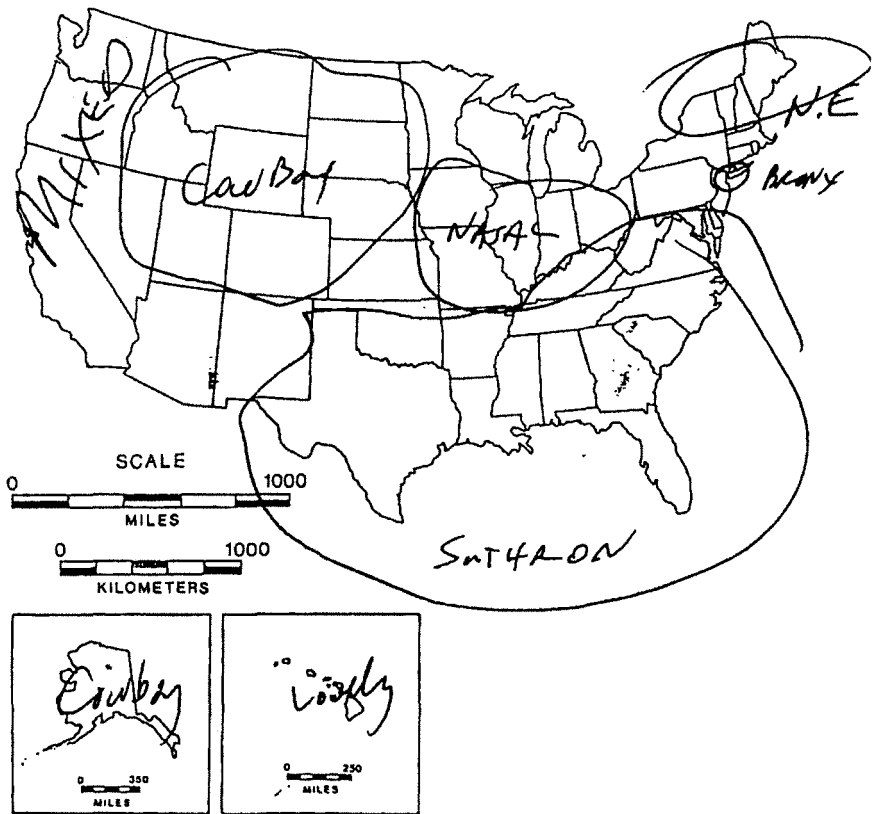


Figure 9.20 Hand-drawn map by an OR respondent

The complete list of regions from that figure includes the following: AK, CL, FL, HI, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, New England, North, Northeast, Pacific Northwest, Plains and Mountains, South, South Midland, Southwest, TX, West, and West Coast. The regions 'East Coast' and 'Great Lakes' were used only in the preparation of generalisations from the hand-drawn maps and not in the following analysis of labels.

The classification of the labels is more straightforward, following a 'topical' analysis introduced in Preston (1982). The system used here differs only a little, reflecting the classification of all labels into an evaluative ('neutral', 'negative', 'positive') set, regardless of their topical classification, as suggested in Coupland et al. (1995). The entire set is as follows:

- 1 *Area*: references to geographical and topographical as well as political or popular divisions (e.g. 'west', 'New York City', 'plains') (It is important to

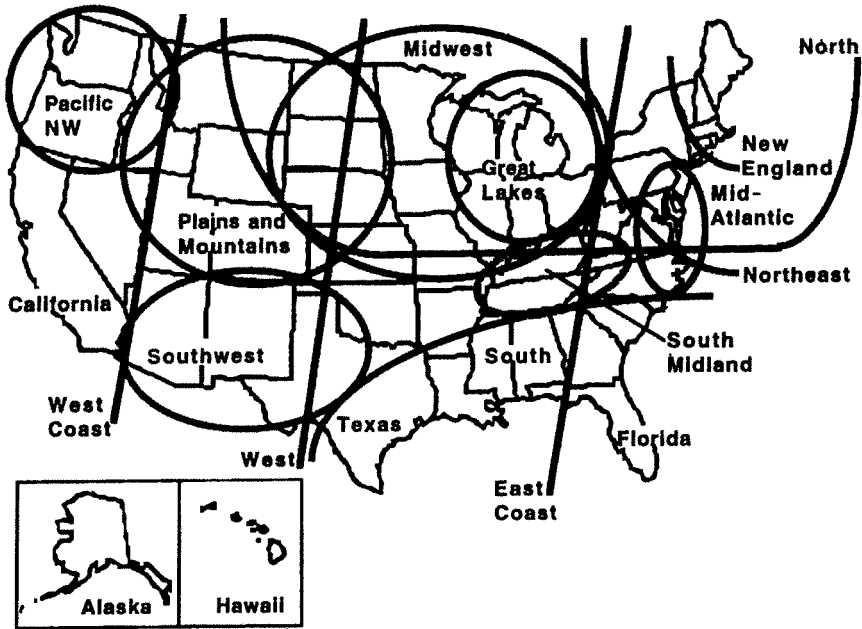


Figure 9.21 Regions of the US used in this study

remember that this 'area' label may be misleading; the respondent may have encircled an area whose name in Figure 9.21 is quite different from the label he or she gave it.)

- 2 *Sound*: references to the acoustic/auditory features of language, including 'respellings', such as 'twang', 'nose-talking', 'harsh', 'Suthron' (i.e. 'Southern')
- 3 *Identity*: references to the inhabitants of a region in terms of a stereotypical profession (e.g. 'cowboys') or some other characteristic (e.g. 'ignorants')
- 4 *Ethnicity*: references to ethnic identity (e.g. 'Cubans', 'Asians', 'White Trash')
- 5 *Media*: references to popular culture figures or events (e.g. 'Beverly Hillbillies', 'Beach Boys')
- 6 *Attributes*: caricatures of activity, practices, personality and the like (e.g. 'slow', 'rude')
- 7 *Standardness*: direct references to language variety status (e.g. 'bad English', 'proper English')
- 8 *Distribution*: indications that the label refers to a situation in which either more than one variety exists in the area labelled (e.g. 'mixture') or that the area supports one variety exclusively (e.g. 'just Southern')
- 9 *Intelligibility*: references to understanding ('hard to understand')

- 10 *Variety*: specific references to linguistic variety (e.g. 'Creole', 'dialect')
- 11 *Comments*: extended comments on the variety, region or 'typical' speakers

In the following pages, we provide a quantitative treatment of the labels based on the above classification system and on groupings into the evaluative categories 'neutral', 'negative' and 'positive'. These labels and ratings are related to areas as given in Figure 9.21. In each case, the labels extracted are from a random selection of fifty hand-drawn maps.

An examination of Table 9.1 shows clearly that the most salient category for regional identification is geographical, since respondents in each region incorporated references to area in 58–77 per cent of the labels. This result is unsurprising, but is clearly not very helpful for uncovering evaluative folk perceptions, since these terms are largely neutral in their connotations. An examination of the other categories, though much less frequent in usage, is thus more insightful in terms of understanding the ways in which varieties of US speech are popularly viewed.

For both MI and OR respondents, the second most used category for language identification was that of *variety*. Interestingly, while these variety references appear in 54 MI labels and 59 OR labels, they are used only 3 and 5 times respectively to refer to the respondents' home areas. In the case of MI, 2 of these home references were to 'English' and only 1 identified the local area as having a 'North Accent'. For the OR respondents, 4 of the 5 variety references are to 'English', and the remaining label characterises the West Coast as having a 'Normal Accent'. In describing the varieties of speech in other regions of the US, both MI and OR respondents most frequently use the terms 'accent' and 'dialect', which suggests that for these areas of high linguistic security, the local area is seen as being the place where 'correct' or 'standard' English is spoken, while 'accents' and 'dialects' (which, for non-linguists, always implies 'non-standard') are

Table 9.1 Frequency of label category by area of respondent (number; percentage in brackets)

Category	MI (n = 344)	IN (n = 225)	SC (n = 348)	OR (n = 319)
Area	265 (77.0)	146 (64.9)	205 (58.9)	207 (64.9)
Sound	43 (12.5)	37 (16.4)	48 (13.8)	50 (15.7)
Identity	37 (10.8)	37 (16.4)	108 (31.0)	29 (9.1)
Ethnicity	30 (8.7)	32 (10.1)	28 (8.0)	31 (9.7)
Media	0 (0.0)	1 (0.4)	6 (1.7)	1 (0.3)
Attributes	14 (4.1)	18 (8.0)	35 (10.1)	11 (3.4)
Standardness	9 (2.6)	9 (4.0)	8 (2.3)	19 (6.0)
Distribution	15 (4.4)	14 (6.2)	15 (4.3)	10 (3.1)
Intelligibility	4 (1.2)	2 (0.8)	1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)
Variety	54 (15.7)	20 (8.9)	91 (26.1)	59 (18.5)
Comments	10 (2.9)	14 (6.2)	25 (7.2)	11 (3.4)

found elsewhere. This idea is further supported by examining the labels which fall into the *standardness* category, which appears to be used by MI and OR respondents, primarily for the purpose of identifying their local areas as the places where 'Normal', 'Standard' or 'General' English is spoken, as well as where there is 'No Accent'.

For residents of SC, the category of Variety is used more frequently than it is by residents of the other areas (although it occurs less than *identity* labels for SC respondents) and is used at a higher rate to refer to the South, the local area (12 of 91 labels). Four of these labels identify the South as having an 'accent' or a 'dialect'. More importantly, the labels which refer to varieties in other areas of the US overwhelmingly use the neutral term 'talk', rather than a more evaluative term such as 'dialect'.

The IN respondents rely on the category of variety much less than respondents from other areas. Only 1 of the 20 variety labels used by this group refers to the home area, and this label admits the fact that southern Indianans have 'a slight southern accent'. Where variety labels are used by IN residents, they generally identify highly caricatured accents such as 'Brooklyn', 'Boston' and 'mountain dialect' (in reference to South Midland). It thus seems that the IN respondents are more hesitant to make reference to others' accents, for fear that attention might be drawn to their own, another indication of their linguistic insecurity.

The category which is more important than variety for both IN and SC respondents is that of *identity*. In fact, this appears to be an important category for identifying non-locals for these two groups, at least as important as variety was for MI and OR. In the case of the SC respondents, only 13 of the 108 labels in this category were used to refer to themselves, and these 13 were almost all 'Southerners', 'Us' or 'Home Folks'. In describing the identities of other regions, however, the South Carolinians were quite colourful, e.g. 'Crazies' (CA), 'Baker Talk' (Midwest), 'Cheese Talk' (WI), 'Potato Heads' (ID), 'L. L. Bean Talk' (ME) and 'Them—the bad guys' (Northeast), used in contrast with 'Us—the good guys'. By far the identity label most frequently employed by the SC respondents was 'Yankee', used to refer to New England, Northeast, North and sometimes even West and Midwest. For the IN respondents, a slight amount of insecurity again rears its head in the one time that the category of identity is used to describe the local area, i.e. 'Country people'. Like the South Carolinians, these respondents use this category almost exclusively to refer to other areas.

The category of identity, though not as frequent in the MI and OR data, is nonetheless still used as a way of identifying other regions. Like the SC respondents, MI and OR residents often draw on cultural icons or occupational caricatures to describe areas. Examples from the MI data include 'Islander' (HI), 'Okey' [sic] (Midwest) and 'Yuppy' (Northeast), while 'Cowboy' (Plains and Mountains), 'Rebel slang' (South) and 'Central Farmers' (Midwest) show up in the OR data. Interestingly, this category is never used by the

OR respondents to refer to themselves, not even in neutral ways such as 'Westerners'.

For all four sets of respondents, the identity category was used almost exclusively to characterise the speech of the South Midlands (when it was identified as a separate speech area), usually as 'Hillbillies' or 'Hicks'. Only the MI respondents (and a minority at that) seem willing to identify this region in more neutral terms, such as 'Appalachian'. This is perhaps due to the significant historical immigration of people from this region into southeastern MI. The only other regions to receive a large number of identity labels across the board are 'Texans' and to a lesser extent 'New Yorkers'.

Ethnicity is another category which appears to be used primarily to refer to specific states. It shows up most frequently in all respondent sets in reference to 'Cajuns' in LA, 'Cubans' in FL, 'Eskimos' in AK, 'Dutch' in PA and 'Mexicans' or 'Spanish' in the Southwest and TX. In addition, SC respondents include a number of references to 'Geechees', a term which refers to (historically) Gullah creole-speaking African-Americans along the South Carolina Coast.

The other category which is used relatively frequently by all four respondent groups is that of *sound*. Some stereotypes again emerge from all four respondent sets: Southerners and Texans have a 'drawl' (often spelled as 'draw' on the maps and clearly pronounced that way in interviews by numerous respondents) and talk 'slow' while Northerners talk 'fast', sound 'nasal' and have a 'brogue'. As with variety, MI and OR respondents rarely refer to sound qualities of their own speech; just one OR respondent referred to it as 'Soft—TV like', while many South Carolinians and one honest Indianan recognize the 'drawl' in their own speech.

In terms of the remaining categories, *attributes* are most important to SC respondents, again as a way of setting up an 'Us' vs. 'Them' dichotomy. Midwesterners are 'bland', Northerners are 'Mean' and 'Rude', Texans are 'big' and 'bad', and people on the West Coast are 'only interested in fun'. In contrast, Southerners are 'down home folks' and 'good'. The category of *distribution* is most frequently employed by the IN respondents, an indication of their greater sensitivity to dialect variation within a given area, no doubt a result of its position as a transition zone between traditionally northern and southern areas. One respondent even points out that in IN you find '150 miles big diff'. MI residents are more concerned with *intelligibility*, depicting people from AK and NY as 'hard to understand', while Westerners and Midwesterners are 'easy to understand'.

One final point perhaps worth noting in this discussion of category distributions, is the fact that SC respondents not only used the most labels (348) but also employed longer labels (including those catalogued as *comments*) than any other regional group. Since these respondents were exclusively college students, however, it may not be correct to attribute that tendency to their regional background.

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Table 9.2 Frequencies of labels used for hand-drawn maps for respondents from the four areas studied (number; percentage in brackets)

	<i>Labels (n = 50)</i>			
	<i>South</i>	<i>Northeast</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>Northeast</i>
MI (n = 147)	138 (94)	80 (54)	63 (17)	45 (13)
IN (n = 123)	106 (86)	63 (51)	58 (25)	39 (17)
OR (n = 65)	60 (92)	49 (75)	58 (18)	42 (13)
SC (n = 50)	47 (94)	23 (46)	85 (24)	48 (14)

Even in this characterisation of the distribution of categories, it is obvious that evaluative comments play an important role, and we turn now to a direct investigation of that fact. Tables 9.3 to 9.6 show the areal and evaluative distribution of labels for the four respondent groups.

Not surprisingly, for all four regional groups, the most frequent labels are assigned to the South and the Northeast (see Tables 9.3 to 9.6), the areas most frequently drawn (see Figures 9.13 to 9.16). Those frequencies are summarised in Table 9.2.

Table 9.3 MI results for labelling of other US accents (n = 50; 344 labels, referring to 361 areas; 'West' and 'Midwest' overlap most frequently; number; percentage in brackets)

<i>Area</i>	<i>Labels</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neutral</i>
Alaska	12 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (8.3)	11 (91.7)
California	16 (4.4)	1 (6.2)	2 (12.5)	13 (81.2)
Florida	13 (3.6)	1 (7.7)	2 (15.4)	10 (76.9)
Hawaii	12 (3.3)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)	11 (91.7)
Mid-Atlantic	23 (6.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (4.3)	22 (95.7)
Midwest	24 (6.6)	1 (4.2)	3 (12.5)	20 (83.3)
North	25 (6.9)	7 (28.0)	3 (12.0)	15 (60.0)
Northeast	45 (12.5)	1 (2.2)	7 (15.6)	37 (82.2)
New England	20 (5.5)	1 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	19 (95.0)
Northwest	7 (1.9)	1 (14.3)	0 (0.0)	6 (85.7)
Plains and Mountains	9 (2.5)	0 (0.0)	2 (22.2)	7 (77.8)
South	63 (17.4)	4 (6.3)	10 (15.9)	49 (77.8)
South Midland	19 (5.3)	2 (10.5)	8 (42.1)	9 (47.4)
Southwest	18 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (27.8)	13 (72.2)
Texas	27 (7.5)	1 (3.7)	6 (22.2)	20 (74.1)
West	22 (6.1)	2 (9.1)	2 (9.1)	18 (81.8)
West Coast	6 (1.7)	1 (16.7)	2 (33.3)	3 (50.0)
Totals	361	22 (6.1)	46 (12.7)	293 (81.2)

Table 9.4 IN results for labelling of other US accents ($n = 50$; 225 labels, referring to 232 areas; 'South' and 'South Midland' overlap most frequently; number; percentage in brackets)

Area	Labels	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Alaska	1 (0.4)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100.0)
California	9 (3.9)	3 (33.3)	1 (11.1)	5 (55.6)
Florida	6 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (100.0)
Hawaii	3 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (100.0)
Mid-Atlantic	5 (2.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (20.0)	4 (80.0)
Midwest	20 (8.6)	3 (15.0)	2 (10.0)	15 (75.0)
North	22 (9.5)	2 (9.1)	5 (22.7)	15 (68.2)
Northeast	39 (16.8)	4 (10.2)	7 (17.9)	28 (71.8)
New England	8 (3.4)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	6 (75.0)
Northwest	1 (0.4)	1 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Plains and Mountains	2 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (100.0)
South	58 (25.0)	2 (3.4)	14 (24.1)	42 (72.4)
South Midland	23 (9.9)	0 (0.0)	15 (65.2)	8 (34.8)
Southwest	11 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	2 (18.2)	9 (81.8)
Texas	13 (5.6)	1 (7.7)	4 (30.8)	8 (61.5)
West	8 (3.4)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (100.0)
West Coast	3 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (100.0)
Totals	232	17 (7.3)	52 (22.4)	163 (70.2)

In the hand-drawn map task, no one of the four regional groups singled out an area more frequently than it did the South, and only the MI respondents singled out an area more frequently than the Northeast for second position (the 'North', their home area). In the labels count, no group assigned labels to any area more frequently than to the South, and the Northeast was in second position for all four groups as well. In fact, for all four regional groups, the third most frequently labelled area never reached even double-digit percentages (of all labels assigned).

Why all this attention to the South and the Northeast? The answer is easily found, we believe, in a closer look at Figures 9.1 to 9.4 (and, to a lesser extent, Figures 9.5 to 9.8). In every case in the 'correctness' rankings, the South and NYC (usually accompanied by NJ) are the lowest-ranked areas. This is even true of southern ratings of the South (Figure 9.3), and the only exception to this general rule when applied to 'pleasantness' occurs in IN and S ratings of the South.

In short, what is 'incorrect' (and to a lesser extent, less 'pleasant') in US English is most salient. This appears to be true of respondents from all over the country, and the areas prejudiced against are the same—the South and the Northeast (generally restricted to NYC and NJ, occasionally NY).

If this first attempt at an assessment of the qualitative assignment of labels is true, there should be confirmation of it in the characterisation of labels as 'positive', 'negative' and 'neutral'. This is clearly true for

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Table 9.5 SC results for labelling of other US accents (n = 50; 348 labels, referring to 348 areas; number; percentage in brackets)

Area	Labels	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Alaska	2 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (100.0)
California	18 (5.2)	1 (5.6)	6 (33.3)	11 (61.1)
Florida	15 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (20.0)	12 (80.0)
Hawaii	5 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (100.0)
Mid-Atlantic	13 (3.7)	1 (7.7)	5 (38.5)	7 (53.8)
Midwest	33 (9.5)	0 (0.0)	10 (30.3)	23 (69.7)
North	11 (3.2)	0 (0.0)	6 (54.5)	5 (45.4)
Northeast	48 (13.8)	0 (0.0)	31 (64.6)	17 (35.4)
New England	15 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (13.3)	13 (86.7)
Northwest	9 (2.6)	1 (11.1)	4 (44.4)	4 (44.4)
Plains and Mountains	10 (2.9)	0 (0.0)	5 (50.0)	5 (50.0)
South	85 (24.4)	6 (7.0)	13 (15.3)	66 (77.6)
South Midland	9 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	6 (66.7)	3 (33.3)
Southwest	11 (3.2)	0 (0.0)	3 (27.3)	8 (72.7)
Texas	32 (9.2)	0 (0.0)	10 (31.2)	22 (68.8)
West	19 (5.4)	0 (0.0)	3 (15.8)	16 (84.2)
West Coast	13 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	3 (23.1)	10 (76.9)
Totals	348	9 (2.6)	110 (31.6)	229 (65.8)

MI respondents (Table 9.3). The South, South Midland and TX show a combined score of 24 negative labels and the Northeast 7. IN respondents (Table 9.4) assign 33 negative labels to the South Midland, South and TX and 7 to the Northeast. Even the SC respondents (Table 9.5) continue this derogation, assigning 29 negative labels to the South Midland, South and TX. Their greater dislike for the Northeast, however, is revealed in their assigning fully 33 negative labels to it alone, the highest number of evaluative labels (positive or negative) assigned any one region by any group in these studies. Even the generally well-liked Midwest was assigned 10 negative labels by the SC raters, but much of that area was often indiscriminately called 'Yankee' by these southern respondents. Finally, OR respondents agree with these general trends. They assign 28 negative labels to the South Midland, South and TX and 10 to the Northeast.

The qualitative labels support, then, our claim that incorrectness and salience go hand in hand in the perception of US English varieties and that the South and the Northeast (as represented by NYC, NY and NJ) are the leading recipients of these classifications. Those familiar with the gross caricatures of US regions will not need to be told of the popular culture support for these views. Although 'everyone knows better', the following (at least) are common. Gangsters and crooks, immigrants (who speak poor

Table 9.6 OR results for labelling of other US accents (n = 50; 319 labels, referring to 319 areas; number; percentage in brackets)

Area	Labels	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Alaska	17 (5.3)	2 (11.8)	0 (0.0)	15 (88.2)
California	14 (4.4)	2 (14.3)	1 (7.1)	11 (78.6)
Florida	9 (2.8)	1 (11.1)	2 (22.2)	6 (66.7)
Hawaii	16 (5.0)	3 (18.8)	1 (6.2)	12 (75.0)
Mid-Atlantic	11 (3.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (9.1)	10 (90.9)
Midwest	33 (10.3)	0 (0.0)	6 (18.2)	27 (81.8)
North	11 (3.4)	1 (9.1)	1 (9.1)	9 (81.8)
Northeast	42 (13.2)	0 (0.0)	10 (23.8)	32 (76.2)
New England	17 (5.3)	0 (0.0)	1 (5.9)	16 (94.1)
Northwest	11 (3.4)	4 (36.4)	1 (9.1)	6 (54.5)
Plains and Mountains	7 (2.2)	0 (0.0)	2 (28.6)	5 (71.4)
South	58 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	17 (29.3)	41 (70.7)
South Midland	3 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)
Southwest	10 (3.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (10.0)	9 (90.0)
Texas	22 (6.9)	0 (0.0)	9 (40.9)	13 (59.1)
West	30 (9.4)	9 (30.0)	2 (6.7)	19 (63.3)
West Coast	8 (2.5)	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	5 (62.5)
Totals	319	24 (7.5)	58 (18.2)	237 (74.3)

English) and other ethnic minorities, hoodlums and street people live in NYC (and, by association, in NY and NJ). A disproportionately large African-American population along with redneck, barefoot, poorly educated, intermarried, moonshiner KKK members reside in the South. Popular culture abounds with the continuing employment of these caricatures, although we believe they are deeply embedded in folk 'wisdom' outside their popular culture use. (Note in Table 9.1 that *media* labels were assigned only 8 times in the 1,236 total labels.)

The salience of the incorrect (or the human preference to play on weaknesses) is further revealed in the catalogue of 'positive' labels. The MI respondents (Table 9.3) like the North (where they live), but they assign it only 7 positive labels. The IN respondents (Table 9.4) give no area even as many as 5 positive labels. The SC respondents (Table 9.5), who ought to be gung-ho southern promoters, give the South only 6 approving designations, and the OR raters, like those in MI, find only the general home area (West) worth praise (9 times). The overall assignment of evaluative labels shows that the preference for negative labels is ubiquitous. MI respondents gave 46 (0.127) negative and 22 (0.061) positive labels; IN respondents gave 52 (0.224) negatives and only 17 (0.073) positives. SC raters (the harshest, stemming from their dislike for the Northeast) gave 110 negative labels (0.316) and only 9 (0.026) approving ones. OR raters gave 58 (0.182) negative labels and 24 (0.075) positive ones.

Finally, these labelling performances can be surveyed by sampling some of the specific negative and positive labels assigned stereotypical areas by all four regional groups.

MI respondents gave the South, South Midlands and Texas various negative labels, but those with the word 'drawl' were most common for the South and Texas (most often simply 'Southern Drawl' although many were elaborated with such extensions as 'southern drawl slower-speaking').⁵ In contrast, labels with the word 'hillbilly' or 'hick' predominated for the South Midland, an interesting division between a straightforward linguistic caricature on the one hand and an identity or stereotypical person label on the other (e.g. 'Tennessee Kentucky Southern Ohio "Hicks" Hillbillies'). The Northeast was assigned such negative labels as 'East New York nasal accents' and 'Eastern twang broad a's', both playing on phonological caricatures. Additionally, however, restricted negative labels in the Northeast included such items as 'Buffalo sometimes hard to understand' and 'Pennsylvania Dutch slang', showing that not all negative labels for the Northeast have their source in the unfavourable view of NYC and NJ varieties.

On the positive side, MI raters labelled their home area (North) 'Midwest—standard English', 'no accent', or simply 'normal', and nearby areas (e.g. WI) were called 'easy to understand'. Most positive characterisations were straightforwardly linguistic, although one respondent labelled much of the North 'central midwest my comfort zone'.

IN respondents agree with the MI assessment that South and TX speakers are users of a 'drawl'. One respondent, however, provides this very detailed label: 'Alabama "Twang" and accents are placed on different syllables from ours. Also runs sounds together.' They also call South Midland speakers 'hillbillies' (although they do not use the label 'hick'). From a 'production dialectology' point of view, by the way, these IN respondents are speakers of South Midland dialect themselves. Their 'distancing' their KY and other near-south neighbours (by calling them 'hillbillies') is, no doubt, a part of their own linguistic insecurity. Finally, IN respondents identified the Northeast with such labels as 'sissy talking' (a common southern and African-American male caricature of Northern US male speech) or 'North East fast talking'. One respondent identified all New Yorkers as speakers of 'slang'. Although not given to much praise, one IN respondent found that in CA there were 'natives with good diction', and another found the Midwest 'like england [sic] more proper less slang'.

As noted above the SC respondents were extremely harsh on the Northeast. Most common was the identity label of Northerners as 'Yankees' (e.g. 'the north "Yankees"' and 'North Northern Yankees'). In some cases this dichotomy was expressed without the term—'Them—the bad guys' or simply 'Them'. Linguistic caricatures were present however, most playing on the southern caricature of northern speech as 'nasal'—'nose plugs', 'NJ accents twist words in mouth nasal sounding', and the interestingly spelled 'North nasal pärk', with the umlaut

perhaps indicating nasalisation. In a few cases the identity and linguistic caricature occurred together: 'Yankees talk through nose'. 'Drawl' is also very common in SC references to southern speech ('Southern Drawl Y'all'), and one SC respondent believes that SC in particular is 'lost in language and time'. Other negative comments, however, often refer to pretentious rather than 'incorrect' use, particularly with reference to Charleston, SC: 'Weird Charlston drawl that is supposed to be an indication of blue bloods' and 'Aristocratic pretentious white trash'. We believe these evaluations supplement the self-praising 'good-ole-boy' evaluations of southern speech which figure in some of the positive comments. As previously mentioned, SC respondents refer disapprovingly to a coastal SC variety (Gullah) and its speakers as 'Geechee', and one uses the only overtly racist label, 'spic talk', to refer to the language of the Southwest. Like the MI respondents, SC labellers refer to South Midland speakers as both 'hillbilly' and 'hick', but they do not refer to TX speech so frequently with the word 'drawl' as the other respondents did. They as frequently play on the TX caricature of 'big': 'Texas Talk & Tall Tales Biggest Best of Everything.'

On the positive side (only 9 total), the SC raters give 6 to themselves. They are the opposite of 'Yankees' and 'Them'; they are 'Us—the good people' and 'The South "God's People"'. As suggested just above, they are the opposite of fancy or aristocratic types: they call themselves 'Deep South Home Folks Good Ole' Boys' and 'Down Home Folks'.

OR respondents agree that the South has a 'drawl', and several remark on the rate ('slow'). One plays on the North-South dichotomy (like many SC raters) by labelling the entire area 'Rebel slang'. Of the nine negative labels of TX speech, eight use 'drawl'; the last uses 'Heavy Texas twang'. There are only two OR identifications of the South Midland, and both use the term 'hillbilly'. OR labels of the Northeast are even harsher (although not as numerous as those of the South). Speakers there have a 'thick brogue', and a common ethnic stereotype is played on in the label 'harsh, talk fast sound Jewish'. The linguistic caricature used by the SC respondents is repeated in the label 'nasal sound', but a more negative evaluative comment appears in 'meaningless mumble'. Also like the SC respondents, the populist distaste for aristocratic speech surfaces, here in reference to the entire Northeast: 'Eastern upturned nose British immigrant wannabees in love with the Queen Mum'. On the positive side, the OR respondents like the West and call it in 5 of the 9 positive labels 'normal'. The even more local Northwest is also 'normal' or has 'no accent'.

In general, our survey of labels supports other findings from perceptual dialectology in the US. The South and the Northeast, particularly NYC and NJ, are not, as linguists would have it, just other regions with their own local standards. Even to locals in the South, that region and the largest metropolitan area of the East Coast are the home bases of 'incorrect' US English. Although the vast majority of respondents simply label dialect regions with regional names, the survey of affective dimensions in labels

reveals the continuing regional prejudices in US English and minor, but intriguing, populist and historical trends.⁶ These labels are significantly different both in their evaluative dimensions and in the classificatory types from those uncovered in Wales in Coupland et al. (1995), and we hope that further research in other areas which we know to be underway (for example, France, Germany, Turkey and Japan) will reveal further patterns of the popular use of labels in perceptual dialectology tasks. For this volume, we hope this paper adds popular and folk detail to the discussion of language standards. Without it, the enterprise is purely academic, a damning popular label if there ever was one.

Notes

- 1 'Folk linguistics' here refers to beliefs held about language by non-linguists. The value and scope of such work is briefly outlined in Hoenigswald (1966); a more thorough review is provided in Niedzielski and Preston (in progress).
- 2 The work reported on here for MI and IN was supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation to Dennis R. Preston. The respondents were subdivided into relatively well-balanced subgroups based on age, status and gender but, in the findings reported here, these groups are combined and only data for European-American respondents are considered. There are two groups of S respondents. First, we are indebted to Michael Montgomery for the southern maps; they are from respondents from South Carolina and also represent both sexes, a considerable variety of social status and age groups, and only European-Americans. For the quantitative southern data ('degree of difference' and 'pleasant' and 'correct' studies) we are grateful to Ann Pitts who provided these data from European-American Auburn University students. The areal and age and status ranges of this group, therefore, are not comparable to the others (although a number of studies, such as Preston [1988], have shown that such factors are not particularly powerful). The Oregon data, again from both genders and a variety of age and status groups but uniformly European-American, are taken from Hartley (1996).
- 3 The ratings scores for OR 'correctness', 'pleasantness' and 'degree of difference' were calculated with a non-parametric technique (multidimensional scaling). These maps, therefore, represent the clusters discovered by that technique (and further isolated by a 'K-means' procedure). To make these maps comparable to the others, however, we have calculated the means scores for each cluster and arranged them in an ascending order on the maps, although these scores were not used in the statistical determination of the areal groupings.
- 4 Since the hand-drawn maps are all from South Carolina residents, we shall refer to these data in what follows as 'SC' rather than 'S'.
- 5 One might argue that the designation 'drawl' is neutral, but our experience with folk users of the term makes us believe it most often suggests negative evaluation.
- 6 With the study of these labels, we hope to have shown that the findings from other modes of perceptual dialectology are further attested. As in those studies, and in those by other researchers, the dominating folk linguistic idea for US respondents is rather obviously one of 'correctness'. It should be clear to readers of this volume that when we call 'correctness' a 'dominating folk linguistic idea', we mean to refer to what others in this volume call a 'language ideology'.

Appendix

The United States state abbreviations (and ones for New York City and Washington, DC) used throughout this paper are as follows:

AL	Alabama	AK	Alaska	AZ	Arizona
AR	Arkansas	CA	California	CO	Colorado
CT	Connecticut	DE	Delaware	FL	Florida
GA	Georgia	HI	Hawaii	ID	Idaho
IL	Illinois	IN	Indiana	IA	Iowa
KS	Kansas	KY	Kentucky	LA	Louisiana
ME	Maine	MD	Maryland	MA	Massachusetts
MI	Michigan	MN	Minnesota	MS	Mississippi
MO	Missouri	MT	Montana	NE	Nebraska
NV	Nevada	NH	New Hampshire	NJ	New Jersey
NM	New Mexico	NYC	New York City	NY	New York
NC	North Carolina	ND	North Dakota	OH	Ohio
OK	Oklahoma	OR	Oregon	PA	Pennsylvania
RI	Rhode Island	SC	South Carolina	SD	South Dakota
TN	Tennessee	TX	Texas	UT	Utah
VT	Vermont	VA	Virginia	WDC	Washington DC
WA	Washington	WI	Wisconsin	WV	West Virginia
WY	Wyoming				