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TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE VARIETIES: PROMOTING LINGUISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH A CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH IN THE "INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS" COURSE

LYUDMILA N. BELOMOINA

241 Pages

This dissertation introduces and analyzes a critical multicultural pedagogical approach to the introductory linguistics course focused on the introduction to the main levels of analysis within linguistics (phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) in the context of standardized English; a nonstandardized English language variety, African American English (AAE); and a World English, Indian English (IE). The approach, which is based on the tenets of critical pedagogy and multicultural education, is centered on language variation and intended for K-12 future language arts teachers (and writing instructors at the college level) with the goal to teach them how to develop linguistically informed curriculum at the K-12 level and beyond.

The course starts with an introduction to the origins of language, properties of human language, and a subsequent comparison of these properties with animal communication systems. Then, the focus shifts to the main historical periods of the English language and language change throughout these periods, followed by such topics as globalization of English, English language variation in the U.S., and the origin and some distinctive linguistic features of African American English (first brief introduction to the variety). The course further centers on the study of the main branches of linguistic analysis, which allows for a more detailed description of the

prominent linguistic and paralinguistic features of AAE (and IE). The course further takes a sociolinguistic approach and explores the issues of language variation, standard language ideology, and language subordination. The last but no less important part of the curriculum is an introduction of the teaching strategies on how to compare and contrast oral and written standardized English with nonstandardized Englishes so that teachers know how to educate K-12 students on the linguistic structure of both varieties, bring awareness about the legitimacy of English language varieties, and guide students on how to communicate effectively with respect to register, context, purpose, and audience.

The research findings suggest that my critical multicultural pedagogical approach and course design were instrumental in the development of students' positive perceptions towards language variation as the result of the scientific study of the linguistic structure of both standardized and nonstandardized Englishes and the examination of linguistic prejudice and injustice in society. In fact, as a result of this examination, the students brought up the question of fair assessment practices in language arts classes, practices that address the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse K-12 students. This inquiry by the students led to additional research on K-12 language arts teachers' assessment practices, the findings of which I share in chapter 5. Furthermore, the pedagogical approach demonstrates how to engage students in critical inquiry and problem solving through their personal experiences with language via the examination of the sociolinguistic injustices stemming from standard language ideology.

KEYWORDS: African American English; Indian English; English Language Variation; Language Ideologies; K-12 Language Arts Teachers; Linguistics and Education; Critical Pedagogy; Multicultural Education; Standardized Assessment; Alternative Assessment

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A Dissertation Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE VARIETIES: PROMOTING LINGUISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH A CRITICAL MULTICULTURAL PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH IN THE "INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS" COURSE

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K. Aaron Smith, Chair

Bob Broad

Susan Burt

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1. Percentage distribution of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2009 and fall 2018 2

CHAPTER I: ENGLISH LANGUAGE VARIATION IN SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

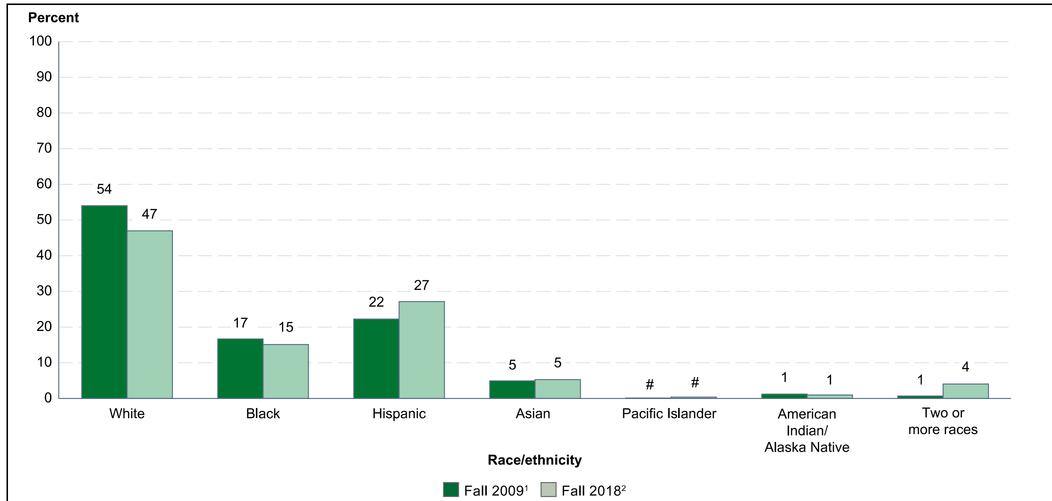
Statement of the Problem

Promoting linguistic and educational change has been one of the central foci of teachers of linguistics, dialectologists, critical multiculturalists, and other educators (Curzan, 2013; Hudley & Mallinson, 2011; Hudley & Mallinson, 2014; Mallinson et al., 2011; Wolfram et al., 2007; Wheeler, 2009; Hercula, 2016). Considering the increasing number of multiethnic and multilingual students in the U.S. schools, it is crucial that schools implement policies and pedagogical strategies that answer the needs of such students. Indeed, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2021), the number of minority students in the U.S. public elementary and secondary schools in fall 2018 exceeded the number of white students, who comprised 23.8 million out of 50.7 million students. From fall 2009 to fall 2018, the number of White students decreased from 54% to 47%; the number of Hispanic students increased from 22% to 27%; and the number of Black students decreased from 17% to 15% (See Figure 1). As for Asian students, they comprised 5% in both fall 2009 and in fall 2018, while American Indian and Alaska native students comprised 1% in those years. Finally, Pacific Islander students comprised less than one half of 1% in both fall 2009 and fall 2018, while students with two or more races increased from 1% to 4% (NCES, 2021).

Such racial/ethnic shifts in the public school population strongly indicate the need to adopt linguistically informed ways of teaching English. Moreover, pedagogical practices that honor and use the languages of students who are speakers of nonstandardized Englishes in K-12 language arts classrooms educate those students, and potentially, their families, on the logic and rule-governed nature of non-standardized varieties of English, which serves as a powerful argument that such varieties are not just bad or broken English.

Figure 1

Percentage distribution of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, by race/ethnicity: Fall 2009 and fall 2018



In fact, as early as in 1974, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) passed a resolution, "Students' Rights to Their Own Language," which states that students have "the right to their own patterns and varieties of language—to the dialect that expresses their family and community identity, the idiolect that expresses their unique personal identity" ("Resolution" section, para. 1). The resolution further states that "classroom practices [should] expose students to the variety of dialects that comprise our multiregional, multiethnic, and multicultural society, so that they too will understand the nature of American English and come to respect all its dialects" (NCTE, 1974, "Resolution" section, para. 6.). Thus, for more than 50 years, language scholars have been advocating for the inclusion of English language variation in K-12 school curriculum, supporting their argument with scientific evidence that nonstandardized English language varieties follow patterns or "rules."

Yet, despite the convincing arguments that all English varieties are rule-governed, students who speak devalued varieties of English still face linguistic hurdles at school, for it is

Standardized English[1] (SE) that is respected and viewed as the most correct variety (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p.10). Indeed, as Lippi-Green (2012) notices, a child who speaks and writes a devalued variety of English in educational settings is quickly corrected and expected to assimilate to an abstracted standard (p. 68). Sledd (1972, 1988) further notices that this "institutionalized policy to formally initiate children into the linguistic prejudice (and hence, language ideology) of middle classes" is cast as a natural process, essential for the greater social good (as cited in Lippi-Green, 2012, p.68). Moreover, attempts to implement policies that would promote the NCTE's resolution mentioned above have been met with controversies and concerns and outright rejection.

Two well-known examples are the case of *King v. Ann Arbor* of 1979, and 17 years later, the Oakland "Ebonics" controversy in 1996. The first case, also known as the "Black English Case," began with the complaint that *Martin Luther King (MLK) Junior Elementary School* officials failed to properly educate eleven African American students; improperly placed these students in learning disability and speech pathology classes; did not attend to these students' linguistic, economic, and cultural differences; and retained or even suspended some of the students from school (Smitherman, 1999, p.133). In addition, the school officials labeled the students "handicapped" and treated the children as uneducable (Smitherman, 1999, p.133). The parents strongly disagreed with the school officials about their children's presumed mental retardation and sought legal advice. As a result, the trial proceedings established that the students were using Black English, which is a systematic, rule-governed linguistic system, and that the school district had failed to take into account the children's use of Black English, which

[1] The term 'standardized English' has been adapted by Hudley and Mallinson (2011), Dunn and Lindblom (2003), Romaine (2000), and Richardson (2003), among others. As Romaine (2000) further notes, "standardization is a not an inherent characteristic of language but rather an acquired or deliberately and artificially imposed characteristic" (p. 87).

served as a barrier to learning SE (Smitherman, 1999, p. 135). The school district was given 30 days to devise a program that would consider the students' home language when teaching SE.

Similarly, in the Oakland controversy, which went down in history as the 'Ebonics Debate," the Oakland, California School Board resolved to recognize African American English (AAE) as a variety with set grammatical patterns and African American students' primary language. The proposal was that AAE should be used in schools when teaching SE in order to highlight the contrasts between the two varieties, AAE and SE (Green, 2002, p. 222). Thus, the resolution read in part:

> "the Superintendent in conjunction with her staff shall immediately devise and implement the best possible academic program for imparting instruction to African-American students in their primary language for the combined purposes of maintaining the legitimacy and richness of such language…, and to facilitate their acquisition and mastery of English language skills. (Smitherman, 1999, p.150)

Both the "Black English Case" and the "Ebonics Debate" ignited a furor of protest and negative commentary from the parents, teachers, White and Black prominent political and cultural figures, and the general public, all of whom revealed a clear non-acceptance of AAE as a legitimate variety. For example, Rowan, an African American columnist, wrote that *King'*s proposed approach on how to address African American students' linguistic and cultural needs would "consign millions of ghetto children to a linguistic separation which would guarantee that they will never make it in the larger US society" (as cited in Smitherman, 1999, p.148). Likewise, the "Ebonics Debate" caused harsh criticism: Richard Riley, Federal Secretary of Education from 1993 to 2001, asserted that "Elevating black English to the status of a language is not the way to raise standards of achievement in our schools," while Jesse Jackson, an African-American civil

rights activist, called the Ebonics resolution “an unacceptable surrender bordering on disgrace” (as cited in Collins, 1999, p. 203). As it can be seen, in 1979 and almost 20 years later, in 1996, the reaction to the assertion that AAE is a legitimate, rule-governed variety was the same: strongly negative. The sad reality is that the pejorative attitude towards AAE as an incorrect, sloppy, potentially harmful, anti-social, and even criminal linguistic practice is still persistent today.

Wheeler (2006), similarly, expresses her concern about the hostile attitude towards AAE and shares that “getting the foot through the schoolhouse door [is] not a simple matter for linguists if they refer to African American English in the classroom” (p. 26). She further talks about her experience of working with public schools, directors of English language arts, directors of Staff Development, and other educators. Wheeler (2006) reports that any explicit conversation about teaching African American English would result in “a stone-wall angry resistance” from parents, teachers, educators, and the general public (p. 26). In addition, Wheeler’s (2006) reference to the achievement gap, the disparity in academic performance between Black and White students, was taken with hostility by teachers as well, for it was perceived as singling out Black students (p. 26) and thus implying that race has to do with students’ literacy skills.
As it can be seen, the assertion that African American English, as well as other devalued varieties, is a legitimate variety has been met with strong hostility up to this day: AAE is perceived as the incorrect use of SE and not correctly using SE implies that speakers are just lazy and uneducated. In fact, society often linguistically discriminates against speakers of devalued English language varieties and privileges SE speakers. According to Lippi-Green (2011), linguistic research has confirmed that “listeners routinely perceive speakers of standardized English as being smarter, of a higher status, and having more positive personality traits than

speakers of nonmainstream English varieties" (p. 68). Such discriminatory vision of language is promoted by the U.S. educational system, for standardization is at the heart of current educational reform efforts. It is often where children are strongly encouraged to speak and write SE and are criticized for the use of devalued varieties.

This linguistic discrimination or "linguicism," as coined by Phillipson (1992), allows government officials and other administrative authorities involved in language planning to decide which variety should be used as the tool of wider communication, that is, which variety should be used for official, educational, economic, and other purposes (p. 54). Tollefson (1995) further explains that language planning practices directly influence educators' pedagogical decisions, such as "curriculum development, content, materials, classroom processes, [assessment practices], and language use" (as cited in McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008, p. 92). As a result, nonstandardized English language varieties are often marginalized in schools and colleges by teachers, professors, and even students.

However, it is not only language that speakers of nonstandardized Englishes are discriminated against, but also their culture and identity, for language diversity and cultural diversity go hand in hand. Truly, as individuals interact with each other in the communities of practice they belong to, "their actions, including common ways of speaking shape and are shaped by their social identities" (Hudley & Mallinson, 2014, p. 45). It is through language use that people construct themselves as social beings and pledge allegiances to their people and home communities that define them. By asking culturally and linguistically diverse students to drop these allegiances, teachers indicate that these students' cultures and linguistic repertoires are substandard, undesirable, non-prestigious, and just wrong. For example, Phillip, a speaker of AAE, shares: "It's like telling me I gotta take off my culture and identity when I leave my hood

and go to a place that don't care about me. Like schools. How can I leave me and my Black English home? I'm nobody's traitor" (Kinloch, 2010, p. 49). It is evident that Philip considers school to be an alien place – a place where his home language and culture clashes with that of the dominant school and classroom culture.

Bourdieu (1991) explains Philip's resistance by a clash of cultures: the culture of such social dominant institutions as schools is reflective of middle-class and upper-class culture, while Philip is representative of a working class, whose language and culture often do not get respect (as cited in Hudson & Mallinson, 2014, p. 50). As the linguistic and cultural conventions that are valued in middle- and upper-class settings are typically expected and reinforced in schools, students from working-class families are often marginalized and discriminated against. Moreover, such linguistic and cultural conventions are often not articulated explicitly in the classroom, while they are expected to be adhered to. This practice is called "the hidden curriculum" (Hudley & Mallinson, 2014, p.50), which puts speakers of devalued English language varieties at a disadvantage, considering that their classmates who are representative of middle- and upper-class come to school with greater cultural and social capital and therefore often succeed throughout their academic careers.

To share a personal example, in the fall of 2016, I worked as a writing tutor in the Sociology Department of Illinois State University. One African American student, a sociology major, would come for writing assistance on a regular basis. This student consistently employed certain AAE language features in her writing, including using the form "theirselves" in place of SE "themselves" and leaving off inflection -*s* on third-person singular verb forms. I compared and contrasted AAE features with SE features: the student was amazed and admitted that she was not aware of AAE being a variety it its own right. Unfortunately, the student still failed the class

as it was an intensive writing course, and she was not able to come for writing assistance for each paper. When I asked the professor, who taught Sociology 206, why the student failed the course, I learned that "bad" grammar was the reason. This answer persuaded me that by and large, many teachers and educators are not motivated to want to study the rule-governed and patterned linguistic structure of nonstandardized varieties due to the fact that linguistics still largely remains to be limited to the academic world (Denham & Lobeck, 2010, p. 1). As a result, educators are unable to appropriately distinguish linguistic features of devalued English language varieties from what are otherwise language errors, so they mark those linguistic features as errors, which leads to systematic differences in the educational achievement of speakers of devalued Englishes. Similarly, the African American student mentioned above was not making grammatical mistakes but applied the linguistic rules of the language code she learned growing up in her home community; yet, her writing was interpreted as filled with errors.

Such inequalities in education are directly reflected in the "Nation's Report Card," the ongoing national assessment of what U.S. students can do in different subjects, including reading. Thus, the U.S. Department of Education (2020) shared the following data on the "Nation's Report Card": the educational achievement gap between eighth grade White and Black students in reading has narrowed only insignificantly in the last 23 years, the years from 1992 to 2019. In 2019, the average reading score for White eighth-grade students was 28 points higher than the average reading score for Black students. This 28-point gap in 2019 appeared not to be very different from the 30-point gap in 1992, which is a troubling finding since the groups of historically underprivileged students continue to perform below students who are speakers of standardized English.

Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the K-12 school curriculum is often not inclusive of nonstandardized Englishes, and by not building on the language patterns that students bring with them to the classroom, "the common educational principle of moving from the known to the unknown" is not adhered to by teachers and educators, which considerably challenges new dialect acquisition (Siegel, 2006, p. 158). Furthermore, research on second dialect acquisition suggests that the sensitive period for the acquisition of a second dialect lasts until age 7, and while the ability starts to diminish after this age, especially in phonology, it is almost impossible to learn a new dialect after age 14 (Chambers, 1992, p. 689). Considering these research findings, it is obvious why culturally and linguistically diverse students often find themselves struggling to succeed academically as they rely on the language patterns of their dialects and may not always recognize the differences in their speech, writing patterns, and oral reading in comparison with those of SE.

In this way, the U.S. educational system perpetuates the marginalization of nonstandardized English language varieties. Indeed, the major role of many schools in the U.S. is the acquisition of spoken and written SE, which is also connected to being a good citizen. The NCTE (1996) openly connects goals of literacy to those of citizenship: "Standards [in language arts education] can help us ensure that all students become informed citizens and participate fully in society" (p. 2). Baugh (1999) calls this linguistic inequality and disadvantage in schools "educational malpractice stemming from educational apartheid" (p. 4).

Clearly, the NCTE (1996) guidelines for teaching English promotes SE-only classroom ideology:

> All of us who speak English speak different varieties of English depending on whom we are communicating with, the circumstances involved, the purpose of the exchange, and

> other factors. Indeed, creative and communicative powers are enhanced when students develop and maintain multiple language competencies. Nonetheless, some varieties of English are more useful than others for higher education, for employment, and for participation in what the Conference on College Composition and Communication (1993) in a language policy statement calls "the language of wider communication." Therefore, while we respect diversity in spoken and written English, we believe that all students should learn this language of wider communication. (pp. 22-23)

This "faux-egalitarianism [promotes] *separate but equal* doctrine": socially stigmatized varieties are restricted to home, informal situations, to rap and folksongs, and to plays and telling folktales, while SE is the variety to be used in school, at work, in media, in government, and in other formal situations (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 82). All in all, the peripheral role of stigmatized varieties is evident: SE is the appropriate, correct, perfect, and important variety of wider communication, whereas stigmatized varieties are inappropriate, incorrect, and something to be tolerated.

By reinforcing the hegemonic ideology, standard language ideology (SLI) to be exact, the U.S. school system is directly involved in the promotion of the needs and interests of the dominant white upper middle class. Lippi-Green (2012) defines SLI as:

> A bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogeneous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class. (p. 67)

By maintaining SLI through the educational system (and the media), the dominant groups succeed at persuading the minority groups that the status quo is natural, positive, and necessary

for the greater social good. SLI further proposes that SE unifies the nation-state, and if individuals just all speak SE, they will achieve cohesive social order and universal rationality, and contribute to binding a nation together (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 68). Bourdieu (1991) concludes that this classic hegemonic appeal also implies that a SE speaker is a person of greater intellectual and personal worth; that is, SE, "the linguistic form-in-use, is revalorized as transparently emblematic of [high] social, political, intellectual, or moral character" (as cited in Woolard, 1998, p. 19).

In fact, language and accent have become a reasonable excuse to deny recognition, to publicly turn away, to request native speaker pronunciation in job ads, and to openly indicate that vernacular varieties are lesser and wrong varieties. An example is the Kahakua case whose Hawai'ian accent was found by both the accent reduction specialist and the judge to be a disadvantage (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 47). Specifically, James Kahakua, a native of Hawaii, applied to one radio station for a weatherman position, but his Hawaiian Creole accent appeared to be a disadvantage for the job position. The speech pathologist who testified on behalf of the employer gave the following recommendations to Mr. Kahakua: "I urgently recommend [Mr. Kahakua] seek professional help in striving to lessen this handicap… Pidgin can be controlled. And if an individual is totally committed to improving, professional help on a long-term basis can produce result" (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 157). As can be seen, such unacceptable act of linguistic discrimination was "a completely normal act," the consequences of which were a suggestion of seeking professional help.

To conclude, linguistic discrimination and segregation in education, employment, housing, public accommodations and elsewhere indicate that today, more than ever, sociolinguists and linguists need to redouble their efforts in disseminating the results of over 50

years of rigorous research and educating the public on the rule-governed nature of vernacular varieties as well as integrating effective linguistically responsive pedagogical strategies into K-12 curriculum that would raise awareness on the workings of language. Certainly, the matter is complicated by the fact that many public policy makers hold negative views on stigmatized varieties and continue to promote school institutional policies that deprecate cultural and linguistic values of vernacular communities and validate all that is marked as belonging to the mainstream society. The situation is also made more complex "by the context of racial and ethnic conflict, inequality, and prejudice in the United States" (Sidnell, 2012, para. 6). Thus, language subordination is one of the powerful ways the dominant bloc institutions maintain the existing social order, including linguistic oppression.

Pedagogical Approach to the "Introduction to Linguistics" Course

In view of such a lack of sociolinguistically informed curricula in schools and classrooms and continuous linguistic discrimination and prejudice in the present economic and political climate, I developed a critical multicultural pedagogical approach to the "Introduction to Linguistics" course, which can be implemented in other educational settings as well. The pedagogical approach has been designed for future K-12 language arts teachers and writing instructors at the college level, so they can productively develop linguistically informed curricula and employ them in their classrooms. Particularly, the pedagogy is focused on the following: 1) the main levels of analysis within linguistics, 2) an acquisition of linguistic knowledge of devalued English language varieties, 3) pedagogical strategies of how to attend to the linguistic needs of speakers of stigmatized varieties, 4) issues of language variation, standard language ideologies, and the interconnection of language, culture, and identity, and 5) language-related

issues stemming from standardized test design and test preparation. It is important to mention that I advocate for the topic of language variation to be one of the central themes of an introductory linguistics course and to be introduced at the very beginning of the course, followed by a simultaneous study of the structure and use of standardized English and the structure and use of nonstandardized English language varieties throughout the course. By focusing on language variation, this pedagogy contributes to promoting the development of "linguistically informed pluralistic language attitudes" (S. Hercula, personal communication, June 17, 2016) among future language arts teachers, K-12 students, and the larger society, which serves to challenge the still persistent linguistic social injustice based on unfair judgements about languages, dialects and the people who may speak them.

Another important moment in the proposed pedagogy is teaching English education majors how to provide linguistically informed assessment for both oral and written English. This component has been added to the on-going development of the critical multicultural introductory linguistics pedagogy as the need of this topic, linguistically informed assessment, became apparent during my teaching of the introduction to linguistics course. My students brought up this topic during our classroom discussions. I could not agree more with my students. Indeed, since K-12 language arts teachers assess both receptive (reading and listening) and productive (writing and speaking) skills, it is crucial to discuss standardized tests' key limitations in terms of their ability to accurately assess students who are speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties and how teachers can address these limitations. Hence, educating future teachers on linguistically informed ways of teaching and assessing both oral and written English in K-12 language arts classrooms is an important step in preparing these teachers to implement

pedagogical practices that will help speakers of nonstandardized varieties to overcome common language-related challenges of standardized tests.

Thus, the proposed introductory linguistic course has the following components: 1) an introduction to the main levels of analysis within linguistics (phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics); 2) an introduction to the origin and history of a nonstandardized variety, African American English (AAE), and a World English variety, Indian English[2] (IE); 3) a detailed description of some of the prominent phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic features of AAE (and IE); 4) discussions about language attitudes towards nonstandardized varieties of English and World Englishes and review of the history and present state of AAE and its speakers in the world of academia; 5) discussions about SE language ideology, the notions of correctness and prestige, and language subordination; 6) an introduction to the global spread of English, World Englishes, and the impact of the globalization of English; 7) a sociolinguistic introduction to the interconnection of language, identity, and culture, and discussions how communicative behavior of speakers of nonstandardized Englishes and mainstream speech communities is reflective of their cultural practices and their identity expression; 8) an exploration of students' own language and literacy backgrounds and experiences through writing a narrative as a way to understand how students' personal histories influenced their beliefs about language; 9) discussions about language-related issues stemming from standardized written tests and standardized oral assessment; 10) an introduction to pedagogical strategies on how to teach oral and written SE and attend to the linguistic needs of nonstandardized English language speaking students; and 11) examination of students' language

[2] I devoted one class to an overview of the origin, history, and the grammatical structure of Indian English. A form-focused examination of one WE aided in student understanding that varieties of English are characterized by certain linguistic features and that Englishes can have different statuses and functions. As for my choice of IE, I will explain it in chapter 4 of my dissertation.

attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies throughout the course through reflections and questionnaires with the purpose of developing positive attitudes towards language variation.

The initial pedagogical approach was designed and implemented in an introductory linguistics course at a mid-size state university in the U.S. Midwest in spring 2017. Developed on the principles of critical pedagogy (CP) and multicultural education (ME), my pedagogy considers the conceptual parallels and differences of both and presents a blended approach. It is important to mention that the conceptual principles of CP and ME are complementary, and their concerns and perspectives are similar with respect to empowerment, voice, transformation, and issues of equity in educational settings. As for differences, while CP is more focused on the issues of political exploitation and reproduction of the oppressive practices of mainstream society through schools, ME keeps at its center the need to transform and democratize school curriculum and considers teaching practices and student learning styles in order to introduce cultural pluralism. Both similarities and differences of these movements informed my critical multicultural introductory linguistics pedagogy, which is primarily focused on the scientific study of English language varieties, linguistic and cultural justice, and linguistically informed teaching strategies. I talk in depth about my pedagogy in chapter 4.

All in all, the design of the course has proven to be effective as the critical multicultural pedagogical approach through which the topics of language variation, standard language ideology, and linguistic injustice have been introduced, has yielded invaluable insights on what factors influenced my students' prior negative attitudes towards nonstandardized varieties of English and has given students an opportunity to express their considerations on the questions of language variation, linguistic discrimination, and pedagogical approaches to teaching both SE and nonstandardized varieties. I truly hope that the pedagogical approach I have developed will

help to challenge the nature of current school pedagogy and will be implemented in other introductory linguistics courses, school curriculum, K-12 teacher preparation programs, and other related courses.

CHAPTER II: LANGUAGE AWARENESS IN SCHOOLS AND AMONG PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD

Teaching Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students

As a means of addressing the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students, some linguists and sociolinguists have proposed practical examples of how K -12 language arts teachers or any writing and literature class teachers in college can introduce language variation and its scientific study in the classroom. The standardized school curriculum has been challenged since 1960s, and much needed teaching strategies that integrate cultural and linguistic knowledge of nonstandardized varieties have been developed and introduced in the field of English language teaching (Banks, 2001, p. 225). In fact, certain schools have made dialect study part of school improvement plans. Such programs as Academic English Mastery (AEMP) in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Critical Language Awareness (CLA) programs, multicultural education teaching strategies and practices, and various dialect awareness programs are a few examples of introduction of nonstandardized varieties into language arts classrooms. And yet, linguistics remains largely confined to the academic world and is generally not part of teacher education programs (Denham & Lobeck, 2010, p. 1). As a result, language arts teachers often know very little about language variation; do not recognize nonstandardized varieties' phonological, grammatical, lexical and pragmatic patterns; and do not consider such varieties as important, all of which negatively affects how teachers approach teaching English, be that K-12 language arts class or writing at the college level.

The second edition of *Dialects in Schools and Communities* shares the educational concerns about dialects and provides "an updated report on the state of language variation and education in the United States" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. x). The volume emphasizes the main

issues arising from dialect diversity and relevant important needs in educational and other related service fields. The textbook also offers practical tools in the form of lessons and various strategies on how to address the language-related challenges that speakers of nonstandardized Englishes may face in the classroom. In the first chapter, "Language Variation in America," the authors introduce readers to such notions as *language variation, dialect, accent, standard English*[3], and *speech communities* from a linguistic point of view; explain that everyone speaks a dialect; and introduce the notion of Standard American English (SAE), a socially and politically prestigious variety of the middle and upper middle class of the United States. While this variety is not uniform and allows linguistic variation depending on the norms of the speech community, the grammar of Standard English speakers, generally, has a "more shared structure across communities" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 15). Finally, besides SAE and nonstandardized varieties in the U.S., one should consider World Englishes—standardized varieties of English that emerged in countries that were colonized by native speakers of English, e.g., Nigerian English or Indian English.

Wolfram et al. (2007) further discuss the social attitudes about language and introduce two schools of thought with contrasting positions towards nonstandardized English speakers: the deficit position and the difference position. The deficit position views speakers of nonstandardized varieties as socially and cognitively handicapped on the assumption that their varieties are illogical and grammatically incorrect. Moreover, some members of the mainstream group often insist that speakers of stigmatized varieties should change their behavior, both linguistically and culturally, in order to fit in, to be accepted. On the contrary, the difference position views speakers of stigmatized varieties as simply speaking differently due to the

[3] Wolfram, Adger, and Christian (2007) choose the term 'Standard English'. I prefer the term I introduced in chapter 1, 'standardized English', and will use this term throughout my dissertation.

variation in linguistic systems of their dialect. Since neither variety is inherently better, all varieties are equal. As a result, the difference position questions the validity and reliability of standardized tests, which are biased towards the linguistic and cultural norms of the mainstream society (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 18).

In this line, in chapter two, "Exploring Dialects," the book further provides directions for teachers and educators on how to explore dialects in the classroom and shares basic scientific principles for investigating language structures and describing dialect features. The chapter then continues to describe patterns of variations in the linguistic systems of nonstandardized dialects, including "consonant blends" (i.e., reduction of a consonant blend to a single consonant, as in *bes' apple, wes' end*), "r and l" (i.e., in some linguistic contexts *r* and *l* are not produced, as in *p'ofessor* for *professor, hep* for *help,* or reduced to a vowel-like quality, that is, pronounced more like vowel sounds, as in *pia* for *pill*), "verb suffixes" (i.e., absence of verb suffixes, as in *Yesterday they walk in the park* or *She have a car*), and "agreement marking" (i.e., the singular forms of the verb *be—is* and *was*—can be used with plural subjects, as in *The dogs is barking*; *They was barking*) among others. It is critical to mention that while this description is not focusing on one particular dialect, but rather provides an overview of the most prominent vernacular linguistic features in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, the authors attempted to indicate in which varieties certain constructions are most typically found, and whether a certain construction is reflective of working- or middle-class speech and of a certain racialized group. Moreover, two illustrative dialect samples are cited, such as Appalachian English in "Appalachian Ghost Story" and African American English in "Wild Life," with dialect features noted and described in "Notes on Transcripts." Three notes follow for the two live speech samples mentioned above, as shown in (1-3), adapted from Wolfram et al. (2007):

"(1) In an unstressed, final syllable of a word, the schwa sound [ə] can be changed to the high vowel *ee* of beet, as in "sofy" for *sofa* or "kindy"[4] for *kinda*:

I was always <u>*kindy*</u> afraid to stay by myself, just me, you know…

(2) The sequence *ire* in items like *tire*, *fire*, or *iron*[5] may be collapsed to a single syllable, resulting in pronunciations such as "arn" for *iron*, "tar" for *tire*, "far"[6] for *fire*, and so forth:

And he come on the walk, pitty-pat, pitty-pat, and…come out that gate, *iron*, slammed it.

(3) For the expletive use of *there* in Standard English (e.g., *There's a new boy in my class*), vernacular dialects may use *it* (e.g., *It's a new boy in my class*) or *they* (e.g., *They's a new boy in my class*):

a. …she said, "Long as you live here, you'll see something like that," said "*they* was, in time of the war, *they* was a woman, that somebody'd cut her head off and they'd buried her in the grave down there."
b. Um uhm, *it's* another one, that's a snow tiger." (pp. 49-54)

In addition to displaying examples of actual usage of vernacular varieties and explaining pronunciation and grammatical differences in those dialects, the authors also include an appendix entitled, "An Inventory of Distinguishing Dialect Features," in which they provide an extensive summary of dialect features of American English. While the appendix goes in greater depth about certain phonological and grammatical features of various nonstandardized varieties, it is sometimes unclear which nonstandardized variety a certain feature refers to. Such vagueness makes the process of learning and recognizing the linguistic features of one variety from another sometimes confusing because preciseness and accuracy are at the core of dialect research.

[4] Presumably representing the phonetic spellings of [i], [sofi] and [kaindi], respectively
[5] Presumably representing the phonetic spellings of [aɪər], [faɪər], [taɪər], and [aɪərn], respectively
[6] Presumably their spelling represents [arn], [tar], and [far], respectively

Hercula (2016) further observes that some of the linguistic features described by Wolfram et al. (2007) are out-of-date. Particularly, the authors explain, "In a construction such as *I was fixin' to come but I got held up*, the speaker is indicating that he or she intended to come. This special use of *fixin' to* is only found in the South, particularly in the South Atlantic and Gulf states" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 198). Hercula argues that such geographical limitation is not true and that "*be fixing to* has also spread extensively throughout the US generally, particularly in urban areas" (as cited in Smith, 2009, p. 13).

The rest of the text addresses other crucial topics in regard to language variation and education, such as various communication patterns of different speech communities, cultural styles in the classroom, dialects and oral and written language instruction, and ways of promoting dialect awareness at schools. The authors advocate in the last chapter, "Dialect Awareness for Students," for the active study of nonstandardized varieties as part of the language arts curriculum, social studies, history, and elsewhere, and further present excerpts from dialect awareness curricula so that teachers can engage students in ethnographic and linguistic research in their schools and communities, as well as in scientific inquiry in the study of dialects. The latter includes the following steps: "making generalizations from carefully described sets of data, … hypothes[izing] about the patterning of a certain dialect, and then checking the hypotheses on the basis of actual usage" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 166). The authors conclude that the value of dialect education in schools is crucial as it not only teaches students about the rule-governed nature of dialects that is internally consistent and logical, but also gives SE speakers and speakers of nonstandardized varieties "information and skills for language investigation to counter the language stereotypes and prejudices" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 151).

Similarly, Hudley and Mallinson (2011), in their *Understanding English Language Variation in U.S. Schools*, argue that it is crucial that teachers build on the language patterns that students of stigmatized varieties bring to the classroom. In this way students learn the differences between the rules, norms, and conventions of SE and nonstandardized English language varieties; learn to communicate effectively in different social and academic settings; better prepare for language-related challenges on standardized tests; and develop appreciation and understanding of the linguistic and cultural diversity of an increasingly ethnically rich population in the U.S. In their first chapter, "Valuable Voices," the authors introduce their readers to the field of multicultural education, define its goals and values, and discuss issues critical to the multicultural education movement, such as issues of language variation, student achievement levels, and student opportunities for academic advancement. Hudley and Mallinson (2011) further challenge the term *achievement gap*[7], which emphasizes academic underachievement of speakers of nonstandardized Englishes, and suggest that the term *opportunity gap* should rather be used as it points to the still existing "society-wide hurdles" that prevent students who speak nonstandardized Englishes from accomplishing their educational goals (p. 4).

In their second chapter, "Standard English," the authors introduce their readers to the commonly used term *Standard English,* which implies that there is one correct and proper variety. Hudley and Mallinson (2011), however, argue that language use is always situated within concrete contexts and, depending on the situation, a different standardized form of talk is often required (p. 12). For this reason, Hudley and Mallinson (2011) prefer the term *standardized English* (SE) (the definition I introduced earlier in chapter 1), as this term reflects that "just as

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[7] Any considerable and ongoing disparity in academic performance between different groups of students, especially students characterized by their socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity and gender. Hudley and Mallinson (2011) emphasize particularly the disparity in academic achievement between minorities and White students.

specific types of knowledge are valued on standardized tests, so too are specific types of language valued within the educational system" (p. 12). In the remainder of this chapter, the authors describe SE and explore ways that teachers can assist all students with the acquisition of the norms and rules of SE at school, while attending to the norms and rules of speakers of nonstandardized Englishes. They explain such a simultaneous approach by the fact that not all students, especially students from the working class, may understand, for example, relational words, which are "conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, adverbs, and adjectives that are used to refer to relationships between objects and events," particularly the ones that comprise academic vocabulary (Hudley & Mallidson, 2011, p. 26). For example, such terms as *beginning*, *behind*, or *next to last* (terms referring to order), or *therefore*, *alike*, *similar*, and *opposite* (terms referring to logic) may not be part of every student's linguistic vocabulary, which may interfere with learning to read, understand reading passages, or understand test instructions and assignments. For this reason, Hudley and Mallinson (2011) emphasize that it is crucial that teachers, at all educational levels, explain academic vocabulary items and academic jargon to their students (p. 28). They further share in the callout box entitled "Strategies for Educators" how to introduce students to academic jargon:

> It is best for educators to explicitly discuss with students the types of jargon that they are expected to learn and use in school, and educators may model for students how to phrase and rephrase their statements using academic jargon. Such scaffolding techniques support students' learning (Mehan, 1979). For all students, exposure to academic jargon and to the specific linguistic conventions used in educational settings is essential for student success. (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 33)

Thus, by teaching how to rephrase colloquial vocabulary items into academic jargon, educators can help students to learn the meaning and connotations of school-specific vocabulary and education-related jargon and prepare them to effectively communicate in educational settings and beyond. In addition, by explicitly teaching students about contrast in vocabulary words, the notion of register, and the concept of diction, teachers raise students' awareness of language use, expand their SE repertoire, and prepare students to make vocabulary and stylistic choices appropriate for a certain social situation or social context.

The next two chapters, "Southern English" and "African American English," provide a thorough description of the most prominent phonological, grammatical, and pragmatic features, as well as the historical, political, and cultural contexts of these two nonstandardized varieties. It is important to mention that the authors avoided the use of specialized linguistic terminology and phonetic symbols when describing the linguistic features of Southern English and AAE. For example, they explain that the word *ain't* is often used either as *a helping* or *linking verb* in AAE and Southern English (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 90). As the term *a helping verb* is less technical in meaning than *an auxiliary verb*, the authors preferred the former one, explaining their choice by appealing to teachers who do not have a linguistics background. As for Wolfram et al. (2007), while they introduce phonetic symbols and certain technical terms, such as *an auxiliary verb* and *verb aspect* in their text, they also occasionally use simplified terms, such as "forms *don't* and *ain't*" instead of using linguistics terms "a negated auxiliary *don't* and *ain't*" (p. 44).

Having taught an introductory linguistics course for a year and a half at Illinois State University, I should say that the majority of my students were not familiar with any of the linguistics terms at the beginning of the course. However, I did not "dumb down" the course, and

introduced my students to the basic linguistics terms in order for them to understand this discipline. In fact, I required my students to be able to read and transcribe words in International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); to draw syntactic trees for various sentences; to provide examples of eight inflectional morphemes; and to be able to identify different word-formation processes. Considering that my students are future elementary and middle school teachers, I wanted to make sure that they would be able to read and understand linguistics textbooks after taking my class. I believe that they will most likely encounter culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms and may need to refer to linguistics textbooks for addressing these students' needs. For this reason, I am confident that it is just as crucial to be educated in linguistics as in other disciplines, such as biology or physics. Indeed, if a student takes a biology class, they do not expect the terms to be dumbed down for them but learn and operate with biology terms and definitions in class. In fact, terminology acquisition and understanding are vital for the study of biology as a subject, and if a student cannot get past the basic concepts of this science, they fail the course. Linguistics, similarly, as a scientific study of language, also demands an ability on the part of a learner to operate and comprehend linguistics terms.

Coming back to the textbook under analysis, the final chapter, "*Assessment and Application*," addresses key linguistic and cultural issues related to standardized tests and other high-stake testing that students encounter in educational settings. Particularly, standardized tests' design and preparation have been the reason for the systematic lower scores and academic underachievement of students who are speakers of stigmatized varieties. The authors describe how the culture and the language of standardized tests unfairly advantage SE language speakers as they come to school already possessing mainstream cultural and linguistic knowledge (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 120). Hudley and Mallinson (2011) further share pedagogical strategies on

how to prepare students for standardized tests while also educating them on the rules and norms of nonstandardized varieties. The following is one example of how to build on students' linguistic and cultural knowledge:

> Redd and Webb (2005) suggested that students practice their skills of paraphrasing and retelling stories from African American English into standardized English and vice versa. In this exercise, students listen to and read a story told in standardized English, and then, in cooperative learning groups, they retell the story in African American English. Using the same process in reverse students listen to or read a story told in African American English and then, in groups, retell the story using standardized English. (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 128)

Thus, by comparing the styles of storytelling in various dialects, students develop awareness of the conventions of these styles and learn differences in the conversational norms and linguistic behaviors of different dialect speakers. Such understanding of the interactive norms of both SE and nonstandardized varieties is also critical for educators as oftentimes lack of knowledge of such norms may affect how language samples are evaluated and scored. Truly, practical examples on how to compare and contrast the interactive norms of different varieties encourage creative linguistic behaviors, support different modes of storytelling, and send an important message to speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties that their varieties count and are no less.

Another important textbook, *African American English: A Linguistic Introduction,* by Lisa Green (2002), provides a comprehensive linguistic overview to the structure and use of this vernacular variety. Green (2002) starts with a brief introduction to the linguistic research on the origins of AAE and the historical account on the labeling of the variety. She further discusses in

chapter 1, “Lexicons and Meaning,” the content and structure of the lexicon in AAE and provides general words and phrases; verbal markers *come, stay*, and *steady* among others; and slang[8] terms, associated with certain regions or age groups. For instance, Green (2002) shares the following phrase, as shown in (4), quoted directly:

“(4) *Get over* [gɪt ovə] Verb, - (Prep-*on*). Take advantage of, to succeed by using wit but little effort.

a. #[9] The students tried to get over the teacher.
   (This sentence has an acceptable reading, but not one that is consistent with the definition in the lexical entry).
b. The teachers tried to get over on the teacher.
c. The students tried to get over.
   Gloss: The students tried to take advantage of the teacher. For example, the students tried to outsmart the teacher by submitting a two-page assignment that was double-spaced as opposed to single-spaced.” (p. 21)

As it can be seen, Green (2002) provides the phonetic representation of the phrase, its grammatical class, the linguistic environment in which the phrase occurs, and the meaning of the phrase. She also includes an example of an acceptable meaning (which does not correspond to the definition in the lexical entry), and a gloss that helps readers to see the meaning correspondences between African American and mainstream lexicons. Such an extensive introduction of lexical entries is important as it gives readers an insightful picture of the structure

[8] Slang is very informal language, or colloquial speech, and is used in place of more everyday terms. For example, the word ‘bucks’ is slang and is used instead of the word ‘dollars’.
[9] While in most linguistics work, a linguistically infelicitous form is marked by an asterisk, Green (2002) marks such forms with the hashtag.

and use of the African American lexicon and helps them to see the difference in meaning and other information between AAE and SE lexicon.

Green (2002) further shares an example of a verbal marker *stay,* as shown in (5), quoted directly:

"(5) Stay [ste] Verb, Verbal Marker, - {Adv, Prep, Verb, Adj}. (1) Live; abide in a place. (2) To frequent a place. (3) To engage in activity frequently. (4) To be in some (emotional) state on most occasions.

#They stay for a long time.

(The sentence has an acceptable reading, but not one that is in line with the meaning above.)

a. I stay on New Orleans Street.

Gloss: I live on New Orleans Street.

Gloss: I always go on New Orleans Street.

b. She stay in that bathroom.

c. She stay running.

d. He stay in the air.

Gloss: He's a frequent flyer; he travels by airplane regularly.

e. He stay hungry.

Gloss. He's always hungry." (p. 23)

Green (2002) concludes that African American lexicon is different from lexicons of other varieties of American English "in that it combines a range of lexical items or meanings that are not included in other English lexicons" (p. 31). I should add that I also included the study of AAE lexicon in my internship class and my students shared their appreciation for its inclusion. In fact, one student from the internship class, voiced that she misunderstood the full meaning of the phrase "some rude," which her College Mentor buddy, an African American student from one of

the midwestern suburban public elementary schools, used in their conversation. It is important to mention that College Mentor program is a mentoring program, which allows college students to work with underserved school students at a university campus and engage with them in fun, hands-on activities, as well as introduce school students to opportunities that higher education has to offer. Thus, one of my internship students was a volunteer in this program and her working with an African American student helped my student to apply the newly acquired linguistic knowledge of AAE in real situations and understand her College Mentor buddy better.

In the next three chapters, Green (2002) describes regular morphosyntactic and phonological patterns in AAE, including the syntactic properties of aspectual markers (also called tense-aspect markers[10]) *be*, *bin*, and *dən*; an extensive verbal paradigm of auxiliaries *have*, *do* and *be* and of aspectual markers *be*, *bin*, and *dən*; genitive marking; consonant cluster reduction; liquid vocalization; and final consonant devoicing. Such thorough linguistic description of AAE is supported by a summary and exercises at the end of each chapter that can be used in the classroom. Green (2002) also consistently compares the linguistic features of AAE (and other nonstandardized English varieties) to SE. She emphasizes that such comparison is necessary so that teachers and educators can use this information in their development of classroom lessons and strategies for teaching SE (Green, 2002, p. xi).

To provide a better picture, I will describe some of the grammatical patterns mentioned above, including aspectual marker *be*, the genitive marker -*s*, liquid vocalization and consonant cluster reduction. The first marker, aspectual marker *be* indicates habitual or recurrent meaning and can occur in the environment before the verb ending in -*ing*, as well as before an adjective, preposition, noun, adverb, passive verb, other aspectual markers, and at the end of a sentence

[10] Aspectual markers or tense-aspect markers denote tense, which places an event in time, and aspect, which indicates a completed action, an action still in progress, or habitual occurrence of an action.

(Green, 2002, p. 48). Here are some examples on the use of this marker, as shown in (6-9), quoted directly:

“(6) She **be telling** people she eight.

‘She is always telling people she’s eight’ or ‘she always tells people she’s eight’

(7) I **be in my office** by 7:30.

‘I am usually in my office by 7:30’

(8) That’s how they **be**.

‘That’s how they usually/always are’

(9) It don’t **be** drove hardly. It don’t **be** dogged. I grease it and oil it.

‘It is usually the case that it is hardly driven. It isn’t usually dogged. I grease it and oil it.’”

(Green, 2001, pp. 48-49, emphasis in the original)

As for the morphosyntactic marker genitive *-s,* it is not obligatory in possessive or other genitive contexts, as shown in (10-11), adapted from Green (2002):

“(10) I always get bites cause we be hanging out at my **mama house.**

(11) Sometime **Rolanda bed** don’t be made up.” (p. 102, emphasis in the original)

In regard with phonological patterns, the vocalization of liquids *r* and *l* were discussed, among other sound patterns in AAE. That is, when liquids *r* and *l* are in the position following vowels, they may be pronounced as a schwa (an unstressed vowel), if any sound is pronounced at all, as shown in (12), quoted directly:

“(12) AAE Phonetic Transcription

a. Cout [kot] ‘court’

b. Bea [bæə] ‘bear’

c. Brotha [brʌðə] ‘brother’

d. Toe [to] ‘tore’

e. Bea [bɛə] ‘bell’

f. Pia [pɪə] ‘pill’

g. Coo [koː] ‘cold’” (Green, 2002, p. 120)

Green (2002) further introduces a summary of the kinds of analyses that have been given to account for the consonant cluster reduction phenomenon. According to one of the analyses, voicing generalization takes place “if the two consonants forming the [final consonant] cluster have the same voicing value, in which both are [+voice] (voiced) or both are [-voice] (voiceless)” (Green, 2001, p. 110). Here is an example of the voicing generalization, as shown in (13), quoted directly:

“(13) AAE Phonetic Transcription

a. Pos [pos] ‘post’

b. Mas [mæs] ‘mask’

c. Gif [gɪf] ‘gift’

d. Bol [bol] ‘bold’

e. Ban [bæn] ‘band’” (Green, 2002, p. 109)

In the next chapter, “Speech Events and Rules of Interaction in AAE,” Green (2002) further provides a detailed analysis of speech events that are used in the linguistic system of AAE, such as playing the dozens, rapping, signifying, and loud-talking, as well as expressions in nonverbal communication, such as eye movement and “giving dap”[11] (for examples and

[11] A form of nonverbal communication, which expresses a friendly gesture of greeting, solidarity, or agreement. It can be carried out by the pound, a gesture in which one person lightly taps the top of the other person’s vertical fist. The receiver repeats the gesture. The pound can be also performed by lightly tapping the front of each other’s fists, which are usually vertically oriented. Another way participants can choose to give dap is by jumping up and gently touching each other’s chests, the latter also called chest-bumping (Green, 2002, p. 144).

definitions see below). Having introduced the pragmatic, phonological, syntactic, and morphological features of AAE, the author focuses on how these linguistic features are used in the representation of Black characters in literature and the media. Green also questions in the next two chapters if the linguistic representation of African American characters in literature and in the media is always authentic, i.e., she raises a question if aspectual markers are always appropriately used in certain linguistic environments.

To share some examples of a speech event, Green (2002) included some snaps (lines from the dozens) from two collections, *Snaps* (1994) and *Double Snaps* (1995) by Percelay et al., as shown in (14-17), quoted directly:

"(14) Your mother is so stupid she thought a lawsuit was something you wear to court.

(15) Your mother's ears are so dirty, I can pull out enough wax to make candles.

(16) I went to your house, stepped on a cigarette, and your mother screamed, "Who turned off the heat?"

(17) Your mother is so old, she took her driving test on a dinosaur." (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 138)

As Green (2002) explains, playing the dozens is a game, which is "in the call and response format, [and during which] two opponents dual verbally, making derogatory remarks about each other and/or each other's family members" (p. 138). It is important that the statements are exaggerated and do not characterize the other contestant's family; otherwise, the game may get offensive.

Another well-known speech event in AAE is loud-talking, which takes place "when a speaker delivers a line that was intended for someone else loud enough for people outside of the conversation to hear" (Green, 2001, p. 136). Because of it, the line not only becomes

objectionable, but may often be embarrassing for the addressee. Here is an example of a situation in which loud-talking was used to attract attention to speaker A, as shown in (18), quoted directly:

"(18) *Speaker B kept asking A where they should have dinner that night, but A didn't have any suggestions. After some time had elapsed, A and B had the following conversation*:

A: I figured it out. Let's go to that place where I had that good veggie burger.

B: Oh, yeah, American Café! That's a great idea!

A, B and others get ready to go to dinner.

A: (A walks over to B and delivers the line quietly with discretion and with hands on her hips.) I know I have great ideas, but it takes time for me to come up with them, so don't rush me.

B: *(B looks at A and delivers the line so that the other four people in the room can hear him).* Now see, see what I have to go through!

A retreats to the door, out of sight, and waits for the others.

She running to the door. She shame now. Dən told me off, now she wanna go in the dark.

Everyone laughs." (Green, 2002, p. 141)

The abundant research on speech events and rules of interaction in AAE provided by Green (2002) further illustrated the features of AAE language use. Indeed, in order to understand the communicative behavior of a speech community, knowledge of the rules of conversational interaction are vital. I argue that this knowledge is critical for all teachers and educators, for differences in communicative and cultural norms may lead to misunderstandings, and AAE speakers (as well as other culturally and linguistically diverse students) may be wrongly perceived as too loud, disrespectful, disinterested, or bored.

As for the linguistic representation of AAE in literature and in the media, Green (2002) provides thorough and critical research on the literary representation of AAE in some authors' works, as well as on the linguistic features and rhetorical strategies used in some television shows and films about African Americans. As I mentioned previously, Green argues that the language of Black characters is not always accurate and gives the following examples to prove her point, as shown in (19), quoted directly:

"(19) It **be's** the way it always **be**. The three musketeers. Me and Cecil and Mike." (Green, 2002, p. 192, emphasis in the original)

In this sentence from John Wideman's memoir, *Brothers and Keepers*, it is unclear "if things at some particular moment are the same, that is, the way they usually are" (Green, 2002, p. 193). If this is the case, Green (2002) proposes the following explanation:

> …then the first *be's* indicates moments in general (i.e., 'it is usually the case at a particular time'), and the second *be* denotes habitual meaning ('things are the way they usually are'). (p. 193)

In another example from the movie by Spike Lee *Do the Right Thing*, Green (2002) also questions if the use of aspectual marker *be* is a grammatical feature of AAE, as shown in (20), quoted directly:

"(20) A: How you be, man?

B: Livin' large, bro." (p. 208)

Green (2002) argues that the meaning of *be* in this context is not clear either. Particularly, it is confusing whether A is asking about B's general well-being or about how B is doing at the moment. If the question is about B's general well-being, then "the meaning of *be* is habitual, and the form itself is the aspectual *be* form" (Green, 2002, p. 207). However, if the question is about

how B is doing at the moment, then it is not habitual *be* that is discussed in the context of AAE. Thus Green calls for taking a critical approach to the different linguistic strategies used in the literature and the media to mark the language of AAE characters. She further suggests that language arts teachers do the linguistic analysis of Black characters in their classrooms, and this way, students may learn a lot about the use and representation of Black speech in literature (Green, 2002, p. 198).

In the final chapter, "Approaches, Attitudes, and Education," Green (2002) overviews the different approaches to the study of AAE and explores the attitudes towards this variety, particularly attitudes towards AAE as a legitimate variety, attitudes toward AAE and employment, and attitudes toward AAE and education. It is important to mention that Green (2002) also brings up the need to consider the link between over-diagnosis and mislabeling of AAE child speakers as communicatively impaired and the limited research on the linguistic development of AAE child speakers—an issue that is not often mentioned in other textbooks. The rest of the chapter is focused on the vitality of teachers' attitudes on students' academic success, as well as classroom strategies that teachers can use in their classrooms. Green (2002) advocates for using AAE linguistic patterns in the classroom; however, she emphasizes that the proposed strategies are for teaching SE to AAE speakers. This is where I have a different stance on this matter as I believe that *all* students should learn to understand how the structure and use of SE compares to the structure and use of vernacular Englishes so that *all* students understand, value, and benefit from knowledge of language variation.

Yet, I concur with Green's assertion (2002) that teachers' attitudes toward AAE (and other nonstandardized varieties) are a strong factor in their choices of classroom strategies and practices; therefore, it is important that teachers are aware of the linguistic rules and patterns of

AAE as a form-focused study aids in teachers' objectivity vis-à-vis language (p. 242). Meier also insists that teachers who are introduced to the rule-governed nature of vernacular varieties are less likely to penalize students for their use of the grammatical patterns of such varieties (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 240). More importantly, such teachers use their knowledge of dialectal differences when teaching students SE, which has been a very effective teaching approach in promoting academic success. On the contrary, discouraging the use of vernacular linguistic features in the classroom has been counterproductive and sends the message to speakers of such varieties that their dialects are wrong and nonacceptable. Rickford (1999) notes that "it is no surprise that students who were interrupted and asked to repeat 'mispronounced' words over and over became withdrawn and hesitated to speak up in class" (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 233). Labov, similarly, insists that teachers should be aware of AAE patterns and recommends that they follow these five principles for teaching reading to speakers of nonstandardized varieties, as shown in (21), quoted directly:

"(21) Principle 1. Teachers should distinguish between mistakes in reading and differences in pronunciation.

Principle 2. Give more attention to the end of words.

Principle 3. Words must be presented to students in those phonological contexts that preserve underlying forms.

Principle 4. Use the full forms of words and avoid contractions.

Principle 5. Grammar should be taught explicitly." (as cited in Green, pp. 235-236)

In a nutshell, Labov asserts that teachers should learn to recognize the linguistic patterns of nonstandardized English language varieties from actual mistakes because such recognition will prevent issues of miscommunication and misinformation. Indeed, ability to distinguish a

nonstandardized linguistic feature from an actual error allows teachers to concentrate on what students are trying to express, explain standardized and nonstandardized linguistic correspondences, and address any actual errors in a timely manner. For example, the use of multiple negators in a single negative sentence is representative of AAE, Chicano, or Appalachian English (for example, 'I don't want no coffee'). Teachers' awareness of this syntactic pattern will help them to approach teaching the negative marking in SE through comparison with a nonstandardized variety and raise students' awareness on the linguistic patterns of both varieties.

Labov then goes into detail what linguistic features are crucial to emphasize: he believes that teachers need to explain to students the differences in pronunciation of the final consonant combinations in words in the nonstandardized variety and SE and to include examples in which words (particularly, final consonant combinations) preserve their underlying forms (for example, the final consonant -*st* in *last answer* is preserved because -*st* precedes a vowel) (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 236). He further clarifies that because phonological differences between a nonstandardized variety and SE often cause difficulties with reading acquisition, teaching students to recognize differences in pronunciation of words in a vernacular and SE will educate them on AAE versus SE patterns and thus help students to learn to read faster.

Finally, Labov shares that when teaching reading to AAE speakers, it is necessary to use full forms of words (for example, full forms of the auxiliary verbs *will* and *is*) in order to avoid confusion as the use of auxiliaries in AAE and SE differs (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 236). For example, while in SE, the auxiliary *be* is obligatory in the environment preceding V-*ing*, it is not the case with how auxiliary *be* occurs on the surface in that environment in AAE. Thus, if *is* is obligatory in SE in a sentence like, "He *is* driving," in AAE, it is both grammatically correct to

say, “He driving” or “He is driving.” Due to such differences in the use of auxiliaries, Labov stresses the importance of using the full forms of words (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 236). The contracted forms such as “*ll* for *will* or ‘s for *is* can be confusing and will impede the understanding of the text. In addition, explicit explanation of how auxiliaries operate in nonstandardized versus SE will help students see the differences in the grammatical patterns and thus educate students on the linguistic systems of both varieties.

All in all, the five principles described above move away from the correctionist approach and use the contrastive analysis approach[12], which provides a systematic study of the linguistic differences in a pair of varieties of a language or in a pair of languages. I strongly support the latter approach myself as it educates teachers on the rule-governed nature of vernacular varieties and helps them to address the cultural and linguistic needs of speakers of nonstandardized varieties of English, along with contributing to the development of positive attitudes and respect towards stigmatized varieties. Green (2002) provides several examples of school programs (Harris-Wright,1999; Taylor, 1989; and Crist, 1995), which used the contrastive analysis approach in the classroom and reported that students succeeded in the acquisition of SE linguistic structure while recognizing the systematicity of nonstandardized varieties (pp. 236-237).

Besides book-length accounts on nonstandardized varieties and on how to approach language variation in the classroom, many linguists and educators have proposed multicultural education teaching strategies and practices as well as alternative curricula on how to raise language awareness in the schools by educating all students on language variation and the linguistic structure of English language varieties. One example is Academic English Mastery Program (AEMP)[13] in the Los-Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which is “a

[12] More on the contrastive analysis used in other programs
[13] AEMP’s strategies are further shared in an educational documentary film “Do You Speak American?”

comprehensive, research-based program, designed to answer the language and literacy needs of African American, Mexican American, Hawaiian American, and Native American students" whose native English variety is not SE (LAUSD, n.d., para. 1). The AEMP has been used by 60 schools in LAUSD since 1991 after its development out of 1989 LAUSD study, *The Children Can No Longer Wait: An Action Plan to End Low Achievement and Establish Educational Excellence*, which focuses on historically underrepresented students' linguistic and cultural challenges and the failure of the school district to answer these students' academic needs (LeMoine, 1999, p. 40). Particularly, the AEMP uses such pedagogical strategies as contrastive analysis and code-switching for learning the differences in the linguistic characteristics of nonstandardized English language varieties and SE. In addition, a sociolinguistic component is present in the AEMP program: teachers "infuse students' history and culture into the curriculum [through] …a rich variety of cultural materials such as multicultural artifacts, literature, arts, crafts, music, and holidays" (LeMoine, 1999, pp. 25-32). Students also have open discussions of various languages and cultures represented in the school; examine ways their cultures are different from and similar to "mainstream" culture and cultures of the world; and explore how different social contexts and different social situations require different language use (LeMoine, 1999, p. 33).

Furthermore, the LAUSD website shares instructional support materials, mini-grammar lessons, and other instructional methodologies for K-12 grades that demonstrate how to facilitate the acquisition of SE in its oral and written forms without devaluing students' English language varieties and cultures. The AEMP's teaching strategies are also shared in one educational documentary film *Do You Speak American?* Specifically, in episode 3 of this documentary, a fifth-grade class does a drill on the linguistic differences between AAE and SE, divides into four

teams, and plays a game like Jeopardy! in which students earn points for code-switching correctly from AAE to SE, as shown in (22):

(22) Test sentence: My grandpa cook dinner every night.

Question: Which feature is not Mainstream American English? (Cran & McNeil, 2005)

After students identify that the feature is third person singular, they are asked to code-switch the sentence into SE. Such an approach allows students not only to develop meta-awareness concerning the use, appropriateness, and rhetorical effect of the linguistic features of both AAE and SE, but also to master the register and style of English used in a school setting. LeMoine, the director of LAUSD, further concludes that if teachers devalue historically underrepresented students' linguistic and cultural differences in the classroom, they "turn [these students] off education" as the latter feel that who they are is not important, which usually considerably affects the motivation to acquire SE (Cran & McNeil, Episode 3, 2005).

Similar to AEMP's pedagogical strategies, Wheeler (2009) advocates for the employment of code-switching and contrastive analysis of the linguistic features of nonstandardized and SE in language arts classes. Wheeler (2009) further notices that in her workshops, she shows how K-12 teachers can transition from the traditional correctionist method to a linguistically informed approach (p. 179). She starts out her workshops with one or two samples of student essays illustrating AAE and asks teachers if the grammar in those essays is familiar to them and what they do about it. Wheeler (2009) asserts that over the past 10 years, she asked this question to more than a thousand teachers and the latter respond that they red pen such papers (p. 180). To her next question if the correctionist approach helps to learn SE, the answer is 'no'. Indeed, as Wolfram et al. (2007) observe, "vernacular speakers who [are] corrected when they use vernacular features actually use more, not fewer features over time" (p.109).

Considering that the correctionist approach has proved to be ineffective for more than fifty years, Wheeler (2009) proposes to go from correction to comparing and contrasting the linguistic features of a vernacular variety and SE (p. 182). By learning the detailed similarities and differences between standardized and nonstandardized varieties, students develop a much greater understanding of the linguistic systems of the two varieties. For example, Swords's (Wheeler's collaborator) incorporation of contrastive analysis and code-switching in diverse second and third grades have brought significant improvement in her students' academic performance (Wheeler, 2009, p. 184). In fact, in 2002, after one year of using code-switching and contrastive analysis, African American students equaled their White classmates in reading and writing and outperformed them in math and science (Wheeler, 2006, p. 24).

An example of Swords's incorporation of contrastive analysis and code-switching in her classroom could be a chart created on discovering the rules for plural patterns across language varieties. Swords introduced two columns on the chart with examples from student writing in AAE (the first column is called Informal English) and SE (the second column is called Formal English[14]), as shown in (23):

(23) Informal English	Formal English
I have two dog.	I have two dogs.
Taylor likes cat.	Taylor likes cats.
All the boy…	All the boys… (Wheeler, 2009, p. 184)

The teacher then asked if students understood what the first two sentences meant and if they had the same meaning. After students clarified that the sentences had the same meaning, she asked them what differences they saw between them. Students further explained that the word

[14] Wheeler and Swords prefer to operate with the terms Informal English and Formal English due to the still persistent today negative attitudes towards stigmatized varieties.

‘dogs’ has an ‘-s’ on it, which means ‘more than one’ in formal English. Students then explored that the other sentence shows more than one dog through the number word ‘two’ in it (Wheeler, 2009, p. 24). As for the second and third examples in informal English, students explained that other words in the paragraph indicate that there is more than one cat and that the word ‘all’ in the third example indicates that there is more than one boy (Wheeler, 2006, p. 24). Finally, one student also explained that “you can’t have part of a boy. If part of a boy come, then all of the boy come” (Wheeler, 2006, p. 24). As the class discovered rules for plural patterns across language varieties, Swords summarized students’ responses under each column, and the chart stayed on the classroom wall for further reference during the editing process at the writers’ workshop time in class. The editing process allows students to code-switch between SE and nonstandardized varieties, which allows them to strengthen their newly acquired linguistic knowledge.

In addition, the contrastive analysis described above is used as a literary tool, that is, students discuss the rhetorical effect of the employment of formal or informal English in literature and learn to use the appropriate variety according to the time, place, audience, and communicative purpose. For instance, in Swords’s class, children read an African American folktale *Flossie and the Fox* by Patricia McKissack, in which Flossie speaks in patterns of AAE (informal English) and the fox in SE (formal English); discuss how speech patterns of the informal English or speech patterns of formal English allow the author to build characters with voice; dramatize the story employing both varieties; and, finally, also allow students to construct their own story narrative choosing a variety depending on what kind of character students want to build. Wheeler (2009) argues that contrastive analysis of English language varieties in literature allows students to articulate the reasons for their language choices and explain why one

language variety does not fit all communication tasks (p. 188). Like LeMoine, Wheeler (2009) also believes that "when a…teacher tells minority dialect students that their language is wrong and error filled, [and] …seeks to eradicate vernacular language and culture, not only does… [this teacher] remove the link of relevance, but…[they] assail the child's family and home community" (p. 178). As a result, such judgement of inferiority lowers teachers' expectations for historically underrepresented students' abilities; does not improve such students' acquisition of SE; and perpetuates standard language ideology (SLI).

In this regard, Sweetland (2006) also criticizes "the dominant institutional response" to AAE and other nonstandardized varieties, which aims to eradicate such language varieties from the classroom (p. 16). She further argues that this "eradication approach contributes to the black-white achievement gap by diminishing instructional quality and triggering student disengagement from schooling" (Sweetland, 2006, p. 17). Her 10-week length study of 13 upper elementary classes (188 students, nine teachers) in an urban school district in Ohio indicated that "in classrooms in which dialect awareness lessons were implemented, students developed significantly more positive writing self-confidence over the course of ten weeks" (Sweetland, 2006, p. 148). The curriculum included contrastive analysis of certain linguistic features of AAE and SE, "dialect awareness learning activities, [and] literature-based writing process activities" (p. 29). The sociolinguistic approach taken by Sweetland not only benefitted AAE students, but also contributed to the development of positive attitudes on the part of teachers towards their students' language, a by-product of solid linguistic knowledge.

Hazen (2001) also joins the circle of scholars advocating for teaching about language variation and shares practical pedagogical strategies on how to use both SE and nonstandardized varieties in the classroom. He argues that the best way to start teaching about dialects is to have

students examine their assumptions about them (Hazen, 2001, p. 3). Hazen (2001) offers the following true-or-false assumptions for the discussion as shown in (24), quoted directly:

"(24) 1. Language is one of our most important cultural inventions.

2. Language change is a process of decay.

3. Grammar books used in schools cover most of the rules and processes of English.

4. Eskimos have many words for snow, and they "see" snow differently than others do.

5. Writing and speech are essentially the same thing.

6. Appalachian English is Elizabethan English.

7. Children require detailed instruction to learn language." (p.4)

After students answer the questions, the teacher and the students can start the discussion of the given assumptions, question these assumptions, and further challenge them by doing research. For example, students could challenge the assumption that most of the rules and processes of English are introduced in grammar books. Assumption 3, particularly, will lead students to the discussion of the prescriptive approach taken by schools, which is driven by SLI; language policies that maintain SLI; and the way these language policies conflict with the reality of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Hazen (2001) further suggests that students learn about dialects through active learning, that is, through observation of language patterns, hypothesis development, and hypothesis testing (p. 4). This scientific inquiry in the study of dialects echoes Wolfram, Adger, and Christian's (2007) approach, but Hazen emphasizes that it is helpful to look at the linguistic patterns in SE before examining linguistic patterns in nonstandardized varieties (p. 4). For example, students could examine the three phonetic forms /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/ of the past tense marker -*ed* in regular verbs. After students "say each of the verbs aloud in the past tense, notice the sound of the past

tense marker for each of them, [and] sort the verbs into the three columns /t/, /d/, or /ɪd/," students realize that language variation is normal, and that it is rule-governed (Hazen, 2001, p. 5). To be more precise, students learn that "if the root word ends in /t/ or /d/, the ending is pronounced /ɪd/; if the root word ends in a voiced sound other than /d/, the ending is pronounced /d/; and if the root ends in a voiceless sound other than /t/, the ending is pronounced /t/" (Hazen, 2001, p. 6). After having learned about some linguistic patterns in SE, students can start examining linguistic patterns in nonstandardized varieties. Such a pedagogical approach that examines unstigmatized variation in English (for example, /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/ forms discussed above) before examining stigmatized variation in English (for example, regularization in vernacular past-tense formation with irregular verbs, as in *know, knowed* or *grow, growed*) helps students understand that "variation is neither bad nor good," and it is inherent in both standard and nonstandardized varieties (Hazen, 2001). Rather, it is the social judgement of nonstandardized dialects' linguistic features that negatively affects how they are perceived by the society.

In addition to a scientific inquiry into language variation, I also believe that it is important to help students understand that language is always changing, and what is considered to be 'correct' in contemporary English is not necessarily what was considered to be 'correct' in Old or Middle English. For example, during my internship, my students and I looked into the history of the word 'ask', which is often pronounced as /æks/ by African American English speakers. My students were surprised and excited to learn that the word 'ask' has existed for more than 1,000 years (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 79). Specifically, in Old English, the verb *ascian* ('to ask' in contemporary English) went through a sound change in which two pronunciations were prevalently used at the same time. Speakers from the northern part of

England pronounced *ascian* as ‘askian’, while speakers from the southern part of England tended to pronounce this verb as ‘axeian’ (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 79). This discovery helped my students not only understand the historical development of the word ‘ask’, but they also realized that language is always changing, and the history of language is certainly reflected in today’s language variation.

Coming back to the overview of pedagogical approaches on how to educate students on the logic and rule-governed nature of English language varieties, Labov (2012) provides a comprehensive review of attempts to teach AAE students SE by comparing and contrasting the linguistic system of SE with the linguistic system of AAE (p. 73). He starts with sharing his research on South Harlem Street groups, “the Jets, the Cobras, the Thunderbirds, the Aces,” and a few isolated individuals, who, for a certain reason, were not members of the groups (Labov, 2012, p. 69). Labov (2012) particularly researched whether the linguistic differences influence the minority gap in terms of reading achievement (p. 68). What he found, however, is that it is not “a cognitive problem of language learning,” but rather the strong cultural conflict between the street values and school values that prevented AAE students from successfully acquiring SE (Labov, 2012, p. 70). Another important factor is that both teachers’ and educational psychologists’ negative attitudes towards AAE produced a Pygmalion effect that influenced the underrepresented students’ poor performance in school (Labov, 2012, p. 71).

Labov (2012) is strongly critical of the point of view that AAE is a corrupt version of English and argues in his article, “The Logic of Nonstandard English,” that AAE has “all the capacities needed for logical thought” (p. 72). He did a thorough linguistic analysis of the logic of Larry Hawthorne’s (one of the main members of the Jets) argument on matters of belief, who

was interviewed by John Lewis, a participant-observer among the youth from South Central Harlem, as shown in (25), quoted directly:

“(25) JL: What happens to you after you die? Do you know?

Larry: Yeah, I know.

JL: What?

Larry: After they put you in the ground, your body turns into -ah – bones, an’ shit.

JL: What happens to your spirit?

Larry: Your spirit -soon as you die, your spirit leaves you.

JL: And where does the spirit go?

Larry: Well, it all depends…

JL: On what?

Larry: You know, like some people say if you’re good an’ shit, your spirit goin’ t’heaven…’n’ if you bad, your spirit goin’ to hell. Well, bullshit! Your spirit goin’ to hell anyway, good or bad.

JL: Why?

Larry: Why? I’ll tell you why. ‘Cause, you see, doesn’t nobody really know that it’s God, y’know, ‘cause I mean I have seen black gods, pink gods, white gods, all color gods], and don’t nobody know it’s really a God. An’ when they be sayin’ if you good, you goin’ t’heaven, tha’s bullshit, ‘cause you ain’t goin’ to no heaven, ‘cause it ain’t no heaven for you to go to.” (as cited in Clark, Chandler & Barry, 1994, p. 181)

According to Labov, Larry “can sum up a complex argument in a few words, and the full force of his opinion comes through without qualification and reservation. He is eminently quotable,

and his interviews give us many concise statements of the nonstandard Negro English (NNE) point of view" (as cited in Clark et al., 1994, p. 181).

Larry is also a proficient speaker of AAE and uses such grammatical structures as negative inversion (for example, *don't nobody know*), negative concord (for example, *you ain't goin' to no heaven*), invariant *be* (for example, expressing a habitual and repeatable action in *when they be sayin*), dummy *it*[15] for SE *there* (for example, *it ain't no heaven*), and optional copula deletion (for example, *if you good...if you bad*) among others (Labov, 1972). By effectively using AAE grammar and AAE rhetorical style, Larry provides a convincing argument to his position on where one's spirit goes after one dies.

Furthermore, Labov's strong counterargument to the assertion of educational psychologists that AAE is illogical and deficient gave an opportunity for AAE speakers to be heard in the world of academia. Labov (1969) concludes his argument by contending that teachers, educational psychologists, and others concerned are ignorant of the linguistic system of AAE, and therefore, they should educate themselves on its rule-governed nature and logic (p. 33). What is more, teachers "must approach the teaching of SE through a knowledge of a child's own system" (Labov, 1969, p. 33).

Thus, the additive approach should be taken in teaching SE: a child develops knowledge of both systems through comparison and contrast of AAE and SE. In fact, as early as in 1968, Carol Reed of the SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) program at Brooklyn College started a contrastive analysis program for African American high school graduates whose reading and writing levels were not sufficient for college (Labov, 2012, p. 73). In addition

[15] A term used in linguistics to refer to a 'dummy' or 'empty' grammatical subject, which does not have any semantic meaning. The real subject occurs later in the clause.

to the contrastive analysis, Reed and Baxter, as well as members of the Language Curriculum Researchers included the following:

> the historical development of US Ebonics/AAVE, … rhetorical sensibility, analysis of the speaking styles of African American community and ways that these styles contrast with the written academic variety of English, and the values associated with US Ebonics/AAVE culture and those of the dominant culture as reflected in language use. (Richardson, 2003, p. 14)

The program received five-years' funding in 1969 and the SEEK curriculum had positive reviews (Richardson, 2013, p. 15); however, in 1971, the program was criticized by the editor Henry Lee Moon in the spring issue of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) publication, *The Crisis* (Labov, 2012, p. 73). Particularly, in his editorial, entitled "Black Nonsense," Moon criticized the program for teaching African American students incorrect English (Labov, 2012, p. 73). The editorial prompted a public flurry, and the program was condemned as a program developed to teach "bad English," "slang," and "ignorant and careless speech" (Labov, 2012, p. 74). Labov (2012) goes on to explain that King v. Ann Arbor case (1979), and the Oakland "Ebonics" program (1996) (I discussed these two unsuccessful attempts to use linguistic knowledge of AAE in schools in chapter 1) caused the same strongly negative political reactions among the national leaders, teachers, educators, and the general public (p. 82).

It is important to mention that such negativity towards AAE (and other nonstandardized varieties) persists even today. For example, as recent as in March 2010, Mike Adams, a professor of Criminology at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington and a right-wing blogger, "campaigned to have students' tuition for Dr. Martinez's classes refunded" (Labov, 2012, p. 83).

Dr. Adams was irritated that Dr. Maurice Martinez, a professor of secondary education at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, included the study of AAE as part of his curriculum. For example, Adams shared the following frustration: "Maurice, the tenured education professor, also informs students that when using plurals it is not necessary to add an "s" in Black English. That's why a paper costs "50 cent," not "50 cents." Is this making sense? Or do we say "making cent"? (Labov, 2012, p. 83). Professor Adam's uninformed response to Dr. Martinez's inclusion of the study of nonstandardized linguistic features not only demonstrates the former professor's ignorance of the linguistic reality of nonstandardized varieties, but also emphasizes the still omnipresent public misperception of AAE. The fact that highly educated people continue to perpetuate SLI points to the sad reality of many scholars, educators, policy makers being linguistically ignorant today, which is the reflection of the U.S. educational system's failure to include a sociolinguistically informed curriculum into schools.

Finally, one more program, Bridge: A Cross-Cultural Reading Program, also used the knowledge of AAE to teach SE. It was developed by Gary Simpkins, Grace Holt, and Charlesetta Simpkins, who launched the program in 1976 (Labov, 2012, p. 83). This "bridge" approach to reading instruction for middle-school students first used "readings [that] were in the authors' versions of AAVE and dealt with African American themes and folklore" and then transitioned to reading texts in SE (Labov, 2012, p. 84). The program was tested in five areas in the U.S. with 14 teachers, 21 test classes and six control classes from the 7th through the 12th grades, with 530 African American students and 10 students of other ethnicities (p. 85). According to Simpkins and Simpkins (1981), the 21 test classes demonstrated a significant progress in reading in comparison with the six control classes: "an average gain of 6.2 months for 4 months of instruction as compared to 1.6 months for the control group" (as cited in Labov, 2012, p. 85).

Even so, the negative reaction to the use of AAE in the educational context made it difficult for the publishers to continue promoting the program until it was eventually stopped.

Labov (2012) further shares that regardless of the continued resistance on the part of educational institutions to use AAE for the acquisition of SE, he and other scholars from the University of Pennsylvania Linguistics Laboratory developed "an Individualized Reading Program for the use of undergraduates in service-learning courses on Black English, [in which] students learn the basic patterns of AAVE and its history…and use that knowledge to tutor elementary school children in local schools" (Labov, 2012, p. 86). This tutoring program was later developed as The Reading Road and is used as the primary tool of a student-run project, the Penn Reading Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania, and at a few other universities (Labov, 2012, p. 86). The following three research findings served as the basis for the program:

> a. Most struggling readers have actually mastered the alphabetic principle as far as the basic relations between sound and spelling are concerned. Their errors are concentrated on combinatory problems where several letters combine to signal one sound or one letter signals more than one sound.
>
> b. Many apparent errors in oral reading are actually differences in pronunciation between AAVE and standard English.
>
> c. Alienated and discouraged readers find the acquisition of literacy irrelevant to the problems that they have to deal with in everyday life. (Labov, 2012, p. 87)

Thus, the Reading Road addressed the three problems named above by focusing on the combinatory problems, by educating tutors on pronunciation patterns, and by providing the reading material that reflects the social concerns and interests of low-income underrepresented students (Labov, 2012, p. 87). According to Penn Reading Initiative (n.d.), African American, Latino, and White students from grades 2-5 who were one to two years behind the appropriate

reading level have demonstrated a considerable improvement in reading. The program has proved to be particularly successful with "the most discouraged and alienated readers" (Penn Reading Initiative, n.d.).

Labov (2012) also incorporated the basics of The Reading Road into a commercial intervention program, Portals to Reading, which is "a full language arts series for grades 4-8, published by Houghton-Mifflin Harcourt and now being marketed in California and Texas" (p. 87). The series consists of "32 short graphic novels," some of which are based on the narratives of The Reading Road and some are new novels (Labov, 2012, p. 87). Furthermore, each chapter to reading starts with the instruction on a certain alphabetic combination, which is then reinforced in the graphic novels as 75% of the words in these novels follow phonics rules taught in the current and previous chapters. As students are learning to read, they apply their newly acquired linguistic knowledge of how a letter or groups of letters of the alphabet represent certain sounds and thus express certain meanings, for example, the silent-*e* rule that distinguishes *rat* from *rate*, or the final combinations -*ld, -nd*, -*sp*, and -*sps* (Labov, 2012, p. 87). It is important to mention that the emphasis of the approach is on decoding and recognizing the meaning of words rather than on drilling pronunciation patterns (for example, the emphasis is on decoding the word *tasks* as the plural of *task*, not on drilling the pronunciation patterns -*sks* and -*sk*) (Labov, 2012, p. 87). The following example of one graphic novel, "Ghosts in the Basement" focuses on -*sts*, -*sps*, and -*sks* combinations:

> I screamed, "Tamara! I just killed a ghost!" Tamara came up. "That's no ghost. That's a wasps' nest." I said, "It's not wasps! It's a ghost's nest." Tamara said, "It isn't a ghost. It's a wasps' nest. There were wasps down here last spring. And they stung me too!" (Labov, 2012, p. 88)

Labov (2012) further explains that in the teacher's edition, there is a letter on professional development for each graphic novel (p. 88). Thus, the letter on professional development for the novel, "Ghosts in the Basement," explains that the combinations -*sts, -sps,* and -*sks*- are the most challenging combinations of three consonants, at the beginnings and ends of words, as in *ghost's nests* and *wasps' nests* (Labov, 2012, p. 88). Pronunciation of such combinations is rather challenging for many speakers of English, including SE speakers. Even with strong effort, the pronunciation of the word *tests*, for example, may be pronounced as *tesses,* or *testes,* or *tesss* (p. 88). Labov (2012) admits that even though the program emphasizes decoding words' meanings rather than developing pronunciation skills, it is up to teachers how much focus they want to give to either aspect (p. 88). Letters of professional development then help to explain to teachers that pronunciation of certain letters is prevalent even among SE speakers (as in the example given above). By doing so, Labov raises teachers' phonological awareness and promotes the understanding of the regularities and patterns that govern the actual language use of sounds in speech.

In addition to the development of phonological awareness, I believe the reading programs described above provide an excellent opportunity to raise students' morphological awareness. For instance, the following linguistic patterns are morphological, not phonological: "He speak funny" in AAE and "He speak***s*** funny" in SE, or "Two dog" in AAE and "Two dog*s*" in SE. If teachers explain to students that -*s* is a morpheme, the smallest unit of meaning in language, and that -*s* indicates aspects of a grammatical function of a word (for example, in "speak*s*," -*s* indicates that the verb is in third person singular in SE), students will not only improve their reading and spelling skills, but also develop a better understanding of the grammatical patterns of both varieties.

All in all, linguists have developed effective methodologies on how to educate speakers of both SE and nonstandardized varieties on the organization and logic in both varieties and compare and contrast those varieties with each other. Educational programs designed to bring awareness of the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized varieties have proved to be successful in raising test scores on standardized tests and beyond, increasing student knowledge on the linguistic and paralinguistic differences in English varieties, and in contributing to positive attitude change to minority dialects. Certainly, a crucial role in this positive change plays teacher preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms. Specifically, in order for meaningful learning to take place, it is important both to introduce teachers to the linguistic structure of both SE and nonstandardized varieties and to show them how to integrate such linguistic knowledge in today's multilingual and multicultural classrooms. In addition, I believe that focus on the history, literary and cultural traditions, and conversational norms of nonstandardized varieties, along with the discussions of standard language ideology, linguistic profiling, and language subordination is an important part of teacher education on language variation.

As I was developing my introductory course to linguistics, I kept in mind several questions: How will this class help my students to become teachers they are aspiring to be? How well will they be prepared to answer the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the classroom? As a linguist, I cannot ignore the fact that many language arts teachers still lack scholarly expertise in the phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of both standardized and nonstandardized varieties of English, and as a result, a deficit perspective is perpetuated in the classroom. As teachers create all other professions, I strongly believe that K-12 teacher education programs should have a strong focus on the English language variation and its scientific study. Indeed, accurate information about the structural differences between

standardized and nonstandardized varieties will bring an understanding that the latter are natural manifestations of cultural and linguistic diversity. My hope is that this focus in introductory linguistics courses will start a movement towards a coordinated, dynamic curriculum and engaged instruction in language arts classrooms.

CHAPTER III: AUXILIARY VERBS IN AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH

Introduction

In my previous chapters, I introduced issues of language variation in the classroom in the U.S. public schools (and beyond) and emphasized the growing need for linguistically prepared K-12 language arts teachers in the increasingly ethnically diverse school population today. I further summarized and analyzed the current research, theory, and practice related to the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students. As a teacher of English, a linguist, and a TESOLer, I believe that linguistically informed ways of addressing issues related to SE and nonstandardized varieties are integral to improving academic success of culturally and linguistically diverse students. As a means of answering the urgent educational needs of linguistically diverse students, I developed a critical multicultural introductory linguistics pedagogy for future K-12 language arts teachers (and writing instructors at the college level). Furthermore, one of the important foci of my pedagogy is a detailed study of some of the prominent phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic features of at least one nonstandardized variety because such form-focused study helps to understand the systematicity and logic of that variety.

As I indicated in chapter I, I chose African American English for a detailed linguistic study with my students. Throughout the semester, my students and I not only analyzed the main linguistic features of this nonstandardized variety, but also looked into its history and origin, as well as attitudes toward AAE as a legitimate variety. Finally, my students and I discussed the educational implications of nonstandardized varieties and classroom strategies on how language arts teachers (and beyond) can integrate linguistic theories in the classroom and compare and contrast a nonstandardized English with the standardized variety.

In this chapter, I would also like to delve into a detailed linguistic study by illustrating the rule-governed nature of African American English. Particularly, I will provide a detailed analysis of this variety's auxiliary and aspectual systems. This thorough examination of the verbal system of AAE will demonstrate that auxiliary verbs and aspectual markers in AAE obey specific rules, which govern their systematic occurrence in this variety. Furthermore, I will also compare the verbal system of AAE to the verbal system of other English varieties and SE in order to show how AAE differs or is similar to certain varieties. I will first describe the auxiliary verbs in AAE and then focus on the aspectual markers.

Auxiliary Verbs as a Word Class

To define auxiliary verbs as a word class, it is important to mention that these verbs possess all the characteristics of grammatical functors because such verbs "form a relatively small, closed set and express very limited semantic features" (Payne, 2011, p. 253). That is, auxiliary verbs, as grammatical functors, are smaller in form in comparison with full verbs (or lexical verbs); do not easily add new members to their class (a closed class); tend to have specific and narrow meanings, unlike full verbs, which have a high degree of lexical content; and, finally, often attach to other items and are either always unstressed or take stress for emphatic confirmation (Payne, 2011, p. 67).

Furthermore, auxiliary verbs have one salient syntactic function, which is to act as operators when they appear as the first verb of a finite verb phrase (Green, 2002, p. 35). To define the latter, a finite verb phrase is "a verb phrase in which the first or only verb is a finite verb [with] the rest of the verb phrase (if any) consisting of nonfinite verbs" (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1994, p. 41). Thus, it is important to mention that copula *be* is also an operator when it

acts as the main (or lexical) verb and is the only verb in the verb phrase (e.g., 'I'*m* not short'). As for the verb *do*, only auxiliary *do* is an operator (e.g., 'He *doesn't* eat'), not the lexical *do* (e.g., 'He *do*es a lot of homework'). Similarly, only auxiliary *have* is an operator (e.g., '*Has* Tim left?', 'I *haven't* eaten', or 'She hasn't eaten, *has* she?'), not the lexical *have* (e.g. 'He *has* a brother').

As operators, auxiliary verbs perform operations in such constructions as negation, inversion, code, and emphasis (also called the NICE properties). Overall, the auxiliary verbs in AAE operate in ways similar to the way auxiliary verbs operate in other varieties of English, including SE; yet, there are some differences between AAE and SE auxiliary systems (Green, 2002, p. 35). Before comparing these differences and describing AAE auxiliary verbs' properties and processes, I'll review some distinctive grammatical features in the verb phrase of AAE as it will serve as a background for understanding auxiliary verbs in AAE.

General Features of the Verb in AAE

The first characteristic of the AAE verb phrase is that "a single form may be used with both singular and plural subjects" in the present tense (Green, 2002, p. 38). That is, in AAE, the verbal suffix -*s* in present tense verbs following third-person singular subjects may be absent and a single verb form is used with both singular and plural subjects (e.g., 'I play', 'You play', 'He play', 'She play', 'It play', 'We play', and 'They play'). Similarly, "a singular auxiliary [verb] form is used with both singular and plural subjects" in a negative sentence (e.g., 'I *don't* play', 'You *don't* play', 'He *don't* play', 'She *don't* play', 'It *don't* play', 'We *don't* play', and They *don't* play') (Green, 2002, p. 36). The incidence of the third-person singular verbal -*s* absence is quite high for AAE speakers and was evident in the early studies in the late 1960s among upper and lower working-class groups in New York and Detroit, where -*s* was absent from 56 to 76%

percent of the time (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 112). However, the absence of third person singular -*s* occurs in many other dialects of English, including East Anglian dialects, such as dialects of Norfolk, Suffolk and northern Essex in the United Kingdom; English-based Creoles and post-creoles of West Africa and the Caribbean; and such South Pacific pidgin and creole varieties as Tok Pisin, Bislama, and Solomon Island Pidgin, to name a few (Trudgill, 1998, pp. 140-141). Typologists, in fact, consider the modern standardized English system to be typologically unusual among world languages as present-tense third person singular verb form is "precisely the verb form which is least likely to receive special marking" (Trudgill, 1998, p. 141). Dandy (1991) goes on to point out that the third-person singular verbal -*s* is "an irregularity, since no suffix is used to mark present tense with other persons" (p. 50).

It is important to note that verbal -*s* inflection may be used in AAE, however, for other reasons: as a narrative marker, as an emphatic marker, and as an indicator of a recurring activity (Green, 2002, p. 100). As a narrative marker, verbal -*s*, can be used to indicate a narration of past events with both singular and plural subjects (e.g. 'I says', 'You says', 'He/She/It says', 'We says', and 'They says'). For example, Green (2002) cites an instance from an American television court show, *Judge Joe Brown*, from January 2000, in which a 19-year-old African American woman used the third person singular verbal -*s*, as shown in (26), quoted directly:

"(26) Judge: What happened?

Woman: He has called me Wednesday afternoon and asked, "Do you want to go to the movies"…so I get*s* in the car." (Green, 2002, p. 100)

As Green (2002) further explains, the speaker was telling her story to the judge and used a verbal marker -*s* with the first-person singular pronoun *I* (p. 100). Green (2002) notes that this use of the verbal -*s* also takes place in other English language varieties (p. 100). Another

function of the verbal -*s* in AAE*,* which is used with both singular and plural subjects, is to communicate a habitual action. In the following examples, all the sentences indicate some habitual meaning, as shown in (27-30), adapted from Green (2002):

"(27) I can show you some of the stuff we tess*es* them on.

(28) A: You have to get your rest.

B: I do*s* that.

Note: 'do*s*' is pronounced as [du:z], not as [dʌz]'

(29) When I think about Palm Sunday, I get*s* excited.

(30) I sit*s* and ride*s*." (p. 100)

In all the examples above, speakers indicate habitual actions, which happen on a regular basis or from time to time. Finally, the verbal marker -*s* can be used for emphasis, as shown in (31-32), quoted directly:

"(31) You know I want*s* to win.

(32) I love*s* my baby." (Redd & Webb, 2005, p. 35)

In the examples given above, speakers use verbal -*s* to emphasize their desire or feelings: a strong wish to win or their love for their baby. The variation of third person singular verbal -*s* in AAE observed above makes the point that the AAE verb system involves certain complexity. This complexity is further reflected in the regularization of present and past forms of the verb *be*. That is, the present and past forms of the verb *be* (the present forms *is* and *are* and the past forms *was* and *were*) are regularized to *is* in the present tense and to *was* in the past tense with plural and second person subjects (Redd & Webb, 2005, p. 35). Thus, the regularization of the verb *be* includes you *is*, they *is*, we *is*, he *is*, she *is*, and it *is*. Wolfram (2000) shares more examples of the verb *be* leveling, as shown in (33-36), quoted directly:

"(33) The folks *is* home.

(34) Y'all *is* here.

(35) The folks *was* there.

(36) Y'all *was*[16] here." (p. 122)

It is important to mention that *be* leveling or regularization is also observed in English-based creoles, in many-working class dialects, and even in the earlier stages in the history of English (Ezgeta, 2012, p. 15; Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 54). Tagliamonte and Smith (2000) further assert that the use of *was* with plural and second person subjects "was a prominent feature of British English dialects from at least the Middle English period" (p. 155). They also note that according to contemporary research, the use of *was* instead of *were* is especially prevalent in comparatively isolated insular dialects (Tagliamonte & Smith, 2000, p. 142).

Another distinguishing feature of AAE is the behavior of the auxiliary/copula *be*. To distinguish between the two, the auxiliary *be* occurs in the environment before the Present Participle in the active voice and before the Past Participle in the passive voice, while the copula *be* form occurs in the environment before an adjective, adverb, noun, or a preposition. As the auxiliary and the copula *be* have the same form and syntactic distribution, I will collapse them in my description. Furthermore, the auxiliary/copula *be* can be omitted if "the condition or event is not one that is repeated or recurring"[17] (Smitherman, 1986, p. 19). Such absence of the *be* form can take place before nouns (e.g., 'She ø a teacher now'), before adjectives (e.g., 'They ø tall'), before adverbs (e.g., 'He ø right there'), before prepositional phrases (e.g., 'My dad ø in the

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[16] In one linguistic and social situation, a speaker of AAE may use 'They *was* scared', and in another, this speaker may use the plural form of the verb *to be* with the same subject, as in 'They *were* scared' (Green, 2002, p. 38). In this dissertation, I do not explore how social factors influence such language use.

[17] More on habitual *be* in the section on aspectual markers.

hospital'), or in auxiliary constructions (e.g., 'She ø readin'[18] a book now'). As for the passive construction[19] in AAE, according to Smitherman (1999), auxiliary *be* is usually present in such constructions, as shown in (37), quoted directly:

"(37) I *am* lock in an apartment with darkness looking through this little hole." (p. 170)

Furthermore, it's important to notice that the auxiliary/copula *be* is usually required when the subject in the sentence is *I*[20] (e.g., 'I*'m* a teacher' or 'I*'m* runnin' late'), and when the auxiliary/copula *be* is in the Past Tense (e.g., 'He *was* my instructor last year' or 'They *was* readin' poetry last night') (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 115). In addition, the auxiliary/copula *be* form must be also present in emphatic contexts (e.g., 'She IS studyin' or 'They IS eatin'') or at the end of a sentence (e.g. 'That's what they is!' but not 'That's what they ø!') (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 115). Finally, the forms *what's*, *it's*, and *that's*—in which *'is'* is contracted to *'s'* and in which final '*t*' is often lost (wha's, i's, and tha's)—behave similar to *am* (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 115). In other words, the contracted form of the copula cannot be deleted, except in some greetings, as in '*Wa'apnin*' or '*What up*?'

The third noteworthy feature of the AAE verb phrase is auxiliary *ain't*. In AAE, *ain ('t)*[21] can be used as the equivalent of the negative forms of auxiliary/copula *be*, such as *am not*, *isn't*, and *aren't*; of the auxiliary verb *do*, such as *don't* or *doesn't* in the Present Tense and *didn't* in the Past Tense; and of the auxiliary verb *have*, such as *hasn't* and *haven't* (Redd & Webb, 2005, p. 36). The following examples demonstrate *ain't* usage in place of the auxiliaries mentioned above, as in '*I ain't studyin''*, 'He *ain't* happy', 'He *ain't* never done it', 'She thinks I *ain't* got

[18] In AAE, the sound ng /ŋ/ in the -*ing* suffix is pronounced as /n/ in words with more than one syllable (Green, 2002, p. 121).
[19] Due to the limitation of space, I will not focus on the passive voice in my dissertation.
[20] I *am* is usually contracted to I'*m* in AAE.
[21] *Ain* is a reduced form of *ain't.*

no more money', and 'He *ain't* got no further than sixth grade". It's important to mention that *ain't,* unlike auxiliaries in SE, "doesn't have distinct past and non-past forms" (Green, 2002, p. 39). That is, in the following sentence, 'He *ain*' go', *ain't* does not indicate a particular tense; rather, the surrounding sentences, clauses, and/or adverbial time expressions (e.g., *yesterday*, *last week*, *usually*, *often*) help to interpret the time of an action in AAE. Dillard (1972) further explains that while it is not necessary to indicate tense, aspect is an obligatory category in AAE (p. 42). In other words, in AAE, while tense may or may not be indicated, it should be clear whether an action is in progress, habitual, or completed. This is perhaps the main difference of the AAE verb system from the standardized English verb system since speakers of that variety have the option to indicate aspect, but they must mark tense. This explains why in past contexts, the main verb following auxiliary *ain'(t)* can be either in the base verb form, as in 'He *ain'(t)* go', or in Simple Past Tense form, as in 'He *ain'(t)* went'. Dillard (1972) argues, however, that the sentence 'He ain' go' "almost always (approximately 90% of the time) refers to past actions" (p. 41). Yet, Smith's (2018) research supports that Present-tense *ain't,* while not robust, does take place, especially with stative verbs (p. 164). He goes on to suggest that "the lexical verb *know* is a likely candidate for the central exemplar of the set of present tense *ain't* tokens" (Smith, 2018, p. 165). For example, as the central and organizing token, *ain't know* attracted such stative verbs as 'care', 'give a shit', 'give a damn', 'like', 'want', 'have', and 'have to' among others. The following example demonstrates Present-tense *ain't* use, as shown in the first instance of *ain't* in (38), quoted directly:

"(38) That chicken *ain't* know shit about bein' no queen and she damn sure ain't never treat me like no princess." (as cited in Smith, 2018, p. 159)

Smith (2018) concludes that even though present and past *ain't* in AAE were available in earlier AAE (as well as in other American English varieties), their frequency in Present Day African American English (PDAAE) has apparently increased (p. 159).

The fourth distinctive feature of AAE is the narrative use of auxiliary *had*[22] in simple past contexts. While tense-aspect marker is one of the newer features in AAE, especially in the last two decades (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 122), this feature is also used in other Englishes (Smith, personal communication, June 1, 2019). Furthermore, Rickford and Theberge-Rafal (1996) assert that this feature is mainly used by pre-adolescents (as cited in Green, 2002, p. 91). Green (2002), however, argues that *had* is also used by adolescents and young adults (p. 91). Consider the use of *had* as shown in (39), quoted directly:

"(39) This is a story that happened to me Monday, not too log ago. I was on my way to school, and I *had* slipped and fell [compare "I slipped and fell"], and I ran back in the house to change my clothes." (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 122)

Rickford and Rickford (2000) cite an adolescent, who used *had* to refer to the critical moment in her story. As it can be seen, the speaker does not refer to an event that happened before some point in the past, that is, there is no indication of a time earlier than another past time. Rather, the speaker narrates a sequence of events that happened in the same time range: she slipped, fell, and then ran back to the house to change clothes.

Finally, in addition to the construction, auxiliary *had* + Simple Past, for expressing narrative events in the past, AAE has more options for conveying the past tense. As I mentioned above, in AAE, the indication of tense is underspecified because AAE relies on contextual signals (Smitherman, 1986, p. 26). So, the Simple Past Tense can be expressed without suffix -*ed*

[22] Auxiliary *had* is also called Preterite *had*

for regular verbs or by Simple Present tense form for irregular verbs, as in ‘He *miss* his bus last night’, ‘He *eat* chicken yesterday’, or ‘He *play* with his best friend last summer’. Thus, context makes it clear that the speaker is talking about past events. Accordingly, these same verb forms indicate the Present Simple tense in the following contexts: ‘He *miss* the bus on Wednesdays’, ‘He *eat* chicken every day’, or ‘He *play* with his best friend every summer’.

Auxiliary Structures in AAE

It is known that the origin of AAE is one of the most hotly debated issues in linguistics. The three versions of its origin are the substratist hypothesis, the Anglicist hypothesis, and the Creolist hypothesis. The proponents of the substratist hypothesis have taken the position that the characteristic patterns of AAE and of Niger-Congo languages are similar, and thus, “AAE is structurally related to West African languages and bears only superficial similarities to general English” (Green, 2002, p. 9). Proponents of the Anglicist view, on the contrary, believe that AAE is structurally related to other English language varieties, particularly Southern varieties and the varieties of earlier periods of English (Green, 2002, p. 9). Hence, Poplack (2000) asserts that “the grammatical core of contemporary [AAE] developed from an English base, many of whose features have since disappeared from all but a select few varieties (African American and British origin) whose particular sociohistorical environments have enabled them to retain reflexes of features no longer attested in Standard English” (p. 1). And lastly, according to the Creolist hypothesis, the grammatical patterns of AAE are those which also occur in the creole varieties of English (e.g. Jamaican Creole or Gullah) and in other dialects of English (Green, 2002, p. 9). As mentioned earlier, Dillard (1972) notes that the verbal system of AAE is similar

to the verbal system of its creole ancestors and “reveals the greatest difference from white American dialects” (p. 40).

In this regard, if English is the lexifier language of AAE, that is, “the language toward which non-native speakers move” (Smith, 2018, p. 288), a range of varieties within AAE can be identified. This set of variants, which develops after a creole is formed, is conditioned by the kinds of discrimination creole speakers may encounter. This “sociolinguistic patterning” is called the post-creole continuum (Smith & Kim, 2018, p. 293). Thus, the three forms of a creole in a post-creole continuum are the basilectal, mesolectal, and the acrolectal varieties.

Depending on the social context, an AAE speaker can choose to speak a variety of AAE closest to the structure of SE, that is, the acrolectal variety, in certain domains, for example, in official or formal situations; however, they can choose to speak a variety, which is closest to the pidgin[23] system of a creole, the basilectal variety, when at home or when speaking with friends or family. Finally, the mesolectal varieties[24] are varieties that take an intermediate position between the two. An example of a basilectal variety is the use of *ain't* instead of the auxiliary *doesn't*, as in ‘She *ain't* know’, while an example of a mesolectal variety would be the use of the auxiliary *don't* instead of *doesn't* in this same sentence, as in ‘She don't know’ (K. A. Smith, personal communication, May 21, 2019). Finally, the use of auxiliary *doesn't* in ‘She *doesn't* know’ would be an example of an acrolectal variety of AAE, a variety that resembles the lexifier language the most (K. A. Smith, personal communication, May 21, 2019). In my description of auxiliary structures in AAE, I will be focusing on the more basilectal AAE system, not its acrolectal variety. Also, as it has been mentioned earlier, auxiliary verbs' main syntactic function

[23] A pidgin is a contact language that developed among speakers of different languages for some practical reason, for example, trading. Once a pidgin becomes the first language of a community, that is, children learn pidgin as their first language, it is described as a creole (Smith, 2018, p. 289).
[24] There is variation within the mesolectal form.

is to act as operators in the formation of NICE properties: a negative clause (negation), an interrogative clause (inversion), an elliptical clause (code), and an emphatic clause (emphasis). I will review these properties in my description of the progressive and perfective aspects, as well as in the description of the Present Time, Past Time, and Future Time; however, I will not provide a full description of the NICE structures for all possible combinations of aspect and time constructions as this is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Progressivity

The progressive and the perfective are two aspectual constructions that help "to "realiz[e] a basic contrast of aspect between the action viewed as complete (perfective), and the action viewed as incomplete, i.e. in progress (imperfective or progressive)" (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 2010, p. 189). Certainly, it is an oversimplified view as these two aspects may combine in one single verb phrase, resulting in the perfective progressive, as in 'I've been working on my dissertation for two years now', which means that I started writing my dissertation sometime in the past, have written it for two years, and am still writing it. In this section, I'll review all three constructions in AAE, such as the progressive, the perfective, and the perfective progressive, and compare them with SE.

The progressive emphasizes the situation as being in progress, that is, an event is, was, or will be in progress at a given time (Quirk at al., 2010, p. 197). In the Present Progressive, in SE, the progressivity is formed with the Present Tense forms of the auxiliary verb *be* and Present Participle of the main verb, as in 'I am eating', 'He/She/It is eating, and 'We/You/They are eating.' In AAE, however, in a declarative sentence in the Present Progressive, auxiliary verb *be* is usually required only with the pronoun *I* and can be absent with all other pronouns (Rickford

& Rickford, 2000, p. 115). In this regard, in AAE, Present Progressivity may be expressed as, ‘I’*m* playin’’, ‘He Ø playin’’, ‘She Ø playin’’, ‘It’s playin[25]’’, We Ø playin’’, ‘You Ø playin’’, and ‘They Ø playin’’. Furthermore, the absence of *be* can happen in a variety of syntactic environments, including a negative sentence (Labov, 1972, p. 67). Thus, in the Present Progressive, there are two ways to express negation: 1) with the use of a negative word *not* (note that after pronoun *I*, auxiliary *am* is required) and Present Participle, or 2) with auxiliary *ain't* and Present Participle. Thus, the two ways to build a negative sentence in the Present Progressive are ‘I’*m not playin’*’ and ‘He/She/It/We/You/They *not playin’’*, or ‘I/He/She/It/We/You/They *ain’t playin*’’. As for the question formation in AAE, “auxiliaries do not [obligatorily] occur on the surface,” but a special question intonation makes it clear that a speaker is asking a question (Green, 2002, p. 42). The following examples demonstrate the two ways an interrogative question can be built in AAE, as shown in (40-42):

(40) a. *Is* Bob *eatin*’?

b. Bob *eatin*’?

(41) a. *Is* they *eating*’?

b. They *eatin*’?

(42) a. *Is* it *eatin’*?

b. It’*s eatin*’?

Finally, in the code construction, “the operator functions in a range of elliptical clauses, where the rest of the predication is omitted. The clause is understood to repeat the omitted part” (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 35). Hence, auxiliaries *be* and *ain’t* function as operators in tag questions, as well as in yes-no questions, in which “the process is characterized by [noun

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[25] As mentioned earlier in this chapter, when the copula *is* is contracted in what’s, it’s, and that’s forms, it cannot be deleted.

phrase]-auxiliary inversion and polarity reversal of the auxiliary" (Green, 1993, p. 20), as shown in (43-47):

(43) Jack Ø eatin', *isn't*/*ain't* he?

(44) Jack not/ain't eatin', *is* he?

(45) Jack Ø eatin'? – Yes, he *is*/ No, he *isn't*/ No he *ain't*.

As for verb-phrase ellipsis, it is similar to verb-phrase ellipsis in SE, as shown in (46-47):

(46) Jack ø eatin', and so *is* Maria.

(47) Jack ø eatin', and Maria *is* too.

Lastly, in the operation of emphasis, the auxiliary *be* is obligatory and possesses the nuclear stress in the intonation phrase, which indicates either that a clause is positive rather than negative or simply implies emotive force. Hence, in AAE, an emphatic sentence in the Present Progressive can be expressed as, 'I AM workin'' and 'He/She/It/You/We/They IS workin''.

Unlike in the Present Progressive, auxiliary *be* is usually present in the Past Progressive, except that in AAE, a singular form *was* is usually used with both singular and plural subjects (as cited in Mufwene, Rickford, Bailey, & Baugh, 1998, p. 41). Thus, in AAE, a declarative sentence in the Past Progressive can be expressed as, 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *was* workin'. As for the negation construction, *ain't* "never occurs as a past auxiliary, varying with *weren't/wasn't*" (Smith, 2018, p. 167); hence, *wasn't* is used in the negative construction. Furthermore, *wasn't* can be pronounced as *wadn't* [wʌʔn̩] because /z/ can be pronounced as /d/ before nasal sounds (Wolfram & Shilling, 2006, p. 81), so two pronunciation variants are possible, such as 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *wadn't* or *wasn't* workin'. Finally, the auxiliary *was* is obligatory in the emphatic construction, as in I/He/She/It/We/You/They *WAS* workin'.

As for the Future Progressive in AAE, it follows the same structure as in SE, that is, modal auxiliary *will* + *be* + *Present Participle*. However, when the contracted form of the modal auxiliary *will*, *'ll*, is used, /l/ is vocalized[26], which means /l/ is pronounced more like /ə/ (Mufwene et al., 1998, p. 41). Green (2002), in her description of the Future Progressive, represents the schwa sound to *'a'*, as in 'He'*a be teaching* tomorrow', which I will also adapt in my description of the Future Progressive. Thus, in AAE, the Future Progressive can be expressed as, 'I'a/He'a/She'a/It'a/We'a /You'a/They'*a be workin*'. However, in an emphatic construction, the modal auxiliary *will* appears in its full form, as in 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *WILL be workin*''. As for a negative construction, it is also similar to SE, as in 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *won('t) be workin*'. Finally, in an interrogative sentence, the modal auxiliary *will* (as well as any other modal auxiliary in AAE) cannot be left out. As mentioned previously, subject auxiliary inversion in questions is optional in AAE; thus, there are two ways to ask a question, as shown in (48-49):

(48) a. You'*a be workin'*?

b. *Will* you *be workin'*?

(49) a. She'*a be readin'*?

b. *Will* she *be readin'*

Perfectivity

In its broadest possible description, "the perfective indicates ANTERIOR TIME; i.e. time preceding whatever time orientation is signaled by tense or by other elements of the sentence or

[26] When liquids /l/ and /r/ follow vowel sounds, they may become vocalized, that is, they may be produced like /ə/, if any sound is produced at all (Green, 2002, p. 120).

its contexts" (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 2010, p. 190). To exemplify this definition, the following sentences illustrate SE Present, Past and Future Perfective, as shown in (50):

(50) a. All our children *have had* chickenpox.

b. I *have lived* in Normal, Illinois, for five years.

c. I'*ve* just *eaten*.

d. My flight was cancelled after I *had* already *paid* for the ticket.

e. By December 2019, I *will have defended* my dissertation.

The Present Perfective, *have*/*has* + *Past Participle*, "refers to a situation set at some indefinite time within a period beginning in the past and leading up to the present" (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 51). Thus, the Present Perfective may indicate an event or events that happened shortly before the present time, as in (50 c), or "at some more remote time in the past, but the implicit time period that frames the event or events leads up to the present" (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 52), as in (50 a). The Present Perfective may also describe an event that began in the past, continues in the present, and may perhaps continue in the future, as in (50 b). As for the Past Perfective, which is formed with an auxiliary *had* + *Past Participle*, it indicates an event or events that took place earlier than another point in the past, as in the example (50 d). Finally, the Future Perfective indicates an event that will take place or an action that will be completed prior to a specific future time, as in (50 e). The Future Perfective time is expressed with the modal auxiliary *will* + *have* + *Past Participle*.

In AAE, the Present Perfective time can be expressed by Simple Past verb forms (Green, 2002, p. 39). Thus, in AAE, the Present Perfective may be expressed as, 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *worked*' or 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *ate*'. Auxiliary *have,* while not required in the declarative sentence, is obligatory in an emphatic confirmation, as in

‘I/He/She/It/We/You/They *HAVE worked’* and ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *HAVE ate’* (Green, 2002, p. 37). The same rule applies to auxiliary *have* in a negative sentence; however, the negator *ain (’t)* can be used instead. Thus, in AAE, there are two ways to express the Present Perfective negative, as in ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *ain(‘t) worked’* or ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *haven’t worked’*, and ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *ain(t) ate*’ or ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *haven’t ate*’. In addition to the negative sentence constructions provided by Green (2002), auxiliary *ain’t* + *Past Participle* construction is also possible, as in ‘She *ain’t seen* them’ (Redd & Webb, 2005, p. 36; Smith, 2015, p. 72). As for the code construction, auxiliary *have* or *ain(‘t)* is used in elliptical clauses, as in ‘She ain(’t) ate, *have* she?’ (Green, 2002, p. 43). Green (2002) further adds that ‘She ain(’t) ate, did she?’ is also possible since *“ain(‘t)* is argued to occur in past contexts” (p. 39). As it has been mentioned earlier, tense is not an obligatory category in the AAE verb phrase, so context is crucial in understanding the time of an action. Lastly, according to the question formation rule in AAE, subject-auxiliary inversion is optional, as in ‘*Have* I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *worked?*’ or ‘I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *worked*?’

Constructions in the Past Perfective in AAE are formed with the auxiliary *had* + the main verb in the Simple Past. Unlike in the Present Perfective, auxiliary *ain’t* is generally not used in Past Perfective contexts (Green, 2002, p. 39). The following examples demonstrate declarative (51), emphatic (52), negative (53), and interrogative (54) constructions in the Past Perfective:

(51) a. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *had worked*.

b. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *had ate*.

(52) a. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *HAD worked*.

b. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *HAD ate*.

(53) a. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *hadn't worked*.

b. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *hadn't ate*.

(54) a. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *had worked*?

b. *Had* I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *worked*?

c. I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *had ate*?

d. *Had* I/ He/She/It/We/You/They *ate*?

In addition to using Simple Past verb form for expressing Present Perfectivity and auxiliary *had* + the main verb in the Simple Past for expressing Past Perfectivity, AAE expresses perfectivity with the help of the aspectual marker *been*, which will be reviewed in the section on aspectual markers. Similarly, Future Perfective will also be described in that section as Future Perfective is formed with the help of the aspectual markers *be* and *done*.

Perfective Progressive

When the perfective and progressive aspects combine, their features of meaning also combine "to refer to a temporary situation leading up to the present" if the auxiliary verb expresses present time, which is expressed by auxiliary *have*/*has* + *been*+ Present Participle (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 56). If we summarize the main uses of the perfective progressive, the first one is to convey "the sense of a situation in progress with limited duration," (Quirk et al., 2010, p. 211), as in (55-56):

(55) It *has been raining* again.

(56) I'*ve been writing* a proposal for a TESOL conference.

Both sentences express actions that have been in progress for some time, are limited in duration, and have present consequences, such as that the ground is probably wet in the first example, and the speaker has progressed on their proposal writing in the second example.

The second distinctive use of the perfective progressive is to express the possibility of incompleteness, especially when this aspect is "combined with accomplishments and process predications" (Quirk et al., 2010, p. 211), as shown in (57-58):

(57) The weather *has been getting* hotter in London.

(58) Kyle *has been cleaning* his apartment.

These two examples imply the possibility of incompleteness, that is, the weather may continue getting hotter and Kyle may continue cleaning his apartment.

Furthermore, the perfective progressive may be used to refer to "a temporary habit up to the present" that may continue in the future (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990, p. 56), as in (59):

(59) John *has been working* morning shifts for several weeks.

The last example indicates that it has been several weeks since John has been working morning shifts, which points to the temporariness of the activity and to the possibility that this activity will continue in the future.

Finally, the Present Perfective Progressive may also express an event that has recently ceased, but the effects are still apparent (Quirk et al., 2010, p. 212). The adverbial of duration[27] is usually not used in such cases, as shown in (60-61):

(60) *It's been raining.* The ground is wet.

(61) Jack *has been fighting* again. He has a black eye.

[27] An adverbial of duration is an adverbial phrase that expresses for how long an action has been done, for example, *for months, for two weeks, for years*.

These two examples indicate actions that have recently stopped, but their effects can be seen: the ground is wet because of the rain, and Jack has a black eye because of fighting.

As for the Past Perfect Progressive in SE, it is formed with auxiliary *had* + *been* + *Present Participle*, and it expresses a temporary event, an action, or a habit that lasted for a period of time before another point in the past (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1999, p. 56), as shown in (62-63):

(62) Finally, the bus came. Kristina *had been waiting* for the bus for 20 minutes.

(63) Howard got up and looked out of the window. It *had been raining*.

What is more, the perfective progressive "loses its restriction to a period of time leading up to the point of orientation" when the perfective progressive is combined with the past tense (or a modal verb) (Quirk et al., 2010, p. 212). As a result, the Past Perfect Progressive and the perfect progressive with modal verbs can be used with an adverbial of time position, as in (64-66):

(64) I *had been playing* tennis at the time of his final exam.

(65) I *must have been playing* tennis at the time of his final exam.

(66) By August, 2019, I *will have been* renting an apartment for 5 years.

The last example is an example of the Future Perfective Progressive in SE, which is formed with modal auxiliary *will* + *have been* + *Present Participle,* and it indicates an action or event that is taking place in the present and will continue until a certain time period in the future.

As for the Present Perfective Progressive and Past Perfective Progressive constructions in AAE, they are similar to those in SE, except that in the declarative sentence in the Present Perfective Progressive, auxiliary *have* is not used (Green, 2002, p. 37). Thus, in AAE, the Present Perfective Progressive may be expressed as, 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *been waiting* for

the bus', or 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *been working* on the project since 1'. In the Past Perfective progressive, auxiliary *had*, however, is obligatory, as in "I/You/He/She/It/We/They *had been waiting* for the bus' or 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *had been working* on the project since 1'. As for auxiliary *ain't*, it is usually used in the Present Perfective Progressive, but not the Past Perfective Progressive, as in 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *ain't been waiting* for the bus' (Green, 2002, p. 37). In addition to constructing a negative sentence with the auxiliary *ain't*, auxiliary *have* can also be used for negation in the Present Perfective Progressive, as in 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *haven't been waiting* for the bus'. Finally, the emphatic construction in the Present Perfective Progressive and the Past Perfective Progressive requires auxiliary *have* in the first case and auxiliary *had* in the second case, as in 'He HAVE been waiting for the bus' and 'He HAD been waiting for the bus'.

As for the Future Perfective Progressive in AAE, I was not able to find a specific example of this verbal syntagm. However, Green (2002) shared a modal perfective progressive verbal syntagm, which is *modal auxiliary + have+ been + Present Participle*. In this regard, Green (2002) explains that the modal forms in AAE are similar to the modal forms in SE, except that auxiliary *have* in this syntagm is reduced to a schwa sound /ə/ (Green, 1993, p. 16). Thus, in AAE, the Future Perfective Progressive may be expressed as, 'He *should'a been eating*', and 'He *shouldn'a been eating'*. As for an emphatic sentence, there is no emphatic affirmation form in the modal perfective progressive.

Present Time

In the section on the general features of the verb phrase in AAE, I described the absence of the verbal suffix *-s* in present tense verbs following third-person singular subjects, as in, 'He

walk, She *walk*, It *walk*'. I further indicated that auxiliary *ain('t)* or auxiliary *don't* can be used in negative sentences, for instance, 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *ain't* walk', or 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They *don't* walk'. As for an emphatic sentence, the auxiliary form DO is used with both singular and plural subjects, as in 'I/You/He/She/It/We/They DO walk'. In question formation in AAE, as it has been reviewed earlier, two syntactic structures are possible: with or without subject-auxiliary inversion. Hence, it is correct to structure a question either, '*Do* he walk to school?' or 'He walk to school? Accordingly, the answer to this yes-no question can be, 'Yes, he do', or 'No, he *ain't/don't'*. As for tag questions, either auxiliary *ain't* or *do(n't)* can be used at the end of a sentence, as in 'He walk to school, *ain't/don't* he'? and 'He *don't/ain't* walk to school, do he'?

Furthermore, the absence of copula *be* in the Present Time, which has also been described in the section on the general features of the verb in AAE, is another characteristic feature of this variety. Thus, in a declarative sentence, it is correct to say, 'He a teacher', 'She Ø beautiful', or 'He Ø here now'. As for the negative sentence, auxiliary *ain't* or the word *not* can be used, for example, 'He *ain't* a teacher' or 'He *not* a teacher'. In an emphatic sentence, auxiliary is always expected, for example, 'He IS a doctor', 'It IS late'. or 'I AM sad'.

Wolfram (2004) notes that the absence of copula/auxiliary *be* is quite a pervasive feature of urban AAE, which is not present at all in "Northern urban benchmark European American varieties" (p. 118). Bailey and Maynor (1985, 1987, 1989), Cukor-Avila (2001), and Wolfram and Thomas (2002) further write that "the process has been quite stable in AAVE for some time now, and that differences in urban and non-urban use are quantitative rather than qualitative" (as cited in Wolfram, 2004, p. 118). Rickford and Rickford (2000) add that this grammatical feature is also present in pidgin and Creole English throughout the world—in Bajan, Guyanese Creole,

Hawaiian Pidgin, Jamaican English, and Liberian English—which points to the possibility of AAE having Creole roots (p. 116).

Past Time

As mentioned earlier, in AAE, the Simple Past Tense verb form is not necessary for the expression of past time if the surrounding clauses provide the needed time clues, as in 'He *go* there yesterday', or 'I *look* for him last night' (Dillard, 1972, p. 41; Redd & Webb, 2010, p. 31). Thus, two variants are possible for expressing Past Time in AAE, e.g., 'He *go* there yesterday' or 'He *went* there yesterday', which confirms the fact that in AAE, tense is of secondary importance, while aspect is of primary importance (Dillard, 1972, p. 44). However, auxiliary/copula *be* in the Past Tense is usually required, though the plural form *were* is often regularized to *was*, as in 'They *was* happy to see you', or 'We *was* very tired' (Green, 2002, p. 37).

As for the negation, the auxiliary *ain't* or *didn't* (*din*[28]) can be used, for example, 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *didn't* (*din*)/*ain('t)* go there yesterday' (Green, 2002, p. 36). In an emphasis, the auxiliary DID is used, as in 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They DID go there yesterday'. Finally, the question formation variants include, 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *go/went* there yesterday?' and 'Did I/He/She/It/We/You/They *go* there yesterday?'

In addition to forming the Simple Past with the base verb form or verbs in the Simple Past, AAE may express the Simple Past Tense with what in SE is Past Participle, for example, 'He *seen* him yesterday' for 'He *saw* him yesterday' in SE, or 'He *drunk*' a lot last night 'for 'He *drank* a lot last night' in SE (Rickford, 1999, p. 7; Wolfram, 2004, p. 122). As mentioned earlier,

[28] A contracted form of *didn't*, *din*, can be used in a negative sentence.

in narration, especially among adolescents, *had* + main verb in the Simple Past Tense can be used to indicate the Simple Past as well, as in ‘Then we *had went* inside’ for ‘Then we *went* inside’ in SE (Rickford, 1999, p. 6).

Finally, the Past Time in AAE can also be expressed through the regularization of irregular verbs, as in ‘John *know**ed*** him’ or ‘Alice *grow**ed*** tall’ (Wolfram, 2004, p. 122). This grammatical pattern is structured by adding the suffix -*ed* to the Simple Present form of irregular verbs. Wolfram et al. (1999) further explain that other vernacular dialects also form the Past Time through the regularization of irregular verbs, and that this pattern is especially prevalent among working-class communities (p. 53).

Future Time

Tense in standardized English is interpreted as a category realized by verb inflection, examples of which would be the Present and Past Tense only (Payne, 2011, p. 280; Quirk et al., 1985, p. 176). As morphologically, English does not possess a future form of the verb, it may be argued that there is no Future Tense in English (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 176). In this respect, the semantic category of Future Time is expressed periphrastically through particular grammatical constructions (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 176). To be more precise, future time in standardized English is expressed by means of modal auxiliaries, semi-auxiliaries, or by simple or present continuous forms (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 213).

Similarly, in AAE, there are also only two tenses, Present and Past, while future time is expressed periphrastically. In this regard, a declarative sentence in the Future Simple is expressed by a reduced form of auxiliary *will*, ‘*a*, + base verb form, as in ‘I/He/She/It/We/You/They’*a eat* soon’. As for a negative sentence, auxiliary *won’t* is used, e.g.,

'I/He/She/It/We/You/They *won't eat* soon'. In an emphatic sentence, an auxiliary is always required, as in 'I/He/She/It/We/You/They WILL eat soon'. Finally, according to question formation rules, the two variants of question formation include, ''I/He/She/It/We/You/They'*a eat* soon?' and '*Will* I/He/She/It/We/You/They *eat* soon?' (Green, 2002, p. 42).

Besides auxiliary *will*, futurity can be also expressed with the construction *Be Going To* + *Infinitive*. This construction, whose historical meaning is 'to move forward in space', has turned into a future marker or, in other words, a grammatical marker, over the history of English (Hopper & Traugott, 2003, pp. 2-3). In addition, the process of univerbation has taken place, that is, words that form the construction *be going to* have formed a single word, such as *gonna* [ganə] or *gon* [gan]. In AAE, the structure *be going to* is usually reduced to the following phonological variants: 1) 'I'*m gonna*[29] eat' and 'He/She/It/We/You/They *gonna* eat', and 2) 'I'*ma*[30] [əmə] eat', and 'He/She/It/We/You/They *gon* eat' (Green, 2002, p. 36). Furthermore, there is no emphatic sentence with *gonna* or *gon*, but a negative sentence can be formed with either *ain't* or *not*, as in 'I *ain't* gonna/I'*m not* gonna eat', and 'He/She/It/We/You/They *ain't gonna*/*not gonna* eat'. Similarly, the constructions with 'gon' are 'I *ain't gon*/I'*m not gon* eat' and 'He/She/It/We/You/They *ain't gon*/*not gon* eat'. In forming questions, two options are possible, e.g., '*Is* John gonna/gon eat? and 'John *gonna/gon* eat?'

Another futurate verbal paraphrasis, *be fixing to*, specifically its variant, *finna* [fɪnə] (but also *fixina* [fɪksɪnə], *fixna* [fɪksnə], and *fitna* [fɪtnə]) + main verb in its base form, is also used in AAE (Green, 2002, p. 70). The rise of this periphrasis versus *be going to* is circumstanced by the fact that while the latter had "a wide distribution among speakers of Englishes in the 16th century development and subsequent global diffusion in the colonial period, [the former construction]

[29] There is also a variation such as I'*monna* [amanə]
[30] *I'm gon* is reduced to I'*ma* [əmə]

grammaticalized in Southern English in the 18th and 19th centuries" (Smith, 2009, p. 12). Due to this fact, *be fixing to* had a limited geographical distribution in its first uses. With time, however, *be fixing to* spread broadly throughout the U.S., especially in urban areas, which involves "racially affiliated sociolectal and geographic distribution patterns" as this structure's dissemination from the U.S. south to northern cities and suburbs during the 20th century comes from AAE speakers particularly (Smith, 2009, p. 12). Finally, the meaning of the construction is that the event will take place in the immediate future, as shown in (67), adapted from Green (2002):

"(67) a. I don't know about you, but I'**m finna leave**.

'I don't know about you, but I'm getting ready/about to leave'

a. Y'all **finna eat**?
'Are you getting ready/about to eat?'

b. She was **finna move** the mattress herself when I got there.
'She was getting ready/about to move the mattress when I got there'

c. Oh-oh they pulling they coats off. That mean they **fixna kill** us or something.
'Oh-oh they are pulling their coats off. That means that they are about to kill us or something'

d. They **finna** do something.
'They're about to do something'

(Literally: The professional ice skaters are getting ready to make a complicated move.)"

(p. 70, emphasis in the original)

As the examples demonstrate, the auxiliary form of *be* occurs only with the first person singular pronoun *I* and in the past tense, which are obligatory environments for this auxiliary in AAE (Green, 2002, p. 71). Bailey et al. (1991) conclude that in other varieties of English, *finna* is

usually realized as *fixing to*, which emphasizes the pronunciation difference as the major difference between AAE and other varieties of English (as cited in Green, 2000, p. 71).

Aspectual Markers in AAE

Habitual Be

The description of the verbal system of AAE would not be complete without the description of the aspectual markers in AAE. The aspectual markers in AAE and the auxiliary verbs in SE are alike in form, which often causes confusion between these two varieties (Green, 2002, p. 44). However, the syntactic and morphological properties of the auxiliary verbs and the aspectual markers distinguish them from each other. In this section, I will review such aspectual markers as habitual *be*, the remote past *BIN*, and the completive *done*.

The invariant or habitual *be* is one of the most salient grammatical features of AAE. This aspectual marker (sometimes may also be in the form *bees* [bi:z]) has been previously described in chapter 2, in which I explained that the invariant *be* expresses a habitual or repeating event or condition, and it occurs before verbs ending in -*ing* or -*ed,* before adjectives, prepositions, adverbs, other aspectual markers, before verbs in the passive voice, and at the end of a sentence. The following sentences express habituality or regularity of the events or actions, as shown in (68-72), quoted directly:

"(68) a. Your phone bill **be high**, don't it?

'Your phone bill is usually high, isn't it?'

(69) b. I **be looking** for somewhere to waste time.

'I am usually looking for somewhere to waste time' or 'I usually look for somewhere to waste time'

(70) c. During the summer, they go off for two weeks, so her checks **be big**.

'During the summer, they go away for two weeks, so her checks are usually big then'

(71) d. He does not even allow women to wear pants at women's retreats and he doesn't even **be there**.

'He does not allow women to wear pants at women's retreats and he isn't usually there'

(72) e. She gotta be there for 9, so they **be dən**[31] [dən] gone to school.

'She has to be there at 9, so they have usually already gone to school'

(Literally: She has to be at work at 9 a.m., so the children have usually already gone to school by the time she leaves.)" (Green, 2002, p. 48, emphasis in the original)

As the examples demonstrate, the events or actions indicate a condition that occurs habitually or regularly. Thus, in (68), the speaker makes a statement that his or her listener's phone bill is usually high; however, since it is a tag question, the speaker expects a response from the listener by saying '*don't* it', or in (71), the speaker shares that some man does not allow women to wear pants even at women's retreat; however, that man usually does not come to these retreats. Rickford and Rickford (2000) note that this unique aspect of the verb *be* referring to an activity that happens regularly at various intervals "occurs rarely or not at all in white vernaculars" (p. 113).

Furthermore, the negative construction with habitual *be* requires auxiliary *don't*, not *ain't*, as in 'He *don't* be listening' (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 114). Accordingly, auxiliary *do* is used for forming questions and for emphasis, as in '*Do* he be listening? and 'He *DO* be listening'. This is also true of tag questions, as in 'He be listening, *don't* he?' or 'He don't be listening, *do* he?'

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[31] *Dən* is pronounced with an unstressed vowel, which Green (2002) indicates by the schwa [ə].

In addition, the habituality or regularity of action can be stressed or emphasized by "an intensified continuative marker" *steady* [stɛdɪ] or [stʌdɪ], when it follows habitual *be* (Rickford, 1999, p. 6). Hence, Green's (2002) example, "Them students be *steady* trying to make a buck" (p. 72) emphasizes the fact that these students are always working hard and intensively to make money. It is important to note that the marker *steady* is generally used "to convey the meaning that an activity is carried out in an intense or consistent manner" (Green, 2002, p. 71), and if not used with the habitual *be*, it usually precedes a verb in the *-ing* form, as in 'Jon wants to go home, and you *steady* talking to him'. In this example, the speaker does not refer to a situation that happens regularly but refers to the situation at the present moment: the speaker wants the listener to know that Jon is trying to leave, but the listener's continuous talking prevents him from doing it. I should note that in SE, the Present Progressive is used for expressing the described above meanings, as in 'The students are trying to make a buck' and 'Jon wants to go home, and you are continuing to talk to him'.

Finally, it is necessary to distinguish the use of habitual *be* from other uses of *be*, particularly, when *be* indicates future or a type of conditional. In the following sentences, such as 'He *be* there in a minute', the contracted form of the auxiliary *will*, '*ll,* is deleted as /l/ comes before a labial /b/ (Fasold & Wolfram, 2003, pp. 67-68), whereas in the sentence 'If they win the game, they *be* happy', the contracted form of *would*, *'d*, is deleted because alveolar /d/ assimilates to bilabial /b/. In the examples (73) and (74), the forms of *be* are also phonologically derived, that is, the auxiliary *will* is deleted in these sentences, while *be* in (75) is a habitual *be*. The tag questions and negative sentences in each example help to distinguish a habitual *be* from other uses of *be*:

(73) She ***be*** there in 5 minutes.

a. She ***be*** there in 5 minutes, *won't* she?

b. She ***won't*** **be** there in 5 minutes.

(74) If they win the game, they ***be*** happy.

a. If they win the game, they be happy, ***wouldn't*** they?

b. If they don't win the game, they ***wouldn't be*** happy.

(75) Sometimes they ***be*** swimming in the pool.

a. Sometimes they ***be*** swimming in the pool, *don't* they?

b. Sometimes they ***don't be*** swimming in the pool.

As it can be seen, other uses of *be* in (73-74) do not take *do* support like habitual *be* does but need auxiliaries *will* or *would* in NICE constructions. This point of difference emphasizes the essential syntactic and morphological properties that distinguish habitual *be* from other uses of *be* (Wolfram, 2004, p. 119). Green (2002) further points out that habitual *be*, as an aspectual marker, does not inflect for person and number. This characteristic is inherent in all aspectual markers.

Remote Past *BIN*

Another tense-aspect marker in AAE is the remote past *BIN* (or *BEEN*). The remote past *BIN* indicates an action, an activity, or a state that happened in the distant past and either completed at some point in the past or still continues at the time of utterance (Green, 2002, p. 54). The distant past, however, is relative, as it can indicate a time period of 20 minutes ago or 20 years ago; rather, this marker is used to point out that the time for a certain activity or a state is longer than normal (Green, 2002, p. 55). Smitherman (1986) adds that stressed *BIN* also contributes to "the intensity and validity" of the fact of the indicated activity or state (p. 23).

Furthermore, *BIN* comes “before verbs, adjectives, nouns, prepositions, adverbs, and aspectual marker dən” (p. 60) Green then (2002) explains that there are three types of *BIN*, that is, *BIN*stat, *BIN*hab, and BINcomp (p. 55). *BIN*stat refers to a state, which started sometime in the remote past and continues at the time of utterance, as shown in (76-80), quoted directly:

“(76) They just sent me this one, but I ***BIN*** **having** that one.

‘They just sent me this one, but I have had that one for a long time’.

(77) I ***BIN*** **knowing** he died.

“I have known for a long time that he died’.

(78) A: The police going bad.

B: They ain’t going bad. They ***BIN*** **bad**.

‘They aren’t going bad. They have been bad for a long time’” (Green, 2002, p. 56, emphasis in the original).

As examples illustrate, *BIN*stat refers to situations that have remained unchanged for a long time (and may continue to hold). As for the verb following *BIN*stat, state verbs can be both in -*ing* or -*ed* form, as shown in (79-80), quoted directly:

“(79) A: Where’d you get that shirt?

B: I **BIN had** it.

‘I’ve had it for a long time’ (i.e., I’ve had it so long I can’t remember where I bought/got it)

A: Hunh?

B: I BIN got[32] it.

‘I bought/got it a long time ago’

(80) I **BIN knew** that.

[32] The meaning of *BIN got* refers to *BINcomp* construction, which is discussed further in this section.

‘I knew that for a long time’” (Green, 2002, p. 56, emphasis in the original).

Green (2002) stresses that only stative verbs, that is verbs that express a state, rather than an action, can be either in *-ing* or *-ed* form without changing the meaning of the sentence (p. 57).

The second type of the *BIN, BINhab* indicates an activity or a state that started sometime in the remote past but continues habitually, that is, a certain action or a state is realized from time to time, on a regular basis. Unlike *BIN*stat, *BIN*hab cannot be followed by verbs in the past form, but only by verbs ending in-*ing,* as shown in (81-82), quoted directly:

“(81) Bruce **BIN running**.

‘Bruce started running some time ago and he still runs from time to time’

(82) That’s where I **BIN putting** my glasses.

‘That’s where I started putting my glasses some time ago and I still put them there’”

(Green, 2002, p. 57, emphasis in the original).

Finally, the *BIN*comp construction indicates that the activity ended or was completed at some moment in the distant past (Green, 2002, p. 58). Like *BIN*hab, *BIN*comp is followed by verbs in their past tense form (also, sometimes by verbs in the present form), as shown in (83-85), quoted directly:

“(83) I could’a **BIN went** back to work.

‘I could have gone back to work a long time ago’

(84) A: You called her, Kaye?

B: Yeah, I **BIN called** her.

(85) I **BIN give** Brenda and Mr. Al their books.

‘I gave Brenda and Mr. Al their books a long time ago’” (Green, 2002, p. 58, emphasis in the original).

As the examples demonstrate, the actions refer to a remote past: in (83), the speaker states that he or she could have gone to work a long time ago; and in (84), the calling event took place a long time ago; finally, in (85), the book was also returned in the remote past.

Green (2002) concludes that BIN does not indicate the length of time that an event or a state has been in progress or the length of time that an event or state has been over; it just stresses that the time period that an event or a state has been in progress or has been over is a long one for the speaker (p. 59). Thus, temporal adverbial phrases are usually not used with BIN; however, time adverbials can occur in specific contexts, as shown in (86), quoted directly:

"(86) John **BIN running** for ten minutes.

'John started to run for ten-minute stretches a long time ago and he still runs for ten-minute stretches' (*BIN*hab reading)" (Green, 2002, p. 59, emphasis in the original).

This use of a time adverbial is acceptable because ten-minutes refer to the length of each running event, not to the length of John's running activity overall.

If time adverbials are used to indicate the length of time of an activity, an event, or a state, then the unstressed marker *been* (or *bin*) is used (Green, 2002, p. 58). The unstressed *been* can be compared to the Present Perfective in SE; however, it is not always the case (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 117). The following examples demonstrate the use of the unstressed *been*, as shown in (87-90), quoted directly:

"(87) I *been* playing cards since I was four.

(88) He *been* doin it since we was teenagers, and he still doin it.

(89) 'Cause I'*ve been* through it. I'*ve been* through them changes.

(90) Here's a guy, live next door to him. He's *been* a gangsta all his life." (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 117)

As it can be seen, time adverbials can be used with the unstressed *been.* In addition, the use of the auxiliary *have* or *has*, or their contracted forms *'s* or *'ve* are also possible with this marker (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 117). Rickford and Rickford (2000) also note that unlike the stressed BIN, the unstressed *been* does not indicate remoteness (p. 119).

Completive Done

Another tense-aspect marker *done* (or *dən*) emphasizes that an action or an event has been completed (usually in the recent past); however, *done* can also be used "to highlight the change of state or to intensify an activity" (Wolfram, 2004, p. 119). Furthermore, the completive *done* is often compared to the Present Perfective in SE; yet, certain syntactic and morphological properties of the completive *done*, which will be reviewed later in this section, distinguish this tense-aspect marker from the auxiliary *have/has* in the Present Perfective in SE. As for the *done* construction, *done* precedes a verb in various forms, as shown in (91-95), adapted from Green (2002):

"(91) I told him you **dən changed**.

'I told him that you have changed'

(92) A: You through with Michael Jordan I bought you?

(Literally, Have you finished reading the magazine that I bought you with Michael Jordan on the cover?)

B: I *dən* [emphasis added] already **finished** that.

'I have already finished that'

(93) People would say that medicine I'm taking *dən made* [emphasis added] me sick.

'People would say that the medicine I'm taking has made me sick'

(94) I *dən lost* [emphasis added] my wallet!

'I have (just) lost my wallet!'

(95) She *dən been* [emphasis added] to church.

'She has been to church before'" (pp. 61-62).

As the examples demonstrate, the events have been completed in the recent past or at an indefinite time in the past; however, these events have present consequences. Thus, in (91), the speaker is talking about the change that has happened to the listener over a period of time, while in (92), the speaker is talking about a present consequence, such as having finished reading the magazine. In (93), the speaker is sharing that people would comment on his present state, which is due to the medicine he has been taking recently; and in (95) the speaker is referring to having had the experience of attending church.

As for the NICE constructions with *done* (or *dən*), my research has revealed various points of view on what auxiliaries can be used with this aspectual marker. For instance, while Green writes that either auxiliary *ain't* or *haven't* can be used in negative sentences, e.g., 'I/You/He/They *ain't/haven't dən* finished/ate it' (as cited in Mufwene et al., p. 1998, p. 44); she finds the occurrence of *have* with *dən* to be somewhat questionable (Green, 1993, p. 36). Green (1993) further explains in the notes to her dissertation that according to her own judgement, the auxiliary *have* "sounds unnatural" in certain environments (p. 36). Still, she asserts that there are some instances in which auxiliary '*have*' does occur before *BIN* and *done* (Green, 1993, p. 36). Hence, Green (1993) introduces the auxiliary *have* as cooccurring with *dən* in an emphatic construction, as in 'I/You/He/We/They HAVE *dən* finished/ate it' (as cited in Mufwene et al., p. 1998, p. 44). As for the question formation, I was able to find this construction in Green's (1993)

dissertation only, in which she puts a question mark[33] next to the auxiliary ‘have’, which indicates that the use of this auxiliary is questionable, as in ‘?*Have* you *dən* finished/ate it?’ or ‘You *dən* finished/ate it?’ Notwithstanding, other scholars, such as Rickford and Rickford (2000), assert that *dən* cannot be used with negatives at all (p. 120). As for an emphatic construction and questions, I was not able to find other scholars’ point of view on what auxiliaries can or cannot be used with *done* (or *dən*). The disagreement on the negative construction and the scarcity of other constructions with the aspectual marker *done* (or *dən*) point to the fact that there is no consensus on the verbal syntagm of the aspectual marker *dən*.

In this regard, while the completive *done* is similar to the Present Perfective in SE, the examples given above demonstrate that the syntactic and morphological properties of *done* differ from the auxiliary *have/has* in SE. Particularly, it is questionable if the auxiliary *have* can be used in NICE constructions. What is more, the completive *done*, unlike the auxiliary *have/has* in SE, does not bear any agreement features. Smitherman (1986) adds that it is correct to use either the Present Tense or Past Tense verb form after *done/dən* as in, ‘I *done finish* my homework today’ and ‘I *done finish**ed*** my homework today’; however, she notes that ‘I *done finish* my work yesterday’ is incorrect, but ‘I finish my homework yesterday’ would be a correct grammatical construction (p. 24). That is, if talking about a past event, which does not have present consequences, completive *done* cannot be used.

As for the completive *done* in other nonstandardized varieties, Wolfram (2004) notes that this aspectual marker also occurs in Southern European American vernacular varieties of English as well as in the Caribbean creoles (p. 119). Wolfram (2004) further notes that in some

[33] Green (2002) puts a question mark next to the auxiliary *have* in an emphatic sentence with *done (dən)* in her book, *African American English: A Linguistic Introduction* (p. 46) and in her dissertation, “Topics in African American English: The Verb System Analysis” (Green, 1993, p. 15). She also puts a question mark next to the auxiliary *have* in a negative sentence with *done (dən)* in her dissertation (Green, 1993, p. 21).

Caribbean creoles, the completive *done* occurs with verbs in the present form or in clause-final position (p. 119); in addition, the semantic-pragmatic function of the completive *done* in AAE is in some ways different from its creole counterparts (p. 119). As reviewed earlier, the completive *done* in AAE can also precede verbs in the present form; however, the completive *done* in this variety occurs only in preverbal auxiliary position. Green (2002) also distinguishes the syntactic properties of the preverbal *done* in Southern white American English, particularly the variety spoken by Alabama working-class speakers (p. 63). She then notes that in this variety, *done* can occur in the following environments: a) *done* can follow an inflected form of *be*, b) *done* can be used with an adverb that indicates past time (e.g. *yesterday*), and c) this marker can precede adjectives, as shown in (96-98), quoted directly:

"(96) Lord, I'm done died!

(97) They done had the tables fixed yesterday, already.

(98) Some of em's done dead an' gone." (as cited in Feagin, 1997, pp. 127-131)

Green (2002) further compares the completive *done* with the preverbal *don* in Guyanese Creole and notes that the constructions are overall similar, except the marker *don* in Guyanese is produced with an emphasis, while in AAE, the marker *done* is unstressed (p. 63). She concludes that the completive *done* in AAE, *done* in other American varieties, and *don* in Guyanese Creole function as an indicator that events have been completed; however, the environments in which this marker can occur vary (Green, 2002, p. 63).

Finally, the description of the marker *done* would not be complete without the construction of this marker with the verb *be*. In the section on habitual *be*, I reviewed the habitual meaning of the invariant *be*, but also other uses of *be*, including the use of *be* to express future and conditional meaning. When these three uses of *be* are combined with the completive

done, the new construction, *be done* + Past Simple, can be used to express habitual, future, or conditional meanings with the completive meaning of *done*, as shown in (99-101), quoted directly:

"(99) Another few weeks, the Puerto Ricans *be done* took [=will have taken] over. (Future completive)

(100) If she [=dog] wasn't spayed, she'*d be done* [=would have] got pregnant cause she gets out. (Conditional completive)

(101) The children *be done* ate [=have usually eaten] by the time I get there. (Habitual completive)" (Rickford & Rickford, 2000, p. 120).

As Smitherman (1986) rightly notes, the construction, *be done* + Simple Past, is similar to the Future Perfective in SE, the fact I mentioned in the section on the Future Time. She further explains that this construction is quite popular in AAE, and "the much-used Black Idiom expression "I be done before you know it" [is widely used by] Hip users" (Smitherman, 1986, p. 25). She concludes that the construction *be done* can be also followed by verbs in the Present Simple (not just by verbs in the Simple Past), as in 'He *be done* finish before anyone come home' (Smitherman, 1986, p. 25). This general tendency to omit the -*ed* or -*en* ending of the main verb in a sentence in AAE has been noted by other scholars as well (Smitherman, 1999; Redd & Webb, 2005; Wolfram, 2004).

In conclusion, I'd like to note that such an in-depth study of the grammatical features of AAE is no doubt crucial for understanding the structure and patterns of this nonstandardized variety. Truly, a thorough analysis of the AAE verbal syntagms that include "verb conjugations and the environments in which the auxiliary verbs and [the aspectual markers] occur" allows to grasp their syntactic and morphological properties (Green, 2002, p. 2). Moreover, the detailed

nature of the chapter has demonstrated that when dealing with linguistic structure, there are many details and intricacies that must be considered if language instruction at the intersection of different dialects is to be effective.

To provide an example of the importance for teachers to understand the grammatical structure of nonstandardized varieties, I'd like to show Swords' teaching strategy, contrastive analysis[34], for introducing the possessive case of nouns in SE by relying on student knowledge of AAE (as cited in Wheeler, 2009, p. 185). As mentioned earlier in chapter 2, Swords and Wheeler use the terms 'informal' English and 'formal' English instead of AAE and SE because of the still present today hostility towards nonstandardized varieties among educators, parents, and the general public. In this regard, Swords first goes over the definition of the term "possessive" and then provides a chart with the examples of the possessive case of nouns from student writing in AAE (Informal English) and SE (Formal English), as shown in (102), adapted from Wheeler (2009):

(102) Informal English	Formal English
Taylor cat is black	Taylor's cat is black
The boy cot is torn	The boy's coat is torn
A giraffe neck is long	A giraffe's neck is long
Did you see the teacher pen?	Did you see the teacher's pen? (p. 185)

Students are then asked to work in small groups and construct rules for the possessive case in nouns for formal and informal English. After that, the groups show their responses with the class and together with the teacher formulate the rules, which Swords (2009) writes on the chart (as

[34] Another example of Swords' (2009) contrastive analysis and code-switching has been shown in chapter 2

cited in Wheeler, 2009, p. 185). Students then write their own examples, three sentences for each variety, for practicing the grammatical patterns.

As this lesson demonstrates, teachers' linguistic knowledge of nonstandardized varieties is very beneficial for students. By building on the language patterns that students bring to the classroom, teachers not only address students' immediate linguistic and cultural needs, but also send a message that language variation is natural and that nonstandardized English language varieties are systematic too. Certainly, such a comprehensive form-focused study I provided in this chapter is not really reasonable for teacher education programs as teacher training curricula cannot provide such kind of detail even for the major dialects of English, but the curricula should give future teachers the grounding in linguistics so that they could research a dialect, whose speakers make up a part of their classrooms, and understand published linguistics material. Therefore, in my introductory linguistics course, I focused on the main levels of analysis within linguistics when comparing SE and AAE and then moved on to language attitudes, and finally, to educational implications in order to demonstrate to teachers how they can incorporate their newly acquired linguistic knowledge in their future classrooms. By having practiced linguistic analysis of SE and a non-standardized variety and discussed such teaching strategies (for example, contrastive analysis), I gave my teachers linguistic tools so that they could analyze their students' English language varieties on their own and have access to resources on language variation. I believe that this emphasis on language variation in an introductory linguistic course is a starting point for disseminating knowledge on the linguistic structure of both standardized and nonstandardized varieties, and as a result, for incorporating critical analysis of language variation in K-12 language arts and ESL classrooms.

CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS OF CLASSROOM DATA

Introduction

As mentioned in chapter 1, I had an opportunity to teach an introductory linguistics course, at a mid-size state university in the Midwest in spring 2017. According to that university, that semester, the undergraduate enrollment was 17,405 students, and of that population, nearly a quarter came from traditionally underrepresented groups, with the total of 4,068 students (the biggest underrepresented groups were Hispanic students at 1,742, and African American students at 1,426). It is important to note that this university is particularly proud of its Diversity Advocacy Organization (DAO), which supports historically underrepresented students through a variety of scholarships, programs, activities, and advising. In keeping with a broader university mission, I developed an introductory linguistics pedagogy that focuses on stigmatized varieties of English. Considering that the introductory linguistics course I taught is a general education course that students majoring in Elementary Education, Early Education, and Middle Level Education are required to take as part of their ESL endorsement, I saw this course as an opportunity to educate future teachers on the systematicity and rule-governed nature of nonstandardized varieties and equip these teachers with pedagogical strategies to effectively work with linguistically diverse students. In addition, as a linguist and an educator, I believe I bear the responsibility for presenting the linguistic perspective on the undervalued varieties of English in order to unveil the standard language myth.

Research Methodology

My research study and data collection were conducted using a qualitative, teacher research methodology. While teacher research takes many forms and serves various purposes,

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) define teacher research as "systematic, intentional, and self-critical inquiry about one's work in K-12, higher education or continuing education classrooms, schools, programs and other formal educational settings" (p. 22). Furthermore, the main components of teacher research include conceptualization, in which teachers-researchers articulate their interests and develop research questions; implementation, in which teachers-researchers collect and analyze data; and interpretation, in which teachers-researchers interpret the findings and take action by changing or improving educational practices (Henderson et al., 2012, p. 1). It is important to mention that not all teacher research is about taking action as the main goal of teacher research is 'transformation, enabling teachers to develop a better understanding of themselves, their classrooms, and their practice through the act of reflective inquiry" (Henderson et al., 2012, p. 1). Similarly, I conducted teacher research in my classroom with a goal of developing a better understanding of my teaching practices, my students' developing uptake of the main levels of analysis within linguistics and the linguistic structure of African American English and Indian English, and the effectiveness of my critical multicultural pedagogy. Thus, as a qualitative process and method, teacher research allowed me to generate, analyze, and interpret classroom data and reflect on my teaching and on my students' written assignment submissions, as well as study my students' attitudinal changes (if any) towards language variation, language usage, correctness, and prestige.

Lewin further adds that teacher research is "ongoing, continually in flux" (as cited in Klehr, 2012, p. 123). That is, it is common for new questions to evolve in response to emerging data, classroom discussions, and teacher reflections. Similarly, my students brought up a question on how to provide linguistically informed assessment and address the limitations of standardized tests. Our classroom discussions on the need of valid and reliable assessment led

me to additional research on standardized assessment practices of K-12 language arts teachers in the U.S. public schools, which helped me to see these teachers' current assessment practices and to visualize how the topic of linguistically informed assessment can be included in an introductory linguistics course. I will discuss my additional research on K-12 language arts teachers' assessment practices in chapter 5.

As for the research focus, my primary research questions of this study were the following: 1) How did students' attitudes towards English language variation and AAE (as well as Indian English) change over the course? 2) What elements of linguistic knowledge did students offer when explaining their changes in views towards language variation, standardization, and notion of correctness and prestige? and 3) How was the design of the course effective in terms of contributing to students' development of positive views on language variation?[35]

Designing Introductory Linguistics Course

The introductory linguistics course I taught is focused on the study of the English language structure (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) and the way social constructs influence language. The course thus offers an introduction to the main levels of analysis within linguistics, English language history and change, its regional and social varieties, and the communication practices of certain cultural groups. In addition to the introduction to the major concepts in language study, instructors of this course incorporate topics according to their research interests. As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, I developed the course with a focus on nonstandardized English language varieties, with a simultaneous study of the linguistic structure

[35] For full disclosure, and as I will mention later, the participants were students in my class and therefore the results in terms of attitudinal change or other affective changes reported by students must be understood in that context.

of SE and AAE throughout the course. As for Indian English, I devoted one class to the discussion of its origin and history, its status in India, as well as this variety's distinguishing phonological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic features. I chose this variety because Indian English is often spoken in the town in which I currently live and teach. Hence, as IE was a variety my students could encounter in their everyday life, I decided to bring my students' attention to its norms, rules, and conventions. In addition, India is a multilingual country, in which there is "both diglossia and widespread English bilingualism" (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008, p. 58), and the discussion of these concepts in relation to this country allowed my students to understand these linguistic phenomena better. We also investigated how the colonial spread of English to India and the 200 years of colonial rule led to the institutionalization of English and discussed its current status in a postcolonial century.

As for the course design, I first introduced my students to the discipline of linguistics, its main levels of analysis, and issues concerning language variation in education and elsewhere. After this overview of the course content, goals, and requirements, I introduced my students to our first two topics: 1) the origins of human language and its basic properties, and 2) animal communication systems. The first week thus was focused on the six different views on the sources of human language and comparison of the properties of human language to animal communication systems. These topics also allowed my students to reflect on and share their opinions on the proposed explanations of language origin and how language makes us uniquely human, as well as compare and contrast animal and human communication systems. After this overview of the speculations how language may have originated, we moved on to discussing the history of English language. We started with the discussions of Proto-Indo-European family tree, especially the Germanic branch of Indo-European, which is the branch the English language

belongs to, and looked into cognates, which are words of common etymological origin that allow us to establish a possible family connection between modern languages. Next, we got acquainted with the reconstruction of proto-forms which allow linguists to determine what a language must have been like in their earlier period before any written records. Lastly, we overviewed the four periods of the history of English. Our next step in learning about English was its worldwide spread, global sway and multifunctional use today. Such important definitions as the three concentric circles[36] by Brai Kachru, World Englishes, English as a lingua franca (ELF), and English as an international language (EIL) were also introduced.

Then, we proceeded to the topic of language variation in the United States and defined such terms as a dialect, an accent, nonstandardized English and standardized English. Yule's (2010) two chapters, "Language and Regional Variation" and "Language and Social Variation," from the textbook *The Study of Language,* and Wolfram et al.'s (1999) chapter, "Sources of Dialect Difference: Region and Social Class," from *Dialects in Schools and Communities* further introduced my students to what factors influence regional variation (for example, history and physical factors of a region) and what social factors influence social variation (for example, age, socioeconomic background, gender, and ethnicity affiliations). We wrapped up the two-week introductory part to language variation by discussing a chapter, "From Africa to the New World and into the Space Age: Introduction and History of Black English Structure," from Smitherman's (1986) *Talking and Testifying: The Language of Black America*, which described

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[36] Depending on the English language status and its speakers in world countries, Brai Kachru proposed three concentric circles of the language: the Inner Circle, the Outer Circle, and the Expanding Circle. The Inner Circle represented countries in which English is spoken as a mother tongue; in the Outer Circle, English is an additional institutionalized language; and in the Expanding Circle, English is spoken as a foreign language (Kubota & Ward, 2000, p. 82).

the social and historical contexts of this variety. Other readings during the first 3 weeks included chapters from Melchers and Shaw (2003), McKay and Bokhorst-Heng (2008), and Green (2002).

The next 6.5 weeks were centered on the main levels of analysis within linguistics, that is, on the study of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The scientific study of language, which is the core of the introductory linguistics course, was essential for the acquisition of the basic principles and terms related to each level. Also, the simultaneous study of the linguistic systems of SE and AAE allowed my students to compare the two varieties and see their systematicity and rule-governed nature. Throughout these 6.5 weeks, an important part of my pedagogy was having my students practice their newly acquired linguistic knowledge through in-class discussions and various exercises in class and at home. For example, after introducing students to the articulatory features of speech sounds and the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) symbols for the sounds of English, they practiced writing English phonetic transcription for various words, reading phonetically transcribed sentences, and writing them out in ordinary spelling. Another example is the study of the systematic ways sounds are pronounced in certain environments in AAE, including the study of consonant blends, liquid vocalization, and articulation patterns involving /θ/, /ð/, and /ŋ/ among others. The comparison of the sound patterns in SE and AAE, their analysis, and follow-up activities (exercises and discussion questions) allowed my students to practice the description of phonological processes and explain why a certain sound combination takes place in a certain variety. Having studied phonetics, phonology, and morphology, students were given a midterm exam[37], which can be found in Appendix B. Besides evaluating my students' ability to define the basic concepts on the covered topics, the exam assessed how successfully they could describe

[37] In my future introductory linguistics courses, I plan on creating a midterm exam that will cover all the levels of analysis within linguistics.

speech sounds, transcribe words using IPA, establish correspondences of AAE grammatical patterns to SE grammatical patterns, explain AAE phonological patterns, find minimal pairs in a given set of words, do a morphological description of a sentence, and create a labeled and bracketed analysis of a sentence.

After the midterm, the course took a sociolinguistic turn as we moved into investigating standard language ideology, issues of language variation, language and culture, language attitudes, language variation and education, and linguistic social justice. The initial discussion of the issues of language variation at the beginning of the course and the study of the linguistic system of SE and AAE were integral parts of the course, which prepared students well for the discussions on linguistic injustice and helped them see why linguistics matters for teaching language arts at the K-12 level (or writing and literature at the college level). As we looked closely at the language subordination process, issues related to AAE were central in our discussions, though other nonstandardized varieties, e.g., Chicano English and Appalachian English, and the sociopolitical status of non-native[38] varieties of English, WEs, were a part of the conversation too.

Our next step in the course involved readings and discussions about practical teaching strategies that help students to develop an understanding of how the structure and use of SE corresponds with the structure and use of nonstandardized varieties. Instead of seeking to correct nonstandardized grammatical patterns, a linguistically informed method takes into account students' language differences and variations, contrasts these differences with SE, leads students in explicit grammar discovery, and in this way, fosters SE mastery. Linguistically informed

[38] World Englishes and their norms are different from the norms of the Inner Circle Englishes (e.g. American English, British English). Since speakers of Inner Circle varieties of English are native speakers of English, the Inner Circle is usually considered to be norm-providing, while the Outer Circle is norm-developing.

teaching is also inclusive of ESL/EFL students and speakers of World Englishes and their linguistic and cultural needs. To address the latter, we discussed the positive effects of using ESL/EFL students' first language (L1) as a transfer mechanism for developing writing in English. Instead of looking at L1 as a crutch that interferes in ESL/EFL students' English language acquisition, ESL/EFL students' advanced literacy skills in their L1 can be transferred into English, aiding ESL/EFL students in developing their English proficiency (Fu, 2009, p. 22).

Another focus during the week devoted to language variation and education was how teachers can introduce the concept of WEs and help students to develop an understanding that language has political, socioeconomic, and ideological implications, and that in cross-cultural communication, both the speaker and the listener bear a communicative responsibility. In this regard, we reviewed a sample unit on teaching about WEs, which was based on the pilot project Kubota and Ward (2000) conducted in an English class in a public high school in North Carolina. The unit consists of seven 1 hour lessons and provides teachers with pedagogical tools on how to introduce students to domestic varieties of American English and WEs, how to help students to understand the global stratification of English, how to engage students in discussions on prejudices attached to stigmatized varieties of English, and how to address the issue of unintelligibility with speakers of WEs. As Kubota and Ward (2000) put it, "Both the speaker and the listener take communicative responsibility, regardless of who they are and what form of language they speak" (p. 81). My students were very passionate about the teaching strategies, activities, and resources that we discussed during this week, and this is when they brought up the question about how speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties can be fairly assessed in school settings, the topic that emerged during our course. During this pedagogical/sociolinguistics phase of the course, students read chapters from Lippi-Green

(1997), Hudley and Mallinson (2011), Lovejoy (2003), Green (2002), and articles by Kubota and Ward (2000), Hercula (2011), and Wheeler (2009).

The last few topics of the course were language and the brain and first language acquisition and second language acquisition. The first topic allowed us to overview the relationship between language and the brain, particularly, how the specific parts in the brain are related to language functions, and how our linguistic knowledge is organized within the brain. We also discussed the critical (or sensitive) period for first language acquisition, which ends around puberty, and the effects of what happens when this period passes without proper linguistic input. We then moved on to the discussions about the processes of first language acquisition. After going over the first language acquisition schedule, including the stages of development of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, we compared the gradual development of first language with usually a more conscious process of learning a second language. Specifically, we reviewed affective factors that influence how successfully a learner will learn L2, overviewed second language teaching methods, and considered issues in second-language acquisition, e.g., the discussions about positive and negative L1 transfer (also known as "crosslinguistic influence") to L2, which is the positive or negative influence of the learner's native tongue in L2 acquisition. We wrapped up the course with teaching strategies that address various challenges in L2 acquisition, including negative transfer, fossilization, and cultural differences in writing, among others. To conclude, the final section of the course was also connected with educational implications of teaching English, which was an important agenda of my course. Considering that 27 of my students out of 31 were Elementary Education majors and three of my students were Early Childhood Education majors, my course was a part of these students' ESL endorsement plan; therefore, this inclusion of how to teach ESL/EFL students SE

was crucial for their professional development. The syllabus[39] for the course can be found in Appendix A.

As for the assignments for the course, besides the earlier-mentioned midterm, the following assessments were employed in the classroom: reflective responses to class readings every two to three weeks (six responses overall), a language and literacy trajectory by week 11, four questionnaires throughout the course, a research paper on a nonstandardized variety of English, and a 7-minute presentation on the variety described in the research paper by the end of the course. In addition, students took 10 reading quizzes throughout the course, which comprised 20% of the course grade. Each quiz had 10 questions and took about 10 minutes to complete at the beginning of a class. The questions on the quiz were basic, but without doing the assigned readings, students would not be able to pass the quizzes. These easy but important quizzes kept students motivated to read the assigned articles and chapters from various textbooks and not to be late for class.

Another course assignment, reflective responses, also promoted attentive reading, as well as a critical analysis of the assigned readings. To be exact, these reflections required that students would choose one concept (or more) they liked the most from each reading, explain why that concept resonated with them, and share their understanding, interpretation, and evaluation of it. Students could also include evolving questions and ideas that they were developing regarding the class content and write about any personal experiences in relation to it. As Yancey (1998) puts it, reflection is "a means of go[ing] beyond the text to include a sense of the ongoing conversations that texts enter into" (p. 5). Hence, reflections as crucial components of learning helped my

[39] The syllabus for my internship course was adapted from Sarah Hercula's dissertation "Teaching Stigmatized Englishes: Counteracting Linguistic Prejudice Using a Critical Pedagogical Approach to the Introductory Linguistics Course."

students to articulate their newly acquired linguistic knowledge, connect it with their life experiences, and express their developing perspectives on linguistic matters.

Throughout the course, my students also filled out four short questionnaires. Students needed to answer five open-ended questions per questionnaire and share their opinion on certain language-related issues. The questionnaires had different foci, which were in line with the sequence of the readings. The first questionnaire's focus was to develop an appreciation of the linguistic analysis as relevant to one's life and an understanding of the descriptive versus prescriptive approach, while the second questionnaire's focus was to develop an understanding that AAE and IE are rule-governed systems and that standard language ideology is maintained by the upper middle class (but in fact, by all social classes) to validate the existing social order. As for the third questionnaire, it was centered on the topic of language as reflective of one's identity, and that language conveys ideas, cultures, and ideologies. And finally, the fourth questionnaire was focused on the positive effects of pedagogical strategies that employ students' linguistic repertoires in language arts classrooms; that is, they contribute to students' successful acquisition of academic writing, speaking, and reading as well as effective communication within the educational system and beyond. Besides pedagogical strategies, another important emphasis of the last questionnaire was the development of understanding that language variation is natural and a part of everyday life. All these foci were important for my data collection as students' responses to the questionnaires allowed me to see their attitudinal changes (if any) towards language variation, and to gauge if the acquisition of linguistic knowledge could have been a decisive factor in these changes.

As for the language and literacy narrative, it allowed my students to reflect on their early experiences at home, at school, and elsewhere that have shaped their literacy and language

practices, features, and beliefs. Some factors among others that influence one's language practices are racial and ethnic affiliations, the subsequent movement within the country (if any), and the influence of the members of the immediate family, teachers, friends, and others. My students' self-reflection on these factors helped them to understand and explain why they talked the way they talked, and who and what influenced their language attitudes and their views on the notions of correctness and prestige. The narrative also allowed me "to hear" my students' voices: their struggles and challenges or their advantages in standardized English language acquisition, their acquisition of a nonstandardized English language variety, a World English, or another language (if any), and how these language experiences shaped their identities.

As I mentioned earlier, in addition to examining their language histories, my students also shared their attitudinal changes (if any) towards nonstandardized Englishes. I was excited to read that many of my students recognized the pervasive language-deficit perspectives on language variation and advocated for academic outreach to underserved students. Finally, as future teachers, my students expressed great interest in exploring ways to improve the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students and ways to integrate knowledge of language and culture into classroom pedagogy.

As for the last assignment, my students needed to choose a nonstandardized English language variety within or outside the U.S. or a WE and research it in the context of each of the areas of linguistics that we covered during the course. Specifically, my students needed to provide a brief overview about the background/history/origin of the variety, write a short description of the language communities that speak that variety, analyze at least one phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and pragmatic feature of the variety, and provide one or more examples for each of the linguistic features. Another focus of the research paper was

the description of the sociolinguistic situation of the chosen variety, that is, how this variety is represented in schools, literature, music, media, and elsewhere. Hence, by analyzing the social and economic status of a nonstandardized variety of their choice, my students were able to assess how this variety's position is conditioned by standard language ideology, to examine language attitudes toward this variety, to consider teachers' perception of that dialect, and to share educational implications of language variation. Having researched on a variety of their choice, my students had an opportunity to give a short presentation (5-7 minutes) on this variety during the last two weeks of class and provide the highlights of their research, that is, introduce the variety's history, its distinguishing linguistic features, its social and cultural situation, as well as pedagogical insights on how to effectively work with linguistically diverse students. The presentations were insightful and engaging as we learned about such stigmatized English language varieties as Appalachian English, Chicano, Cajun, Lumbee, Spanglish, Irish English, Philippine English, and Hawaiʻi Creole English, among others. Students, as critical researchers, relying on the linguistic knowledge acquired during the course, investigated the structure of nonstandardized varieties and their role in speech communities. This assignment thus was eye-opening in terms of helping my students to realize that they can research their future students' language patterns on their own because presumably they can also research sociolinguistic aspects of those languages. Knowing what their students can do linguistically, these future teachers will be able to teach SE by comparing and contrasting differences between SE and the language varieties their K-12 students speak.

The Pedagogical Background

I will now describe the pedagogical background of my introductory linguistics course. As I mentioned in chapter 1, it was developed on the principles of multicultural education (ME) and critical pedagogy (CP). As these movements are “complementary and parallel mirror images of each other” (Gay, 1995, p. 158), I considered the attributes of both when developing my critical multicultural pedagogy. Indeed, the shared goal of ME and CP is “to empower students and transform schools and society for greater freedom, equality, and justice within the contextual realities of cultural pluralism” (Gay, 1995, p. 180). As Gay (1995) further explains, as pedagogies of difference, resistance, and hope, their philosophical underpinnings and ideological emphasis are similar and echo each other, while the differences between the two are more a question of range and specificity (p. 158).

Speaking of CP advocates, they are more generalists because their “proposals for action apply to the universe of U.S. education without reference to any specific programs of study” (Gay, 1995, p. 158). In addition, CP, as a constantly evolving field for more than 40 years, offers a vast variety of diverse scholarship for fostering critical awareness in learners. However, despite the different approaches and theories in CP, it is mainly concerned with “transforming relations of power which are oppressive and which lead to the oppression of people” (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 77). Based on the principles of critical theory of the Frankfurt school, which seeks to point out and change *all* the circumstances that subjugate human beings, CP adopts this desire for social justice, but through educational practices. Hence, through emancipatory education, CP is aimed at empowering minorities so that they gain political, economic, and cultural control of their lives and thus change their life conditions. Keesing-Styles (2003) concludes that CP is “an educational response to inequalities and oppressive power relations which exist in educational

institutions. It focuses on issues related to opportunity, voice and dominant discourses of education and seeks more equitable and liberating educational experiences" (p. 3).

In this regard, critical educators examine schools as part of the existing social order and political structure and challenge the fallacious assumptions that U.S. schools are democratic and egalitarian. Gay (1995) further asserts that American schools "routinely engage in politics and practices of reproduction wherein the existing social [structure] of mainstream society is replicated, complete with its established patterns of discrimination against individuals and groups on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and language" (p. 162). Bowles and Gintis further point out that the reproduction of intergenerational labor force and "forms of consciousness, dispositions, and values" that maintain the existing social order are the two primary functions of schools (as cited in Foley et al., 2015, p. 118). In this line, critical educators refuse to be complicit in this replication of cultural hegemony and instead challenge the imposition of Eurocentric cultural values and disempowerment of marginalized groups in schools in order to develop critical and active citizens. Dewey concludes that the role of education is crucial in the creation of liberal democracy, and as agents of emancipation, U.S. schools should act as "laboratories of learning for democratic living where all forms of knowledge ventilated and the experiences of all cultural groups are legitimated as worthy contributions to the life and culture of the United States, global society and humankind" (as cited in Gay, 1995, p. 165). Such an approach, which focuses on social injustices, encourages critical inquiry, and demystifies the culture of conformity, was vital for my linguistics course, which was focused on the study of the structure of English (mostly), English language variation, and linguistic injustice, and in which my students, pre-service teachers, challenged standard English language ideology and

mainstream cultural ethos, unveiled language subordination processes, and re-evaluated previously held assumptions, if any, about ‘correct’ English.

Multicultural education, whose fundamental concerns are also related to critical inquiry, social justice, and full citizenship rights for all groups, joins CP and challenges any form of discrimination in schools and society and demands that democratic principles be applied to the schools’ curriculum and instructional strategies. Speaking of the latter, this is where, as Gay (1995) explains, ME is different from CP: it is “more particularistic in that [its] advocacy tends to concentrate on changing curriculum content and classroom instruction to incorporate cultural pluralism” (p. 158). In fact, ME, which was born during the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, sprang out of the demands of ethnic groups for inclusion in the curricula of schools, colleges, and other educational institutions so that these places “would reflect their experiences, histories, cultures, and perspectives” (Banks, 2001, p. 5). In this line, Banks (2001) strongly critiques traditional pedagogy and maintains that:

> a curriculum that includes the experiences of different ethnic groups *and* presents these experiences from diverse perspectives and points of view is needed to help students understand the complexity of the human experience and how a nation’s various groups have strongly influenced each other culturally and interacted within the social structure. (p. 161, emphasis in the original)

Thus, advocates of ME and CP call for rethinking the traditional way of teaching and incorporating multiple perspectives in school curricula in order to transform school practices and promote “cultural, racial, social and ethnic pluralism” (Gay, 1995, p. 159). Multiculturalists, however, remind us that the school is a social system, and in order to achieve educational equality, the total environment of the school should be reformed (Banks, 2001, p. 22). In this

line, in addition to focusing on the curriculum and classroom instruction, educators should consider the school's policies, values and goals of the school, assessment practices, grouping and labeling practices, teaching styles and strategies, and teachers' values and attitudes (as well as attitudes and values of other members of the school staff) towards underrepresented racial, ethnical and cultural groups (Banks, 2001, p. 22). Only when efforts are made in each area can an effective multicultural school environment be achieved. An empowering school culture and social structure as indispensable factors for implementing multicultural education are in fact one of its five dimensions, which Banks developed as teachers' and educators' guide for school reform. Banks (2001) reminds us that multicultural education is a reform movement and is an ongoing process, the goals of which are ideal and perhaps can never be fully reached (p.4); yet, educators should continuously strive to restructure the educational system in order to keep increasing equal educational opportunities for all students.

Toward that direction, both multiculturalists and critical educators emphasize that teachers, being in a unique position to socialize students into critical thought, are responsible for encouraging students to question knowledge, their everyday experiences, and society and its dominant ideologies. Shor (1992), a critical educator and a professor of English, further explains that:

> in forming the students' conception of self and the world, teachers can present knowledge in several ways, as a celebration of the existing society, as a falsely neutral avoidance of problems rooted in the system, or as a critical inquiry into power and knowledge as they relate to student experience. (p. 14)

That is, education can be liberatory only when the pedagogy is "engaged beyond the surface level" (hooks, 2010, p. 19). Instead of submitting to schools' texts, materials, and ideological

resources, teachers should help students to understand that knowledge is socially constructed and is linked to the values and beliefs of the upper middle class. By examining the biases and implicit cultural assumptions behind the dominant groups' arguments, students begin to see how the dominant discourses shape our subjectivities and "how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by relations of power and privilege" (McLaren, 1994, p.179). This critical investigation of how social knowledge is constructed and why certain types of knowledge are legitimated while other types of knowledge are not, is the second dimension of ME and one of the fundamentals of CP. This interrogation of the social construction of knowledge was an important part of my linguistics course that prompted my students, especially those in teacher education programs, to examine and challenge an argument in favor of standardized English language and following from it "common-sense" explanations about the illogical structure of vernacular varieties.

CP and ME further emphasize the importance of implementing ethnic and cultural content in school curriculum, which is also a third dimension of ME. Certainly, teachers are challenged by the limits of the standardized curriculum, and some of my colleagues, who are language arts teachers at various U.S. middle public schools, admit that it can be difficult to develop a rigorous and engaging curriculum for their students, which would reflect linguistically and culturally diverse students' values and cultures. Yet, teachers *are* in power to integrate multicultural content, which would promote these students' perspectives, views, and experiences.

As Shor (1992) further explains, teachers can do so through their daily choices by attending to "the themes, texts, tests, seating arrangements, rules for speaking, grading systems, [and] learning processes," all of which create the politics of the classroom (p. 14). I should add that presenting a view on a curriculum as "a dynamic and potentially empowering decision-

making process" (Nieto, 2004, p. 190) is imperative in a teacher education course, including an introductory linguistics course, as it is crucial for future teachers to understand that curriculum is never neutral but highly politicized. As English/language arts teacher education majors are usually required to take only one linguistics course (if any), I included readings and facilitated discussions on developing a linguistically informed curriculum in K-12 language arts classes.

Furthermore, while critical educators and multiculturalists both focus on empowering their students by democratizing the nature of teaching and learning, they emphasize different aspects of it. Particularly, critical educators pay more attention to power/knowledge relations between a teacher and a student, while multiculturalists, as mentioned earlier, are more concerned with the teaching styles and techniques that promote educational equality for all students. I will further discuss these foci of each movement in order to specify the differences.

In this regard, critical educators stress that "classroom pedagogical practices [are] a form of ideological production, wherein the classroom reflects discursive formations and power-knowledge relations, both in schools and in society" (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015, p. 252). One of the leading advocates and the main contributors to the theoretical constitution of CP, Paul Friere, conducted careful analysis of power/knowledge relations between a teacher and students. In his best-known work *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he strongly criticizes the schooling in capitalist societies and posits that education became "an act of depositing, in which the students are depositories and the teacher is the depositor" (Friere, 1973, p. 58). In other words, it is assumed that teachers know everything, and students are "empty vessels" (Freire, 1973, p. 58). They do not question the knowledge presented, but instead record, memorize, and repeat the information.

Freire (1973) called this traditional view of education, which promotes unequal power-knowledge relations, "the banking concept" of education (p. 72). It serves the interests of the oppressors since this model reflects the structure of an oppressive society and seeks to control thinking and action in order to inhibit critical consciousness development and any chance for the transformation of the society. Freire concludes that those who are in the pursuit of liberating education must deny "the banking concept" and adopt "the problem-posing education," which "involves uncovering of reality, striving for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality" (as cited in Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 78). That is, the problem-posing pedagogy approaches students as critical conscious beings and considers students' life experiences and life situations as central to the learning process.

Such problem-posing method brings the teacher and the students into a *dialogical relationship*, which changes the nature of teacher-student relationship and "a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teacher" (Freire, 1973, p. 67). In this dialogic relationship, the teacher is not the only source of knowledge, but students also share valuable information on the subject. As Freire (1973) further explains:

> the teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and re-considers [his or] her earlier considerations as the students express their own. The role of the problem posing educator is to create, together with the students, the conditions under which knowledge at the level of *doxa* is superseded by true knowledge, at the level of the *logos*. (p. 68, emphasis in the original)

These two Greek philosophical terms, *doxa* and *logos*, are used by Freire to emphasize the importance of a dialogue as the only way to generate critical thinking. While knowledge at the level of *doxa* indicates common beliefs and popular opinions people obtain from the sensory

world, *logos*, which is translated from Greek as ‘word’, ‘reason’, or ‘speech’ is “understood as the link between discourse and rational structure” (Duarte, 2015, p. 113). Similarly, my students contributed to the development of true knowledge, knowledge at the level of *logos*, when my students shared their personal experiences in regard to issues of language variation, standard language, and linguistic social justice. That is, instead of passively absorbing the information and adopting my world view supported by the choice of textbook content, which is detached from students’ reality, students’ reflections on their worlds served as a turning point in the construction of meaning. Through such authentic reflection, students learned to critically reflect on "*the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves, [and] to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation” (Freire, 1973, p. 71, emphasis in the original). Such understanding of reality as transformational is liberatory, and hence, it is empowering because students learn that the current social conditions can be challenged, and a more just society can be reached.

Like Freire, hooks (1994) believes that “education can only be liberatory if everyone claims knowledge as a field in which we all labor” (p. 14). In this regard, hooks (1994) emphasizes active learner engagement in the construction of knowledge because knowledge is not “universal, neutral, and objective,” but interrogation of the existing forms of knowledge is necessary in order to nurture critical consciousness in students and create participatory spaces in the classroom (p. 14). Thus, hooks (1994) insists that:

> Critical pedagogies of liberation [should] necessarily embrace experience, confessions and testimony as relevant ways of knowing, as important, vital dimensions of any learning process…. In classrooms that have been extremely diverse, where I have endeavored to teach material about exploited groups who are not black, I have suggested

> that if I bring to the class only analytical ways of knowing and someone else brings personal experience, I welcome that knowledge because it will enhance our learning. Also, I share with the class my conviction that if my knowledge is limited, and if someone else brings a combination of facts and experience, then I humble myself and respectfully learn from those who bring this great gift. I can do it without negating the position of authority professors have, since fundamentally I believe that combining the analytical and experiential is a richer way of knowing. (p. 89)

Thus, hooks emphasizes that both teachers and students are responsible for the creation of a learning context because if everyone in the classroom acts responsibly and if students' voices truly count, then the pedagogy of freedom can be enacted, and a climate of openness can be achieved. Freire (1973) further explains that such libertarian education is "for [people] to come to feel like masters of their thinking by discussing the thinking and views of the world explicitly or implicitly manifest in their own suggestions and those of their comrades" (p. 118). Moreover, such reflection of students upon social injustice issues through critical dialogue presupposes action because only true reflection challenges individuals to actively respond to oppression. This critical reflection upon the world and subsequent action to transform the social reality is what Freire (1973) called "praxis" or liberation, which can be achieved only if education is humanist and does not serve the interests of the oppressor (p. 66).

I should say that while I support Freire and hook's positions on developing a dialogic method of teaching and encouraged my students to participate in the construction of knowledge where it was relevant in my course, I believe that the power/knowledge relations between a teacher and their students cannot be completely resolved for various reasons. One reason is that a teacher, whose responsibilities include planning, preparing, and delivering lessons, as well as

evaluating and assessing their students, is endowed with authority by the very role they are assigned. As a professional in a certain subject area(s), a teacher is a learning guide, who leads their students throughout the course (especially in a linguistics course) and needs to assess and document their students' progress as required by law and school regulations. Similarly, as a teacher, I needed to evaluate my students' progress and assign a grade for various assignments of the course, as well as submit official course grades at the end of the course. Another reason is that it is not always possible to apply a problem-posing pedagogy to all course content, especially of a linguistics course. For example, in the first half of the semester, during which I introduced my students to the main levels of analysis within linguistics, I lectured for more than half of a class period, and during the rest of the class, my students and I would do exercises provided at the end of each chapter of the textbook in order to practice the newly acquired linguistic knowledge. Most of my students had not taken a linguistics class before, so introduction to and explanation of the linguistics terms and concepts required direct instruction on my part. I did implement class, group, and pair discussions whenever it was possible; however, for the most part, student-led inquiry in the discovery of knowledge was not a suitable approach for learning the main levels of analysis within linguistics.

As for the second part of the course, my students acted as critical investigators in dialogue with me, the teacher. That is, they were engaged in demythologizing the standard language ideology, shared their literacy and language experiences and ideologies, and re-evaluated their previously held prescriptive views of language. In this process of unlearning, learning, and relearning, students' critical reflections on how they used to view how language works and how their understanding of the nature of language (as well as their attitudes towards language variation) was changing were a crucial step in this process. As a transformative

intellectual, my goal was to mold my students into critical teacher educators, who will not only recognize the hidden curriculum and classroom practices that benefit the dominant cultural groups, but also will challenge such oppressive practices and have courage to enact a critically oriented pedagogy in their classrooms.

Thus, inspired by critical pedagogy's fundamental principles, such as critical thinking, reflection, and action, I encouraged my students to critically question language ideologies and investigate the history of the English language, which allowed my students to see that certain language forms that were considered to be grammatically 'correct' and prestigious at the turn of the 20th century are not necessarily 'correct' today (for instance, at that time, *ain't* was prestigious among the educated and upper classes in Southern England, but today *ain't* is reflective of the working-class speech) (Bergmann et al., 2007, p. 435). In addition, by reflecting on their linguistic and cultural practices, critically examining how "the main knowledge is legitimized by the dominant culture" (Sarroub & Quadros, 2015, p. 253), and considering ways to incorporate a critical multicultural approach in their classrooms, founded on social justice and equality, my students felt empowered to apply what they have learned during the course into both their everyday life and teaching practices. In fact, one of my students, who graduated from the university in a year after taking my course and had started working as a middle school teacher at a public school in Illinois, emailed me with a request to share more material on how to address underrepresented students' linguistic and cultural needs in the classroom and recommend more literature on critical pedagogy and multiculturalism.

Furthermore, my students, who were all (except one student) future language arts teachers, were also very interested in classroom instructions and teaching styles. This is when my students and I turned to the discussions of the two last dimensions of the multicultural approach,

prejudice reduction and equity pedagogy, in our exploration of effective ways to positively influence the learning experience of all students, including underrepresented ones. In terms of the former dimension, it emphasizes the need to develop positive attitudes towards racial, ethnic, and cultural groups by "creat[ing] the conditions for equitable learning and positive contact between students from different social groups" (Camicia, 2007, p. 223). That is, in addition to learning about the perspectives, contributions, and social struggles of minorities, Allport's (1954) *contact hypothesis*[40] names four conditions necessary for promoting positive intergroup contact in the classroom: "(1) equal status; (2) cooperation rather than competition; (3) sanction by authorities such as teachers and administrators; and (4) interpersonal interactions in which students become acquainted as individuals" (as cited in Banks, 2011, p. 21). Indeed, in a group, in which students of different social classes can work together towards common goals, and in which multicultural values are reinforced, an equitable learning environment can be obtained. Cohen and Lotan (2004) then recommend promoting equal-status behavior in intergroup interactions by "assigning competence to low-status students," which can be achieved by giving a facilitating role to such students in group work (for example, a low-status student leads a group) or by consistently recognizing low-status students' achievements with detailed feedback whenever the latter perform well (p. 102).

The second method for facilitating equal intergroup interaction is "the multiple ability treatment," which means that teachers should consider various intellectual abilities for completing a task, not a single ability (for example, a teacher does not focus mostly on writing to assess student learning but gives other opportunities to demonstrate learning) (Cohen & Lotan,

[40] According to Allport's Intergroup Contact Theory (ICT) developed in the 1950's, an intergroup contact is most positive when the following criteria are met: "equal group status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation and authority support" (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 65).

2004, p. 102). Cohen and Lotan report that such modification of status inequality in the classroom has demonstrated positive results in 13 elementary school classrooms; that is, low-status students participated in intergroup interactions a lot more, which contributed to equaling their status in the classroom, while the participation level of high-status students was not affected (as cited in Camicia, 2007, p. 224). Such focus on intergroup interactions and ways to develop positive interracial attitudes in the classroom was no less an important topic in my linguistics course, which is usually required for education majors, who are likely to encounter student status inequalities by virtue of their socioeconomic background.

Finally, multiculturalists' fifth dimension, an equity pedagogy, overlaps with the four dimensions (as they all do in their pursuit of educational school reform), and stresses the use of culturally responsive teaching approaches and styles in the classroom for enhancing linguistically and culturally diverse students' academic achievement. That is, multiculturalist educators insist that teachers should attend to these students' learning styles and use such teaching approaches that answer their learning needs. For example, Aronson and Gonzales (1988) report that African American and Latino students' academic achievement increased when cooperative teaching techniques, not competitive ones were used, which is also a point Allport (1954) made earlier in his *contact hypothesis*, who emphasized cooperation (p. 307). Gay (2000) agrees with Aronson and Gonzales (1988) and notes that that culturally responsive teaching takes place when teachers use the "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 29). Such an approach that considers various cultural groups' conversational styles and norms, learning styles, and students' values and beliefs about the nature of the world was at the core of my linguistics course, the goal of which was precisely to

educate future teachers on these matters, as well as to introduce them to teaching strategies that would address minority students' learning needs.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that the two frameworks described above are both focused on equity pedagogy, underrepresented groups' inclusion in the curriculum, knowledge as power, inclusion of marginalized voices, empowerment, and social transformation. These foci suggest to me that pedagogy is a process, a philosophy, a political activity, and a reform movement. Moreover, these educational philosophies tremendously influenced my pedagogy development, which I admit will be a continuing process throughout my professional life. Thus, my multicultural critical pedagogy includes discussions of structural and organizational practices in schools and their influence on educational experiences of underrepresented groups, ways to minimize microaggressions in the classroom and promote educational equity, considerations of students' communication and learning styles and of teaching strategies that would address students' cultural and linguistic needs, and ways to help students of all backgrounds to find their own voices and reclaim and affirm their cultural heritages, ethnic contributions, and linguistic experiences as an essential part of school curriculum. I strongly agree with Morrell (2005) that "literacy [is] tied to power relations in society, and …literacy educators [are] political agents capable of developing skills which enable academic transformation and social change" (p. 313). As an international female scholar, a non-native English-speaking teacher, and a member of an underrepresented group, the Buryats, I join critical educators and multicultural educators in their continuous work of re-visioning education and am determined to challenge the mainstream centric curriculum in order to transform ethnocentric and monolingual school programs and practices. I envision my contribution to the field of linguistics and teacher education is to educate future teachers (and other majors) on matters of cultural and linguistic injustices in school and

elsewhere, to engage education majors in a linguistic analysis of nonstandardized Englishes (one variety as a minimum) so that they develop an understanding of the logic and structure of nonstandardized varieties, and consider ways to create democratic classrooms, which answer the educational needs of all students.

Spring 2017 Course Outcomes

My students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds

In the spring semester of 2017, 31 students enrolled into my introductory linguistics course. Out of 31 students, 27 were elementary education majors, three students were early childhood education majors, and one student was a public relations major, with English as an additional plan. As for their year level, three students were sophomores, 19 students were juniors, and nine students were seniors. Only one student whose additional plan was Spanish had taken an introductory Spanish linguistics class prior to my course; all the other students had not taken a linguistics class before. As for their linguistic backgrounds, my students' language and literacy narratives revealed that the majority of the students were speakers of a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English (those same students believed their English to be standardized)[41]. As for bilingual and bidialectal speakers, there were six students in this class who spoke a nonstandardized variety of English or had a language other than English as their first language: student 12 identified himself as a speaker of African American English and of a non-African American variety of standardized English; student 20 identified herself as a speaker

[41] My students reported that they were speakers of standardized English, which is an abstracted, idealized variety, not a true variety. For this reason, it is more accurate to say that my students were referring to a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English. Moreover, as it is my students who wrote what variety they believed they spoke, it is more relevant for understanding their identity-building rather than linguistic realities. In other words, my students may have overreported their knowledge of English.

of Southern English and of a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English; students 1 and 8 identified themselves as speakers of Spanish and of a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English; student 14 identified herself as a speaker of Polish and of a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English; and finally, student 25 identified herself as a speaker of American Sign Language (ASL) and of a non-stigmatized white, midwestern variety of English. In addition, student 22 was half Pakistani, and while she did not learn her father's native language, Indian English, growing up in a bilingual and bicultural household made this student, as she explained, more sensitive and open to other cultures. Students 28 and 24 also did not learn their parents' native languages, but like student 22, they said that they developed a sense of cultural fluidity. Such linguistic diversity of monolingual, bidialectal, and bilingual students considerably enriched our class discussions about issues of English language variation and allowed my students to compare and reflect on their cultural and linguistic experiences in their negotiation with the content of the course.

Furthermore, the fact that all but one student were teacher education majors allowed my students and me to focus on language variation and education throughout the course; that is, the readings were geared towards this topic, including the discussions of teaching strategies that integrate linguistic knowledge into K-12 language arts teaching. I also believe that the above-mentioned student whose major was public relations and English as an additional plan benefitted from this course: as an English major this student always has an opportunity to teach English. In fact, this student shared in reflection 4 that she taught English in Costa Rica in the winter of 2017, so the pedagogical focus of the course was no less important for her. In the following analysis, I will provide data collection procedures and management and then discuss the findings of my research, focusing on my students' articulation of their understanding of the newly

acquired linguistic knowledge and their attitudinal changes towards language variation, language usage, and the notion of correctness and prestige.

Data Collection Procedures and Management

Before I proceed with the description of my introductory linguistics course outcomes, I will explain data collection procedures and data analysis process. To begin, it is important to explain the ethical protections I offered to the potential participants of the study in order to secure IRB approval. First, the recruitment of participants was done by the principal investigator (PI), the chair of my dissertation committee, at the beginning of my internship course, with the co-investigator (I was the co-PI) leaving the classroom during the recruitment. Furthermore, coercion and undue influence was also minimized by that the participation in the study was completely voluntary and no penalty or extra credit would follow because of non-participation or participation. In addition, a student had the right to withdraw from the study anytime during the semester without penalty. Another crucial moment was that the co-PI did not have access to students' informed consents until the final grades were submitted. Therefore, even though my data were classroom assignments that were subject to my evaluation, students' decision whether to participate in the study did not affect their final grades for the course because I was not aware who decided to participate or not participate in the study throughout the whole semester. By choosing this ethical protection, an overt or implicit threat of harm to or undue influence on the participants were minimized. Finally, the risk resulting from the breach of confidentiality and release of personal information was minimized by the co-PI's use of pseudonyms. That is, the participants' identities are kept confidential, and the real names will never be revealed in this dissertation, as well as in future presentations and/or publications.

As for data analysis, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, my students had four written assignments: a narrative, reflections, questionnaires, and a research paper on a nonstandardized variety of the students' choice. Considering that the first three written assignments provided me with rich and nuanced data for my research, I decided not to include the analysis of the fourth written assignment in my dissertation in order to keep it to a manageable size. I am planning to report the findings of the latter in my future presentations, in articles, and in the classroom.

After collecting my students' written responses (an entire semester of documents), I uploaded them to Nvivo software. I started reading these data anew even though I had been reading my students' responses throughout the semester in order to provide written feedback or to discuss my students' responses in classroom discussions. As I was reading through the data sets, I started to create a preliminary list of theme nodes[42] (codes) in NVivo and wrote down notes to myself that included ideas that indicated relationships between the nodes. After this step, I started reading my data again and modified my theme nodes as the first attempt to assign the coding categories was to discover the usefulness of themes for my research. I repeated this step several times until I came up with fixed parent nodes (or master codes) that I believed answered my research questions. The following parent nodes emerged: *Attitude Change, Language and Culture, Language and Identity, Linguistic Analysis, Notions of Correctness and Prestige, Teaching Strategies,* and *Critical Multicultural Pedagogy.* Each node was an important collection of references that helped me to answer my research questions. For example, as I was reading through data sets, I saved excerpts where my students wrote about their attitude change (or no change towards language variation) in the node *Attitude Change*. In the node *Language and Culture*, I saved students' excerpts about the interconnection of language and language's

[42] In NVivo, a node is a container, in which a researcher gathers related material.

cultural codes. In this node, I also saved students' responses on how rules of interaction of a certain variety influences the way people talk. For this reason, my parent nodes also had child nodes, which allowed me to create subtopics related to one main topic. For example, the parent node, *Attitude Change*, had such child nodes as *Positive Attitude Change*, and *No Attitude Change*, and *No Attitude Mentioned*. The parent node, *Attitude Change*, was about students' change of attitude towards language variation. But as my research revealed that not all students used to have a negative attitude towards language variation, I created two more child nodes that reflected my findings. By doing so, I was able to accurately record my students' attitudinal change to language variation and attend to the nodes when interpreting my findings.

Furthermore, as I was developing my coding system, I used annotations abundantly while coding as it allowed me to record my comments or observations about particular content in a source. For example, annotating attitude change in a source allowed me to create a connection between relevant excerpts from students' papers and the node *Attitude Change*. These connections were an important step for creating codes and gathering relevant material for each node. I was able to go back to a certain paper the next day and quickly retrieve the information related to a certain emerging theme.

Finally, I also used memos in order to record my ideas, insights, and interpretations of the data in my project. Writing up memos for each node allowed me to keep my reflections separate but connected to the node I created. For example, a memo for the node *Attitude Change* allowed me to summarize my data analysis and write the main reasons why students changed (or didn't change) their attitudes towards language variation and save these reasons for my data interpretation. I also recorded students' comments on how they used to perceive language

variation prior to the course and why. By doing so, I could easily access my students' before and after reasonings for attitude change, which was crucial for my data interpretation.

Overall, the coding system development I described allowed me to sort through and organize the data in themes related to my research questions and generate master codes, develop subcodes, and record my interpretations in memos, all of which was crucial for my data analysis. My research questions anchored all of the codes as I looked for evidence of attitude change towards language variation (or no change) and for students' articulation of their acquired linguistic knowledge as their reasoning for attitude change. Furthermore, my students' determination to use critical multicultural teaching strategies in their future teaching and to critically approach an educational system that holds SE as the only legitimate form of English also served as evidence of the development of more critical perspectives toward language variation. In my next section, I will describe the findings of my research.

Findings

I should say that the findings of my study revealed students' deep engagement with and genuine interest in the course material. The participants of the study found linguistic knowledge to be relevant to their both professional and personal lives, indicated that the introduction to the main levels of analysis within linguistics was crucial for understanding the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized English language varieties, recognized that standard language ideology misled them to think of those varieties 'as less than', and asserted that they would use linguistically sound teaching strategies in their future classrooms. Further in my findings I will unfold my students' different kinds of attitudes and understandings about English language varieties.

To start, one of the important and interesting findings of my research was that the course readings and their in-class discussions and writing assignments allowed my students to make personal connections with the course content. That is, students were able to reflect on their own linguistic and cultural experiences, on the role of standard language ideology in their identity formation, and on the importance of linguistic education on the deconstruction of their language ideologies. For example, one of my students, who grew up in a household where Spanish was the primary language, describes in her narrative how her struggles to acquire standard English influenced her identity:

> When I was placed in the mainstream classroom, I became extremely quiet. I did not talk or participate in class. I think that impacted my speech because I avoided talking in English for so many years. I started getting bullied for my accent. My friends knew Spanish, and, therefore, I could use my native language. Coming to college was not easy; I have to push myself to raise my hand and participate. When I got involved during my community college, it pushed me to step out of my comfort zone and talk more. I definitely feel more comfortable now than when I was growing up learning to speak English. It has turned to be that I prefer English to Spanish now. I use to volunteer in high school, but I would not mind talking to little kids in after school programs or in smaller groups, but in front of a class, I would freeze. Even today, talking to people that at one point gave me hard time for my accent, makes me nervous… I am constantly getting corrected in English, especially since starting college. I pronounce things weirdly.
>
> Sometimes it is frustrating being told that you did not pronounce something correctly.

In her narrative, student 1 expresses how standard language ideology negatively influenced her experience of English language acquisition. The student shares that she became quiet and shy

and would freeze in front of the classroom. This negative influence affected this student in such a way that she would avoid speaking English because she was constantly corrected for mispronouncing words and was even bullied in school. She explains further in her narrative that she chose to be an early childhood educator because of this frustrating and unpleasant experience: “I want my students to have a strong foundation in their early years to not fall as behind as I did.”

As evident from reading an excerpt from this student’s narrative, the student took up the course content and applied it in a very personal way. Indeed, the topic of language variation and standardization allowed this student to deconstruct her identity, reflect on her own experiences with language and identity, and explain the connection between those experiences and the choice of her major. This particular language and culture narrative also provides an excellent example of how standard language ideology can negatively affect an individual emotionally and socially and contribute to feelings of insecurity and incompetence.

Student 8, whose first language was also Spanish, similarly, made a personal connection with the class readings:

> Being put into a transitional bilingual program right when I was enrolled in school it gave me a message that my mom’s non-standard English was not good enough compared to the Standard English that my teachers spoke. I strived to get my English to their level and once I did, I was deemed to be more than my mom. English and the way that you speak English can come with many things, including social status. I did not know it then, but because I knew how to speak a more standard English than my mother, I was already a higher social status than her at such a young age. I became more distant from my first language because that is what society urges you to do. However, coming to college I have

> realized that English, as well as other languages, is more than just sentences, grammar, and syntax. Every person puts their own personality into the same language and not everyone speaks the same language the same way. I have learned how unique non-standard English is and how everyone's English comes with a story. I also realized that although society has its input on those who speak nonstandard English, I appreciate and admire those who speak it.

Student 8 explains in her reflection 2 that she knew she was 'more' than her mom because this student's level of English was 'better'. As a child, while this student could not articulate that she gained a higher social status than her mom, she certainly recognized that she became more important than her mom and that it was due to acquiring standard English. She then continued to perfect her English and distanced herself from Spanish. This student's examination of the role of standard English in her life allowed her to deconstruct her language ideologies and articulate why she consented to standard language ideology. Her further linguistic exploration of the nature of AAE (its phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and pragmatics) helped her to learn that nonstandardized English varieties follow regular patterns and are systematic. In reflection 3, she concludes that the grammatical features of nonstandardized Englishes make them unique but not in any way "less" than. To demonstrate the uniqueness of AAE, in her reflection 3, student 8 chose to focus on a morphosyntactic feature of this variety, multiple negation:

> One of the characteristics of African American English (AAE) syntax is negation, or more specifically multiple negators in a single negative sentence. Per Green (2002) "researchers have referred to the 'extra' negative elements in the AAE sentences as pleonastic, suggesting that they do not contribute any additional negative meaning to the sentences" (p. 78). It is interesting how standard English perceives double negatives as

> incorrect grammar, and sometimes even labels people who use double negatives as "uneducated." However, double negatives are perceived as being grammatical in AAE. Each language is unique in their own usage of a common feature.

This student's explanation of the AAE grammatical feature, multiple negation, as pleonastic demonstrates her uptake of the system of negative marking in AAE. She concludes that AAE is a unique variety with set patterns, as all nonstandardized varieties are. More importantly, once this student learned the prominent grammatical features of AAE, she stopped supporting the assertion of standard language advocates that multiple negation is incorrect English as there is a scientific explanation of why 'double' negatives do not make a positive in AAE. Furthermore, she changed not only her perceptions of nonstandardized varieties, but also questioned her language ideologies.

Speaking of student learning that all dialects are structured and rule-bound, it was another exciting finding. All students articulated, both in class discussions and in written assignments, their linguistic understanding of AAE (and IE). It is interesting that many chose to comment on the particular feature mentioned above, multiple negation (as well as negative inversion), in their written assignments. It is perhaps due to the strong proscription against multiple negation in schools, and in general, its wide condemnation by society. Many students referred to their teachers and family members as people who unintentionally perpetuated standard language ideology and the interests of the upper middle class. For example, student 11, in her narrative, focuses on her fifth-grade teacher's "logical" explanation of why writing sentences using double negatives is not grammatically correct:

> I have grown up speaking standard English my entire life, and I had always been taught in school that the rules of standard English are correct. For example, I remember my

fifth-grade teacher teaching the class about double negatives and explaining that if someone were to say, "I don't want nothing to eat," the two negatives in the sentence would cancel each other and change the meaning of the sentence to, "I want something to eat." Because I was taught these rules in school, I always assumed that anyone who spoke in a way that differed from these rules was not speaking correctly. In reality, however, the rule for use of negators within African American English is just different: "This system of negative marking contrasts with the system in mainstream English in that it allows more than one negative element in clauses that are interpreted as negative" (Green, 2002, pp. 77-78). Though standard English only allows one negator in a sentence, there is no reason that that rule is inherently correct. Learning about the rule-governed nature of African American English has helped me to realize that it is a completely separate dialect and not simply standard English with grammatical mistakes.

As can be seen, student 11 used to think that standardized English was the only 'correct' variety due to having been taught only the prescriptive rules of this variety in school, which is still the predominant practice in schools. She shares her 5th grade teacher's comment that anyone who uses double negatives in a sentence is incorrect. However, after having learned about the rule-governed nature of AAE, student 11 articulates the rules of negators in AAE and concludes that this variety is just another language variety, not a 'broken' English. In her reflection 3, student 11 also commented on the verbal marker *been* in AAE and explains how she used to misunderstand the meaning of this marker when communicating with speakers of AAE:

The reading by Hudley and Mallinson described many of the features of African American English that we had previously discussed in this class; however, there were a few rules that I had never heard of before. One of these was the idea of stressed *been*,

> which is when "been is paired with a main verb in the simple past tense," communicating that "the event has happened in the remote past, a long time prior to the present time" (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 93). I thought that this idea was really interesting simply because I have never used it within my own idiolect, and while I may have heard it before, I don't think I really understood its true meaning. For example, if someone says, "I been married," that means that they got married a long time ago and are still married. Prior to reading this article, if I would have heard that sentence, I would have assumed that the person was married a long time ago but wasn't married anymore. I don't know how many times I have heard someone speak using the "stressed been" and completely misinterpreted what they were saying. This makes me realize how much miscommunication can happen simply because different dialects have slightly different rules, even if the language is the same on the surface. I'm glad that I am becoming more aware of other dialects now, so hopefully I will have fewer miscommunication when interacting with others in the future.

As this student explains, her misunderstanding of what stressed *been* means in AAE led her to miscommunication with speakers of AAE. She writes that she would hear this verbal marker in their speech but would always misinterpret what they meant. This student is communicating an important message: teachers who were not introduced to the grammatical patterns of at least one nonstandardized variety are likely to perceive these patterns as incorrect and simply unintelligible. This, in turn, leads to the perception that a nonstandardized variety is a “bad” English, and many teachers, truly believing they are doing the right thing, consider themselves responsible to discourage students from the use of nonstandardized varieties in their written and spoken speech.

This point is stressed well by student 12, a speaker of both AAE and SE. In one of his reflections, he writes that nonstandardized varieties are underappreciated and that while speakers of nonstandardized varieties are often asked to become bidialectal, speakers of SE are not:

> When we assess students in reading, writing, oral language, and even listening, we assess them based upon their ability to conform to the standard. In the case of American schools, this would be LWC[43]. In situations where students are tested in such forms, many students especially Black or Latin students have to become bilingual to some degree. Since this is not the primary linguistic pattern of those particular groups, they must adapt and attempt to learn an entirely different linguistic system in order to be credited as successful. This is something that their white classmates will never have to experience because they will come from backgrounds where they are familiar with or have at least heard this particular variety of English. This immediately puts students of color at a disadvantage because they must navigate a system or pattern that was not designed for them to be successful. In this respect, many school systems and policies are created so that white children excel, and black and brown children will either fall below the margin or will have to work three times as hard to attain achievement. Schools and education systems contribute to the notion of white supremacy through linguistic discrimination. In majority of American schools, dialects of AAE are explicitly taught to be uneducated speech or "slang."

Student 12, a bidialectal speaker, passionately responded to the topic of language subordination and language variation, a sociolinguistic issue that left no student indifferent. Coming from personal experience as articulated by this student's contributions in in-class discussions and in

[43] Language of Wider Communication

his narrative, he was very aware of the power dynamics in the classroom since young age and avoided speaking AAE with teachers and his classmates who were speakers of SE. He calls this preference of teaching the rules, norms, and conventions of standardized English and following from it, standardized tests, which are biased towards students from standardized English-speaking backgrounds, a way to continue the promotion of linguistic and cultural injustice, and racist ideologies in the U.S. He further reflects on his use of various AAE features in his speech in his narrative, including a lexical entry ‘steady’ and concludes that he recently began to take more pride in AAE:

> The use of the adverb 'stay' is something that I did find myself using in social situations with friends. This adverb "can be used to express habitual meaning" (Green, 2002, p. 23) and this is the way that it was used by my friends, my parents, and myself occasionally. Often times, it would come in the form of saying something like "he steady playin'" or "you stay mad". These are all examples of how this speech was used around me, and even sometimes by me, but it was never consistent. Only recently have I begun to take more pride in this because I recognize it as a valid way of speech. I think the use and worship of "standard English" in this country has a lot to do with my early views on AAE. Standard English or LWC is something that is very unnecessarily valued in the American society. I believe this is what contributes to the lack of knowledge of other languages and varieties of English. I also believe it contributes to the lack of respect that other languages and varieties of English are given in comparison to LWC.

In this excerpt, student 12 compares Green’s definition of the lexical entry ‘stay’ with his use of this adverb, as well as his parents’ and friends’ use. Having studied a scientific descriptive presentation of this variety seems to be a reason that contributed to this student’s recent pride in

this variety. He further explains in questionnaire 3: “I never thought of AAE as a variety of English until I came to college. Even those in my context saw it as slang, which now I know is not true.” As can be seen, speakers of AAE may perceive the variety many of them grow up speaking as “slang.” The fact that this student has recognized AAE as valid, which is due to the study of the linguistic structure of this language, is no doubt an important step in his personal growth as language not only expresses an identity but also shapes it.

To share more examples on student learning that nonstandardized dialects are not corrupted versions of SE, I will now turn to questionnaire 2, in which I posited questions that were focused on revealing such understanding. One of the questions was the following: Can you say that your attitude towards nonstandardized varieties of English has changed over the course?[44] Why or why not? In their responses, all students acknowledged that they have developed a scientific perspective on non-standardized varieties, and many students expressed that they were mistaken to believe these varieties to be incorrect versions of English. Here are a few responses:

1) Student 3 writes in her response: Yes. Although I haven't had much experience with AAE or IE (I grew up in an environment with extremely little ethnic variety), I now realize that I definitely didn't think of these varieties as being actual "types" of English. I had no idea about how specific the structures and rules are, nor how efficient and logical many of them are. I now realize that speakers of these varieties are not changing English or being lazy about how they communicate, they are simply using a different type of English than I do. I'm thankful for that new perspective, as it gives me more understanding for those whose first language is not English or whose dialect is not Standard English.

2) Student 6 acknowledges that prior to the course, she considered nonstandardized varieties Engishes with mistakes: Before taking this class. I certainly did believe that these varieties were “English with mistakes." I thought the grammar, vocabulary and accent differences were mistakes that were corrected as the

[44] As I mentioned earlier, even though I was not aware who agreed to participate in the study and did not learn who participated in my study until after I submitted my grades, the participants were students in my class and thus any affective changes reported by my students must be understood in that context.

speaker assimilated over time. To my shame. I think I sometimes judged the intelligence or worth of another person based on whether they spoke one of these varieties. However, after learning the grammatical patterns of AAE (Green. 2002. pp. 100-101) and hearing the systematic patterns in the video of speakers of IE, I now recognize these varieties as completely valid forms defined by the innate human ability to follow language patterns.

3) Student 9 writes that at the beginning of the course, she was not excited to learn about non-standardized varieties: My attitude toward non-standard varieties of English has drastically changed over the course of this semester. At the beginning of the semester, I had a bunch of negative thoughts about learning about African American English and all the other types of non-standard English. I felt that it was unimportant for me to know and understand each of these non-standard English varieties but as the semester moved forward, I started to understand why it is important as a teacher of diverse children to learn about these non-standard varieties. I am now very interested in the topic of non-standard English varieties and cannot wait to learn about other non-standard varieties.

4) Student 11 writes about her perceptions of non-standardized varieties as being incorrect varieties prior to taking the course: I think that my attitude towards non-standard varieties of English has definitely changed since beginning this class. Growing up, I had been taught the grammar rules for Standard English at school, and I heard my mom correct other people's usage of grammar. While this isn't necessarily bad if the goal is to use Standard English correctly, I never considered that there could be other correct ways to use English. For example, when I heard individuals use multiple negation within African American English, I assumed that that way of speaking was wrong since I had been taught in school that double negatives were not correct. While I don't think I was intentionally judgmental of speakers who used African American English, I think I subconsciously held assumptions that they were uneducated or careless in their speaking since their way of speaking was different from the way I was taught to speak. This class has helped me to realize that African American English is actually governed by a lot of rules, and there is no inherent reason why the rules of Standard English should trump the rules of non-standard varieties.

5) Student 27 explains that learning about the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized varieties was eye-opening: I believe that my attitude towards non-standard varieties has changed greatly over the course. Now that I see language patterns and rules pertaining to various varieties, I am able to understand why it is not a lack of trying. I have always been very accepting of non-standard variety language patterns; however, I did not realize how [consistent and legitimate] these varieties are. Learning about the AAE and IE rules and language patterns reiterates the reasoning behind the differences, and I see nothing wrong

with that. Who is to say that we are to speak one way and one way only? For example, Kubota and Ward (2000) stated that "students need to prepare themselves for a more linguistically diverse environment" (p. 80). I think that this is exactly what this class is doing for us as individuals.

6) Student 16 shares her previous perception of non-standardized varieties as unimportant varieties: My attitude towards non-standard varieties of English has definitely changed over the course as I have looked more in depth at the linguistic analyses of them. In high school I began to learn the rules that compose much of the Spanish language, but never considered the rules to be so extensive for other varieties of English as well. I began the course at a place where I was open to diversity and other languages, but had not yet fully considered variations, such as AAE and IE, to be their own languages. When a friend would say something such as, "'Don't no game last all night long", I would zone out with the perception that their message was not important or thoughtful. After linguistic analysis of AAE I found that sometimes this was used as a means of emphasis, forcing me to reconsider my perception (Green, 2002, p. 78). The concrete evidence and rules that our readings provide help me to make sense of why variations like these are used. I have now begun to train my brain to consider differences, how and why my friend or the speaker is using the language variation, rather than deeming it wrong.

As these responses demonstrate, once these students learned the systematic grammatical structure of these varieties of English, they realized that dialects are equal to standardized English and are not substandard varieties. Prior to this course, perceptions of many students on nonstandardized varieties and their speakers were different: “unimportant” varieties, “not really a type of English”, “English with mistakes,” “uneducated and careless speakers,” “lazy speakers”, and other similar notions. However, when my students learned that variation is natural and that to speak a language means to speak a certain dialect (or dialects) of that language, they expressed their appreciation and respect for language variation. In their written assignments throughout the course, each student shared at least a couple of examples of their newly acquired linguistic knowledge as proof of their understanding of the varieties we studied, a study which led these students to reconsideration of their earlier perceptions of them.

Along with responses that indicated a previously negative perception of nonstandardized varieties, there were a few students who wrote that their attitudes were never negative to language variation and two students who did not comment on their perceptions at all. What is interesting to note is that all students emphasized the newly acquired linguistic knowledge learned during the course and how this knowledge is very useful either professionally or personally (or both). Here are some responses from questionnaire 2:

1) Student 2 wrote that she never perceived one variety to be better that another: I don't think my attitude has changed in the fact that I had never thought my variety of English was better than anyone else's, but I now have new knowledge about the forms of English. Knowing that different types of English have different rules is important for being an open-minded person. If something may sound wrong to me, it might sound right to someone else based on the rules they have learned. As a future educator, it is important to have an open mind and understand the rules that govern different types of English. Knowing that different students may grow up with different rules is important because I will be teaching my students academic English. This will help me explain new rules to my students and how best to convey them.

2) Student 12 also writes that he never had negative attitudes towards non-standardized varieties: My attitude has simply broadened. I have never been the type to say that one specific way of doing something (speaking, acting, listening, etc.) is better or more valued than the other. Some of my misconceptions were cleared and I gained more insight to what the actual varieties are and what rules govern each variety.

3) Student 23 emphasizes how the course helped her to learn some AAE lexical entries: I do not believe that my attitude towards non-standard varieties of English have changed over the course. I say this because I came into the course understanding that non-standard varieties are valid and important, due to the fact that I work with a lot of students who speak African American English. I never thought less of them in anyway, because I had a very simple understanding of the fact that they spoke another variety. This course has most certainly helped me gain a better understanding of specific words or phrases. For example, I never knew that "the verb mash is used to mean press or apply light pressure to an object to achieve results" (Green, 2002, p.22). It is simple things like this that are important to understand about other varieties, because it just adds that much more understanding about various non-standard varieties.

4) Student 4 comments on the acquired linguistic knowledge of AAE and IE: In the beginning without these readings and or class discussions I was not really aware of all the non-standard varieties of English. I did know that people that lived in different parts of the United States had different dialects, but I was not aware of languages such as AAE and IE. Thus, after these class discussions and readings I have learned that these

languages have many similarities and a few differences than [standard English] that has been instilled in me since first grade, which was very interesting to discover.

5) Student 7 also expresses her appreciation of learning the linguistic structure of AAE and IE: Coming into this course I was familiar with African American English, and I had been placed in a clinical classroom where many of the students spoke this variety. However, after learning more about the phonological and grammatical differences, I am able to appreciate this language variety even more. In regards to Indian English, I have been surrounded by that my whole life as there is a large population of Indian Americans in my home town. But, I never really paid attention to how it was structurally made up so it has been very interesting to learn more about the specific differences.

Overall, data analysis demonstrated that my students did not have a negative attitude towards language variation by the end of the course, which, given their explanations, perhaps is attributed to learning about the linguistic structure of nonstandardized varieties and about standard language ideology and linguistic injustice issues. It is important to note that throughout the course students commented on all levels of analysis within linguistics, that is, phonetics, phonology, semantics, morphology, syntactics, and pragmatics. The acquisition of linguistic knowledge also gave my students confidence that they would be able to successfully attend to their future students' linguistic and cultural differences.

Another interesting finding of my research is a connection my students made between linguistics, language variation, and education; that is, my students wrote about the importance of linguistic knowledge of dialects in their future teaching. In fact, a vast majority of students referred to it in reflection 5 after we discussed teaching strategies on how to address the linguistic and cultural needs of speakers of nonstandardized varieties. Here are a few examples of students' responses:

1) Student 11 wrote about the importance of understanding differences in pronunciation in dialects: One of the most thought-provoking parts of *Understanding English Language Variation*[45] was the idea that children who have grown up speaking African American

[45] *Understanding English Language Variation* is the title of the book by Anne H. Charity Hudley and Christine Mallinson.

English might struggle with spelling. While it's common for teachers to tell students to simply sound out a word to figure out how it is spelled, this doesn't work for speakers of African American English because there are dramatic differences between pronunciation of sounds in African American English and Standard English (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p.89). For example, spelling the word *their* "might be confusing for African American English-speaking students who pronounce the *th* sound as a *d* sound, because they may wonder why the first sound of the word that they pronounce as 'deir' is not spelled with a *d*, as it sounds to them, but rather with a *th*" (Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p.86). As a child, I was always told to sound out words, and as a speaker of Standard English, that was a successful strategy for me. If I hadn't read this article, I may not have ever realized that that strategy may not work for all of my students. Understanding that differences in dialect affect pronunciation is something that will be extremely important for me as a teacher if I want to help every student be successful.

2) Student 1 shared her plan to incorporate her future students' language varieties when teaching standardized English: The other day in class, I enjoyed a video of a teacher incorporating AAE into his lesson of teaching English. The students were challenged to think how the grammar would be changed to formal English in a fun game. I would have not thought about incorporating other English varieties into my lessons. Discussing and learning about different varieties in class has made me think about my future lesson plans. I want to incorporate the varieties my students speak into my lessons to help them learn standard English.

3) Student 2 also wrote about the importance of taking into account the nonstandardized varieties spoken by students in class when teaching these students standardized English: The last article we read was about pedagogy. I found this article really interesting because it was geared toward the classroom. This article talked about the importance of valuing other varieties of non- standard English. I think this is really important. While students do need to learn Standard- English to be successful now, they should not lose that sense of identity that a person has based on how they speak. I think it is important for teachers to understand that it is ok that students speak a different variety of English than standard English. Teachers should embrace it and use [a non-standardized variety] to help them learn Standard English. Using both varieties can give students a greater sense of English and understand it better than someone in a classroom where it is not valued.

4) Student 4 emphasized the importance of code-switching in the classroom: Code switching is a term that I recognize a lot from my clinicals in a bilingual classroom. Research shows "that code-switching works and details ways to address language varieties in the reading and writing classroom" (Wheeler, 2004, p. 178). This is important because I have seen instances where teachers do not even allow students to speak another language. By giving a student the opportunity to codeswitch, it helps them use all their tools they have in order to understand and reproduce academic concepts. From many

discussions in my previous classes, codeswitching should be encouraged, if needed, in the classroom.

5) Student 6 wrote about her future students' home languages and cultures: I have met individuals who disagree with my approach to education from a multicultural standpoint, arguing that students need to develop proficiency in standardized English immediately: a "sink-or-swim" approach. This approach stems from the belief held by many Americans that the goal of education is to eradicate foreign cultures and non-standard varieties [for] assimilating all non-white children into mainstream American society. From my perspective, this supposedly patriotic belief is the most un-American thing I can imagine. I agree with Hudley and Mallinson that students' home language and culture should be respected in the classroom and I would even go further to say that it should be esteemed and celebrated: this is how Spanish, Chicano, and any other non-standard varieties will be treated in my classroom.

These and many other responses of these future teachers concerning their intention to use their future students' dialects in teaching standardized English and attend to their students' linguistic and cultural needs appear to have been influenced by the linguistic study of language and English language variation. These future teachers' explanations of what teaching strategies they plan to use in order to address their future students' linguistic needs were one of the most exciting moments of teaching this course. For example, student 1 and student 4 refer to the use of code-switching in their classes. Specifically, student 1 talks about a fun game, like Jeopardy! in which students are asked to recognize linguistic differences between AAE and SE while earning points, and student 4 is referring to Wheeler's contrastive analysis of the linguistic features that students use in their writing. As for students 2 and 6, they emphasize the social aspects of language learning in terms of how important it is to take into account the direct connection between language and identity and language and culture and build on the language patterns and cultural knowledge of speakers of nonstandardized varieties in the acquisition of standardized English. Finally, other important strategies mentioned by my students are strategies that consider the sound patterns of nonstandardized varieties when teaching SE. As student 11 notices, such seemingly clear request, "Just sound it out," maybe very confusing for speakers from diverse

cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Truly, this particular strategy often does not align with the phonological system of nonstandardized varieties because of the phonological differences between SE and nonstandardized English varieties. These differences are one of the main reasons of academic failure of speakers of nonstandardized varieties.

To sum up, my students' reflections on various teaching strategies for working with linguistically and culturally diverse students indicate that my students intend to enact linguistically and culturally relevant pedagogy in their future classrooms. I chose to include some of the most interesting responses in my findings in order to demonstrate my students' uptake of the pedagogical approaches in multicultural education. I plan to share more on this interesting finding in my subsequent publications and presentations on educational linguistics. It is important to note that my students' responses also illustrate that the design of the course, that is, the sequence of readings, the choice of readings, and the written assignments, contributed to my students' developing understanding of language variation and the way they, as teachers, could teach both standardized and nonstandardized varieties in order to address issues of language variation and promote multicultural principles of language teaching.

Furthermore, my other goal was to teach these future teachers to think critically, to apply a critical lens to information being delivered to them, and to address issues of linguistic diversity through a critical multicultural approach in their teaching. I saw all of this in many of my students' responses in different written assignments:

1) Student 6 wrote about the need for her grandma to take a communicative responsibility when speaking with non-standardized speakers: [W]hile people pretend prejudice is about accent, it is partly racial and has more to do with how we think language "should" be spoken. My grandmother definitely subscribes to these ideas; she is very biased against Hispanic immigrants and often complains about why they just do not "learn English." I know her prejudice is more about her belief that her language style is superior and that she herself as a white woman is superior, and that she has a desire to hold Hispanic immigrants responsible for their communicative responsibility (she often discusses her

difficulty communicating with Spanish speakers during her time at the treasurer of Chicago's office). From my perspective, however, my grandmother has a responsibility to learn to communicate to diverse speakers as a member of a multicultural community such as Chicago.

2) Student 8 calls for reevaluating the traditional way of teaching English and for adapting a critical multicultural approach in teaching: lt is important that as future educators, we understand the importance of non-standard English in the lives of our students. It is important that we adapt the way we teach, especially the way we teach from textbooks because they contain the traditional approach to language, which does not celebrate the linguistic diversity of our students…We need to educate our students on nonstandard languages and celebrate their own nonstandard languages… As teachers we need to reexamine the way we teach and allow our students to have linguistic diversity. We need to make attempts to incorporate their language diversity in the classroom while still meeting the standard. In order to successfully succeed in teaching our students, we need to demonstrate to students the value of language differences.

3) Student 8 also calls for society to acknowledge linguistic discrimination and to re-evaluate language variation: There are ways to combat linguistic discrimination. Much like any other form of discrimination, it needs to be acknowledged. We, as a society of people, need to recognize and accept that we judge others based on their means of communication. It is silly, but it is real. To move forward we must open our eyes to reality of the situation. In "Language ideologies and the education of speakers of marginalized language varieties: Adopting a critical awareness approach", Jeff Siegel (2006) discusses linguistic discrimination and how it is a reflection of the ideologies that surround race in society today. He talks about how language discrimination did not just appear, but it is a representation of racism itself. "Why do such views persist? Some authors, such as Hill (2001), argue that negative attitudes towards AAE are not really about language per se, but rather a reflection of racist culture in the USA" (Siegel, 2006, p. 159). Once we acknowledge this to be true, we can begin to break the systems and the structures that hold these views. Once we acknowledge the problem, we can begin to be more inclusive and sensitive to other cultures and the people within them. We can begin to respect and honor the differences across people and dismantle the stereotypes. We can then educate our young people about the truth and give them hope for a brighter, anti-racist society in the future.

4) Student 6 also calls for reevaluation of how society perceives language diversity: If we know that language is such a huge part of who we are as humans, why do we tend to diminish or prioritize the use of one form of language over the other? Green writes "What do we gain or lose by characterizing AAE as being unique or substantially different from mainstream English?" (Green, 2002, pp. 222). I have the same question, but I also know the answer. By labeling other language varieties as "less than" we continue to perpetuate this notion of white superiority, or the idea that the only "correct" way to speak is by

> using language of wider communication. The white supremacist ideology is continued through this, by dehumanizing people that speak other language varieties. We see the effects of this in other language varieties such as Aboriginal languages… I think that we, as a people, should re-evaluate our thoughts and feelings about language diversity because I think they may hurt more than help.

As these responses demonstrate, students feel strongly about issues of linguistic diversity, a point I made earlier in my findings, and call for the re-evaluation of stigmatized varieties of English and their speakers. For example, student 6 calls her grandmother, a former employee at the Office of the City Treasurer of Chicago, to take a communicative responsibility in her communications with speakers of nonstandardized Englishes, including Hispanic immigrants. Student 6 criticizes her grandmother, not the Hispanic immigrants, for problems in cross-cultural communication as it is the student's grandmother whose racial and linguistic biases, as this student explains, stand in the way of successful communication. As for the other three responses, I was excited to read my students' call for society to re-evaluate its perception of language variation and for schools to critically re-examine the traditional way of teaching English today. My students' critical perspectives towards current practices of teaching language arts in schools and in society indicated to me that my students adopted the tenets of the critical multicultural pedagogy I developed and hopefully will enact it in their future teaching.

I should say that I was highly encouraged by the new understanding about and appreciation for nonstandardized varieties by all of my students, their critical re-evaluation of the educational system of the U.S., their strong criticism of society's linguistic and cultural values, and finally, their planning to enact critical multicultural teaching strategies in their future teaching. As for the latter, my students both wrote in their reflections and shared in class discussions that their future students' linguistic knowledge of their dialects or their first language is a critical resource for learning standardized English, and this resource should be actively used

in the classroom. For example, all students emphasized the importance of allowing K-12 students to code-switch in certain classroom assignments for the purpose of learning how the structure and use of their students' nonstandardized English language varieties compare to the structure and use of standardized English, for matters of style in writing (for example, when giving voice to literary characters), or for the purpose of expressing one's identity.

Moreover, my students, in their linguistic investigation of nonstandardized varieties, brought up the importance of fair assessment of linguistically and culturally diverse students. While some students emphasized discriminatory assessment practices against such students, which are still persistent today, others wrote their developing views on how to assess these students in a linguistically appropriate way. Here are some of my students' excerpts on this important matter:

1) Student 12, in reflection 5, wrote about discriminatory assessment practices in schools: This is true in the speaking and writing assessments that we give students in schools today. When we assess students in reading, writing, oral language, and even listening, we assess them based upon their ability to conform to the standard. In the case of American schools, this would be LWC. In situations where students are tested in such forms, many students especially Black or Latinx students have to become bilingual to some degree. Since this is not the primary linguistic pattern of those particular groups, they must adapt and attempt to learn an entirely different linguistic system in order to be credited as successful. This is something that their white classmates will never have to experience because they will come from backgrounds where they are familiar with or have at least heard this particular variety of English. This immediately puts students of color at a disadvantage because they must navigate a system or pattern that was not designed for them to be successful. In this respect, many school systems and policies are created so that white children excel, and black and brown children will either fall below the margin or will have to work three times as hard to attain achievement. Schools and education systems contribute to the notion of white supremacy through linguistic discrimination. In majority of American schools, dialects of AAE are explicitly taught to be uneducated speech or "slang".

2) Student 28, in reflection 3, writes about how she will use her awareness of the differences in pronunciation between a nonstandardized variety and a standardized variety in assessment practices: Being aware of the difference in pronunciation can help me when assessing students work because I can see these patterns and understand why errors may be made in their use of standard English in their work. I

agree with the text that we should refer to the variety of pronunciations as "different" rather than "correct" or "incorrect." Just like I would teach an ESL student to value their native language, I want my AAE students to value their as well, it is part of their culture and heritage.

3) Student 13, in reflection 5, asserts that students should not be penalized for using their English variety in writing if it is journal writing or a similar type of writing: Unless a teacher is solely grading a writing sample for the correct use of Standard English, the students should not be penalized at all for using their own variety. The content may be correct in which they are asked to write, but their variety may be different than the Standard. Therefore, the student should only be graded on the content of their writing rather than how well they can adhere to the rules and patterns of Standard English.

As can be seen, my students both discussed the unfair standardized assessment practices that apply to students of color and reflected on their future assessment practices in terms of how they can provide linguistically principles assessment practices. While student 12, a speaker of both AAE and SE, rightly asserts that students of color have to work three times as hard in order to succeed in school simply because they have to acquire an entirely different linguistic system, student 28 writes about the importance of awareness of the sound patterns in the nonstandardized variety a student speaks when assessing this student. As for student 13, she brings up an important issue of not penalizing students for their use of nonstandardized varieties in such writing assignments that are primarily focused on the content. Indeed, allowing students to express themselves in such assignments that are not focused on the conventions of SE has proven to help students express their thoughts and ideas better, as well as develop their writing skills.

It is important to note that along with my students' reflections on how they can apply their newly acquired linguistic knowledge with their future assessment practices, they also brought up the issue of discriminatory assessment practices in our class discussions and inquired how democratized assessment can be achieved. Truly, considering that K-12 school curriculum

is predominately standard-based, my students were curious about assessment strategies that take into account the linguistic and cultural differences that students of color bring with them. My students' connection of the linguistically informed teaching strategies they learned in class with their future assessment practices pointed to the importance of the latter as assessment is an inseparable part of the learning process and goes hand-in-hand with the curriculum. Therefore, in my future introductory linguistics courses, I plan to include the topic of linguistically sound assessment as it is an inseparable part of critical multicultural education.

Finally, I'd like to attend to one more interesting theme that emerged during my data analysis. While the outcomes of the course indicate that all of my students learned that from a linguistic point of view, none of the varieties of English language is inherently "better" than any other variety, the students' opinion on whether standardized English and nonstandardized Englishes are equal was divided. While a good majority of students responded positively to the question whether nonstandardized varieties should be recognized as equal to SE (the question was posited in questionnaire 2), two students responded negatively, and a few students believed that standardized English should continue to serve as a common ground variety, without undervaluing nonstandardized Englishes though. Here are the negative responses to the following question: Do you think that nonstandardized English language varieties should be recognized as equal to standardized English?

1) Student 1: I do not think non-standard English language varieties should be used as equal to standard English varieties. Varieties are specific depending where they are from. If someone else is not from the place they are currently staying, they are going to have a hard time learning and understanding the local variety of English. If I were to try to talk in AEE or IE, I would struggle because the rules and patterns of those varieties are different than what I grew up with. I believe that having more than one standard would result in each standard being its own type of language.

2) Student 27: I do not believe that non-standard English language varieties should be recognized as equal to standard English. Although, I do feel AAE and IE should be

recognized as a language with less negative stigma around them, this does not make them the same as standard English. They are all their own rule-governed languages and while they have some similar characteristics with one another, this does not make them equal because standard English is still the main variety used in schools, government, and media giving it a different status and power. Therefore not equal to the non-standard varieties.

As these responses demonstrate, student 1 is concerned about unintelligibility if there is more than one standard of English. She seems to advocate for standardized English to serve as the only standard for the ease of communication. Even though student 1 wrote in her other written responses about her recognition of these Englishes having set patterns, she expressed the concern of having more than one standard as inconvenient and confusing. Regardless of the fact that different dialects of English (or of another language) are generally mutually intelligible, this student did not think that speakers of different English dialects would understand each other well. As for student 27, she expressed a similar idea in terms of that one variety should be used as a superior variety in society. She further explains that while nonstandardized varieties are equally rule-bound and should not be stigmatized, the social status of SE should remain higher.

A standpoint, similar to that of student 27, was expressed by a few students in the classroom, except that these students insist that SE and nonstandardized Englishes should be considered equal. The following students wrote that there should be a common ground variety of English, standardized English. Here are some of these students' answers:

1) Student 7: I believe that non-standard English varieties should be recognized as equal to standard English. Even though standard English has been used as a base language for other varieties, it is still not the one and only language that should be accepted in society. I think that there should be equal recognition of different language varieties, and I don't think that there one should be deemed superior to the others. However, I do think that there needs to be a basis, or a standard language when it comes to global affairs. Allowing there to be a common ground makes communication much easier for all that are involved.

- Student 11: I think that non-standard varieties of English should be treated as equal to standard English because there is no inherent reason that standard English is correct and the other varieties are lesser. It's hard to imagine every variety of English being

recognized as equal with all of the institutionalized racism and implicit bias of privileged groups within our country, but I think that, especially within speech, speakers of all varieties of English should be treated with respect. To me, it makes sense that standard English is used within professional and educational writing since it establishes a standard of correctness that can be evaluated consistently by all schools and organizations. It would be difficult to evaluate writing in a fair and consistent way if every dialect was accepted, so in my opinion, standard English is still preferable within this type of setting.

- Student 15: I do not believe that one variety of a language should be seen as lesser than another variety of the same language. However, I do think there should be some emphasis on standard English being the "basis" for all these language varieties. If one language is not seen just a little higher than the others, I think teaching English in the schools would be hard. As a future educator, I am aware that I will be teaching standard English to my students because that is the "professional" or higher variety of English. It would be very difficult for students if they were learning different English varieties in the school. Just because I think standard English should be seen as the basis variety for English, does not necessarily mean that the other varieties are not equal.

These students emphasize that while nonstandardized varieties should not be seen as “less than;” having “a base variety” is necessary in schools and elsewhere. While student 7 reasoned that having a common variety will ease communication, especially in international affairs, student 11 expressed her concerns about the difficulty of fair assessment of English language varieties in schools, and student 15 was concerned about the difficulties K-12 students will likely encounter if they learn different English language varieties. Students 11 and 15 also seem to contradict themselves: student 11 refers to SE as a standard of correctness, perhaps implying that SE is the norm, and student 15 asserts that SE should be viewed as “a little higher” of a variety. These answers demonstrated that the social status of SE is truly hard to challenge, and that standard language ideology is something that even professionals are often trapped into, including myself. Yet, the fact that these students recognized that all English language varieties are linguistically equal to SE was a significant achievement of the course; moreover, in their other written responses, these students indicated that they were planning to use their future students’ linguistic knowledge of nonstandardized English language varieties in the classroom when teaching SE.

As for the question of linguistic unintelligibility, while only a few students expressed a concern about nonstandardized varieties leading to a communicative breakdown, I believe that including more readings and having more discussions on this topic in my future teaching will help to address assumptions about communicative clarity. For example, in addition to an insightful article on communicative responsibility we discussed in class, "Exploring Linguistic Diversity through World Englishes" by Ryuko Kubota and Lori Ward (2000), I am planning to add chapter 5 (or excerpts from this chapter), "Linguistic Variation and Standards," from the book by Sandra Lee McKay and Wendy D. Bokhosrt-Heng (2008) *International English in Its Sociolinguistic Contexts: Towards a Socially Sensitive EIL Pedagogy*, in my future teaching as I see this reading to be a good addition for the discussion of this topic. This chapter particularly explains such important issues as how the question of unintelligibility arose, what categories go into interaction and why intelligibility is only one part of interaction, and why the development of mutually unintelligible varieties of English is a highly unlikely prediction.

Summary of Findings

I will now summarize the findings of my research and will evaluate each of my research questions in the context of the data analysis provided in the Findings subsection. The first research question was focused on how my students' attitudes towards English language variation and AAE (as well as IE) changed over the course. As students' responses demonstrated, it was the scientific study of the main levels of analysis within linguistics and the linguistic structure of AAE and IE that was the reason of all of my students' recognition of the legitimacy and systematicity of nonstandardized varieties and development of the "more informed and pluralistic language attitudes" (Hercula, 2020, p. 14). Throughout the course, in their written responses and in class discussions, students articulated their newly acquired linguistic knowledge

and explained how this knowledge made them realize that variation is normal and has regular rules at each main linguistic level. In addition, the study of how language and culture are interconnected allowed my students to see that conversational norms may differ from variety to variety, which may bring a cross-cultural misunderstanding. The study of the rules of interaction was also very insightful for my students, future language arts teachers, as they learned that it is important to consider the conversational norms of a standardized dialect and of nonstandardized dialects when teaching. For example, these future teachers' introduction to AAE speech events helped some of them understand their elementary students who spoke AAE better during student teaching time (or clinical practice), which took place the same semester, in spring of 2017. I was excited to see how my students found immediate application of their knowledge of linguistics in student teaching.

Finally, the discussions of issues of linguistic variation, linguistic injustice, and prejudice allowed my students to see how the standardization process stigmatizes and devalues nonstandardized English varieties. My students were passionate about this topic, and many students shared examples of being mistreated based on the way they or their family, friends, or even their elementary school students during student teaching practice spoke or wrote. Some of my students also admitted having been linguistically prejudiced towards speakers of nonstandardized varieties prior to taking the linguistics course. However, after the scientific study of language and the study of standard English language ideologies, which perpetuate the language subordination process and white supremacy, these students changed their perceptions on language variation.

The second research question asked about the elements of linguistic knowledge that my students offered when explaining their changes in views towards language variation,

standardization, and notion of correctness and prestige. In their written responses and in class discussions, my students explained how the study of rules, patterns, and restrictions at the phonological, syntactical, morphological, lexical, and pragmatic levels of analysis within linguistics prove that AAE (and IE) have regular patterns. The sequential study of these levels allowed my students to provide examples related to each level of linguistic analysis in their responses and compare the linguistic structure of AAE with the linguistic structure of standardized English. As I mentioned earlier, my students found this linguistic knowledge especially beneficial for their future teaching as students gained invaluable insights on how to evaluate their future elementary students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and how to attend to these students' linguistic (and cultural) needs.

Thus, by the end of the course, all students who acknowledged to have negative perceptions towards language variation at the beginning of the course indicated that they changed them to positive ones. This outcome seems to confirm that public's basic misperceptions about language variation come from lack of education on the logic and linguistic organization of nonstandardized varieties, which in turn allows the dominant bloc institutions to promote and maintain standard language ideology and devalue nonstandardized varieties. After my students read about and discussed the standardization process and language subordination process, they came to realize that standard language is an abstracted and idealized variety, which is linguistically equal to nonstandardized ones. This understanding is crucial for language arts teachers as my students explained that they would be careful not to devalue nonstandardized varieties of their future elementary and early childhood education students and will use multicultural education teaching strategies when teaching standardized English.

As for the third question, it was about whether the course design was effective in terms of contributing to students' change of attitudes towards language variation. The student uptake suggests to me that the sequence of readings and written assignments seemed largely to have been effective in achieving the course goals. Thus, a general overview of what language variation is at the beginning of the course set a good start for the study of language variation throughout the course. The next step, the study of the main levels of analysis within linguistics, let my students compare how the use and structure of standardized English compares to the use and structure of nonstandardized Englishes. The subsequent topics, such as linguistic injustice and standard language ideologies, further allowed my students to examine how standard language myth is maintained and how standardization process is established, as well as examine their own language ideologies and beliefs about notions of correctness and prestige.

The final focus, teaching strategies on how to address the linguistic and cultural needs of speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties, allowed my students to see how they can connect all they had studied throughout the course with their teaching. My students expressed appreciation of the shared teaching strategies and were determined to promote a critical multicultural approach in teaching standardized English. Along with the teaching strategies, my students also wrote their critique on current assessment practices in language arts classrooms and further inquired about how to provide a linguistically informed assessment, the one that provides a valid and fair evaluation of students' skills or proficiency levels in the content area by considering their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. My students' inquiry about linguistically informed assessment led me to research on K-12 language arts teachers' standard-based assessment practices, which I will share in my next chapter.

CHAPTER V: K-12 LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS' STANDARD-BASED ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Introduction

As I indicated in my earlier chapters, I conducted additional research on K-12 language arts teachers' assessment practices in the U.S. based upon my students' written reflections and classroom discussions about linguistically informed assessment in the American public school system. Prior to describing this research and its findings, I'd like to first provide an overview of the history of standardized testing in the U.S. and its main currents, as well as the negative effects of standardized testing practices on student academic achievement and beyond. Further in this chapter, I will describe my research methodology, findings, and summary of my findings.

The History of Standardized Testing in the U.S.

Standard-based assessment and accountability have been at the core of the U.S. educational system for decades, which are used for the evaluation of what students have learned and what they can learn. In fact, standardized-based assessment was introduced at the end of the 19th century, after the Civil War period, when state and municipal policy leaders started to seek control over schools, and standardized tests provided an opportunity to "mak[e] centralized governance feasible" (Schneider, 2017, p. 25). Since then, standardized assessments have continued to increase across the nation, and by the 1950s, testing had become an influential and powerful industry in the education system, which allowed policy leaders and legislators to measure schools from afar and expand their control over them through funding (Schneider, 2017, p. 32).

In the second half of the 20th century, policymakers demanded more transparency in teacher practices and more rigid standards-based accountability as frustration with an alleged ineffectiveness of American education had been growing. A report issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983, *A Nation At Risk*, shared that according to studies of international educational achievement conducted in the 1970s, American students were lagging in test scores with other industrialized nations: “on 19 academic tests American students were never first or second and, in comparison with other industrialized nations, were last seven times” (p. 16). This perceived crisis gave impetus to a standards and accountability movement, and mandated, statewide test-based accountability was strengthened with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act in 2002, which was signed into law by then President George W. Bush. The new law was based on an older law, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, and was in fact its updated model (Schneider, 2017, p. 40).

Known for its punitive features, NCLB was “the most sweeping federal intervention ever into education,” which required schools to conduct annual standardized tests in math and English in grades 3-8 and 1 year in high school (Schneider, 2017, p. 41). The expectation was that within 12 years, all students would meet their state’s proficient level of academic achievement (Schneider, 2017, p. 41). And while states would develop their own standards and define their level of proficiency, the new mandate required that all schools meet targets, “Adequate Yearly Progress.” Schools that did not meet targets would be sanctioned and even closed if a school failed to bring all students to a proficiency level on state reading and math tests five years in a row (Schneider, 2017, p. 41). As for schools that chose not to comply with NCLB, federal education funds to such schools were deferred.

To a great surprise of lawmakers, despite the massive scale of testing and the pressure that the new accountability law put on schools, achievement gaps persisted, and no state had succeeded in meeting levels of proficiency for all its students. In order to avoid a potential crisis, in late 2011, the U.S. Department of Education announced that it would start to free states from NCLB accountability requirements. Specifically, The U.S. Department of Education issued waivers that allowed states to report “test score growth, graduation rates, and the degree to which schools [close] achievement gaps” as factors that can be added to a state’s accountability structure (Schneider, 2017, p. 54). In return, however, it was required that all states adopt new standards for college readiness. The U.S. Department of Education strongly encouraged states to adopt Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which are the learning goals of what K-12 students should know in math and English language arts and be able to do at each grade level (Schneider, 2017, p. 43). The second requirement was teachers’ accountability in relation to their students’ standardized test scores; in other words, teachers were responsible for student academic achievement reflected in students’ test scores.

To explain more about the CCSS (2021), they were sponsored by the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and developed in 2009 and 2010 by “state leaders, including governors and state commissioners of education from 48 states, two territories and the District of Columbia,” with the help of teachers, educators, representatives of higher education, psychometricians and other experts (para. 1). Polikoff (2014) further explains that the new content standards were developed with an intension to eliminate the drawbacks of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards and assessments. Specifically, the differences in content in state standards and assessment led to differences in the rigor and specificity of state standards, with only a few states’ standards being academically rigorous,

while "most lack[ed] the content and clarity needed to provide a solid foundation for effective curriculum, assessment, and instruction" (Carmichael et al., 2010, p. 21).

Thus, the developers of the CCSS presented coherent, higher quality standards in order to address divergent state policies, the variability in content expectations, and the poor quality of certain state standards and assessments under NCLB. These standards consist of The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that "form the backbone of the ELA/literacy standards by articulating core knowledge and skills, [and] grade-specific standards [that] provide additional specificity" in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language ("English Language Arts Standards," n.d., para. 3). Furthermore, to answer the content messages of the CCSS, new assessments were developed (Polikoff, 2014, p. 1). Two multi-state consortia, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), received grants in 2009 from the U.S. Department of Education through Race to the Top (RttT) program[46] in order to design assessments that accurately measure student mastery of the CCSS (Polikoff, 2014, p. 5).

As Polikoff (2014) further explains, coherence of standards and assessments was one of the main goals of standard-based reform (p. 9). In this line, proponents of the SBAC and PARCC assert that these two assessments comprehensively evaluate and assess students' English language competency and inform educators on students' academic progress "toward the higher-order thinking skills —such as critical thinking, communicating effectively, and problem solving—that the standards emphasized" (Jochim & McGuinn, 2016, para. 7). Both assessments offer combined diagnostic, formative and summative assessments for grades 3-8 and in high

[46] Race to The Top Program was a 4.35 billion competitive grant the U.S. Department of Education introduced in 2009 by President Barack Obama to motivate states to adopt the federal government's educational reforms and their policies, that is, CCSS and Common Core aligned assessments (Mattson, 2011, p. 1).

school. As for the latter, SBAC assessment is administered only in 11th grade out of high school grades, and PARCC can be administered through grade 11.

Furthermore, with regard to the SBAC assessment, it consists of three components. The first one, the interim assessment, is an optional periodic test for monitoring student progress throughout the school year so that teachers could adjust their teaching based on or in response to student needs ("Smarter Balance," n.d.). This first component, the interim assessment, and the second component, a year-end summative assessment, are made up of computer adaptive tests, which means that they adapt to an examinee's level of ability and measure a student's ability against their previous performance, as well as their ability to apply learned concepts to tasks of higher difficulty. Finally, the third component, Tools for Teachers, is a set of online tools and resources for formative assessment that has been developed to help teachers with their everyday assessment activities ("Smarter Balance," n.d.). The three integrative parts of the SBAC assessment have been developed to complement each other and provide teachers with formative assessment resources and instructional strategies, and with the tools that help enact an ongoing assessment of students throughout the year, as well as at the end of the year.

Similar to SBAC's interim assessment, PARCC offers optional tests: a diagnostic test at the beginning of the year, which allows teachers to evaluate student level of knowledge from the start of the school year; and a mid-year performance-based test that is focused on "hard-to-measure standards" and that predicts student performance on the end-of-the-year assessment (it is up to states whether to include the results of this test as part of a summative component) (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 192). As for the summative assessments, they are composed of Performance-Based Assessment (PBA), which takes place when 75% of the school year has been completed and is focused on writing effectively when analyzing texts; and End-of-Year

Assessment (EYA), which is focused on reading comprehension and is administered after 90% of the school year has been completed (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 192). It is important to note that unlike the SBAC's computer-adaptive summative assessments, the PARCC summative assessments are fixed-form tests, which means that students are tested at a constant skill level (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 194). The final component of the PARCC test is speaking and listening assessment, which all students are required to take; however, the results are not part of the summative score (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 192). As for the SBAC test, reading, writing, and listening assessment scores are included in the summative score.

Overall, proponents of the PARCC and SBAC systems contend that unlike the older forms of standardized tests that often required rote memorization and relied primarily on multiple-choice questions, the new assessments offer numerous benefits to students in terms of fostering deep learning, requiring students to apply their critical thinking skills to higher order thinking contexts, and overall, preparing students toward success in college (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 191). They further explain that PARCC and SBAC have well-balanced assessment systems, use "advanced computer technology, adhere to an evidence-based design principle and emphasi[ze] educational equity" (Zhang & Kang, 2016, p. 190). In other words, these two tests are supposedly comprehensive and accurately assess a student's academic literacy and deep learning capacity.

Yet, this seemingly superior assessment systems did not bring great success for several reasons. There has been a lot of criticism of these assessments by many educators, teachers, writing researchers, among others. One of the main reasons why these standardized assessments failed was that the "next-generation" tests require long hours, which is tiring for students and takes a lot of hours out of a school day, just to name a few negative effects. Indeed, as of 2014,

PARCC used to be 8 to 11 hours long depending on the grade, while SBAC still requires 7 to 8 ½ to complete a test (Gewertz, 2014). And even though the PARCC consortium shortened their 10- to 11- hour test assessment by 90 minutes since 2015-2016 school year, the test is still quite long (Gewertz, 2015). As a result, the opposition to the tests was growing as school officials, teacher unions, and parents criticized the long hours.

Another reason why state participation in assessments declined was the mentioned above education innovation that came along with the Common Core assessments: new teacher-performance evaluation systems. In fact, accountability policies were one of the foci of Race to the Top program, and states that adopted the new system of teacher and principal evaluations would gain higher scores and earn funding. Thus, teachers' evaluations by their students' test scores, called value-added measurement, or VAM, were a driving factor for "teachers' compensation, tenure, bonuses, and other rewards and sanctions" (Ravitch, 2019, p. 192). However, such punitive approach to enhance student learning exerted a lot of pressure on teachers, as well as brought frustration and dissatisfaction with the work of teaching. Ravitch (2019) further explains the flaws of such a punitive system:

> It is simply wrong to devise a measure of teacher quality based on standardized tests. The tests are not yardsticks. They are not scientific instruments. They are social constructions, and quite apart from how contingent their results are on the social and economic background of the students being tested, they are also subject to human error, sampling error, random error, and other errors. It is true that the cleanliness of restaurants can be given a letter grade (another of Bloomberg's test-oriented innovations in New York City), and agribusiness can be measured by crop yields, and corporations can be measured by their profits. But to apply a letter grade or a numerical ranking to a

> professional is to radically misunderstand the complex set of qualities that make someone good at what they do. It is an effort by economists and statisticians to quantify activities that are at heart matters of judgement, not productivity. Professionals must be judged by other professionals, by their peers. Nowhere is this more true than among educators, whose success at teaching character, wisdom, and judgement cannot be measured by standardized tests. (p. 93)

Thus, Ravitch reminds her audience that student scores are the result of many variables, not solely the result of a teacher's input. The National Academy of Education and the American Educational Research Association support Ravitch's assertion and further explain that "students with disabilities, English language learners, and low-performing students" usually score lower on tests than students from wealthy families and well-funded schools, which does not reflect a teacher's competence, but rather speaks of a student's background (as cited in Ravitch, 2019, p. 92). Thus, it is often the case that students who need help the most not only have their needs unmet, but also are unfairly penalized by the standardized education system.

Hudley and Mallinson (2011) further explain the main reason why there is a consistent difference in scores and educational achievement for students who speak nonstandardized English: it is "language-related issues rooted in test design and test preparation" (p. 110). As high stakes standardized tests assume a homogeneous group of test takers, such tests assess the language of students who speak nonstandardized varieties with a standardized English language norm. In other words, as standardized tests usually use norms taken from the standardized English language dialect, students whose first dialect is not standardized English are often unfairly assessed as dialect differences are often not taken into account by test developers (Wolfram & Shilling-Estes, 2006, p. 279). And even though educational publishers and large-

scale test developers screen tests for potential cultural and linguistic bias, differences in language background serve as one of the major factors in disparities in academic performance between speakers of nonstandardized and standardized varieties of English (Banks & Banks, 2016, p. 296; Hudley & Mallinson, 2011, p. 110).

Indeed, as reflected in the "Nation's Report Card," consistent disparities of achievement have been evident in both reading and writing. That is, in addition to the still persistent achievement gap in reading between eighth grade Black and White students described in chapter 1, the national results on the writing performance demonstrate that eighth- and 12-grade African Americans and Hispanics scored the lowest in comparison with other ethnic minority groups, while Asian/Pacific Americans and White Americans scored the highest in 2011 (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2011). In this connection, the academic underachievement of historically underrepresented groups undoubtedly indicate that standardized tests are often biased towards the dominant group's language and culture. One elementary bilingual teacher emphasized the racial biases of standard-based assessment:

> We're asked to do this standardized testing, which is racist, it's based on a system of racism. It's normed to certain language group, and it's basically biased against a whole group of other language learners. And we're asked to use it and advocate for a system we don't believe in. (Sleeter & Carmona, 2017, p. 66).

Hood (1998) further shows that many teachers who work in historically underserved communities observed that "results of standardized achievement tests contradicted their first-hand classroom observations and assessments of students of color [which] revealed higher levels of student performance on targeted learning objectives" (as cited in Sleeter & Carmona, 2017, p. 65). In this regard, it seems that standardized tests neither adequately measure nor facilitate

student achievement. The following question is then if standardized tests measure what they claim they measure? In other words, are standardized tests valid?

Truly, if standardized tests measure different things for different groups of students, the validity of such tests is questionable. For speakers of standardized English, standards-based tests often measure things that students bring to school from home—"the knowledge of language that they acquired unconsciously" (Wolfram et al., 2007, p. 90). As for speakers of nonstandardized varieties, standardized tests may assess a level of achievement—the ability to use standardized English norms, norms of an external language for them, which they learned in the classroom, not at home (Wolfram & Shilling-Estes, 2006, p. 300). The assumption is then that speakers of standardized English and speakers of nonstandardized varieties "start from the same linguistic baseline," which is not true (Wolfram & Shilling-Estes, 2006, p. 300). In this regard, standardized tests that often emphasize the standard-nonstandard distinction are biased and invalid since they do not actually measure what they claim to measure.

Besides being biased, standardized tests have also negatively affected teaching quality. Singer (2016), a public middle school teacher, further explains that teachers tend to selectively teach chunks of knowledge, and by doing so, teachers teach to the test and test-taking tricks, but not a subject per se. Popham (2001) calls this teaching to the test "item teaching," which is focusing instruction on items similar to test items (p. 16). While such selective teaching helps to boost test scores, it impedes "real, authentic learning" because students often do not learn real skills, for example, writing or reading skills (Singer, 2016, "It Makes the Tests" section). They learn to take *a writing or reading test* instead, which is not measuring academic readiness for college. Hence, again, standardized tests do not prove to be valid as they do not measure what they claim to measure. Instead, they measure how well a student is prepared for the test, which is

often due to various factors. In addition to a student's linguistic and cultural background factor, Singer (2016), also mentions income as a decisive factor. As Singer (2016) further states, wealthier families often enroll their children in test-prep courses or hire private tutors. As can be seen, a student's likelihood to succeed in taking a standardized test is also often determined by student's socioeconomic status.

That said, I agree with Singer's (2016) statement that teaching to the test is an educational malpractice. It not only promotes "item teaching," but also narrows the curriculum (Singer, 2016). In fact, the emphasis on high-stakes assessments, including PARCC and SBAC, is the direct result why schools continue to shift their focus away from untested subjects, such as arts, music, theater, social studies, among others. As one of the elementary teachers wrote in her questionnaire on K-12 assessment practices in a language arts classroom: "There is not enough time to get in everything that is required. We don't have recess anymore. We don't have art anymore." Another example is also my daughter's experience in one of the public middle schools in 2018-2020. Her favorite subject, art, was offered only once in 2 weeks throughout her middle school years. In addition, there was no foreign language subject in grades 6 and 7. Singer (2016) concludes, that such little attention to non-tested subjects contributes to "far less well-rounded students" ("It Dumbs Down" section) and damages the quality of education overall.

Finally, along with dumbing down education, conducting standardized tests is very expensive. According to American University's School of Education (2018), "administering the entire testing system" costs states approximately 1.7 billion dollars a year ("The Cost of Standardized Test" section). Similarly, PARCC and SBAC appeared to be more expensive than what some states were spending at the time. As Gewertz (2013) states, PARCC's summative tests in language arts and math were estimated at 29.95 dollars per student, while SBAC's

summative tests cost 22.50 dollars, and its summative, interim, and formative tests (the "complete system") cost 27.30 dollars per student. As Ravitch (2019) further clarifies, "[t]he federal government, states, and school districts have spent billions of dollars to phase in the standards, to prepare students to take the tests and to buy the technology needed to administer them online" (p. 313). As a result, many state school districts struggled financially to provide proper implementation of "better" standards and assessments. Along with it, teachers needed more time for professional development, for the alignment of the local curriculum and instruction with the new standards, and for preparation of their students for the new assessments (Murphy & Torff, 2014, p. 19).

To sum it up, the implementation challenges, increased testing time, the one-size-fits-all approach of the standardized tests, the forced necessity of teaching to the test, financial struggles on the part of schools, lack of proper teacher professional development, and the federal government overreach were some of the main reasons why state participation in the consortia has been declining. Specifically, the number of states that signed up to one or both assessments "dropped from 45 in 2011 to 20 in 2016" (Jochim & McGuinn, 2016, para. 5). In 2019, only 15 states and the District of Columbia continued with the federally funded assessments, which is 1/3 of the states (Gewertz, 2019). Domaleski (2019) further points out that most states run SBAC, while PARCC is administered by only a few states who "use the former PARCC 'flagship' form, or leverage PARCC content now managed by New Meridian[47] with alternative blueprint options" ("Setbacks" section). It is important to note that along with the changes in the assessment system, the Common Core standards have also been dropped by the majority of states

[47] New Meridian Corporation is an assessment design and development organization.

and new state standards have been adopted (Domaleski, 2019). Domaleski (2019) notices that many state standards, however, are very similar to the CCSS.

Overall, the shifts in state assessments (and standards) indicate that changes have been taking place in the testing landscape of K-12 education. The 32 states that dropped SBAC or PARCC either purchased or created their own assessments, and three states administer hybrid tests, meaning they mix their own questions with PARCC or SBAC questions (Gewertz, 2019). Such shifts in assessment practices towards non-consortium state assessments have brought positive changes: states have demonstrated a burgeoning interest in developing assessments that "better reflect and support the daily work of students and teachers in classrooms" (Olsen, 2019, p. 1). To be more precise, such customized assessment systems would allow for "faster turnaround of test results, as well as greater use of end-of-unit tests, performance-based tasks that ask students to apply what they know and can do, and tests that are more closely linked to the curriculum" (Olsen, 2019, p. 1). Finally, individualized state assessments would let teachers better monitor student progress and adjust instruction according to student educational needs.

At the same time, the total number of states that the U.S. Department of Education (2019) allows to apply for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA) is currently seven, which is less than 5% out of the 50 U.S. states. This innovative assessment system, the IADA, was designed to encourage the development of individualized state assessments that are more relevant to the classroom. To participate, state educational agencies' (SEA) applications should answer the program's requirements, meaning that SEA should demonstrate that "their innovative assessments are developed in collaboration with local stakeholders, aligned to challenging state academic standards and accessible to all students through use of principles of universal design for learning, among other requirements" (The U.S. Department of Education,

2019). Once the applications are approved, states can pilot their new assessments. So far, only Georgia, Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Massachusetts have joined this federal innovative assessment pilot program (Marion & Evans, 2021).

In addition to the increased individual state content standards and assessments, it is also important to mention The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which was signed by President Barack Obama in December 2015 and which was a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This act replaced the NCLB act and mandated new forms of flexibility in states' accountability structures. Besides student test scores, such academic factors as "test score growth or graduation rates" were included in the accountability systems (Schneider, 2017, p. 55). Moreover, the ESSA mandated one factor to be determined by states, whether it is an academic or nonacademic achievement (Schneider, 2017, p. 55). In this regard, student participation and engagement or even school environment could be considered as measures of success.

Yet, despite the positive changes with more flexibility in relation to testing, all students in grades 3-8, and then once in high school, are required to take accountability tests (The U.S. Department of Education, 2019). For this reason, at the high school level, about half of the states have embraced commercial college-admissions exams, such as ACT or SAT, as their high school accountability tests, even though they often do not quite align with state standards (Olsen, 2019, p. 2). Such misalignment of ACT and SAT with state standards is the main reason why high school teachers tend to narrow down high school content and focus on preparing their students to college-admission exams. As Schneider (2019) rightfully concludes, standardized tests' importance has not diminished, and the national emphasis on testing is still very much central (p.

44). Indeed, by the time an American student finishes high school, he or she has taken approximately "ten standardized tests for at least seven years" (Schneider, 2019, p. 44).

As a scholar and an educator, I am deeply concerned with the ineffective standardized testing frenzy in K-12 schools (and beyond). I join the scholars who argue that it is time to stop treating standardized tests scores as the ultimate measure of education and reconsider what we really value. Instead of measuring students' ability to prepare for the test, educators need to focus on how to measure authentic learning and how to accurately assess student growth. As it has been observed earlier, the obsession over test scores distorts education, which has resulted in harmful consequences.

Further in this chapter, I am going to describe the design of my study, the method and methodology of my research, and most importantly, share the findings and the summary of my research. I should say that this additional research on K-12 language arts teachers' assessment practices has revealed that that while there is still a strong focus on standardized testing in the U.S. public schools, the rhetorical value and appropriateness of nonstandardized English language varieties are often explored, and in a few cases, their grammatical structure is studied by students.

Research Methodology

My research on K-12 language arts teachers' standardized assessment practices in the U.S. public schools took place in December 2017 and through August 2018. Having emerged as the result of classroom discussions with student participants in this study, this additional research study revealed important insights on whether nonstandardized varieties are analyzed, discussed, included, and therefore, valued in language arts classrooms. The method by which the data were

collected, a questionnaire, consists of 29 questions (See Appendix C). The questionnaire allowed me to collect K-12 language arts teachers' detailed answers quickly and efficiently via an email. It is important to mention that one teacher chose to fill out my questionnaire by hand due to time constraints.

As for the ethical protections that I offered to the potential participants of the study in order to receive IRB approval, they are the following. First, I explained to the teachers in my initial contact via an email or a phone call that their participation was completely voluntary, and no penalty would follow in case they were not interested in taking part in the study. In addition, the potential participants could withdraw from the study even if they first agreed to fill out the questionnaire. Another important moment is that the participants' identities are kept confidential, and pseudonyms are used instead of the real names. This way, the participants' confidentiality is maintained in both my dissertation and future presentations and/or publications.

With regard to the research method, it is a qualitative inquiry: the majority of the questions in the survey were open-ended and sought to elicit elaborate answers. Teachers thus provided thoughtful responses and valuable insights on the assessment practices in K-12 language arts classroom. Along with qualitative questions, a few quantitative questions helped me to collect such important information as what grade(s) and for how long teachers have been teaching, what kind of written and oral assessment practices they have conducted in the classroom, how many teachers had taken an introductory linguistics course(s) in college, and the number of teachers who had been introduced to the teaching strategies on how to compare and contrast the linguistic features of standardized English and nonstandardized Englishes.

As for the teachers who answered my questionnaire, approximately 20 out of 40 teachers agreed to participate in the study. A convenience sample of teachers from three elementary

schools, five middle schools, and six high schools from several midwestern suburban communities agreed to participate in the study. Out of these 20 teachers, five were elementary school teachers; nine were middle school teachers; and six were high school teachers. Surveying teachers from each educational stage (elementary, middle, and high school) allowed me to collect data about standardized assessment practices at each educational level, which provided a good overview of the K-12 standardized testing in the state of Illinois (all teachers who answered my questionnaire were teaching in Illinois at that time). Data related to teachers' backgrounds beyond teaching language arts and training were not collected.

The focus of my research was the following: 1) What kind of standardized assessments language arts teachers have conducted in the U.S. public schools? 2) Have teachers had a linguistic training and developed an understanding of the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized English language varieties? 3) Is there room for dialects in student speaking and writing in the classroom? and 4) What kind of alternative assessments have the teachers practiced, and whether they count alternative assessment towards a student grade?

Data were analyzed in the same manner as was described in chapter 4 for the students in my classroom. Once I gathered the teachers' completed questionnaires, I uploaded them to NVivo software and started reading and analyzing them. First, I created preliminary theme nodes as I was reading through the questionnaires. In addition, I created memos in order to summarize the teachers' responses and to record my insights and my growing understanding of the preliminary themes. After that, I reread my data and modified my preliminary themes. I repeated this step three times until I created parent nodes. Besides using NVivo, I organized my data in a notebook by writing out each question and writing down the teachers' main points. Despite the meticulous approach with the handwriting process of recording data, I found this additional step

very rewarding. Particularly, analyzing my data and writing down my findings not only allowed me to retain the information better and quickly access the teachers' summarized responses, but also to correlate my handwritten notes with the analysis of the data on NVivo and visualize the main themes better.

As for the parent nodes that emerged during my reading, they are *Standardized Assessments in K-12, Teachers' Attitudes Toward Common Core State Standards and Assessments, Teaching Nonstandardized English Language Varieties, Teachers' Linguistic Education, and Alternative Assessments.* Each node provided important insights on my research questions and helped me to gather related data in one place and thus analyze my references at a deep level. I also created child nodes for each main node in order to record a difference in opinions, practices, or strategies. For example, the parent node, *Teachers' Attitudes Toward Common Core Standards and Assessments*, has two child nodes such as *Positive Attitudes Toward Common Core Standards* and *Negative Attitudes Toward Common Core Standards*. It has been an interesting finding that the number of teachers in both child nodes was almost the same, that is, the teachers' opinions divided in half. In my opinion, more research on this topic—teachers' perceptions of Common Core standards and assessments—with a bigger sample size would bring interesting findings. Another example could be the parent node, *Teachers' Linguistic Education*, in which I saved the teachers' responses on whether they had taken a linguistics class when in college, and if they had been introduced to the teaching strategies on how to approach teaching and comparing nonstandardized Englishes and standardized English. As I had two main questions that are under the umbrella term, *Teachers' Linguistic Education*, four child nodes emerged, with one negative and one positive response for each question.

To conclude, my data analysis strategies allowed me to sort, organize, and interpret the data as accurately as possible. Similar to my data analysis of student attitudinal changes to nonstandardized English language varieties, my research questions anchored all of the codes as I looked for teachers' standardized assessment practices and their perceptions of standardized standards and assessments in K-12 language arts classrooms, of the inclusion of nonstandardized varieties in both the curriculum and assessment, and of alternative assessments in the classroom. In the following chapter, I will interpret the findings of my research.

Findings

After having analyzed 20 language arts teachers' responses on what kind of national and state standardized tests they conduct in their classrooms, the following picture has emerged: all elementary and middle school teachers administer the PARCC test, and the vast majority of these teachers administer Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure Academic Progress (MAP) Growth assessment.[48] As it is explained on NWEA website (n.d.), MAP Growth assessment is computer-adaptive interim assessment designed for "measuring achievement and growth in K–12 math, reading, language usage, and science" (para. 1). Furthermore, the MAP assessments are standard-based and are administered three to four times a year.

In addition to the MAP assessment, the majority of elementary school teachers also administer the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark assessment, which is an assessment system developed to evaluate "the instructional and independent reading levels of all students and document student progress through one-on-one formative and summative assessments" ("Assessment," n.d., para. 1). As for the middle school teachers, one teacher wrote that instead of

[48] NWEA is a non-profit organization that provides computer-based assessments worldwide, including MAP assessments. MAP assessments are a suite of computer-adaptive assessments that provide data on student progress.

the MAP assessment their school conducts STAR Reading formative assessment, which is a K-12 comprehensive assessment that measures student literacy growth and progress toward state-specific learning standards. Other standard-based assessments that middle school teachers administer are AIMSweb (Academic Improvement Measurement System based on the web) and the Performance Series of Scantron Assessment Solutions. Both tests are used for screening and monitoring student reading proficiency level. Finally, the majority of teachers conduct district-wide writing benchmarks, which they administer two to three times a year.

As for high school teachers, all teachers administer SAT and/or ACT, and all but one high school teacher conduct the MAP assessment. SAT and ACT tests are pre-college standardized exams that cover such areas as English, math, reading, and science, and measure college readiness and future academic achievement. It is important to note that while the ACT test measures student knowledge and skills that a student has learned during high school, the SAT test is more focused on testing logic, that is, a student is asked to apply their learned knowledge to the material not covered in high school (ACT, n.d.; College Board, n.d.). These two tests have been traditionally required by colleges as ACT/SAT scores have been one of the decisive factors in college admission decisions, as well as in merit-based scholarship and grant awards. According to FairTest (2020a), however, more than two-thirds of all U.S. four-year colleges and universities were test-optional for fall 2021 admission; as a result, applicants were not required to submit ACT or SAT scores to those colleges and universities. As of September 2020, the total number of colleges and universities that are now test-optional are 1,570 (FairTest, 2020a). As Bob Schaeffer, FairTest’s interim Executive Director, further explains, “the strong ACT/SAT-optional wave” for college admissions since mid-March 2020 has been due to the coronavirus pandemic, which was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization

(WHO) that month (as cited in FairTest, 2020b, para. 3). It is important to mention that before the pandemic, however, colleges have already been dropping ACT/SAT requirements; in 2019, for example, FairTest (2020b) reported 51 colleges waiving ACT/SAT requirements, with the total of 1,040 colleges nationwide that joined the standardized test-optional admissions movement, which has been led by FairTest, the National Center for Fair and Open Testing, since late 1980s. Yet, the pandemic certainly has affected standardized testing the strongest; in fact, with the approval from the Education Department, all K-12 students' standardized testing was cancelled in spring 2020, which has been inconceivable considering that K-12 state mandated standardized tests have been administered for two decades (Ujifusa & Schwartz, 2021).

Coming back to my research findings, in addition to ACT, SAT, and MAP assessments administered in high school, one high school teacher indicated that she has taught an Advanced Placement (AP) Literature and Composition course and prepared her students for national AP exams. To explain more about the AP program, this program offers college-level courses and exams that students can take while in high school. Students who successfully passed AP exams and earned high scores may earn a college credit and an advanced placement. During spring of 2020, despite the pandemic, the College Board proceeded with administering the AP exams, which were taken by high-school students online; as a result, 1% of test-takers (20,000 students) were not able to submit their answers due to the College Board's technology failure (FairTest, 2020c). As a result, the College Board released a statement saying that students who were not able to submit their exam would be able to take a test again. The next year, the College Board (2021) announced that while some exams could be taken in either a traditional (paper) and a digital format, certain exams could be taken only in a traditional format.

Overall, teachers' responses demonstrate that K-12 students take a lot of standardized tests throughout their academic year. My findings confirm the fact that the educational system in the U.S. continues to be test-driven: along with the mandatory K-12 statewide-testing, students take their school district's benchmark or interim assessments two to three times a year, which reflect how well students are progressing. My research has further revealed teachers' perceptions on whether their roles in curriculum decisions and in their teaching practices have diminished with the implementation of the CCSS in school curriculum and with the heavy reliance on standard-based assessments as the indicator of student success.

In this line, teachers' responses in regard with the question above divided: nearly a half of the teachers believe that the Common Core standards and standard-based assessments do not inhibit their role in curriculum decisions. That is, teachers considered that even though they used standards as a guideline for teaching, and many of their assessments were in alignment with specific skills and essential questions from the Common Core Standards, they still had some freedom in their teaching and assessment practices. For example, teacher 14 responded to the question 6 whether the teacher's role has been replaced by teaching to the Common Core and standard-based assessment:

> I tend to disagree. While yes, the common core standards tell us what to teach, they do not tell us how. They are open enough for teachers to provide thoughtful instruction catered to our students. Common Core allows for better vertical alignment throughout grade levels. I know what teachers should have covered last year, and therefore can make instructional decisions that allow students to continue to grow. It also allows for students moving from different schools to have consistency in content. So, while yes we do have to teach Common Core, it drives outcomes not content.

As can be seen, teacher 14 believes that while she follows the Common Core, she decides how to approach teaching and to provide instruction that answers her students' needs. She also emphasizes that Common Core allows for consistency in content, which makes it easier for

students moving from school to school. Thus, teachers know what has been taught in previous grades, which helps them to better plan their lessons. A similar view has been expressed by other teachers who supported the Common Core and standard-based assessments. For example, here are a few teachers' responses that praise the standards, explaining that they make it clear for both teachers and students what to expect, while allowing teachers to be creative:

- Teacher 13 wrote: I think the standards give us a good starting point in order to plan our instruction. The standards make it clear for teachers and students what they are expected to learn, know, and apply. Teachers can still be creative about how they decide to teach the standards.

- Teacher 9 responded: I feel that the standards help teachers better align curriculum. There is still a lot of flexibility in terms of classroom instruction, materials used, etc. The rigor of schooling seems to have improved with CCSS because all teachers have shared academic objectives.

- Teacher 8 shared: I believe our role is more important than ever. Incorporating SBG has allowed teachers to assess the growth and progress of each child more accurately.

These positive comments on the Common Core and standard-based assessments demonstrate that some schools have made it possible for teachers to have room in their curriculum planning while following the Common Core. By giving teachers leadership roles in the transition to CCSS, teachers seem to have succeeded in integrating new curricular materials. Another important takeaway is that trusting teachers to plan and adapt the curriculum to CCSS allowed them to use their professional judgement and content area expertise in this transition, which appeared to have been empowering for teachers.

As for the other half of the teachers, they criticized the Common Core standards and the federal testing. Particularly, these teachers assert that the academic standards and the aligned tests neither provide enough time for teaching, nor allow flexibility for curriculum planning. Another valid concern they expressed is that standardized assessments cannot accurately

measure academic performance of all students. Here are a few excerpts from various teachers on this topic:

- Teacher 7 responded: My training allows me to teach beyond the CCSS writing standards, and the curriculum that my district has selected limits what I have the ability to do with my students. While I think providing rigorous national standards are fine, I think the way my particular district has implemented pre-packaged curriculum in response to standardized testing is limiting.

- Teacher 16 wrote: Yes, all curriculum is supposed to be tied to the CCSS. Some districts require teachers to teach certain curriculum in a certain way, other districts allow more freedom for teachers to choose curriculum but to tie it to the standards. In my 10+ years of teaching high school, there has been a major shift in how much of the curriculum is tied to standards.

- Teacher 5 wrote: [T]here are too many standards for each grade level. It would be impossible for each student to be assessed on each standard. All we would do is TEST and never teach.

- Teacher 17 expressed her criticism: I have criticism of it, yes. It creates another environment of teaching to the test.

- Teacher 1 shared: [L]ittle time remains to add curriculum outside of these standards.

- Teacher 4 wrote: I agree that the state and corporate actors involved in standardized assessment can't know my students, and whatever knowledge they have is based on percentages that do not apply to my individual students or class.

As can be seen, certain schools limit teachers' ability to add curriculum. As teacher 7 has noted, she finds that her school has limited the choice of instructional materials and what she can teach to her students. Other teachers complained that they feel forced to teach to the test and follow commercial testing corporations' generic approach. As teachers 4 further explains, corporations simply cannot know what his students need, and these agencies' expectations do not apply to his students. These concerns point to the problematic one-size-fits-all approach of standard-based assessments and the need to turn to an alternative assessment instead.

While teachers' opinion divided whether their central roles in curriculum planning have been removed, the majority of teachers, including the teachers who praised CCSS, overwhelmingly responded negatively to the questions of whether standard-based assessments truly measure culturally and linguistically diverse students' written and oral linguistic abilities, and if such assessments meet these students' cultural and linguistic needs (questions 14 and 15). Here are a few examples of the teachers' responses:

- Teacher 6 said: True measure? Definitely not. Teachers can assess far better without cultural bias.
- Teacher 11 wrote: I don't think standardized assessments can ever be a true measure of students' written and oral linguistic abilities.
- Teacher 16 responded: No, I think standardized assessments honor standard American English and doesn't place value on culturally and linguistically diverse students' languages/dialects.
- Teacher 12 wrote: Absolutely not. These tests don't allow for anything other than standard English which is abhorrent in such a culturally diverse world.
- Teacher 7 wrote: No. These are standardized exams, by definition that seems to mean that they would not meet the needs of diverse students. For example, these exams are written in English, specifically SAE (Standard American English). As such, they are not only assessing students' ability to only understand, for example the theme of a text or the meaning of a word, but also the ability to express these understandings in [standard] English.

As these answers show, teachers believe that standardized tests neither answer the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students, nor do they accurately measure these students' written and oral linguistic abilities. In addition, many teachers emphasized the limitations of standardized tests and their inappropriateness for students with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Teacher rightfully noticed, however, that such tests by their definition do not seek to accommodate minority students' needs. Still, since school accountability systems depend

heavily on standardized tests, which all students in grades 3-8 and then once in high school are required to take, such tests should certainly be fair to all students.

My research further revealed that the majority of the teachers welcome dialects in student speaking and writing in the classroom (question 7) and more than a half discuss the rhetorical effects of both SE and NSEs in literature, and why one language variety does not fit all communication tasks (question 10). Another interesting finding was that some teachers (less than a half) lead conversations about the status of SE and nonstandardized Englishes in terms of validity and correctness (question 9). The teachers further explained that they support and encourage the inclusion of nonstandardized varieties in speaking and in writing depending on the genre, explore various rhetorical situations and the appropriateness of the use of SE and nonstandardized varieties, and conclude with the importance of recognizing and respecting the latter varieties. Here are some responses from the interviewees:

- Teacher 4 shared: Yes, we discuss a lot of dialects and we talk about how they touch on cultures and different groups of people, and where they originate from, and how language evolves.

- Teacher 7 explained: I discuss dialects with my students, and I also provide fictional narratives with non-standard varieties of English. I am often surprised by the reaction my students have to these non-standard varieties. Many students discuss them in terms of correctness, although I have actually had students tell me "no one talks like that". This lesson always leads to interesting conversations about "correctness" or acceptance of non-standards varieties of English.

- Teacher 15 wrote: There are assignments where Standard School English is expected and assignments where individual language is encouraged. There are also assignments where they can choose—the goal is to communicate effectively. Many of our "good" students (they have earned A's in the past) have difficulty writing anything outside of Standard (School) English and often their writing suffers for it. They write grammatically correct sentences, but their writing can lack passion, voice, and/or meaning beyond the paper.

- Teacher 9 explained: Students are encouraged to interact [in] their home dialects in the school setting. When writing, we talk about purpose and craft. I do not place specific

emphasis on Standard English unless students are being assessed on their ability to write using [standardized English] language.

- Teacher 14 shared: We have this conversation [about the appropriateness of use of SE and non-standardized varieties] when we talk about the audience. Additionally, depending on a student's background they may have a variety of experience with "non-mainstream" English. I talk to them about how the different types are not wrong, but knowing your audience may help portray your message better. For example, when I talk to friends I do not use the same form as when I applied for college. Neither is wrong, but for my purpose of getting into graduate school I needed to use a type of language for my audience.

- Teacher 20 wrote: Yes, depending on the assignment. For personal writing and speaking, dialects are welcome and encouraged; for more formal academic writing, a formal tone is encouraged.

- Teacher 16 shared: I allowed students to use their dialects while writing poetry, narratives, during whole and small group class discussions.

- Teacher 5 wrote: It depends on the genre. When students are writing stories or personal narratives, then dialects are welcome, but standardized English is used when writing more "professional" types of writing. This is a good practice for the future.

As these excerpts demonstrate, teachers educate their students about the origin of nonstandardized dialects, discuss their validity and cultural implications, and have students read literature that is reflective of these varieties and analyze their rhetorical effects. In other words, teachers encourage their students to think about the purpose, the effect, the audience, and the context of a writing or speaking assignment. I should say that such pedagogical practices directly contribute to increasing inclusiveness and educational equity for ethnic groups of color, which is also reflective of my critical multicultural pedagogy, the pedagogy that incorporates the experiences of ethnic groups of color in everyday teaching. It is also interesting to note one teacher's observation about his students who struggle to write outside of SE: while such writers are often proficient writers of the prestigious variety, their writing in nonstandardized varieties of English is often dull and dry. The teacher's observation suggests that if students write only in

one variety and do not explore the linguistic diversity of English languages, students' creativity with language may become stifled, not to mention that these writers often develop a monolithic notion of the English language, which they may carry throughout their lives.

Besides teachers' practices that promote a multicultural environment in the classroom, I was curious to learn if these teachers had taken an introductory linguistics course, and if they had been introduced to the main features of nonstandardized English language varieties (question 12), as well as teaching strategies on how to compare and contrast the linguistic features of a standardized English to the linguistic features of nonstandardized varieties (question 13). It has been insightful to learn that less than a half of the teachers had taken a linguistics course when in college and had been introduced to the linguistic structure of nonstandardized varieties (for the most part, a brief introduction had been done). As for the teaching strategies on how to compare and contrast standardized English versus nonstandardized varieties, only a few teachers confirmed that they had had such discussions in their linguistics class. Here are some teachers' responses to these questions:

- Teacher 18 wrote: In a few of the courses I took within linguistics, we did talk about different ways to teach and assess writing while thinking about differentiations within language varieties. I had already experienced this first-hand within my own teaching when it came to teaching and assessing writing, whether it was looking at prescriptive vs. descriptive grammar, students with communication, cognitive, or learning delays (my special education background), or students with linguistically diverse backgrounds, these are things that myself and other teachers on my team would always consider when planning, implementing, and assessing writing lessons.

- Teacher 16 responded: Yes, [an introductory linguistics course] did introduce me and opened my eyes to the ways I could include students' dialects in my classroom and assessments.

- Teacher 19 wrote: Yes, I did take a Linguistics course, and it gave me a brief introduction to non-mainstream English language varieties. I received a brief introduction [to the teaching strategies of how to compare and contrast standard English to non-standardized English language varieties], but I can't remember the particulars.

- Teacher 7 shared: Yes, I was required [to take a linguistics class] as part of my undergraduate degree. I also took a linguistics course as part of my PhD. I don't think either class introduced the specific teaching strategies, but they did provide enough information for me to be able to make comparisons with my students. I could discuss with students the language variation we saw in the literature we were reading, and I could help facilitate discussions that would help students compare and contrast variations of standard and non-standard English.

As teacher 18 indicates, she has started using the tools of linguistic analysis in her teaching and assessing writing, and considering that this teacher works with students with disabilities, her newly acquired linguistic knowledge has been perhaps especially useful when it comes to differentiating language disorders from nonstandardized dialect features. As for the next response, teacher 16 expressed her appreciation of the newly acquired linguistic knowledge, which helped her to see how to work with students in linguistically informed ways. Finally, teacher 7 explains that while she had not been introduced to the teaching strategies in either of the linguistics classes she had taken, the linguistics classes have given her enough basis for discussing English language varieties with her students, as well teaching them how to compare and contrast these varieties.

As can be seen, educating K-12 language arts teachers on the linguistic structure of SE and nonstandardized Englishes promotes linguistically and culturally appropriate ways of teaching English. By integrating linguistic knowledge into their teaching and educating their students on English language variation, teachers raise language awareness in K-12 classrooms, which Hercula (2020) calls "the beating heart of linguistic inequality" (p. 4). Truly, as school is first and foremost where children learn to read and write, learning to read and write in English language varieties in schools challenges this inequality and prepares students to communicate effectively in the diverse world we live in, as well as teach them to appreciate the cultural and linguistic differences.

My next question (question 17) was also focused on the idea of linguistic equality as it asked teachers whether they agree that the inclusion of oral and written nonmainstream English varieties in teaching and in assessment practices will enhance both mainstream and nonmainstream students' oral and linguistic skills, develop dialect awareness and appreciation, and contribute to the reflection and respect of the diversity of our society. Overwhelmingly, teachers responded positively. Here are some responses from the questionnaire:

- Teacher 3 wrote: I agree that welcoming the employment of oral and written non-mainstream English varieties in assessments and in teaching will enhance both mainstream and nonmainstream students' oral and linguistic skills, develop dialect awareness and appreciation, and contribute to the reflection and respect of the diversity of our society.
- Teacher 6 responded: That is a positive step in the right direction!
- Teacher 19 explained: Yes, because it would level the playing field for all students taking the assessments.
- Teacher 12 shared: Yes, this is absolutely true which is why I employ this as a teaching practice.
- Teacher 14 wrote: Agree! I think it is important to expose students to the different dialects and appreciate them, and where they fit in the world. I think exposing students to this and why it is important is incredibly valuable.
- Teacher 18 wrote: I agree. For me, this includes the addition of different types of texts students are exposed to, the mediums and media of text, as well as the writing opportunities students are given in order to maximize exposure to dialect varieties.

As the excerpts exemplify, the majority of the teachers strongly supported the idea of including both SE and nonstandardized varieties in teaching and assessment practices. Considering that the majority of teachers already welcome dialects in student speaking and writing depending on the assignment and the genre, the strong agreement on including language variation in teaching and in assessment is not surprising. Some teachers, however, expressed various concerns about the

inclusion of nonstandardized varieties in assessment practices. Here a few responses, expressing this concern:

- Teacher 4 wrote: In teaching, yes, however, I think assessment is looking to find a base reflection of certain knowledge, so while it may be respectful for diversity I'm not sure if assessments are broad enough to include these things.

- Teacher 20 shared: That would be great [to include both SE and nonstandardized varieties in assessment practices], but a monumental task. Yet, I think it would be more representative of our country's diversity.

- Teacher 17 thought: I don't think that including these types of literature will garner any respect for these dialects. It would need to be included in curriculum in classroom to hope for any change in students' attitudes toward them.

- Teacher 1 responded: I personally feel teachers should help students gain awareness of the large variety of dialect differences among students (Indian, Spanish, regional, etc.) in order to foster appreciation and respect for all students. However, what is the goal of the assessments? To measure factual knowledge or to measure one's ability to communicate clearly to others as discussed in my response to question #16. Assessments do not foster respect and appreciation among students for peers with varying dialects. Class environment and teacher/student interactions foster respect and appreciation for the differences in others.

As the first two responses show, teacher 4 and teacher 20 questioned if it is possible to create assessments that are representative of both SE and nonstandardized varieties. Particularly, teacher 4 questioned whether tests could be broad enough to be representative of diversity, and teacher 20 thought that it would be a very challenging task to do. As for teacher 17, she believed that in order for assessments to be representative of nonstandardized varieties, the curriculum should be reflective of them as well, which is a reasonable observation as curriculum and assessment go hand in hand. Finally, teacher 1 presented an interesting insight: this teacher asserts that assessments do not contribute to language variation appreciation, but "the class environment and teacher/student interactions" do. The teacher further shares her opinion on the ultimate goal of assessment and explains that assessment should "measure factual knowledge" or

measure students' ability to express themselves clearly to others, by which she means the ability to communicate in standardized English. This reference to SE is clear in teacher's response to question 16, which asks whether the construction of standardized tests/assessment should be representative of culturally and linguistically diverse students' home languages: "…if the tests are measuring a student's ability to communicate through written expression then isn't the ultimate goal for students to be able to write using standard English since adult world requires these skills such as job communication tasks, functioning in society, etc.? "

As is apparent, the teacher associates the written form of English with standardized English and asserts that this is what assessments should evaluate—an ability to write in a standardized form of language. And while this teacher supports raising dialect awareness in teaching and through in-class activities and conversations, she leaves writing assessment primarily for demonstrating knowledge of the socially prestigious form of the English language variety. Perhaps such a divisive view is the influence of standard language ideology, the ideology in which many highly educated individuals are trapped.

With this in mind, the positive finding, however, is that the majority of the teachers not only strongly support the inclusion of nonstandardized English language varieties in teaching and in assessment, but also welcome nonstandardized varieties of English in speaking and writing. By addressing the still persistent linguistic injustice and educating their students on the importance and equal linguistic status of both standardized and nonstandardized Englishes, teachers promote multiculturalism and contribute to the development of "linguistically principled and pluralistic language attitudes" (Hercula, personal communication, June 17, 2016) in students. Along with this finding, my other research focus, alternative assessment in language arts classrooms, helped me to gain the full picture of assessment practices in K-12 language arts

classrooms. Indeed, as alternative assessments have established a foothold in language assessments since 1990s in response to standardized assessments (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, p. 123), alternative assessments in schools are usually widely used by teachers and school administrators.

To explain more about alternative assessments, these methods are closely linked to instruction, student-centered, and are not standard-based, which allows teachers to evaluate students "on what they integrate and produce [over a sufficient amount of time] rather than on what they are able to recall and reproduce" during the limited amount of time during the test (Huerta-Macias, 1995, p. 9). That is, alternative assessment is developmental and authentic as it is focused on what a student can do with a language and how they can do it in connection with what a student has learned in the classroom. Alternative assessment is therefore an essential part of the teaching and learning process, which gives an opportunity to teachers to measure student learning curve and unique abilities and needs without time pressure.

In this line, after analyzing the teachers' responses on their alternative assessment practices (question 22), I learned that teachers use a vast majority of alternative assessments. Some of them are writing and reading conferences, running records[49] and Fountas and Pinnell at the elementary level, writing journals, writing portfolios, self- and peer- assessments, observations, interviews, presentations, peer editing, and student-created rubrics. Taking into account the very nature of alternative assessment, which is often formative, but can be summative as well, the big variety of alternative assessments in the teachers' practices is not surprising and points to the necessity and usefulness of such assessments.

[49] Running records, initially called oral reading records, refers to formative assessment method, which allows teachers to evaluate an elementary student's oral reading level and identify reading error patterns.

As for the question whether teachers count alternative assessment toward a student grade (question 23), more than a half of the teachers responded that they do, but some of the teachers indicated that it often depends on an assignment. Here are some responses from the teachers who count alternative assessment towards a student grade:

- Teacher 6 wrote: Absolutely! I am very open to alternative methods for getting the information—it's about the knowledge being learned and not the means upon which it is presented. I often let students create their own assessment—as long as it still can fit the standards of my rubric, I let them be creative. I have had some of the best final projects/assessments as a result.

- Teacher 7 responded: The alternative assessment is an important part of the grade in my classes. Especially in PCHAT curriculum, these types of assessment are actually the ones that actually get at learning. Examining a completed product without a student explanation of the choices s/he made or the evidence of what s/he did means that the teacher is guessing about learning based on the product alone. It completely removes the student from the assessment, and the product alone is inadequate to assess learning, in my opinion.

- Teacher 9 shared: Yes, these are often the basis of a student's grade in the course. This variety [of alternative types of assessment] allows students multiple opportunities to demonstrate knowledge. It also encourages students to explore and practice new ways of expressing themselves.

- Teacher 19 wrote: I do journals, interviews, and self and peer assessment. Some do count as formative and summative assessments, depending on what is being addressed.

- Teacher 10 responded: Sometimes it does. For instance, I allow one self-assessment grade per trimester. I see self-assessment as a transfer of ownership from the teacher to the student. Too many students rely on teachers to assess their work, leaving their ownership of the work's value to a third party. When students take ownership, they tend to think more about their work. In the end, it all depends on how we feel about our work. That's where the value lies.

As these excerpts show, teachers highly regard alternative assessment and emphasize that such kind of assessment not only allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills, but they also do it in creative ways. Truly, assignments that are aligned with the curriculum and instruction and welcome creativity are meaningful because students rely on recent learning, use

relevant skills when solving realistic and authentic problems, and are not afraid to experiment with their projects. In addition, when students have an opportunity to individualize an assignment and/or create their own assessments that agree with a teacher's rubric (as in the first excerpt), it adds to a student's self-esteem and rewards innovation. Another important finding is that teachers believe that self-evaluation gives students a sense of ownership. As teacher 10 explained in his response, the value of alternative assessment lies in the way students feel about their work as through the analysis and explanation of their choices, students understand their work better, validate it, and feel that they contribute to the assessment process. Teacher 7 also stressed the importance of engaging students in the assessment of their work as without a student's explanation of their product, a teacher may misinterpret the work and therefore, lower a grade. Thus, self-assessment not only contributes to a more trusting relationship between a teacher and students, but also gives students a voice. That is, when students contribute to the assessments processes, participate in the creation of projects that are appealing to and useful for them (and which are also in alignment with the teacher's learning goals), and engage in setting personal goals, students take charge of their own learning and are driven to satisfy their internal rewards.

As for the teachers who do not count alternative assessment towards a student grade, they explained it by their district using standard-based assessments only. Here are some of these teachers' responses:

- Teacher 12 wrote: Our district uses only standard-based assessments. These [alternative assessments] do not count toward a grade but are used for them [students] to better themselves or have opportunities to explore, discover, and reveal whatever inspires them.

- Teacher 2 responded: No, grades are given with standard-based grading.

- Teacher 11 explained: Standard-based grading is a problem here. While we can report out on those types of things and offer feedback, we can't really assign scores to those things.

> I use journaling, conferences, observations, and self/peer assessments. They will just never be recorded as a grade in Infinite Campus.

As is evident, it is due to the standard-based grading that teachers do not assign grades to alternative assessments. As the last response indicates, this teacher calls standard-based grading a problem, which implies that this educator does not seem to be supportive of such an approach. She further points out that the alternative assessments she does unfortunately do not contribute to a student's grade.

As can be seen, alternative assessment does not always count towards a student grade in K-12 language arts classrooms. The key factor is standard-based grading, which mainly reflects student performance on standardized assessments. And even though, as my research has demonstrated, more than a half of the teachers has, and uses the opportunity to employ alternative assessment in grading practices, alternative assessment certainly has a lesser role in these practices. My hope is that local, classroom-based assessments as truly relevant and fair evaluations of student learning will continue gaining recognition in more and more schools. As a scholar, I will keep advocating alternative assessment on a par with conventional assessment as the former promotes meaningful learning and contributes to an accurate evaluation of a student academic level.

Summary of Findings

In order to summarize my findings, I will now evaluate my research questions in the context of the data analysis in my previous section. The first research question asked what kind of standardized assessments K-12 language arts teachers conducted in the U. S. public schools. As the findings demonstrate, PARCC and MAP in elementary and middle schools, and MAP, ACT, and SAT were the predominant standardized tests in 2017-2018 in the selected Illinois

public schools I did my research in. I should say that my findings accurately represent the testing landscape of those years in Illinois: students in third through eighth grades in Illinois public schools took PARCC, which was replaced in spring 2019 by the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), an Illinois state achievement test that "assesses the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core" in Math and English Language Arts (Illinois State Board of Education, n.d., para. 1).

Another important observation is that the number of standardized tests a year in 2017-2018 was high. In fact, on average, both elementary students, third grade and up, and middle school students took up to seven standardized assessments in language arts a year. As for high school students, my research indicates that on average, they took standardized tests 4 times a year; however, if a student was enrolled in an Advanced Placement course, the number of standardized assessments for this student would be higher. Thus, the standardized test-based accountability approach to measuring school quality seemed to persist in the U.S. public schools in the years during which I did my research.

As for the second research question, it was focused on the linguistic education of language arts teachers. Specifically, my inquiry was whether language arts teachers had taken an introductory linguistics course during their teaching degree programs, and whether they had been introduced to the main features of both nonstandardized and standardized English language varieties, as well as to the teaching strategies on how to compare and contrast these varieties. The fact that less than a half of the teachers had taken a linguistics course and only a few teachers had been introduced to the teaching strategies on comparison and contrast of standardized and nonstandardized varieties points to the still marginalized position of linguistics courses not only

in general education at the majority of the U.S. universities (Welch & Shappeck, 2020, e59), but also in teaching degree programs.

I should say that linguistics courses are especially relevant today in light of the recent anti-racist and social justice events that have taken place in the U.S. in response to the deaths of African Americans, including Breonna Taylor, in March 2020, George Floyd in May 2020, Ahmaud Arbery in February 2020, and other unarmed individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. Particularly, the murder of George Floyd on May 25th in 2020 has triggered intense civic unrest in America; fueled Black Lives Matter movement, an international human rights movement; and sparked numerous marches and protests against systemic racism, police brutality, white supremacy, and social discrimination throughout the U.S. and throughout the world. Another important step has been the current reform and curriculum changes at many American colleges that address diversity, equity, inclusion, as well as diversity trainings and workshops for faculty, students, and staff about systemic racism, white privilege, gender bias, and other social injustice issues in the U.S. In this respect, it is crucial that introductory linguistics courses and educational linguistics, are included in all teacher education programs as by educating teachers about the history and the linguistic structure of nonstandardized Englishes and by teaching them how to compare and contrast nonstandardized English language varieties and standardized English, they will not only gain greater awareness of the underlying linguistic structure of both standardized and nonstandardized Englishes, but will also pass on this knowledge to their students.

My third question, which is focused on whether there is room for dialects in student speaking and writing, overall revealed positive findings. As I mentioned in my previous section, the majority of the teachers welcome nonstandardized English language varieties in student

speaking and writing in certain genres and support and promote a critical multicultural approach in their classrooms. Particularly, teachers discuss the rhetorical effects of using nonstandardized varieties versus the standardized variety in writing and in speaking and encourage the use of both varieties, depending on the appropriateness of a variety for a particular genre. As one teacher shared, students reflect on both "What is academic writing" and "How do my rhetorical/grammatical choices change audience perception?"

It is interesting to note that while the teachers welcome nonstandardized varieties in speaking and writing and discuss with their students these varieties' rhetorical uses and grammatical choices depending on the rhetorical situation, only one teacher mentioned discussions about the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized varieties. Taking into consideration that only a few teachers were introduced to the way how to compare and contrast standardized and nonstandardized English language varieties, it is not surprising that there is no discussion of the systematicity and the main linguistic features of latter varieties. This absence of conversation on the rule-governed linguistic structure of nonstandardized English language varieties and on how their structures compare to the linguistic structure of standardized English leaves students linguistically uneducated, which in turn, may contribute to linguistic prejudices.

As for the last research focus, I inquired what kind of alternative assessments teachers practice, and if teachers count alternative assessment towards a student grade. As the findings demonstrate, K-12 language arts teachers widely use various kinds of alternative assessment. Indeed, as mentioned earlier in my findings, alternative assessments are highly valued in schools as these local, classroom-based measures of students provide invaluable insights to teachers on where their students truly are in terms of their proficiency level. Considering that standardized tests and school curriculum quite often do not match, alternative assessments allow teachers to

evaluate students on what they normally do in class, and thus, to triangulate data and provide fairer assessment.

Furthermore, my research findings revealed that more than a half of the teachers count alternative assessment as part of a student grade, with some teachers noting, however, that it depends on an assignment, or that they do it once in a trimester. While this finding is indeed positive and indicates that democratized assessment is taken into consideration and, to an extent, influences student academic success, it is too soon to assert that conventional assessment and alternative assessment play an equal role when it comes to grading practices. After all, K-12 American public education program still largely uses the standard-based grading system for evaluating student academic success and growth. My research confirms this fact: less than a half of the teachers indicated that they do not count alternative assessment towards student grade due to the fact that only standard-based assessments count, while others grade only some assignments from alternative assessment. In other words, alternative assessment is not always graded, even though this type of assessment has proven to be far more accurate than standardized assessment in the evaluation of student academic progress.

In this line, as I indicated earlier in my chapter, standard-based curriculum and assessment are still at the heart of K-12 American public school system. The focus on standardization and testing therefore largely determines the educational mobility of students, often leaving students who are speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties and other students whose first language is not English struggling academically. In order to answer these students' needs, more support for promoting multicultural curriculum and authentic forms of assessment is needed.

In this respect, advocates of authentic assessment urge educators, state leaders, education reformers, and school administrators to consider what they really value and "to re-capture, re-coup, harness organic, localized assessment to nourish productive teaching and learning" (Broad et al., 2009, p. 2). Broad et al. (2009) further compare standardized assessment to a commercially grown imported tomato, which is like all industrially produced kinds of foods have no nutrition and taste and are produced with "the goal of high yields" (p. 1). More importantly, there is no direct connection between producers and consumers: such produce is "faceless" (Broad et al., 2009, p. 2). Standardized assessments, like commercially grown produce are mass-produced; therefore, they are disconnected from schools and student needs. Broad et al. (2009) strongly oppose such "fast-food style [that] offers to make assessment faster and simpler by splitting it off from the rest of … [the work of] educators" and calls for "home grown assessment" as the best approach for productive teaching and learning (p. 2).

I strongly support Broad's et al. (2009) position on the need to adapt locally-grounded assessments in writing classes, and insist on a shift towards a more balanced approach of standardized and alternative assessments, especially in relation to grading practices. As Brown and Hudson (1998) point out, the positive characteristics of alternative assessment address the limitations of conventional assessment in terms of being contextualized, engaging, congruent with instructional goals, and more relevant to students' diverse backgrounds and learning styles (p. 654). They further summarize what alternative assessments are and what they do:

1) Require students to perform, create, produce, or do something;
2) Use real-world contexts or simulations;
3) Are nonintrusive in that they extend the day-to-day classroom activities;
4) Allow students to be assessed on what they normally do in class every day;
5) Use tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities;

6) Focus on processes as well as products;
7) Tap into higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills;
8) Provide information about both the strength and weaknesses of students;
9) Are multiculturally sensitive when properly administered;
10) Ensure that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgement;
11) Encourage open disclosure of standards and rating criteria; and
12) Call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles. (Brown & Hudson, pp. 654-655)

Without a doubt, if given an equal footing in grading practices, this type of assessment would certainly contribute to a more balanced approach to literacy assessment. Furthermore, as my research has demonstrated, even though balancing assessment strategies have started to take place and more schools tend to count alternative assessment toward a student grade, the latter does not weigh in as much as standardized assessments, which are the major indicator of student academic success. However, if we truly want to implement multicultural critical education in K-12 classrooms, alternative, authentic assessment should become a big part of grading practices because it is truly representative of classroom everyday goals and student needs, as well as is built on student individual strengths and weaknesses. Only then all students will thrive academically and experience equal educational opportunities.

By changing schools' assessment practices and moving from one-shot performances that are decontextualized and culturally and linguistically insensitive to more localized assessments that are meaningful to all students and are inclusive of students' languages and cultures, "site-based, locally-driven procedures" for assessing students will gain more weight in grading practices (Huot, 2009, p. 170). By doing so, classroom-based assessments, the type of assessment that follows a different logic from standard-based assessment, will not only improve student learning, but also contribute to closing the racial achievement gap still present today. As

Gay (2010) rightfully affirms, “when instructional processes are consistent with the cultural orientations, experiences, and learning styles of marginalized African, Latino, Native, and Asian American students, their school achievement improve significantly” (as cited in Sleeter and Carmona, 2017, p. 68). Considering that the majority of students in U.S. public schools are culturally and linguistically diverse students, the need of a more balanced assessment practices has never been more urgent. It is important to stress that in my call for democratized assessment practices, I do not propose a complete replacement of standard-based assessments with alternative assessments. Rather, I propose a more balanced approach that equally uses and counts both standard-based assessments and alternative assessments as a start or a step towards culturally and linguistically relevant assessments.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications of the Study

In this last chapter, I will summarize the most important implications of my study, identify its limitations, and provide recommendations on how my research can be applied in various pedagogical and academic settings. To begin, as my research has demonstrated, the course has been very successful in many ways. To restate, all of my students, who were future elementary and middle school teachers, recognized the importance of the study of linguistics and its main levels of analysis and articulated their newly acquired linguistic understanding of a nonstandardized variety, African American English, as well as Indian English, in their written and oral assignments. Another important finding is that all students who had negative perceptions of nonstandardized English language varieties prior to taking my linguistics class reported to have changed them to positive attitudes by the end of the course.

In addition to the scientific study of African American English (and IE), the sociolinguistic phase of the course was another crucial part of the curriculum that contributed to the dismantlement of appropriacy arguments, which disguise politically, culturally, and socially bound judgements of "correctness" and "prestige." Particularly, discussions about language variation; standard language ideology and language subordination processes; linguistic discrimination in school, at work, and beyond; the connection between language, culture, and identity; as well as the conversational norms, the melodic aspects of language, and speech events in AAE and their comparison with the rules of interaction in standardized English led to a further analysis of the stigmatized features of AAE and to an understanding of how nonstandardized varieties are systematically targeted for eradication and their speakers to a silencing of voices.

Finally, discussions about linguistically pedagogical strategies on how to compare and contrast the prominent features of nonstandardized varieties with those of standardized English, and how to design lessons with consideration of the linguistic and cultural differences that speakers of nonstandardized varieties bring with them to the classroom were another critical part of my curriculum that provided practical knowledge about ways to improve all K-12 students' academic success, while building the spirit of multiculturalism and fostering equality, justice, and equity.

In view of such successful uptake of the descriptive, sociolinguistic, and pedagogical aspects of the curriculum by my students and the positive findings, I propose that an introductory linguistics course that focuses on English language variation should be a required course for all undergraduate students in the U.S. public colleges and universities. More importantly, the need to educate all college students on the legitimacy of nonstandardized English language varieties has never been more urgent. As is known, fueled by George Floyd's abhorrent death and subsequent Black Lives Matter protests, many U.S. colleges and universities, in their attempt to embed greater inclusivity, equity, and diversity on campuses, have been creating Offices of Diversity and Inclusion (Nunes, 2021), and one of the biggest foci of these offices is addressing educational inequities. In this line, an ethnically representative curriculum will no doubt contribute to the efforts to achieve not only equal education opportunities for all students, but also improved cultural, racial, and linguistic awareness. Truly, an opportunity to study the history, linguistic structure, and use of at least one nonstandardized English language variety and compare it with the standardized variety will open students' eyes on how language works, which is fundamental to understanding human communication, linguaculture, human identity, and social relations. Moreover, I believe that an introductory linguistics course will help college

students to develop strategies for challenging appropriateness arguments that are perpetuated by dominant institutions (including academia), as well as research strategies on how to further study language variation, which is a tool that every citizen of the global village we live in should possess.

Another important implication of my research is that K-12 language arts curriculum should undergo tangible changes in terms of growing a linguistics program in K-12 settings. In chapter 2, I reviewed various linguistic programs and teaching strategies devoted to the scientific study of the linguistic structure of both standardized and nonstandardized English varieties, as well as their sociolinguistic study. Specifically, the following has been overviewed: multicultural education pedagogical strategies by Hudley and Mallinson (2011), the contrastive analysis approach and code-switching by Wheeler (2009) and Academic English Mastery Program, dialect awareness lessons by Sweetland (2006), a sample activity on how to challenge false assumptions about the nature of language and a sample exercise on linguistic patterns in vernacular varieties by Hazen (2001), as well as Labov's (2012), (2009) pedagogical strategies on how to teach reading to speakers of nonstandardized English varieties. As these linguistic teaching strategies and approaches to teaching English language and literature have demonstrated, the scientific and sociolinguistic study of the English language varieties is often very successful in challenging language-deficit views, promoting language awareness in classroom, increasing student academic performance, and fostering standardized and nonstandardized English mastery, as well as positive attitudes to the latter. Truly, when students are introduced to the descriptive notion of grammar, which is "a set of grammatical rules based on what we say, not on what we should say according to some language authority" (Denham & Lobeck, 2013, p. 10) and examine the systematic nature of nonstandardized English language

varieties as used by the members of certain speech communities, they come to understand that there are two approaches to grammar: descriptive and prescriptive, and this newly acquired linguistic knowledge often profoundly changes students' views on language. To be more accurate, they develop "a linguistically principled understanding of language" (Hercula, 2020, p. 26), and begin to see standard language ideology's arguments, and stemming from them sociolinguistic injustices.

Yet, despite the positive findings of the application of linguistically informed curriculum in K-12 classrooms (and in colleges), it is, by far, not a prevalent practice today. Rather, standardized curriculum that promotes standardized English, and standardized testing, as my research has confirmed, are what predominantly impacts teaching and learning today. As a result, as Curzan (2019) rightly asserts, by the time students start their secondary or higher education, many of these students have a very strong opinion on what is "correct" grammar (p. xi). This prescriptive approach to grammar, that is, the belief that there is one "correct" way to speak and write English, has been exercised in the U.S. educational system for centuries. Gee cautions though that a seemingly innocent practice of correcting students (for example, reminding them to use a concrete verb form) may "mushroom into broad exclusionary practices that go beyond issues of spelling to the silencing of discourse, to the detriment of everybody" (as cited in Lippy-Green, 2012, p. 80).

However, as I mentioned earlier, the traumatic events of 2020 have emphasized the urgency of challenging the dominant standard language ideology and promoting a "linguistic diversity ideology," which means that all varieties of English are equal and valuable, and no one variety is inherently superior to another (Devereaux & Palmer, 2019, p. xvii). In this regard, the time has never been more right for rethinking the language arts curriculum towards a

linguistically informed one, meaning that K-12 students will learn how language actually works; learn about the social, historical, and economic forces that influence language change; expand their linguistic repertoires by analyzing and comparing the rule-governed structures of nonstandardized Englishes with standardized English; and more crucially, examine their own language use and attitudes and learn how to disrupt oppressive racist ideologies.

From this perspective, as a natural outcome of my second point, another major implication of my research is that future K-12 language arts teachers (and college-level instructors) should be equipped with linguistic pedagogical strategies on how to introduce the topic of language variation in the classroom, how to investigate grammatical similarities and differences between a nonstandardized English language variety and the standardized variety, as well as how to explore various academic genres while affirming their future students' English language varieties. In fact, I advocate that teacher preparation programs, especially language arts teacher preparation programs, should include a course or a series of workshops on linguistically informed instructional practices and methodologies. As my research has revealed, the area where K-12 language arts teachers lack expertise the most is the comparison of the linguistic features of a nonstandardized variety to the standardized variety. That is, while many teachers indicated that they discuss the rhetorical effects of both varieties and welcome them in student writing and speech depending on the purpose of the rhetorical situation, they are often neither ready to explain the linguistic structure of a nonstandardized variety, nor to compare English language varieties. Therefore, I consider improving teacher education in linguistics pedagogy to be the starting point for the increase of linguistically informed approaches in K-12 language arts classrooms and in college settings. If more linguistically and culturally responsive teaching

strategies are used in the classroom, perhaps linguistics will receive more representation in K-12 curricula (and beyond), which is ultimately the goal of my work.

On a larger scale, culturally and linguistically competent curriculum in K-12 language arts classrooms (and beyond) is exactly what is needed for democratizing the U.S. public education. As Au (2012) explains, "curriculum has a relationship to how we think about and understand the world … curriculum influences our consciousness as well as how we carry that consciousness forward through praxis" (p. 11). That is to say, the school as a social system is responsible for shaping students' social, cultural, and linguistic values and beliefs and developing a sense of civic responsibility in its students so that they can challenge social injustices and further promote democratic leadership styles. If the goal of education is to empower *all* their students, which is at the heart of multicultural education and critical pedagogy, then diverse cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge should be part of the K-12 curriculum across *all* the disciplines, especially language arts classes, literature classes, history, and social science.

Therefore, instead of standardized language ideology, "linguistic diversity ideology" should be promoted in education, the ideology that has as its core nurturing and fostering multicultural and plurilingual values in students (Devereaux & Palmer, 2019, p. xvii). It is the ideology that promotes meaningful connections between home and school, instead of alienating students from school; communicates to *all* students that their diverse cultural, linguistic, and racial-ethnic knowledge is valuable, not only of those who represent upper-middle and upper classes; and aids in the development of mutual understanding and respect among speakers of *all* English language varieties.

Furthermore, “linguistic diversity ideology” implies transformation of not only the current K-12 language arts curriculum and programs, but also of the assessment practices in K-12 schools (and beyond). The fourth implication of my research is, therefore, democratization of K-12 language arts assessment practices, by which I mean, active implementation of alternative assessments that are culturally and linguistically relevant. While it may seem challenging to go beyond standardized tests, the COVID -19 pandemic interrupted the two decades of annual one-size-fits-all standardized testing and demonstrated that there are other official means to assess students. Ladson-Billing (2021) further argues that educators, scholars, and practitioners should approach the pandemic as “an opportunity to restart, or more precisely to reset, education using a more robust and culturally centered pedagogy” (p. 68). She calls this reset in education a “hard re-set,” the one that should help to “reclaim and preserve our [diverse] culture through our school students” (p. 68).

I strongly support Ladson-Billing’s position that schools need this “hard re-set” because “going back to normal,” that is, going to the school practices that were oppressive and alienating to students who are speakers of nonstandardized English language varieties, would be the wrong thing to do. There has been nothing “normal” in the persistent academic achievement disparities between White and Black, and White and other historically marginalized students of color. Therefore, it is indeed the right moment to actively reset both K-12 curriculum and assessment practices in the direction of culturally and linguistically relevant pedagogy.

In this line, democratization of K-12 language arts assessments should start with balancing current K-12 language arts assessment practices. As I wrote earlier, it means making more space for classroom-based, authentic assessments that are culturally and linguistically appropriate. Moreover, this type of assessment should officially evaluate student learning, not

just be used as formative assessment. As my research has demonstrated, language arts teachers find alternative assessment extremely valuable and widely use it in their classrooms. Yet, while more than a half of the teachers wrote that they count alternative assessment toward a student grade, it often does not have a significant weight, and student performance on standardized testing is still the decisive factor of student academic success.

Hence, in order to provide truly democratic learning experiences for *all* students, legislators and education policy makers should consider increasing the role alternative assessments play in student evaluation. In other words, alternative assessments should play no less role in measuring student academic achievement. I believe such changes in assessment practices will encourage more initiatives, more conversations, and strategies on the ways alternative assessments can be implemented on a large scale.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

It is important to acknowledge that while the findings of my research have been positive and indicated that *all* students had developed positive attitudes toward linguistic diversity by the end of the course, questions arose that require further study. First, it, perhaps, would be useful to conduct my research on a larger sample in order to gain more perspectives on how my course influences positive attitude change towards nonstandardized Englishes. And while I do not consider the sample of my study to be too small, which was 28 students, I believe that a larger sample would augment more credibility to my findings and would more likely capture the full diversity of student views. Particularly, it would be insightful to learn the reasons why certain students, if any, would keep negative attitudes towards nonstandardized varieties after taking the course. In addition, the 20 practicing K-12 language arts teachers who agreed to complete my

questionnaire comprised a small sample too, and surveying a larger number of teachers would provide more perspectives on assessment practices in the language arts classroom. It is also important to note that by choosing to survey K-12 language arts teachers from only Illinois public schools, I used a convenience sample, and therefore the findings of this research must be understood in that context.

Another limitation of the study I conducted is that my research was done during one semester only. To explain, it is sometimes the case that certain individuals, after having taken an introductory linguistics course, may fall back to the prescriptive view on language. It is often due to the pervasiveness of standard language ideology in society. Therefore, it would be useful to conduct a longitudinal study in order to further examine my students' uptake and internalization of what had been discussed in the classroom. Should I have had such an opportunity, a longitudinal study would allow me to further test the effectiveness and relevance of my course design and critical multicultural pedagogical approach. Reconnecting with my students in the months or years after teaching my introductory linguistic course would demonstrate if their perceptions on language variety, notions of correctness and prestige, and linguistics injustice remained the same. Moreover, considering that the vast majority of my students were future teachers, it would be also insightful to learn if they pursued incorporating the study of language variation in their future classrooms.

Thus, these two limitations—sample size and time constraint—are essential to be considered when similar research that is focused on educating students on the linguistic structure of nonstandardized varieties and challenging linguistic injustice is conducted. In truth, a long-term research project with a larger number of individuals participating in it would certainly enhance the quality of research, provide a deeper understanding of the participants' changing (or

nonchanging) attitudes towards language variation, and point out any areas for improvement in the course, if needed. Besides, it would be useful to learn how and if the participants' newly acquired linguistic knowledge have contributed to their addressing linguistic prejudice and discrimination in their future personal and professional settings.

Finally, as I wrote earlier in chapter 4, the third limitation of the main study is that the participants were my students, and therefore the results in terms of attitudinal change or other affective changes reported by students must be understood in that context. In other words, despite the fact that I was not aware of who agreed to participate in the study until after the grades were submitted, I could have potentially influenced my students' responses to classroom assignments. Therefore, it would be interesting to perform this study in the context where I am not in the position of power to see if the same attitudinal and other affective changes would be reported.

In regards with recommendations, it is important to note that when conducting their research, researchers could certainly do adjustments to the course curriculum I developed, and certain components of the course could be modified as needed. Speaking of course adaptations, I have used a variation of my pedagogy for English 143 in one writing course I have taught. This course, the Gateway Colloquium, which is a freshman course with an emphasis on writing and critical thinking, is taken by students of all majors. As writing instructors are free to choose the focus of this colloquium, I chose *Language Ideologies in the United States* to be the main theme in my course. In this regard, in this course, my students wrote their personal essay, an argumentative essay, and a research essay on the topic of language variation and linguistic discrimination in the U.S. Another important component of the course was a short introduction to the rule-governed nature of nonstandardized Englishes, which helped my students to understand

that these varieties are not "incorrect" versions of standardized English. Thus, the discussions in this class were focused on language variation, language change, language and social/regional variation, language and culture, and, certainly, linguistic discrimination, and notions of correctness and prestige. In effect, these are the same topics I discussed in my English 143, which indicates that aspects of my developed introductory linguistics course could be taken up in other courses: writing courses, TESOL courses, and literature courses, in both K-12 and at the university level.

Therefore, I think that my course curriculum could be adapted to fit a variety of teaching environments. That is, the components of my pedagogy could be implemented in various ways across various disciplines to promote linguistically informed approaches within their classroom instruction, as well as positive attitudes towards language variation. Indeed, if more and more teachers, professors, and other professionals collaborate with linguists on how to teach in a linguistically sound and engaging way and promote linguistic diversity ideology, linguistic discrimination will be challenged and eradicated. My goal after all is that linguistically informed curriculum in both K-12 classrooms and at the college level will continue to grow, and wide-scale curriculum and assessment changes will take place as linguists, educators, and teachers strive to disseminate linguistic knowledge among their students (and beyond) in order to foster linguistic equality and to give their students tools to challenge and demystify the appropriacy arguments of standard language ideology.

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APPENDIX A: ENGLISH 143 SYLLABUS: SPRING 2017

ENG 143: Unity and Diversity in Language

Course Description:

The course catalog describes ENG 143 as follows: "Study of the structure of language (phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) as it reflects cognition, social relations, cultural conventions, and speech communities."

This course will introduce students to the main levels of analysis within linguistics: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. During the second half of the course, students will explore such sociolinguistic problems as issues of language variation, standardized English (SE) language, language and culture, and linguistic social justice.

ENG 143 will also focus on the linguistic study of such non-standardized varieties of English as African American English (AAE) and Indian English (IE). AAE will be examined as a legitimate, rule-governed variety of English in the context of each of the major branches of linguistics, ultimately studying its linguistic features and its sociolinguistic situation. A brief study of the linguistic structure of Indian English will also be done.

Learning Goals/Objectives:

- Students will gain a basic understanding of the main levels of analysis within linguistics.
- Students will begin developing competency with linguistics terminology, practicing the discourse of the field in discussions and writing both within and outside of class.
- Students will gain a basic understanding of some of the features of African American English and Indian English, developing the ability to discuss these features linguistically.
- Students will develop an understanding of language variation and the connections between language and culture, including an understanding of the social situation of AAE and its speakers.
- Students will be challenged to examine their language ideologies and beliefs as they confront the issues in and implications of linguistic diversity.

Course Readings:

- Yule, George. (2010). *The study of language.* 4th ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Green, Lisa (2002). *African American English: A linguistic introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Excerpts from several other texts and articles (provided via ReggieNet)

Course Assignments:

- **Reading and Participation (15 points**) Students are expected to participate in all in-class activities, including active engagement during class, thoughtful contributions to classroom discussions, and coming to class prepared, having completed all readings and assignments.

- **Reading Quizzes (20 points)** On several unannounced class days throughout the course, students will take a reading quiz, covering some of the basic information in the material they read for that class. These quizzes will be short and should take students about 5-10 minutes at the beginning of class to complete.

- **Reflective Responses (30 points)** Periodically throughout the semester (due dates will be indicated), students will turn in one-page (single-spaced, 12 pt. font) reflective responses. These responses will serve two purposes: 1) to give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they are learning and what is resonating with them regarding the class content, and 2) to give students the opportunity to express evolving questions and theories they are developing regarding the class content. Note: while these responses should be personal and can include real-life evidence, students should use these responses as a way to show me what they have learned, and as such, they should make specific references to course readings and in-class discussions.

- **Midterm Exam (20)** The midterm exam will cover each of the branches of linguistics that we have covered to that point in the course, assessing students' ability to use the discourse of the field in examining language data. A study sheet will be provided one week prior to the exam.

- **Literacy and Language Trajectory (20)** After reading some published examples of language and literacy narratives, students will write their own, reflecting on their early experiences at home, in school, and elsewhere that have defined and shaped their literacy and language experiences, features, and ideologies. These papers (5-7 pages, double spaced) should be based on students' experiences but also tie in and utilize linguistics terminology and/or course readings as appropriate.

- **Questionnaire (10)** Throughout the semester, I will ask you to fill out 4 questionnaires that are related to course readings, which will allow me to see your attitudinal changes or no change towards language variation, language usage, correctness, and prestige.

- **Final Paper Proposal (5)** Each student/group will write a proposal (about 2 pages or so) to explain what he/she plans to do in his/her final paper. This proposal must include: a topic description, a research and writing plan to address each of the specific requirements for the paper, a rationale, and an annotated bibliography with at least five (tentative) sources. Students are strongly encouraged to visit me in my office to discuss paper topics and plans before submitting their proposals.

- **Final Paper (25)** Your final paper (8-10 pages, double spaced, utilizing at least five sources, written in LSA style) should be the following:

Choose a marginalized variety of English (except those covered in class) and research it in the context of each of the areas of linguistics that we have covered in this class. In your paper, include the following:

- o brief information about the background/history/origin of the variety,
- o a short description of the language communities that speak the variety,
- o analysis/examples of at least one phonological feature of the variety,
- o analysis/examples of at least one morphological feature of the variety,
- o analysis/examples of at least one lexical feature of the variety,
- o analysis/examples of at least one syntactic feature of the variety,
- o analysis/examples of at least one pragmatic feature of the variety, and
- o a description of the social and cultural situation of the variety.

Final Presentation (5%) During finals week, each student/group will give a short presentation to share a small part of his or her final paper and research with the class.

Grading:
The following grading scale will be used to grade all assignments:

135-150= A
120-134= B
105-119= C
90-104= D
89-0=F

The specific grading criteria for each assignment will be made clear in class. All assignments must be submitted by the due date and time on the syllabus. Late submissions will not be accepted unless the student has discussed the need for late submission with the instructor at least 24 hours in advance of the due date/time. If you have questions or concerns about a particular grade you receive, please set up an appointment to meet with me outside of class to discuss the assignment and/or grading procedures.

Attendance Policy:
Students should make every effort to be on time and present for every class meeting. Students may miss two classes without grade penalty. Absences (for any reason) exceeding this number will have an effect on students' final course grades: a course grade reduction of 5% per absence over two. If a student does need to miss a class, I ask that he or she emails me to let me know of the conflict or emergency in as far advance as possible. Also, if a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for all class content missed, including turning in assignments and reflections.

Expectations for In-class Behavior
Respectful, considerate behavior is called for all times. You are expected to be awake, prepared, and ready to give your full attention. Students may not use cell phones, computers, tablets, or other electronics in class.

Academic Honesty Policy:
Students will be held to the tenets of the ISU Student Code of Conduct, which states the following:
Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's placement of his or her name on any academic exercise shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own thought, effort, and study.
Violations include but are not limited to:

- possessing or utilizing any means of assistance (books, notes, papers, articles, etc.) in an attempt to succeed at any quiz or examination unless specifically authorized by the instructor.
- taking any action with intent to deceive the person in charge as to the student's acting without honesty to complete an assignment, such as falsifying data or sources, providing false information, etc. Students are prohibited from conversation or other communication in examinations except as authorized by the instructor.
- appropriating without acknowledgement and authorization another's computer program, or the results of the program (in whole or part) for a computer-related exercise or assignment.
- plagiarizing. For the purpose of this policy, plagiarism is the unacknowledged appropriation of another's work, words, or ideas in any themes, outlines, papers, reports, speeches, or other academic work. Students must ascertain from the instructor in each course the appropriate means of documentation.
- submitting the same paper for more than one University course without the prior approval of the instructors.
- willfully giving or receiving unauthorized or unacknowledged assistance on any assignment. This may include the reproduction and/or dissemination of test materials. Both parties to such collusion are considered responsible.
- substituting for another student in any quiz or examination.
- being involved in the unauthorized collection, distribution advertisement, solicitation, or sale of term papers, research papers, or other academic materials completed by a third party.

Resources for Students with Disabilities:
Students with documented disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Concerns Office to determine and take advantage of any accommodations and services to which they are entitled. I would welcome any student to share with me any concerns he or she has regarding his or her abilities to perform well in this course. I encourage students to stop by during office hours or set up an appointment with me to discuss any concerns at the beginning of the semester so that I can be a resource and help them to succeed in the course.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 The Origins of Language Properties of Human Language	Tuesday 1/17 Yule, Chapter 1: The Origins of language	Thursday 1/19 Yule, Chapter 2: Animals and Human Language
Week 2 History of English	Tuesday 1/24 Yule, Chapter 17: Language History and Change	Thursday 1/26 Wolfram, et. al.: Language Variation in the U.S.; Melcher and Shaw: The Spread of English *Quiz 1*
Week 3 Language Variation	Tuesday 1/31 Yule, Ch.18, and Ch. 19: Regional Variation in Language, and Social Variation in Language	Thursday 2/2 Geneva Smitherman: From Africa to the New World, pp. 1-15. *Quiz 2*
Week 4 Phonetics and Phonology	Tuesday 2/7 Yule, Chapter 3: The Sounds of Language	Thursday 2/9 Yule, Chapter 3: The Sound of Language **Reflective Response #1 due** *Quiz 3*
Week 5 AAE Phonetics and Phonology Morphology	Tuesday 2/14 Yule, Chapter 4: The Sound Patterns of Language	Thursday 2/16 Lisa Green: Introduction to African American English (AAE); Lisa Green: AAE: Phonology
Week 6 Grammar/Syntax	Tuesday 21/2 Yule, Chapter 6: Morphology	Thursday 23/2 Yule, Chapter 7: Grammar **Reflective Response #2 Due** *Quiz 4*
Week 7 Grammar/Syntax	Tuesday 28/2 Green: AAE: Morphology and Syntax; Hudley and Mallinson (2011): Features of African American English	Thursday 3/2 **Midterm Exam**

	Questionnaire 1 due	
Week 8 Lexicon/Semantics	Tuesday 3/7 Yule, Chapter 8: Syntax	Thursday 3/9 Yule, Chapter 9: Semantics **Reflective Response # 3 Due** *Quiz 5*
Week 9 World Englishes	Tuesday 3/21 Lisa Green: AAE: Semantics; Kubota and Ward: "Exploring Linguistic Diversity through World Englishes"	Thursday 3/23 Yule, Chapter 10: Pragmatics **Questionnaire 2 Due** *Quiz 6*
Week 10 Language and Culture	Tuesday 3/28 Yule, Chapter 11: Discourse Analysis; Lisa Green: AAE: Pragmatics	Thursday 3/30 Yule, Chapter 20: Language and Culture *Quiz 7* **Reflective Response #4 Due**
Week 11 Language Attitudes	Tuesday 4/4 Romaine: Speech Communities; Lippi-Green: Language Subordination, pp. 66-74	Thursday 4/6 Lisa Green: AAE: Language Attitudes; Hercula: AAE and Australian Aboriginal English; **Language and Literacy Narrative Due**
Week 12 Language Variation and Education	Tuesday 4/11 Hudley and Malllinson: Some Features of School English; Hudley, A. and Mallinson: AAE: Educational Implications, pp. 84-89; **Questionnaire 3 due**	Thursday 4/13 Wheeler, R.: Taylor Cat is Black: Code-switch to add Standard English to Students' Linguistic Introduction; Lovejoy, Kim: Practical Pedagogy for Composition *Quiz 8*

<table>
<tr><td>Week 13
First Language Acquisition/Second Language Acquisition</td><td>Tuesday 4/18
Yule, Chapter 12:
Language and the Brain

Reflective response #5 Due</td><td>Thursday 4/20
Yule, Chapter 13 and 14:
First and Second Language Acquisition
Quiz 9</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week 14
Word Formation</td><td>Tuesday 25/4
Chapter 5: Word Formation
Quiz 10
Questionnaire 4 Due</td><td>Thursday 27/4
Final Presentations

Reflective Response #6 Due</td></tr>
<tr><td>Week 15
Final Presentations</td><td>Tuesday 5/2

Final Presentations</td><td>Thursday 5/4

Final Presentations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Finals Week</td><td>Tuesday 5/9

Final Paper Due 5/9 by 11 p.m.</td><td></td></tr>
</table>

APPENDIX B: ENGLISH 143 MIDTERM EXAM: SPRING 2017

1. According to this theory of language origin, the sounds of a person engaged in physical effort could be the source of our language, especially that the physical effort involved several people and the interaction had to be coordinated. This theory is:

   a) The tool-making source
   b) The physical adaptation source
   c) The social interaction source
   d) The genetic source
   e) The natural sound source

2. This property of human language indicates that human language is organized at two levels simultaneously. At one level, we have distinct sounds (for ex., c, a, t,), while at another level, we have distinct meanings (for ex., cat, act). This property of language is

   a) Arbitrariness
   b) Cultural transmission
   c) Duality
   d) Productivity
   e) Displacement

3. English as a Lingua Franca means that

   a) Speakers do not have a common native tongue and do not share common culture. English is not a native language for either speaker (for example, a conversation in English between a Chinese and a Turkish).
   b) One speaker is a native speaker of English and another speaker is a non-native speaker of English (for example, a native speaker of English and a Chinese).

4. We can refer speakers of English to three concentric circles. When speakers are nonnative speakers of English and use English as *a foreign language* and in highly restricted domains (it is usually not used for internal purposes within the country, such as in higher education and employment, for example, in Russia), then these speakers belong to

   a) The Inner Circle
   b) The Outer Circle
   c) The Expanding Circle

5. A dialect is different from another dialect in

   a) Pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar
   b) Pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and the way people use language forms (for example, overlapping each other's talk versus not talking while a partner talks)
   c) Pronunciation and grammar only

6. Describe consonants in terms of their place of articulation, manner of articulation, and voiced or voiceless characteristics:

   v____

   m____

   tʃ____

   z____

7. Transcribe the following words using IPA:

   Pat
   Bet
   Cheek
   Fifth
   Rough
   Look
   Rude
   Choice
   Rote
   George

8. Using what you have learned about comparative reconstruction, try to recreate the most likely proto-form for these cognates:

Language A	Language B	Proto-forms
Kewo ('red)	čel ('red')	______________
Kuti ('tree')	kut ('wood)	______________
Like ('heavy')	lič ('morose')	______________
Waki ('sister')	wač ('sister')	______________
Wapo ('hand')	lap ('hand')	______________
Woli ('beam')	lol ('roof')	______________

9. Some people pronounce the word ‘jewelry’ as “ jew-luh-ree” instead of the correct pronunciation “jew-el-ree.” This reversal of two neighboring sounds in a word is called

    a) Epenthesis
    b) Metathesis
    c) Prothesis

10. The tendency of some people say “filum” instead of “film” is an example of

    a) Epenthesis
    b) Metathesis
    c) Prothesis

11. There is always mutual intelligibility between the dialects of neighboring villages of Spain, Portugal, France, and Italy. However, the intelligibility decreases as the distance between the neighboring villages increases. This is an example of

    a) Diglossia
    b) Dialect continuum
    c) Monolingualism

12. In the Upper Midwest of the USA, there is a Northern dialect area, which includes Minnesota, North Dakota, most of South Dakota, and Northern Iowa. The rest of Iowa and Nebraska are representative of the Midland dialect. So, a Northerner will say “a pail,” while a Midlander will say “a bucket” for the same thing. Based on this one difference, we then can draw a line on the map separating the two areas. This is an example of

    a) Bilingualism
    b) Dialect boundary
    c) Isogloss

13. African slaves, who were brought to Bunce island (used to be a slave fort), spoke different languages from the start. As a result, they developed their own simplified English language (before the first generation). It is an example of

    a) Creole
    b) Pidgin
    c) Bilingualism

14. A creole is different from pidgin by that a creole language does not have native speakers, while a pidgin has native speakers

    a) True
    b) False

15. The verb *ain't* has been proven to be used more often in working-class speech than in middle-class speech. Since social class (not a region) substantiates this linguistic feature, we can say that it is an example of sociolect

    a) True
    b) False

16. Unique circumstances of every life results in each of us having an individual way of speaking. This linguistic phenomenon can be called an idiolect

    a) True
    b) False

17. Speech style is a social feature of language use. The main distinction in speech style is between formal and informal uses of language.

    a) True
    b) False

18. If you introduce your fiancé (imagine you have one) to your grandma versus to your boss, the act of choosing the appropriate speech style for each audience, can be called

a) Style-shifting
b) Covert Prestige
c) Slang

19. The conventional way of using language in our class, English 143, for example, "The functional morphemes, which are types of free morphemes, are conjunctions, prepositions, articles, and pronouns," can be called

    a) The linguistic register
    b) Slang
    c) Overt prestige

20. The use of special technical vocabulary associated with a specific area of work or interest is called

    a) Jargon
    b) Slang
    c) Taboo terms

21. The erroneous use of pronunciation or a word form as in "five women**s** and these men**s**" is based on a false analogy with a correct form. It is an example of hypercorrection

    a) True
    b) False

22. According to this hypothesis of the origins of AAE, this language shares apparent patterns with Jamaican Creole, Gullah, and other English-based creole languages. This hypothesis reflects

    a) Anglicist view
    b) Creolist view
    c) Substratist view

23. Find 10 AAE grammatical patterns in this abstract (punctuation is not considered). Write them out, translate into standardized English, and define what grammatical pattern it is:

    <u>It a girl</u> Shirley Jones and she live in Washington (2, live is done for you). Most everyone on her street <u>like</u> her because <u>she a nice girl</u> (2). And all the children <u>Shirley be riding</u> the bus to school everyday like her, too (1). Shirley, <u>she like Charles</u>, a boy in her class (1). <u>Don't no conversation happen</u> between them because <u>Shirley be scared of Charles</u> (3). Charles <u>don't hardly say nothing to her</u> neither (2).

    For example: live= lives Absence of –s inflection

24. Write 8 AAE phonological patterns and define what phonological pattern it is:

    Example: He is in <u>court.</u> (1)   court=cout   r vocalization

    <u>That</u> boy is not happy. (1)

    I'm <u>listening.</u> (1)

Take a bath. (1)

I passed. (1)

Submit your test. (1)

The bell rang. (2)

My brother can do it. (1)

25. Find 4 minimal pairs among the following words and underline the contrasting sound:

    For example: bat-bet
    Ride, cat, wise, pie, rite, pat, wide, tie

26. Sound /t/ can be pronounced with aspiration, unaspirated, and as a flap in the following words: tea [t ^{h}i], stop [stɒp], and writer [raɪɾƏr]. This is an example of

    a) Allophones
    b) Allormorphs

27. In the sentence- I can go [aɪ kæŋ goʊ], velar [g] influences [n] and makes it come out as a velar nasal sound [ŋ]. On its own, [n] is an alveolar nasal. This is an example of

    a) Elision
    b) Assimilation

28. There are 10 morphemes in this sentence. Identify these morphemes and write above them, which one is lexical (for ex., child), functional (for ex., and), derivational (for ex., -er in teacher), and inflectional (for ex., -s in cats).

    The friend's disrespectfulness surprised him.

29. Define the parts of speech of each word in the following sentence:

    He suddenly stopped her long conversation in a rude manner.

30. Create a labeled and bracketed analysis of the following sentence:

    The clerk answered all my questions.

Extra credit (2 points each):

31. Write 4 allomorphs for the morpheme “past tense”

32. Write IPA for the following words: although, perhaps, never, cute, vowel, charisma, exercise, hour.

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE ON ASSESSMENT PRACTICES OF K-12 LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHERS

The questions in this questionnaire are focused on written and oral assessment practices of K-12 language arts teachers in the U.S. public schools. Please answer the following questions and email the filled-out form to me through lbelomo@ilstu.edu.

1. Please share what grade you are teaching and years of teaching experience.

2. What kind of written and oral national assessment (or national assessment that integrates language skills) do you conduct in the classroom?

3. What kind of written and oral state assessment (or state assessment that integrates language skills) do you conduct in the classroom?

4. What kind of district benchmark or interim oral and written (or integrated) assessments do you do?

5. Are some of the types of assessment mentioned above standard-based? If so, what kind of assessment are they? (For example, PARCC, MAP, STAR and other kinds). Please explain if they are national, state, or district, and whether the test is oral, written, or integrated.

6. There has been some criticism that the central role of teacher-based curricular decision making has been replaced by teaching to the Common Core (Sleeter & Carmona, 2017, p. 44). Do you agree or disagree with this criticism of standard-based assessment removing teachers from their central location in education? Please explain.

7. Is there room for dialects in student speaking and writing in the classroom?

8. If you do incorporate dialect into the classroom, what methods/approaches do you use in moving between dialect forms and standardized (School) English?

9. Is there a conversation in the classroom about the status of mainstream and any nonmainstream English language variety in terms of correctness or validity?

10. Is there a conversation about the rhetorical effects of the employment of both mainstream (standardized) and nonmainstream (dialects) English in literature and why one language variety does not fit all communication tasks?

11. Are dialect features corrected in all types of written and oral assessment, or are there assessment practices that welcome dialect features?

12. Were you required to take an introductory linguistics course, and did it introduce you to the main features of some nonmainstream English language varieties?

13. If you took an introductory linguistics course, were you introduced to the teaching strategies of how to compare and contrast mainstream English to nonmainstream English language varieties?

14. Do you think that standardized assessment accurately meets the needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (For example, speakers of nonmainstream dialect or English as a Second/Foreign Language speakers, generation 1.5 students, etc.)?

15. What is your opinion of standardized assessment/testing in terms of being a true measure of student written and oral linguistic abilities? Please explain.

16. In your opinion, should the construction of standardized tests/assessment be representative of culturally and linguistically diverse students' home languages?

17. Do you agree or disagree that welcoming the employment of oral and written nonmainstream English varieties (dialects) in assessment practices and teaching will enhance both mainstream and nonmainstream students' oral and linguistic skills, develop dialect awareness and appreciation, and contribute to the reflection and respect of the diversity of our society?

18. Are you encouraged to add additional content that you consider important to the curriculum prescribed by your school?

19. If so, what kind of additional content do you implement in the curriculum and how do you assess it? Please explain.

20. If you are not in a position to add additional content to the curriculum, what kind of content would you add if you were?

21. How would you assess the content you would implement?

22. Do you employ written and oral alternative assessment in your classroom? Alternative assessment are portfolios, journals, conferences, interviews, observations, and self- and peer-assessments in the classroom.

23. Does alternative assessment count towards the student grade?

24. In case you employ alternative assessment, what value do you see in this type of assessment when evaluating your students' written and oral linguistic skills?

25. What kind of performance-based assessment do you conduct, and does it count towards student grade? Performance-based assessment is curriculum-based and usually asks students to construct responses on real-world tasks, so an oral interview is an example of performance-based assessment.

26. Does the curriculum give space to design your own assessment practices and tests and if so, please describe them?

27. In your opinion, how should knowledge be selected and who decides what knowledge is most worth teaching and learning?

28. How do you think assessment can best serve students' interest and encourage students to become engaged in literacy learning?

29. In conclusion, what do you think would be an ideal assessment that best evaluates both mainstream and nonmainstream students' written and oral linguistic skills?