

Video: “[3 ways to speak English](#)”

Standard Language

Consider the following statement about Standard English and try to decide whether you agree or disagree with them, providing a reason in each case for your decision.

- Standard English is not a language
- Standard English is an accent
- Standard English is a Speech style
- Standard English is a set of rules for correct usage



Dialectology – Language vs. Dialect

- **Dialectology**: is a branch of sociolinguistics that studies the systematic variants of a language
- Linguistic criterion - mutual intelligibility: Can the speakers of two different language forms readily understand one another?
- Cultural criterion - takes into account the opinion of the speakers: do the speakers themselves think of their form of language as a variety of a more standard form of speech?
- Differentiating language from dialect involves a language's political status, a factor that is external to the form of the language and sometimes even at variance with the culture of the speakers.



Accent vs. dialect

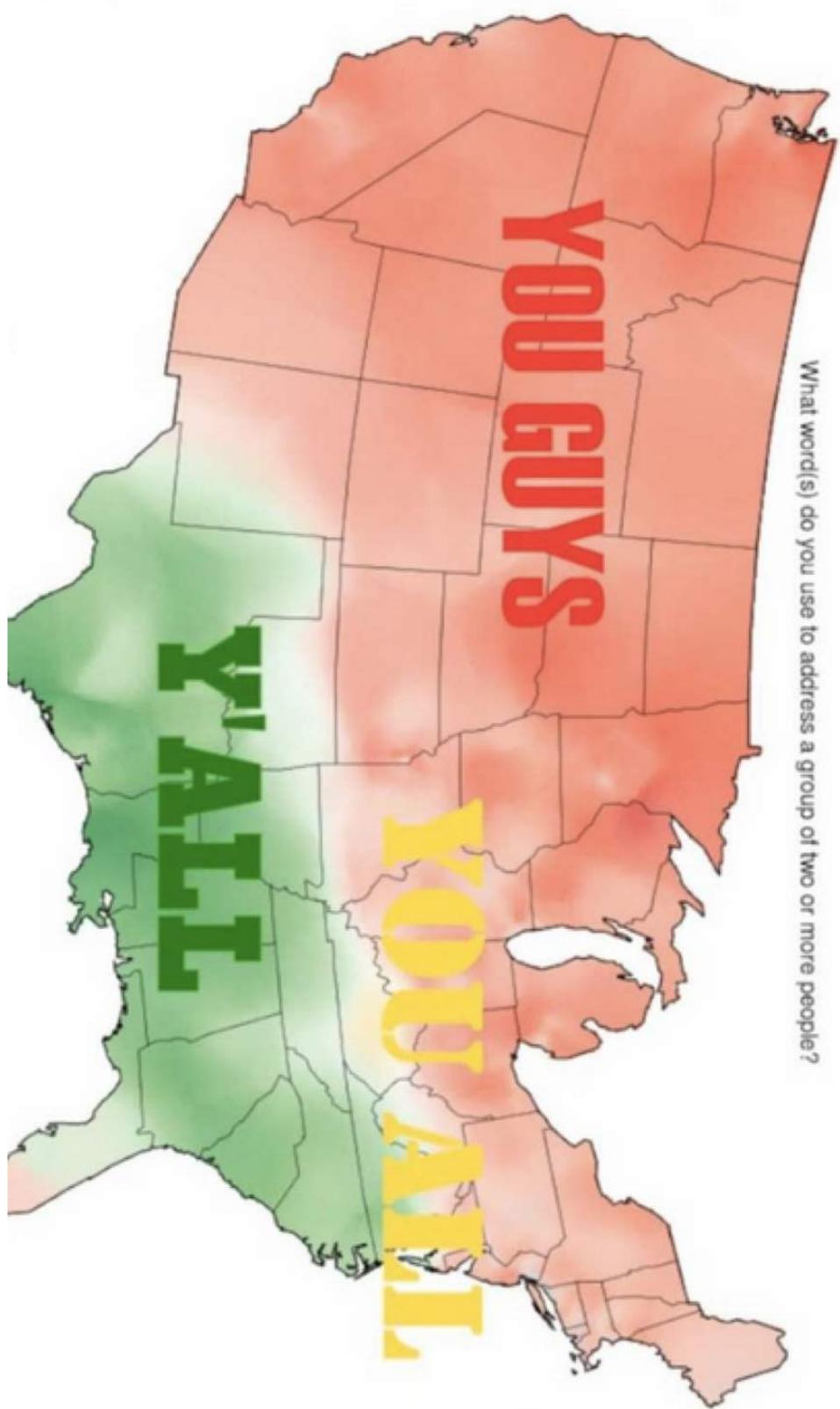
- **Accent** – describes aspects of pronunciation which identify where an individual is from regionally or socially
- **Dialect** – describes features of grammar & vocabulary, as well as aspects of pronunciation



- **Regional variation - Regional dialects:**
 - **quiz:** Post a comment with the results of your quiz and say whether it is accurate!
 - **Article:** Business Insider – January 5, 2013
 - **Isoglosses** - lines which represents a boundary between the areas with regard to that one particular linguistic item.
 - **Dialect boundaries vs. Dialect continuum**
 - Dialect Boundary is a more solid line of a number of isoglosses.
 - Taking into account that Isoglosses and dialect boundaries don't have sharp breaks from one region to the next, they exist along a continuum.



What word(s) do you use to address a group of two or more people?



■ you guys



Bilingualism

- What is the official language of the U.S.?
- How does a region / country become bilingual?
- What are the pros and cons of being bilingual?



Language Planning

- **Selection:** Choosing the variety to be an official language
- **Codification:** Standardizing its structural/linguistics features – elaboration of grammars, dictionaries and written models.
- **Elaboration:** Extending its functions for its use in new domains – all aspects of social life.
- **Implementation:** attempts by the government to encourage use of the standard.
- **Acceptance:** the population use and think of it as the national language.



Social variation – Variationist Sociolinguistics

- Variation – there is more than one way to say the same thing
- Sociolinguistics – study the relationship between language and society
- Investigate if there is systematic variation involving the two variables (linguistic and social) by counting how often speakers in each class use each version of the linguistic variable.

Social class: Middle class & Working class

Economic class: Upper & Lower

- use of statistical programs to handle its multi-variable nature

Dialect studies had focused (up until then) on rural speakers and has ignored social factors – **regional variation** Urban accents / dialects were thought to be too diverse and too heterogeneous to study





William Labov

- 1927, Rutherford, New Jersey
- The founder of the discipline of variationist sociolinguistics.
- Studies at Harvard (B.A) and Columbia (M.A. / Ph.D.)
- He worked as an industrial chemist before becoming a linguist!
- University of Pennsylvania – Semi retired at the end of Spring 2014
- Study of varieties of English in NYC
 - Martha's Vineyard
 - NYC



Study: Social stratification of (r) in NYC

- Variants of the phonological variable (r) – post-vocalic position

Example: *fourth floor*

- Presence
- Absence

NYC = r-less – non-rhotic accent

- Social variables – social classes
 - Saks Fifth Avenue (Highest)
 - Macy's (Middle)
 - Klein's (Lowest)

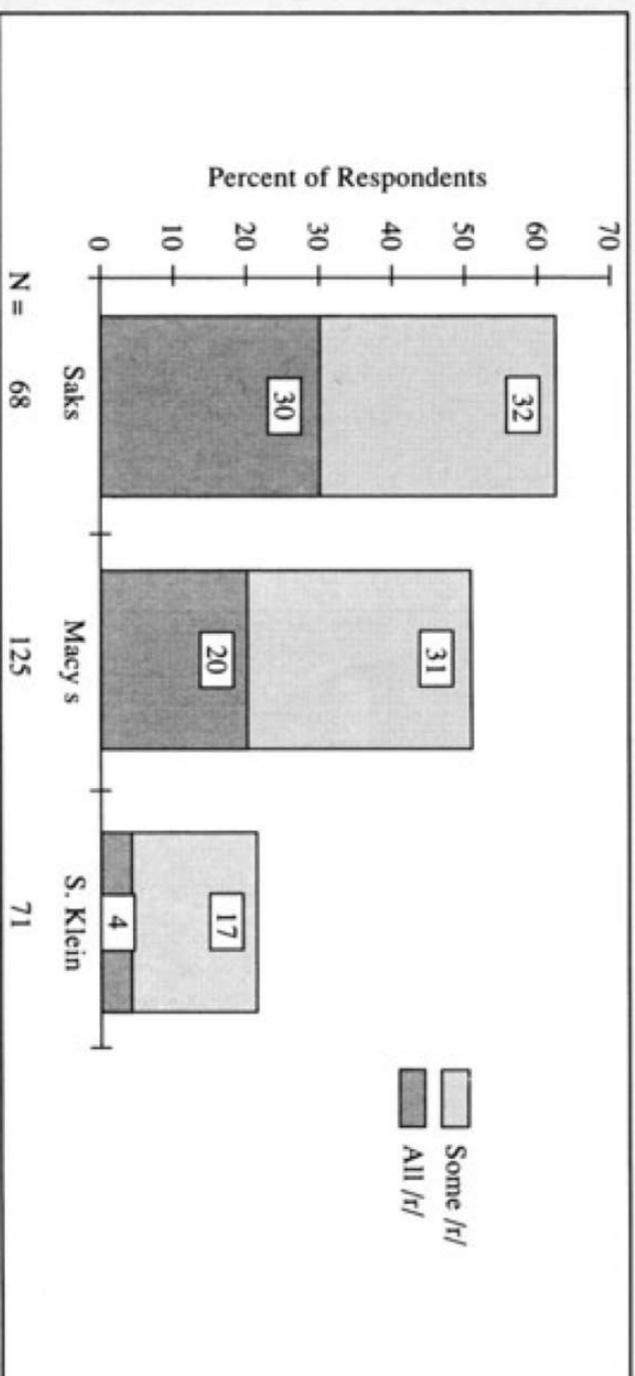
Is the linguistic variable (r) a

social differentiator in all level of

New York City speech?



Overall Stratification of /r/ by Store in New York City



(Source: Finegan, 2004: 391)

The pronunciation of /r/ depended on the social class of the employees - Those employees with higher socioeconomic status pronounced /r/ more frequently than those with lower socioeconomic status



Peter Trudgill

- 1943, Norwich (England)
- King's College, Cambridge (B.A.)
- University of Edinburgh (Ph.D.)
- Professor at the University of Essex – retired 2005
- Labovian methodology in UK - Reading



Table 19.1 *Percentages of groups pronouncing postvocalic /r/*

Social class	New York City	Reading
upper middle class	32	0
lower middle class	20	28
upper working class	12	44
lower working class	0	49

Social markers – particular linguistic feature (speech sound) that marks an speaker as a member of a specific social group



Possible mediums: email, text message, letter, voicemail, snapchat, Facebook, ????

Example 1

To: your friend

Message: you want to meet with your friend to watch the new Blade Runner Movie on Friday. (Where? / time?)

Example 2

To: your professor

Message: you need to meet with her/him as soon as possible because you have missed the review class and the final exam is next week

Example 3

To: friends

Message: it is your 21st birthday (a big one!)



Discussion questions

- In the study of social dialects, what is “the observer’s paradox” and how can it be overcome?
- What is the difference between an accent and a dialect?
- What does an isogloss represent in a linguistic atlas?
- What are the first two stages of language planning in the process of adopting a national language?
- What is the difference between style-shifting and code-switching?
- What is meant by a “register”?
- According to Brown and Attardo (2005): “If children move to an area before the age of nine, they are able to “pick up” the local dialect, which their parents do not.” Do you think this statement is true of both regional dialect and social dialect? When and how do you think people develop their social dialects?
- English is not the official language of the United States, but some insist that it should be. What are the arguments for and against the ‘English-Only Movement’?



According to Fought (2003), Chicano English is spoken in the southwestern region of the USA (from Texas to California), mainly by individuals of Mexican- American heritage.

Consider the following statements about Chicano English and try to decide whether you agree or disagree with them, providing a reason in each case for your decision.

- Chicano English is a dialect of American English.
- Chicano English is another term for “Spanglish.”
- Chicano English is simply ungrammatical or “broken” English , as exemplified by sentences such as “*Everybody knew the Cowboys was gonna win*” again and “*She don’t know Brenda*”
- Chicano English is the second language learner’s English of people from countries where Spanish is spoken.
- There are no native speakers of Chicano English.

