A course to make students aware of the patterns of the different dialects of American English is offered by the Dade County Public Schools. Designed to foster tolerance for other ways of speaking, the quinmester program helps students to determine their own dialect and to compare it with alternative forms of speech. The course content includes a definition of dialect, a study of the regions of dialect, causes for dialects, identification of dialect variables, and a survey of dialects. Learning activities center around dialect examples from literature, newspapers, radio, and television. The course guide contains a list of suggested literature, as well as a list of student and teacher resources such as textbooks, magazines, and media resources. (RS)
AUTHORIZED COURSE OF INSTRUCTION FOR THE QUIMESTER PROGRAM

DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DIDISION OF INSTRUCTION•1971

Language Arts: COMPARATIVE DIALECTS  5112.23
5113.23
5114.23
5115.23
5116.23
5187.03
COMPARATIVE DIALECTS

5112. 23
5113. 23
5114. 23
5115. 23
5116. 23
5187. 03

English, Vocabulary

Written by Ann Hendrick
for the
DIVISION OF INSTRUCTION
Dade County Public Schools
Miami, Florida
1971
Course Title: Comparative Dialects

Course Number
5112.23
5113.23
5114.23
5115.23
5116.23
5187.03

I. Performance Objectives

A. Having examined the phonology, vocabulary, and grammar of different sub-groups, the student will formulate a definition of dialect.

B. Given information about the different dialect regions in America, the student will suggest causes for dialectical differences.

C. Given passages in various types of dialects, the student will identify the variables.

D. Having taken a dialect survey, the student will deduce the dialect area of his informants.

E. Given the premise that major American dialects have consistent patterns, the student will compare the pattern of his own dialect with an alternative pattern.

II. Course Content

"Do you speak in a dialect around here?"

"Nope. I sure don't."

"Do you know anyone who does?"

"Yep. That feller over yonder speaks kinder funny. He has a nasal twang in his voice and pronounces some words kinder funny. I like he calls Yellar Creek over there Yellar Crick."

The imaginary conversation above illustrates most people's idea of a dialect -- something that they are immune from but that other people have. The purpose of a course in comparative dialects is to make students
aware that everyone has a dialect, that the way a person speaks is not necessarily an indication of ability or education, and that language correctness is a matter of using language that is appropriate for the audience and the purpose. In defining dialects, therefore, the student needs to take into consideration the levels of usage and to consider what is appropriate language for a given purpose and speech community.

It is imperative in a course of this nature that no ridicule or censure is cast upon those who speak differently, for everyone speaks differently from someone else. If the teacher can make use of his own regional expressions and pronunciations that are different from those found in use by the students, he will help the students recognize that no one is "immune" to speaking differently and that there need not be a stigma attached to a dialect. Another way this can be brought out is to compare the voice print to the fingerprint; just as no two people have the same fingerprints, neither can two people make the same voice print. To the listener, a mimic may be able to sound exactly like another person, but the voice prints of the two would be completely different. Hopefully a side benefit of a course such as this will be that the student will no longer foster linguistic prejudices against those who use pronunciations or expressions different from his; instead he will withhold giving an immediate judgment on the other person's education and ability by the way he speaks.

In defining what dialect is, the student also needs to take into consideration the levels of usage and what determines the appropriateness of language in a given situation. If the idea of using language according to the purpose of the communication and for the audience can be achieved, the teacher will have taken a first step towards ridding his students of language prejudices; especially if the student himself can realize that he uses a different type of language when he is talking to his friends from what he uses when he is talking to complete strangers. The student should recognize that the dialect he uses should be the one that is appropriate for the community he is talking with, whether that is his immediate family, his friends or schoolmates, his work or age group, his neighborhood, his city, or his area of the country.

The range of subject matter in this course will include the following:

I. Definition of dialect
   A. Variations in pronunciation
   B. Variations in vocabulary
   C. Variations in syntax

II. Regions of dialects
A. Eastern New England
B. North
C. North Midland
D. South Midland
E. South

III. Causes for dialects
A. Separation of people into different areas
B. Early settlement
C. Population migration
D. Physical geography
E. Cultural centers
F. Social structure
G. Late immigrations

IV. Identification of dialect variables
A. Vocabulary
   1. Age
   2. Sex
   3. Occupation
   4. Region
B. Pronunciation
   1. Age
   2. Education
   3. Region
C. Syntax
   1. Age
   2. Education
   3. Region
V. Survey of dialects
   A. Method
   B. Application

VI. Patterns of dialect
   A. Written
      1. Older forms
      2. Recent forms
   B. Spoken

III. Teaching Strategies
   A. Keep a bulletin board with unusual uses of words that students find in newspapers, cartoons, advertisements, magazines, and in articles found pertaining to the use of language (e.g., Sidney Harris) as an on-going class project throughout the course.

   B. Use the overhead projector or the opaque projector for as many written examples as possible. Have students make a transparency of phonemic transcriptions for comparisons of pronunciation variations. Let the students use the overhead projector to illustrate the individual and group presentations.

   C. Play recordings and/or tape-slide presentations of literature written in a dialect so that students can hear the words that have been written in an eye dialect.

   D. Play recordings that illustrate the changes in English pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax to introduce the students to the idea that language is not a constant and that standards of language can vary.

   E. Ditto several short passages (approximately 1-5 sentences) from short stories, novels, non-fiction, and poetry that use different levels of language, slang expressions, occupational terminology for students to analyze as to what the language used in each passage tells about the selection. Begin with a class analysis and then break into small groups for more individual work. Each group could report back to the class on its findings so that the class can challenge or add to the analysis.
F. Give an incident for a group of students to role play. The rest of the class determines the differences in language used.

EXAMPLE: You cannot get your assignment in on time because you waited until the last minute to go to the library. When you got there, the books you needed were all checked out. Tell your teacher; your best friend; a chance acquaintance. You must tell the truth. This incident could be taped for more accurate evaluation.

IV. Learning Activities

OBJECTIVE I

1. The students determine that they all speak differently by comparing their own vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation by taking the following dialect check quiz:

A. Vocabulary -- students write what they call the following:

1. their father
2. their mother
3. center of a peach
4. a policeman
5. place where they buy groceries (not a specific place of business)

E. Grammar -- students fill in the blank with the word they use:

1. He's _____ his stomach.
2. He's the man _____ owns the car.
3. I won't go _____ he does.
4. It's quarter _____ five.
5. plural of you

C. Pronunciation -- different students pronounce each word as it is written on the board (transparency) and compare their different pronunciations:

1. roof
2. greasy
3. nine
4. this (that)
5. want to go
6. mouse

2. The students work on distinguishing the different sounds of consonants, vowels, and diphthongs in words, using the phonemic alphabet found in New Dimensions in English, p. 16; Roberts, grade 7; Shuy's Discovering American Dialects, pp. 7 and 9.
3. The students listen to the record *Sound Skills for Upper Grades*, albums 1 and/or 2 and discuss different sounds in words.

4. The students discuss why they use different names for things. EXAMPLES: family members, community items, foods, etc.

5. The students examine a group of words that can have different meanings according to who uses them and discuss what these words mean to different people; then they make a list of their own. EXAMPLES: dough—bread, money; dogs—feet, soldiers, ugly girls, canines; spider—skillet or frying pan, insect.

6. The students determine how vocabulary reflects age, sex or occupation of individual. EXAMPLES: age—ice box; sex—lovely (y-ending words generally used by females); occupation—lawyer's brief.

7. The students discuss why they use different syntactical forms. EXAMPLES: sick at my stomach, sick to my stomach, sick on my stomach.

8. The students read a list of 4 or 5 kernel sentences and then combine them into one or more sentences to illustrate that there are different ways of saying the same thing. EXAMPLE: 1. John is a star athlete. 2. He plays football. 3. Football is a game. 4. The game is very rough. 5. It requires muscles. Possible combinations: John, a star athlete, plays football, a very rough game that requires muscles. John, who is a star athlete, plays the very rough game of football, which requires muscles. John plays football, a very rough game that requires muscles. He is a star athlete.

9. The students view videotape "Dialects in Modern English" for class discussion.

10. The students meet in groups at the conclusion of this phase of study to define dialects.

11. The students transcribe a list of words into phonemics, using individual pronunciation and a copy of the phonemic alphabet. EXAMPLES: seize, wrings, pawed, quench, hoists, squirm, flared, need, coughed, strange, poor, whales.

12. The students translate a phonemic transcription into written English using a copy of the phonemic alphabet.
13. The students read a short poem or prose passage and transcribe it into phonemics using the phonemic alphabet.

14. The students read chapter 7, pp. 132-165 in *An Introduction to Language* and discuss the study suggestions, pp. 137-138.

15. The students listen to portions of recordings of speeches to discuss pronunciation variations. EXAMPLES: President Kennedy, President Johnson, Will Rogers, William Faulkner.

16. Individual students or groups research slang, jargon, localisms and colloquialisms and be able to define and give examples of each.

17. The students read Chapter 3, *An Introduction to Language*, pp. 42-54 and discuss Exercise B and C, pp. 54-56.

18. The students will prepare and present panel discussions on vocabulary characteristics of particular speech communities: profession or trade—lawyer, doctor, plumbers, carpenters; hobby—model planes, stamp collecting; sports—bridge or poker, football, surfing, etc.

19. The students read Chapter 4 in *An Introduction to Language* and discuss the exercises passages, pp. 80-83.

20. The students examine a short literary passage for syntax used and discuss why the author may have used that form. EXAMPLES: Mark Twain, Langston Hughes, Ring Lardner.

21. A group of students present a roundtable discussion on the definition of dialect.

22. A group of students present a panel discussion on what are speech communities, how they can be recognized as such, and what type of language habits certain groups might have. EXAMPLES: family dialects, a school class dialect (English, history, math), an occupational or professional dialect.

23. The students view film *Sounds of Language* for class discussion.

24. A group of students tape a short passage for the class to transcribe into phonemics.

25. The students listen to two or three local radio stations and report on the type of pronunciation the speakers used.
26. The class will select a TV program and listen for differences in pronunciation to discuss why the sounds were used as they were.
   EXAMPLES: Beverly Hillbillies, Gunsmoke, Family Affair, To Rome with Love.

27. The students listen to two or three local radio stations and report on the type of vocabulary the speakers used.

28. The students view a TV program for different types of vocabulary used and discuss why the vocabulary was used as it was.

29. Individual students or groups research syntactical forms that were once standard and are no longer in general use. Discuss why they may have gone out of use.
   EXAMPLE: double negative.

30. The students view a TV program for the different syntactical forms that are used and discuss why they were used as they were.
   EXAMPLES: Beverly Hillbillies, Gunsmoke, Green Acres.

31. The students write a paper describing their idiolect by telling what words they don't use according to their age, sex, and the speech communities they belong to.

OBJECTIVE II

1. The students listen to some of the free spoken passages on Americans Speaking (record) and compare pronunciation and vocabulary to own. Discuss possible reasons for differences. (The pamphlet that accompanies the recording gives a checklist of differences in pronunciation.)

2. The students examine a list of place names and discuss what the names tell about the area.

3. The students view the filmstrip What's in a Name and discuss.

4. Students draw a map tracing the migration of settlers in the United States (use acetate, poster).

5. The students examine a map with broad regional dialects identified and listen to speakers from those regions for characteristics of dialects.
6. The students read and discuss chapter "American Dialects" in Warriner's.

7. The students examine road maps for what the place names tell about the people and history of that location.

8. The students compile a list of words that all refer to the same thing but are different names used in other localities. EXAMPLES: creek, stream, brook, run, branch, fork, prong, gulf, binneckill, binacle, rivulet, riverlet, gutter, kill, bayou, burn.

9. Students draw maps (acetates, posters) of the dialect areas in the United States with a legend to point out key differences in pronunciation and vocabulary.

10. A group of students presents a panel discussion on peculiarities of speech in Miami.


12. Individual students or a group report on the procedures of "dialect geography," "linguistic geography," or "area linguistics."

13. Groups of students research the influences on language of the migrations to our country during the Colonial Period, the Post-revolutionary Period, the Civil War Period, the Twentieth Century.

14. The students compare their own regional dialect variations using the work done in the first phase of this course.

15. Individual students tape a free spoken passage to compare regional variations in language.

16. A group of students present a panel discussion on reasons for regional variations in language.

17. Individual students prepare group reports that deal with regional language differences and the reasons for them: cultural differences and sameness, environment, geographical and topographical aspects of area, and occupations—all of which affect the language. EXAMPLES: The Ozarks, the Florida Lowlands, Downeast Maine.
18. Individual students research the differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax in American regional dialects: look for geographical, historical and time elements which affect dialect variations.

19. The students listen to a television program that uses distinct regional dialects and report on regional speech patterns used by one character in that program.
   EXAMPLES: Gunsmoke, Beverly Hillbillies, Green Acres, Petticoat Junction.

OBJECTIVE III

1. Groups of students collect newspapers from several different United States dialect regions (small town papers would be a good source) to study the society, sports, and local pages for examples of dialect.

2. The class collects local newspapers from the different areas of Dade County (i.e., North Dade, Coral Gables, Hialeah, South Dade) and examines the society, sports, and local pages for differences in dialects.

3. The students tape a dialogue written by themselves to compare the written and spoken language in a group activity.

4. The students keep a back-country journal of regional expressions heard or read. Identify the region and give the source where possible.

5. The students read a novel with different dialects in use and discuss the differences.
   EXAMPLES: authors to use could be John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, Willa Cather, Marjorie Rawlings, Leo Rosten.

6. The students view a non-dialogue movie and write a short dialogue using a dialect to indicate a region and/or occupation.

7. The students view a transparency of a scene with two or more people; identify a specific regional setting and write a short dialogue. Compare the dialogues for what they tell about people.
   EXAMPLES: two cowboys, two football players from Brooklyn on the field, a group of people at a party in Roanoke, Virginia.

8. The students read a passage in a British dialect and discuss how it differs from American speech.
9. The students listen to a recording of *My Fair Lady* and discuss the specific changes in language Professor Higgins brought about in Eliza.

10. A group collects folk songs from a specific area of the country and examines the dialects used.

11. A group of students present a panel discussion on Martin Jos, *Five Clocks*.

12. The students read chapter 5 in *An Introduction to Language*, pp. 84-100 and discuss exercises A, B, and/or D, pp. 97-101.

13. The students read *Dialects U.S.A.*, pp. 38-41 for dialect differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar found in the North, Midland, and Southern dialects for the purpose of discussing the similarities and differences noted in these charts. Then they transcribe 3 sentences into each dialect according to pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. EXAMPLES: Every morning in the summer I dived into the small stream even though my mother said I oughtn’t because I might run into an earthworm. I’ll wait for you a short distance from the haunted house at 9:45 after I take this paper sack of string beans to Mary.

14. The students collect superstitions from different regions in the country to identify the region and how the dialect reflects the region.

15. The students go through the Sunday paper to pick up language of the various sections and write a paper on the purposes and varieties of language.

16. The students examine a newspaper comic strip that shows people who use language characteristic of a particular community and analyze how it has been portrayed. EXAMPLES: “Snuffy Smith,” “PopEye,” “Li’l Abner”.

17. The students listen to a recording of one of Winston Churchill’s speeches and discuss the differences in pronunciation with American speech.

18. The students compare the written speech with the oral and discuss.

19. The students read a short story in a regional dialect to analyze the speech variables found in age, sex, occupation, education, and region of the characters.
20. The students read a novel or short story that uses dialect and write or give a report on how the language of one character reflects his age, sex, occupation, education and region.

OBJECTIVE IV

1. The class discusses how dialect surveys are taken.

2. The students in groups of 5 to 7 take a dialect survey of their group (see Dialects U.S.A. or Discovering American Dialects for questionnaire).

3. The students take a dialect survey of a friend who lives in another part of the country and compare it to own.

4. The students conduct the dialect survey, pp. 98-100 in An Introduction to Language and report findings to the class.

5. The students identify the influences on speech patterns found as a result of the class survey of dialects.

6. Each student takes a dialect survey of the immediate family and compares this to own, giving possible reasons why some of his vocabulary differs from his parents or other older members in his family.

7. The students write a composition on the topic "Why I Speak As I Do."

8. The students take a dialect survey of the neighborhood and determine the regional influences on the speech patterns in the neighborhood. Draw a map of the area and make a legend for a group report to the rest of the class.

9. A group of students take a dialect survey of a teacher, secretary, guidance counselor, etc. in the school and determine what region the informant was from originally and what forces seem to have been at work in the formation of his dialect.

10. Individual student reports on the differences in dialects in two sections of England.

11. A group of students analyze the speech of an adult (consider age, origin, ancestry, and occupation).

OBJECTIVE V

1. One student listens to a trite story and changes the dialect to
match the American region.
EXAMPLE: How would a boy try to meet a pretty girl on a New York subway train? On a Main Street in Savannah, Georgia? In the Ozark Mountains? On a Texas ranch? In a staid, New England town?

2. The students listen to a record of a comedian using dialect and analyze the pattern.
   EXAMPLE: Bill Cosby, Shelley Berman, Alan Sherman, Flip Wilson, Sam Levinson.

3. The students select a well-known fairy tale, nursery rhyme, or news story and retell it in a dialect to compare with the original.
   EXAMPLE: "Little Red Riding Hood," "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," "Little Miss Muffet".

4. The students read excerpts from a play and determine what dialect characteristics each character has and what the language used tells about the character.
   EXAMPLES: I Remember Mama, Twelve Angry Men.

5. The students listen to records of ballads and folk songs to distinguish between genuine and spurious dialects.
   EXAMPLES: American Folksay, Johnny Cash's Greatest Hits, Negro Folk Songs for Young People.

6. The students read or listen to a poem in regional American dialect and analyze how the dialect was indicated, its purpose, and its consistency.

7. The students write a commercial for a new product and compare the language patterns to those on commercial radio and/or television.

8. The students tape one of their discussions; transcribe each individual's part of it into phonemics, and then compare their patterns of pronunciation of words in sentences.


10. The students examine a passage written several years ago, one written more recently, and one written today to contrast the sentence patterns of the passage. The students then write each passage as they would tell it to contrast with the original for vocabulary and sentence structure.

-13-
EXAMPLE: Bradford's *Journal*, Lee's *Farewell to his Troops*, and Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley*.

11. The students write a paper on the use of semantic shift as a device in humor.

12. Individual students tape a reading of a short passage written in standard English, then one talking freely for two minutes on a subject of own choice to compare the differences in pronunciation and vocabulary of the two passages.
SUGGESTED LITERARY SELECTIONS FOR COMPARATIVE DIALECT STUDY

Poetry
Benet, Stephen Vincent. "The Mountain Whippoorwill" in *Currents in Poetry*. (Georgia)

Short Stories
Stuart, Jesse. "The Moon Child from Wolfe Creek" in *Perception: Themes in Literature*, (Kentucky)
"Split Cherry Tree" in *Adventures in American Literature*. Olympic Edition. (Kentucky)
Twain, Mark. "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" in *Studies to the Short Story*. (Far West)

Novels


**Plays**


Van Druten, John. *I Remember Mama* in *Plays to Enjoy*. (San Francisco Norwegian)
V. Student Resources

A. State adopted Textbooks:


B. Non-state-adopted supplementary materials

1. Books


2. Media Resources

American Folksay, 3 vol.  Educational Record Sales, 3-12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.  Peter Seeger, Leadbelly, Cisco Houston and others.

Americans Speaking.  National Council Teachers of English, 1967.  2 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.

Bret Harte Stories.  Educational Record Sales.  1 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.  read by Ed Begley.

The Changing English Language.  Educational Record Sales.  2 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.
Deer in the Forest. Encyclopedia Brittanica Educational Corporation. 16" color. Dade County number 1-13872. (film)

Dialects in Modern English. Lesson 19, English II. Dade County Department of Educational Media. Video-tape, 27".

Hunter in the Forest. Encyclopedia Brittanica Educational Corporation. 8" black/white. Dade County number 1-02191. (film)

Johnny Cash's Greatest Hits. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m.


Negro Folk Songs for Young People. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m.

Negro Poetry for Young People. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 10" 33-1/3 r. p. m. read by Arna Bontemps.

A Place in the Sun. Films, Incorporated. 7" color. Dade County number 1-13696. (film)

Poetry of Robert Burns. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m. read by Frederick Worlock.

Ring Lardner Stories. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 16 r. p. m. read by Henry Morgan.

Scenes from American Novels. Educational Record Sales. 2 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m. read by Paul Sparer and John Roberts.

Songs of the Mountains, Appalachian Mountains--Old British Songs. Society for Visual Education. record and filmstrip.

Sound Skills for Upper Grades, albums 1 and 2. Educational Record Sales. 2 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m.

Spoken English. Scott Foresman. 2 - 12" 33-1/3 r. p. m.

The Strange Case of the English Language. Bailey-Film Associates, 1968. 48" color. (film)
A Thousand Years of English Pronunciation. Educational Record Sales. 2 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.

1 filmstrip, 1 record, and guide.

William Faulkner. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.

Will Rogers. Educational Record Sales. 1 - 12" 33-1/3 r.p.m.

A Word in Your Ear. Folkways. (record and tape.)

VI. Teacher Resources

A. Books and magazines


