

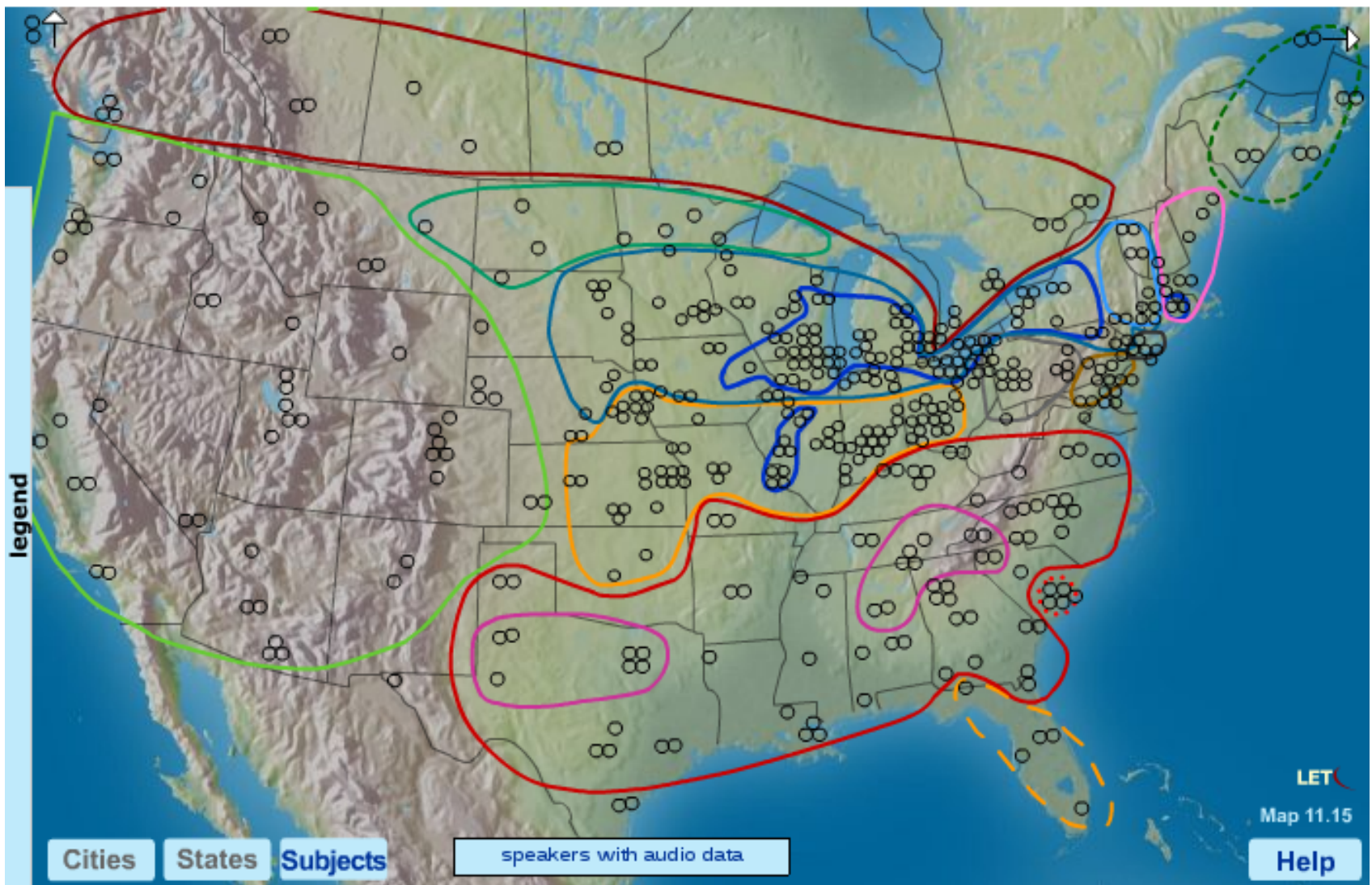
Levels of Dialect, Cont.

Linguistics 159 – American Dialects

October 2, 2014

Rickford, 1985

North American English Dialects



SOUTH CAROLINA Sea Islands

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Gullah/Sea Island Creole

- **Pidgin** = language variety induced by contact, created out of a communicative need; always an L2
- **Creole** = nativized language variety created from a pidgin (L1)
- **Gullah** = creole likely constructed from contact between English and West/Central African languages; spoken by African-American Gullah communities in Sea Islands & Southeastern coast

Variation Studies

- Picking a variable
- What are the **variants**?
- How to quantify?
 - **In which contexts** can they occur?
 - Are there cases that are nearly **categorical**?
- What are the **factors** that might predict variation?
 - Structural/Linguistic
 - Social/Extra-linguistic





Mr. King and Mrs. Queen

- What is the research question?
- Who are Mr. King/Mrs. Queen? How are they similar/different from one another?
- Pros of comparing two speakers?
- Cons of comparing two speakers?
- Other potential ways to investigate?

Phonology

- TH/DH stopping
- Post-vocalic /r/ & /l/ deletion
- Word-final Consonant Cluster Reduction (CCR)

- **Can't** as /kja:n/ and **here** /je/
- /tr/ affrication
- Laxing of open-syllable vowels in function words
- Intonation/prosody

Morphology

- Plural formation
- Passivization
- Possessives

Plural formation

- Noun##dem
- Noun#0
- Noun#s

Plural formation

TABLE I
Plural Formation in the Speech of Two Sea Islanders

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Noun ## dem</i>	<i>Noun#Ø</i>	<i>Noun#s</i>
Mrs. Queen (n = 128)	.01	.76	.23
Mr. King (n = 114)	.00	.06	.94

I got two bruddaØ. [Ø after plural numeral]

TingØ change. [Ø where nonspecific; here equivalent to 'Things have changed']

Passivization

- Unmarked
- *Get* passives
- *Be* passives

TABLE 2
Passives in the Speech of Two Sea Islanders

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Unmarked Passives</i>	<i>Get Passives</i>	<i>Be Passives</i>
Mrs. Queen (n = 17)	.71	.23	.06
Mr. King (n = 11)	.00	.36	.64

Possessives

- Unmarked
 - -s
-
- Mrs. Queen: 88% unmarked
 - Mr. King: 14.2 % unmarked

Black-White Speech Differences in Other Studies

- What other studies are discussed?
- What were the findings?

Why the differences?

- **Distance** versus **difference**
- Structural or geographic distance
- Historical difference
- Contact
- Social identity/motivation

Why differences in morphosyntax, but not phonology?

- Precedent from other communities
- Phonological forms = regional/national norms
- Morphosyntax = associated with creole (intra-regional social variation; ethnic markers)

Discussion

- Would we expect younger speakers to show the same patterns? Why or why not?
- Other factors that could contribute to these differences? What evidence would we need to test this?
- Do Mr. King and Mrs. Queen speak different dialects?

Slang and Word of the Year

Creating New Words

- Coining
- Broadening/Narrowing Meaning
- Meaning shift
 - Figurative Extension

Creating New Words

- Compounding
- Acronyms
- Blending
- Clipping
- Conversion
- Proper names
- Borrowing
- Folk etymology
- Back formation
- Recutting
- Derivation

Some Words of 2013

- Sharknado
- Thanksgivukkah
- Twerk
- Selfie
- Slash
- Shmeat
- Because

Words of the Year

- What do these words tell us about the social context of 2013?
- What should count as a “new word”?
- Who should decide?
- Are these words slang words?

What is slang?

- **Sociopsychological** rather than **linguistic** constructs
- Informality
- References group outside mainstream adults
- In-group membership
- Flouting of conventional terms
- Association with localized/temporary groups
- Authentication

Misused New Words

- **Selfie**
- Is **selfie** a slang term?
- What's the difference between an *innovation* and a *misuse*?

Discussion

- Where do these words come from?
- Who are the innovators?
- What can slang or new words tell us about the connection between language and culture?
- What's the relationship between slang and dialect differences?