

Perceptual Dialectology

LINGUIST 159 - American Dialects

October 23, 2014

Linguistics and Geography

What relevance does (physical) geography have on linguistics?

- (1) Geography blocks linguistic contact
- (2) Geography facilitates linguistic contact
- (3) Geography may even shape linguistic content

Linguistics and Perceptual Geography

What relevance does (perceptual) geography have on linguistics?

(1) Language “regard” – different from language “attitudes”

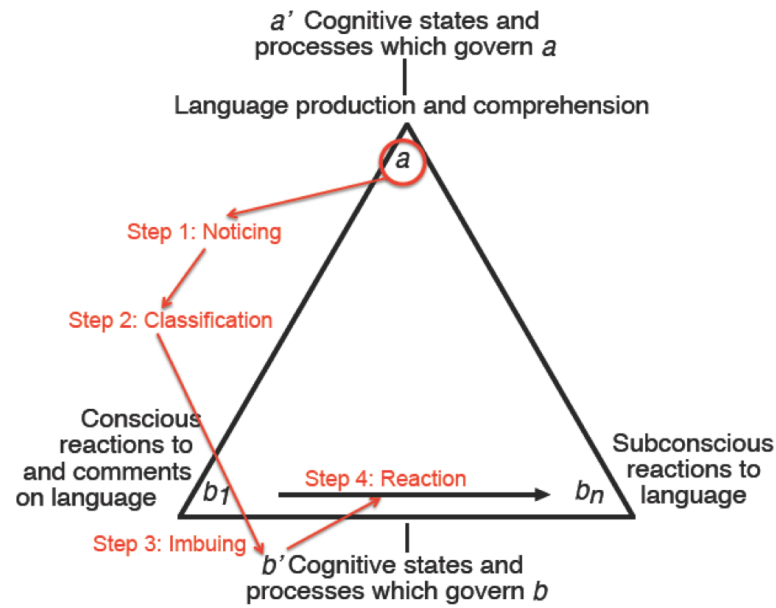


Figure 10. A procedural account of language regard — production, noticing, classifying, imbuing, and responding (modified from Niedzielski and Preston 2003:xi)

Linguistics and Perceptual Geography

What relevance does (perceptual) geography have on linguistics?

- (1) Language “regard” – different from language “attitudes
- (2) Can help us understand some of the psychological/ sociological motivations behind regional variation and language change.

Saliency (Labovian terms)

Indicators

a variable feature that shows no pattern of stylistic variation in users' speech, speakers are not aware of this variable.

Markers

a variable feature that shows stylistic variation, speakers use different variants in different contexts, the use of one variant over another is socially meaningful.

Stereotypes

a variable feature that is the overt topic of social comment; may become increasingly divorced from forms that are actually used.

Perceptual Dialectology ≠ *Perception* in Dialectology

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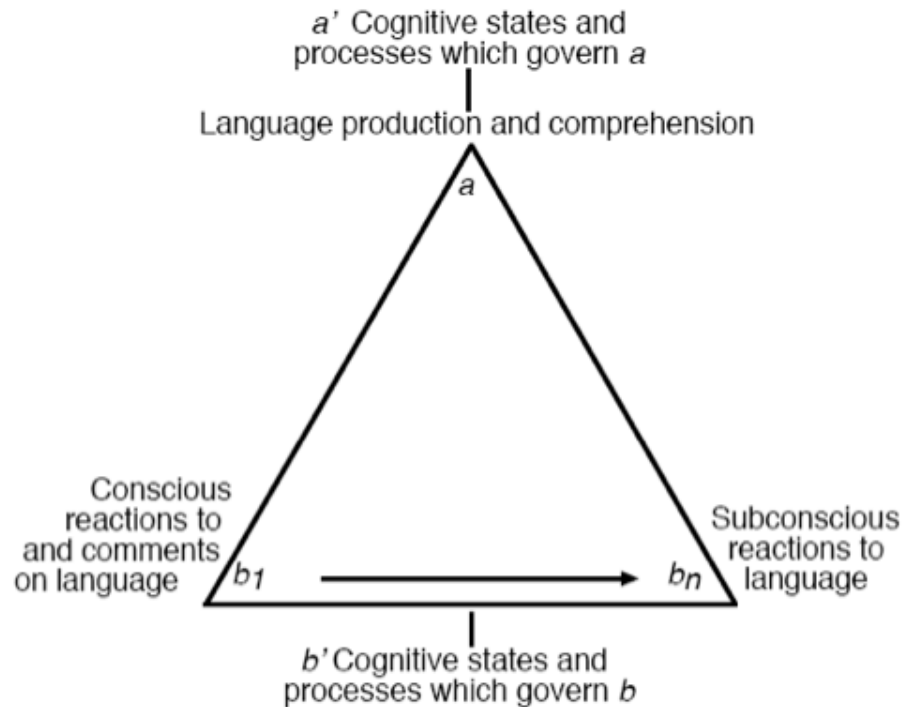


Figure 9. A first attempt to relate production, regard, and their cognitive underpinnings
(Niedzielski and Preston, 2003: xi)

Linguistic Security

How might relative linguistic security be related to language variation?

How might relative linguistic security be related to language change?

Types of Prestige

Overt Prestige: forms that have widespread recognition of positive social significance.

Covert Prestige: forms that are positively valued apart from, or even in opposition to, their social significance for the wider society

Types of PD work

- 1) Draw-a-map.
- 2) Degree-of-difference.
- 3) 'Correct' and 'pleasant.'
- 4) Dialect identification.
- 5) Qualitative data.

Study design elements

- 1) Voice samples are either:
 - A. Given, or
 - B. Not given
- 2) Tasks involve:
 - A. Evaluation, in which
 - i. Evaluative labels are given, or
 - ii. Not given
 - B. Identification, for which
 - i. Sites are given, or
 - ii. Not given
 - C. Respondent production (i.e., imitation) is
 - i. Requested, or
 - ii. Not requested
- 3) Modes of response are:
 - A. Specified (e.g. rating scale), or
 - B. Discursive
- 4) Awareness of the research target by the respondent is
 - A. (Relatively) conscious, or
 - B. (Relatively) subconscious

Summary

- Which variable (or system of variables) is investigated?
- What is the research question?
- Where was the research conducted?
- Who were the speakers/participants?
- How was data elicited?
- Why were these methods chosen?
- What were the findings?

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The Bucholtz et al. task

This map drawing task is part of an assignment for Linguistics 70: Language in Society. It is designed to discover your idea of the geographic distribution of language in California. What we are after are your own opinions, based on your knowledge and experiences. The right answer is the one you have, not the answer of some expert. On the back of this sheet is a map of California. **Please draw a boundary around each part of California where you believe people speak differently, and label the area.** You may not have visited every area, but you may have heard speakers in person or through the media. However, you should only draw as many boundaries as you want to draw. You should write down anything you think is important about language use in California. (p. 329)

The Voices of California task

Another thing we're asking everyone to do is to take a look at this map of California and think about how people might live differently or talk differently across the state. Some people say, for example, that there's a major division between Norcal and SoCal, and some people divide the coast from the Central Valley. What kind of cultural divisions do you see across the state--where are people different from each other, and where are they similar to each other? Could you draw those dividing lines for me on the map? And do you think people talk differently in those different regions of California? How do they talk?

Voices of California CA map (Sacramento)



Voices of California PD data

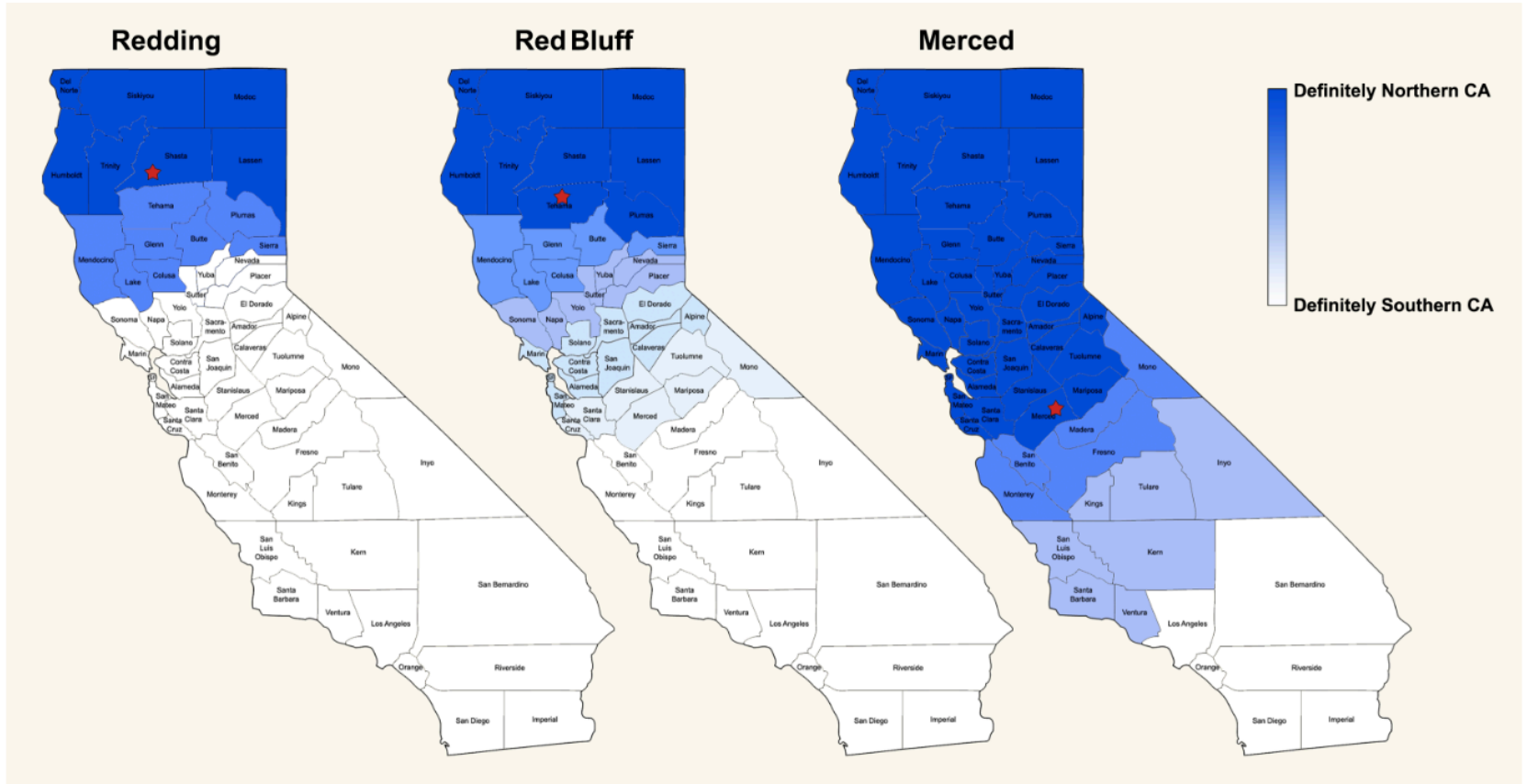
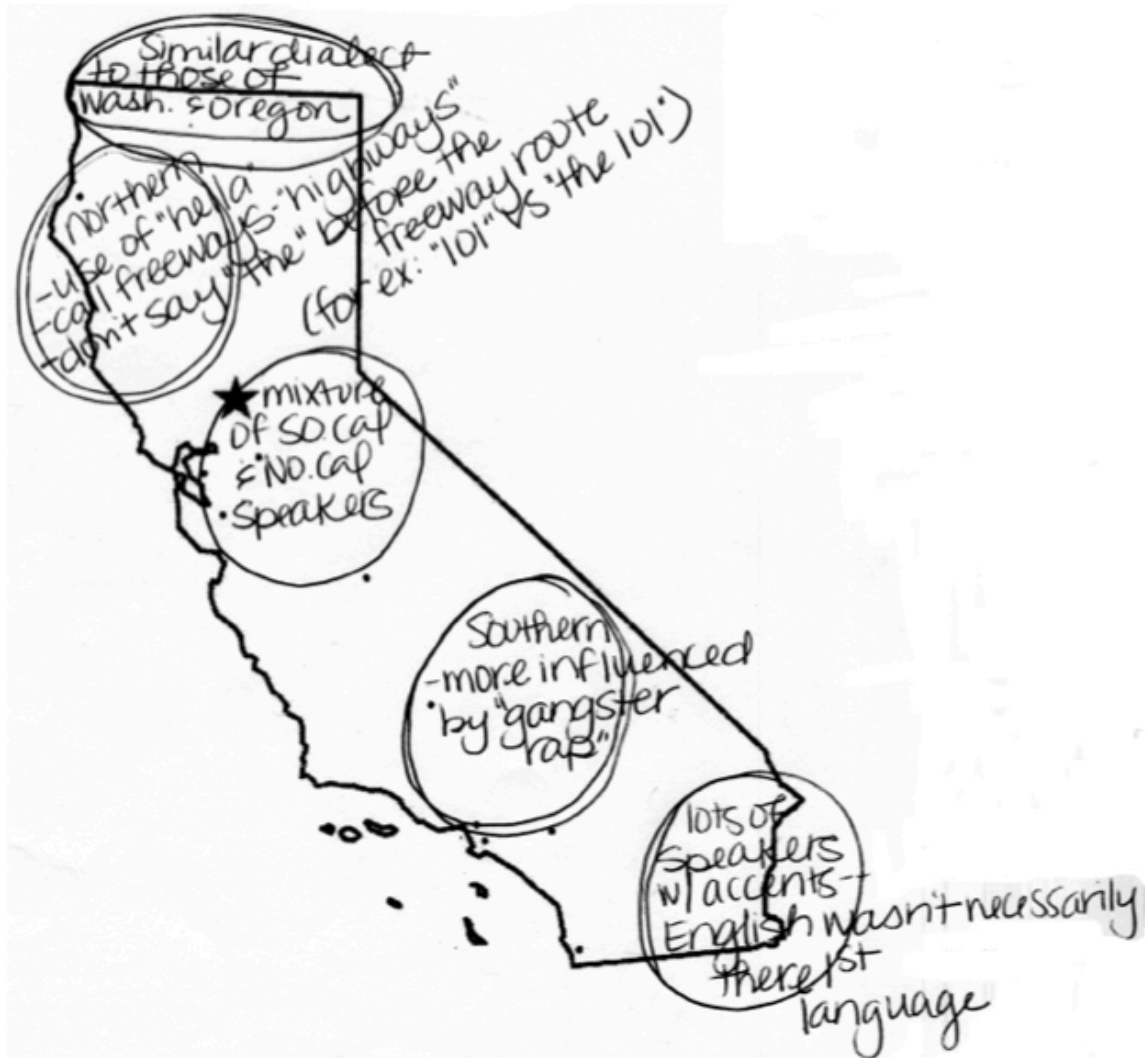


Figure 1
Labeled Map of Regions of Linguistic Difference within California, by an
18-Year-Old Male Student Born in Berkeley, California (“White, Phillipino,
Spanish, Native American”)



Figure 3
Labeled Map of Regions of Linguistic Difference within California, by a 20-Year-Old Female Student Born in Mission Hills, California ("Caucasian")



Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

4 main types of labels emerged:

- Geographic areas
- Languages and dialects
- Slang/lexical items
- Social groups

Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

Geographic areas:

Table 3
Most Frequent Geographic Label and Salience Score, by Region

Region	Most Frequent Geographic Label	Salience Score
Northern California	Northern California	733.8
Bay Area	Northern California	842
Central Coast	Southern California	834
Inland	Southern California	727.2
Los Angeles	Southern California	930
San Diego	Southern California	777.5

Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

Language and dialect labels:

Table 4
Language and Dialect Labels, by Region

Label	Northern California	Bay Area	Central Coast	Inland	Los Angeles	San Diego	Total
English	371 (43.0%)	79 (31.1%)	147 (29.7%)	345 (30.8%)	141 (22.3%)	143 (22.4%)	1,226 (30.6%)
Spanish	127 (14.7%)	39 (15.4%)	149 (30.1%)	367 (32.7%)	216 (34.2%)	310 (48.6%)	1,208 (30.2%)
Chinese	51 (5.9%)	34 (13.4%)	26 (5.3%)	45 (4.0%)	38 (6.0%)	19 (3.0%)	213 (5.3%)
Diverse	40 (4.6%)	20 (7.9%)	22 (4.4%)	40 (3.6%)	30 (4.7%)	16 (2.5%)	168 (4.2%)
Ebonics	23 (2.7%)	11 (4.3%)	11 (2.2%)	30 (2.7%)	34 (5.4%)	18 (2.8%)	127 (3.2%)
Standard	44 (5.1%)	8 (3.1%)	11 (2.2%)	26 (2.3%)	5 (0.8%)	3 (0.5%)	97 (2.4%)
Japanese	23 (2.7%)	12 (4.7%)	11 (2.2%)	21 (1.9%)	18 (2.8%)	8 (1.3%)	93 (2.3%)
Asian	14 (1.6%)	8 (3.1%)	18 (3.6%)	24 (2.1%)	16 (2.5%)	11 (1.7%)	91 (2.3%)
Korean	9 (1.0%)	3 (1.2%)	12 (2.4%)	21 (1.9%)	20 (3.2%)	12 (1.9%)	77 (1.9%)
Normal	23 (2.7%)	2 (0.8%)	8 (1.6%)	20 (1.8%)	10 (1.6%)	8 (1.3%)	71 (1.8%)
Spanglish	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (1.2%)	23 (2.1%)	18 (2.8%)	22 (3.4%)	70 (1.7%)
Broken	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (1.2%)	14 (1.2%)	9 (1.4%)	10 (1.6%)	41 (1.0%)
Tagalog	4 (0.5%)	3 (1.2%)	6 (1.2%)	14 (1.2%)	8 (1.3%)	2 (0.3%)	37 (0.9%)
Vietnamese	3 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (0.8%)	7 (0.6%)	6 (0.9%)	4 (0.6%)	24 (0.6%)
Nonstandard	5 (0.6%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (0.6%)	4 (0.6%)	1 (0.2%)	18 (0.4%)
Other	124 (14.4%)	33 (13.0%)	58 (11.7%)	117 (10.4%)	59 (9.3%)	51 (8.0%)	442 (11.0%)
Total	863 (100%)	254 (100%)	495 (100%)	1,121 (100%)	632 (100%)	638 (100%)	4,003 (100%)

Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

Slang/lexical items:

Table 6
Slang and Other Lexical Labels, by Region

Label	Northern California	Bay Area	Central Coast	Inland	Los Angeles	San Diego	Total
hella	406 (78.4%)	92 (76.0%)	47 (29.4%)	100 (31.7%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)	646 (47.4%)
dude	4 (0.8%)	3 (2.5%)	17 (10.6%)	22 (7.0%)	25 (16.8%)	17 (17.2%)	88 (6.5%)
like	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.8%)	9 (5.6%)	26 (8.3%)	20 (13.4%)	11 (11.1%)	68 (5.0%)
bro/bra	2 (0.4%)	2 (0.4%)	10 (6.3%)	22 (7.0%)	14 (9.4%)	16 (16.2%)	66 (4.8%)
grip	2 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (6.3%)	22 (7.0%)	15 (10.1%)	9 (9.1%)	58 (4.3%)
chill	2 (0.4%)	1 (0.8%)	7 (4.4%)	9 (2.9%)	8 (5.4%)	5 (5.1%)	32 (2.3%)
Other	101 (19.5%)	22 (18.2%)	60 (37.5%)	114 (36.2%)	66 (44.3%)	41 (41.4%)	404 (29.7%)
Total	518 (100%)	121 (100%)	160 (100%)	315 (100%)	149 (100%)	99 (100%)	1,362 (100%)

Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

Slang/lexical items:

“hecka” vs. “grip”

Language attitudes or ideologies are often rooted in the foregrounding of linguistic difference in relation to what is taken to be similar to one’s own language use (Susan Gal and Judith Irving)

Bucholtz et al. (2007) findings

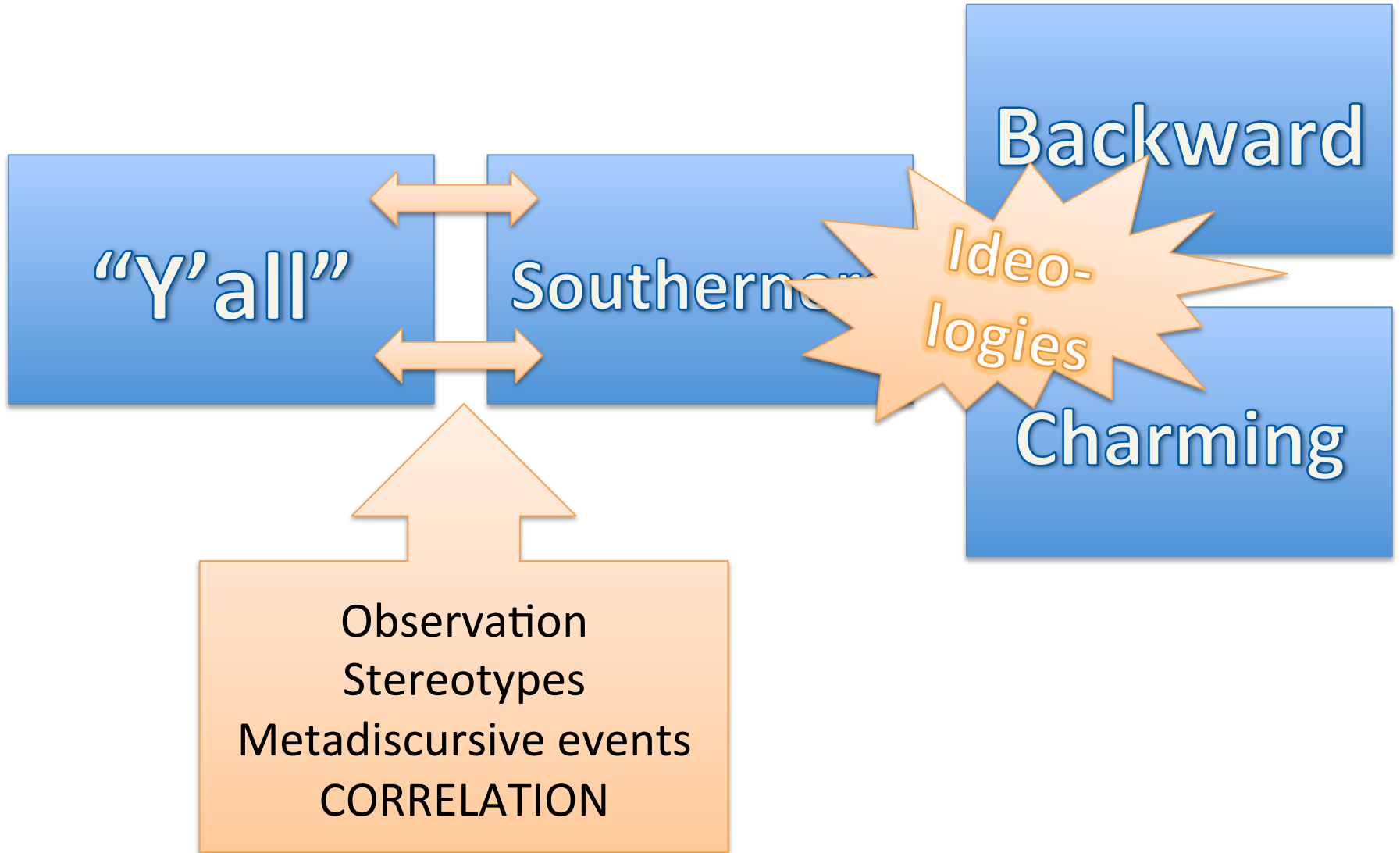
Social group labels:

Table 7
Social Group and Attribute Labels, by Region

Label	Northern California	Bay Area	Central Coast	Inland	Los Angeles	San Diego	Total
Hicks	117 (26.2%)	6 (7.9%)	16 (8.8%)	86 (23.7%)	16 (8.4%)	11 (7.1%)	252 (17.9%)
Surfers	9 (2.0%)	4 (5.3%)	52 (28.7%)	49 (13.5%)	58 (30.4%)	47 (30.1%)	219 (15.6%)
Mexicans	6 (1.3%)	2 (2.6%)	13 (7.2%)	35 (9.6%)	23 (12.0%)	32 (20.5%)	111 (7.9%)
Laid-back	31 (7.0%)	5 (6.6%)	16 (8.8%)	21 (5.8%)	7 (3.7%)	6 (3.8%)	86 (6.1%)
Valley girls	3 (0.7%)	1 (1.3%)	7 (3.9%)	31 (8.5%)	21 (11.0%)	9 (5.8%)	72 (5.1%)
White	23 (5.2%)	3 (3.9%)	13 (7.2%)	13 (3.6%)	6 (3.1%)	5 (3.2%)	63 (4.5%)
Hippies	43 (9.6%)	4 (5.3%)	4 (2.2%)	6 (1.7%)	1 (0.5%)	2 (1.3%)	60 (4.3%)
Latinos	5 (1.1%)	1 (1.3%)	9 (5.0%)	18 (5.0%)	10 (5.2%)	14 (9.0%)	57 (4.1%)
Upper-class	20 (4.5%)	7 (9.2%)	9 (5.0%)	6 (1.7%)	6 (3.1%)	0 (0.0%)	48 (3.4%)
Gangsters	11 (2.5%)	3 (3.9%)	4 (2.2%)	9 (2.5%)	12 (6.3%)	5 (3.2%)	44 (3.1%)
Asians	12 (2.7%)	8 (10.5%)	5 (2.8%)	12 (3.3%)	3 (1.6%)	3 (1.9%)	43 (3.1%)
Gays	14 (3.1%)	7 (9.2%)	2 (1.1%)	3 (0.8%)	1 (0.5%)	0 (0.0%)	27 (1.9%)
Blacks	9 (2.0%)	4 (5.3%)	1 (0.6%)	9 (2.5%)	2 (1.0%)	1 (0.6%)	26 (1.9%)
Other	143 (32.1%)	21 (27.6%)	30 (16.6%)	65 (17.9%)	25 (13.1%)	13 (8.3%)	297 (21.1%)
Total	446 (100%)	76 (100%)	181 (100%)	363 (100%)	191 (100%)	156 (100%)	1,405 (100%)

Concluding thoughts...

This approach [PD] is particularly useful inasmuch as the distinction between languages, dialects, and styles, widely recognized as problematic by sociolinguists, is generally not carefully maintained by nonlinguists. (p. 348)



"Y'all"

Southernner

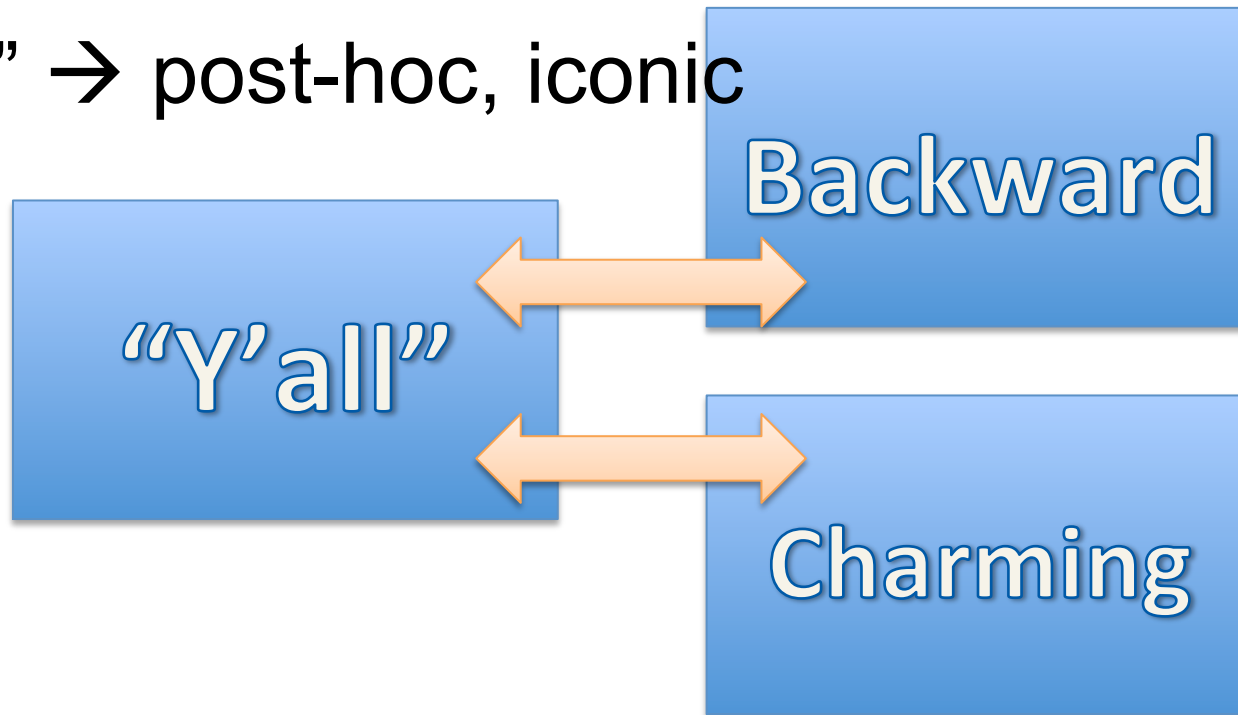
Ideologies

Backward

Charming

Observation
Stereotypes
Metadiscursive events
CORRELATION

“Drawl” → post-hoc, iconic



Now you can say things about language that
it’s less PC to say about the people- the
people are “erased”!

What fun PD studies would *you*
like to do?

Joseph Fruehwald on *Slate*

What's wrong with "America's ugliest accent"

- What *is* wrong with it?

“It's a working class language, probably, is what it amounts to”

- What's a “standard language ideology”?

“It's the idea that somewhere out there, there's a perfect, unadulterated version of English, and what your everyday person speaks is a poor copy”

- Why does it have to be so nasty?

“It's probably in part because standard language ideology gives us almost no other way to talk about accents but negatively.”

Who won?

America's ugliest accent (according to voters on Gawker) is..... **drumroll**