

the language of the city

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In a sense, to speak of the language of the city is a contradiction in terms. There is no one voice for the city, any more than there is a single type of urban personality. Nor, to be sure, is there much reason to speak of *the* city; each city has its own set of characteristics—as anyone will recognize who has changed jobs or residence from one community to another. Chicago is not Cleveland; Greenville, South Carolina, is not Gary—nor is it Greenville, Texas. The function of a city is determined by its location and its history; location and history in turn determine what ethnic, religious and social groups make up the population—and the relationships between these groups are responsible for the varieties of language to be found in a city, the amount of prestige assigned each variety and the kind and degree of difference among them.¹ In a small midwestern town in the belt of Yankee settlements the only overt social markers in language may be relatively slight differences in grammar; in a comparable city in the South there will be significant and more striking differences in pronunciation and grammar. In an older city, particularly one with a relatively stable population, the differences are likely to be well established by tradition and recognized by all groups; in a newer city, or one with a great deal of recent immigration, the differences may not be so well agreed upon, and the new arrivals, or their children, may even reject the traditional standards of the community as represented by the old *élite* families.²

Those who have studied the rise of cities are in fair agreement that with increasing importance and better transportation, a city will grow in size and complexity and attract special groups to handle manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, service industries and the proliferation of government services, including public education. Moreover, as cities grow in size and complexity, they become increasingly dependent on this outside world. Not only is this true of food—an American city may get

some of its milk supply from five hundred miles away—but of other commodities as well. Chicago's steel mills and electrical system are both dependent on soft coal mined far downstate. Likewise, no city out of its own resources can fill all the jobs created as the economy expands; it must lure workers from elsewhere—from smaller communities in its own region, from other regions of the nation and from other nations. As the groups are brought together in the relatively impersonal urban scene, those of similar background will tend to live in the same neighborhood—whether by choice or by design. But at work—and in going to and from work—each person will come in contact with representatives of all kinds of regional, ethnic and social groups. In the course of a day he will hear all kinds of accents and evaluate their speakers, often most cruelly, in the light of his past experiences. This has been true of urban communities of the last five thousand years, but the more rapid urbanization of the United States and the development of faster means of transportation have recently juxtaposed more cultural groups, of more diverse background than ever before—with greater shock at difficulties in the way they communicate.

Speech, we must remember, never takes place without other behavior. The speakers stand in a physical relationship to each other, and in no two societies is this exactly the same. Edward Hall³ and others have calculated that in the United States two men communicate most effectively when they stand about two feet apart; we become uncomfortable when another man comes closer to us—but Latin Americans cannot relax if they are more than a foot apart, and Arabs like to be close enough to smell each other's breaths. We may feel there's something wrong but not notice it specifically unless we are trained to observe it. In 1967, to my surprise, I felt vastly more at home in Helsinki than I had been in Bucharest or even in Prague, though my Swedish is subminimal and my Finnish non-existent; then I realized that Finns just don't like to crowd each other, even in department stores or when lining up for a trolley at rush hours. When I commented on this to Tauno Mustanoja, Professor of English at the University of Helsinki, he was surprised that I had noticed this so soon, and went on to say that this difference in comfortable space was one of the most noticeable differences the Finnish soldiers had found between themselves and their temporary German allies. Perhaps the reason that the Southern poor whites are the most difficult group to cope with in Northern cities is that they don't like to think of themselves as a group or get into organized crowds but prefer to go their ways as individuals.

In speaking we do not confine ourselves to the vocal tract but accompany ourselves with all kinds of body movements.⁴ Sometimes the accompaniment is more significant than the overt words, as when we say "yes" but shake our heads. We often think that there is something sinister about the way the other person uses body movements in com-

munication: to the American white Protestant, Italians and Levantines seem to gesticulate wildly, while Orientals are impassive. Still, despite my six generations of Upcountry South Carolina ancestry, some of my Northern friends have commented on my “Jewish” gestures; one of my childhood friends observed, perhaps more accurately, that some hand movements we both use are found nowhere else in America.

And even in our speech, the language itself is only a part. We frequently make up our minds about a person or a group on the strength of the accompanying orchestration of speech—loudness, tempo, rhythm, rasp, nasality and the like—before we hear clearly a single sentence they have uttered.⁵ Those who speak a different language from our own—especially if their language is one we have learned painfully and imperfectly—always seem to talk fast; those who belong to groups we do not normally associate with always talk loud and with a pitch level unpleasantly high or unpleasantly low. The salient quality of hillbilly music is the strong accompanying nasality. Even occupations seem to induce peculiar vocal orchestrations. It is inconceivable that a Southern politician could campaign successfully in the back precincts without at least a simulation of a Bourbon baritone or without the throaty prolongation of what he thinks are his most important syllables, or that a Marine topkick could induce the proper *esprit de corps* in recruits without his rasp, or that a kindergarten teacher could convey the mystique of the public schools without the Miss Frances wheedle.

With these differences existing in the behavior accompanying the use of language, it is no wonder that we find a wide range of differences in the way people use the English language. The Middle Western American—even though he is only a statistical abstraction—thinks the Englishman has a wider pitch range and a greater variety of speech tunes. The Southerner is likely to consider the speech of the Middle Westerner as monotonous, because it has a narrower range of pitch and stress than he is accustomed to. The Middle Westerner, in turn, thinks the Southerner has a “lazy drawl,” though the actual tempo of Southern speech may be more rapid than his own, because the stressed syllables of Southern speech are relatively more heavily stressed and more prolonged. In compensation, the Southerner—like the Englishman—weakens and shortens the weak-stressed syllables, with accompanying neutralization of their vowels, so that *borrow* and *Wednesday* become /bárə/ and /wénzdiy/, with the final vowels of *sofa* and *happy* respectively; the Middle Westerner labels this as “slurring.” But turning the coin again, the Middle Westerner often pronounces the final syllables of *borrow* and *Wednesday* with the full vowels of *day* and *go* respectively; the Southerner is likely to consider such pronunciations as affectation, if not the over-precise articulation of foreigners.

We often notice that people in other groups have different pronunciations of vowels than our own. Differences in the pronunciations of

consonants are less common. Nevertheless we do notice the “peculiar” sounds made by many New Yorkers (and by some speakers in other cities) when they pronounce /t, d, n, s, z, r, l/ with the tip of the tongue against their teeth instead of against the gums, which is the usual American fashion. It is quite evident that most Southerners have a different kind of /r/ and /l/ from what Chicagoans use in *borrow* and *Billy*. In the Upcountry of South Carolina we used to laugh at the peculiar vowels the Charlestonians had in *date* and *boat*; in recent years I have learned to tolerate the Northerner’s amusement at my vowel in *all*, or the fact that the Northerner may interpret the Upcountry pronunciation of *oil* as his own pronunciation of *all*.⁶ Americans from the Mississippi Valley have often commented about the very high vowels found along the Atlantic seaboard, from New York to Baltimore, in such words as *bad* and *dog*. And what seems to have become a standard Southern pronunciation (though it is not my own), the use of a long vowel instead of a diphthong in *nice white rice* (as well as in *high rise*, where I do have it), has never ceased to bewilder unsophisticated Northerners, even to the barbarous assumption that Southerners confused *right* and *rat*.

But even more disturbing to us are the contrasts that our fellow speakers of English make where we don’t make them and don’t make where we do. I was twenty-five before I was aware that an educated person might not make a distinction between *do* and *due*, between *hoarse* and *horse*, between *merry* and *marry* and *Mary*.⁷ I recall that even as a child I was irritated when a poet rhymed *hill* with the preposition *till*; I pronounce *hill* with the vowel of *hit*, but *till* with a vowel halfway between that of *hit* and that of *put*. Later I found myself a source of delight to my fellow linguists and of distress to my students because the vowel I have in *till* also occurs, in my speech, in such words as *dinner*, *sister*, *milk*, *mirror*, *scissors*, *ribbon*, *pillow*, to mention only a few; for me these words contrast with *sinner*, *system*, *silk*, *spirit*, *schism*, *ribbing*, *billow*, all of which have the vowel of *hit*. None of my Chicago-born students have such a contrast. Few of my students have my three-way contrast between *have*, *salve*, *halve*, or *had*, *sad*, *bad*.⁸ No true-born Englishman has my contrast between *wails* and *whales*; no Charlestonian makes a distinction between the night *air* and the ring in her *ear*. Despite decades of ridicule, some educated New Yorkers of the older generation still pronounce alike a *curl* of hair and a *coil* of rope. I was well over thirty when I learned that Pittsburghers and Bostonians did not distinguish *cot* and *caught*, *tot* and *taught*, *collar* and *caller*. It was my wife who apprised me that this homonymy was also found in Minneapolis, and later I found it in most of Canada and in parts of the Rocky Mountain area.⁹ But even today some European observers, who know only British Received Pronunciation, refuse to believe that such homonymy can exist. Nevertheless, even if I have close to the maximum num-

ber of contrasts found among speakers of English, there are some which I lack; I do not have the peculiar “New England short o” of *coat*, *road* and *home*, which I have recorded in some of the smaller communities of Northern Illinois.

Needless to say, we do not always agree on which vowel or consonant we will use, even when we share the whole repertoire. North of Peoria one is likely to find *greasy* with /-s-/, further south with /-z-/: a person familiar with both pronunciations is likely to consider one more repulsive than the other—depending on which is his pronunciation at home. In metropolitan Chicago the natives of smaller suburban communities are likely to pronounce, *fog*, *hog*, *Chicago* with the vowel of *father*; in the city itself these words normally have the vowel of *law*. The words with derivatives of Middle English long *ō* have a wide variety of pronunciations today. My own pattern is unlikely to be duplicated by anyone native to the Chicago area:

/uw/	/u/	/ə/
the vowel of <i>do</i>	the vowel of <i>foot</i>	the vowel of <i>cut</i>
<i>root</i>	<i>coop</i>	<i>gums</i>
<i>roof</i>	<i>Cooper</i>	
<i>food</i>	<i>hoop</i>	
<i>spoon</i>	<i>soot</i>	
<i>moon</i>		
<i>soon</i>		

With *broom*, *room* and *hoof*, I may have either the vowel of *do* or that of *foot*. Many Pennsylvanians rhyme *food* with *good*; many highly educated Southerners rhyme *soot* with *cut*. *Roof* with the vowel of *foot* is widespread in the area of New England settlement and some of the areas settled from Pennsylvania; *coop* with the vowel of *do* is almost universal north of the Kanawha River; *root* rhyming with *foot* is characteristic of Yankee settlements. President Ruthven of the University of Michigan, an Iowan of Yankee descent, always said *gums* with the vowel of *do*; a former president of the American Academy of Physicians, a native of the belt of Yankee settlement in northern Illinois, consistently says *soon* with the vowel of *foot*.

We even show differences in our grammar. No one in South Carolina, however uneducated, would say *hadn't ought*, which is still current in educated Northern speech, nor would we say *sick to the stomach*, which in the North is almost universal. But many educated Southerners—and I include myself—find a place in conversation for *might could*, *used to could* and *used to didn't*. I have heard the basketball announcer for the Chicago *Tribune* become almost schizoid as he hesitated between *dived* and *dove* (with the vowel of *go*), and there seems to be no regional or social distinction between *kneeled* and *knelt*. Even *ain't*—a four-letter word still taboo in writing despite *Ulysses*, *Lady Chatterly* and Norman Mailer¹⁰—may be found in educated conversation, especially among the

first families of Charleston. When we realize this, we can take calmly the diversity of names for the grass strip between sidewalk and street, the earthworm, the dragon fly or cottage cheese; the debate among New Englanders as to whether a doughnut should be made with yeast; or the fact that the New Orleans *poor boy* sandwich may be a *hoagy* as in Philadelphia, a *submarine* as in Boston, a *grinder* as in upstate New York or a *hero* as in New York City. Only in recent years have people outside learned that *clout* is our local Chicago name for political influence, a *Chinaman* is a dispenser of such influence, a *prairie* is a vacant lot and a *gangway* is a passage, usually covered, between two apartment buildings. I would not be surprised if these terms were unfamiliar to many who have grown up as close to the city as the DuPage Valley.

ii

Yet if we are sometimes bewildered by the differences in American English, we should be comforted to learn that by European standards these differences are very small. We can notice, in fact, that not only are differences along the Atlantic seaboard fewer and less sharp than one finds in the much shorter distance between Cumberland and Kent, but that differences diminish as we go west. We owe our relative uniformity of speech to several forces. First, the speakers of the more extreme varieties of British local speech were not the ones who migrated; most of the early settlers had already migrated, in Britain, from village to towns, especially to seaport towns. There was dialect mixture in all of the early settlements—a situation repeated in the westward movement—so that what survived in each area was a compromise. There has always been a tradition of geographical mobility, epitomized in various ways by Daniel Boone, Sam Houston and Steinbeck's Joads. There has been an equal tradition of social mobility; except for Taft and the Roosevelts, no president of the United States since 1890 has come from an old family of social prestige and inherited wealth. There has been a tradition of industrialization—of substituting better tools and more intricate machinery, wherever possible, for human hands and muscle. The Yankee farmer was the son of a townsman—uninhibited by traditional English ways of farming but determined to make a good living. The curved American ax-handle made it easier to clear the forests; the computer and scanner promise to make it easier to collect citations for dictionaries—though no technological development can eliminate the need for judgment. There has been a tradition of urbanization—of cities arising in response to opportunities for trade and providing in turn greater opportunities for industry and the arts alike; if we are aware of the open spaces of colonial America and the rugged strength of the frontiersman, we should be equally aware that in 1775 Philadelphia and Boston were the second and third most important cities under the British crown and that they provided the sophisticated citizen with most of the cultural

advantages of his British counterpart. And finally, there has been a tradition of general education, beginning when the Northwest Ordinance provided that public schools be financed from the public lands, and proceeding through coeducation and the great state universities first established on a large scale in the Middle West but now found everywhere. All of these forces have combined—and are still combining—to replace local and even regional terms with commercial terms of national use, to eradicate the most noticeable non-standard grammatical features and even to reduce the differences between the pronunciation of one region and that of another.

Yet though these forces have reduced some of the regional differences in American English, they have not eliminated them. If cottage cheese is now a commercial product, so that only the older people are likely to remember *Dutch cheese*, *smearcase* or *clabber* cheese, the regional designations for the large complicated sandwich are becoming established, and the designations for the grass strip near the street seem to be fairly stable, and indeed often peculiarly local, as *tree belt* in Springfield, Massachusetts, *tree lawn* in Cleveland, and *devil strip* in Akron. Many of these differences are due to the nature of the original population: *pail* and *swill* were spread westward by New Englanders and York Staters, *bucket* and *slop* by Pennsylvanians and Southerners, in the same way that East Anglians brought to eastern New England the “broad *a*” and the loss of /-r/ in *barn*. Where Germans have settled, one may say *got awake*; in communities settled heavily by Scandinavians, one *cooks coffee*.

The routes of communication often stay the same, though the mode of transportation has changed; relatively few of these routes—the Mississippi is a notable exception—cross the major dialect boundaries. Even the monstrous expenditures for highways have not reduced the isolation of some of the more striking relic areas: the Maine coast, the eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay, the Outer Banks of North Carolina and parts of the Kentucky mountains are still off the beaten track; even in Illinois the tongue of land between the Illinois and the Mississippi has become accessible to metropolitan St. Louis only in the last few years. Since our system of public education is highly decentralized (in most ways, a source of strength, since it allows one community to learn from the successes or failures of another), the differences in taxable wealth make it possible for expenditures per pupil to be much less in Mississippi than in Illinois, even though Mississippi spends a far greater proportion of her tax revenues on education, so that libraries are far smaller and the best-trained teachers are tempted to go elsewhere; as a result, regional non-standard grammatical forms in Mississippi prove strikingly resistant to the influence of the classroom.

Because the nation is too large for any single center to establish its speech as a model of excellence—even if we had not had a number of stubbornly autonomous regional centers of culture from the beginning—

we can expect to have a number of regional varieties of cultivated speech, unlike the situation in France or Spain or England. If some of the colonial centers no longer have the prestige they once had—Newport, Charleston and Savannah have certainly ceased to exert much influence on their neighbors—new centers have come into existence, such as Chicago and St. Louis, Atlanta and Nashville, Houston and Denver, Salt Lake City and San Francisco. It is certain that the differences among educated speech—always less than those among uneducated varieties—will become even less with the passing of time. But some differences will remain. And as corporations emulate the traditional policy of the army and the older policy of the Methodist Church, in shifting their executives around as they rise in the hierarchy,¹¹ we can be sure that any respectable suburban classroom will contain children speaking several varieties of cultivated American English. It behooves the teacher to recognize that in the long run one such variety is as good as another, and to make the diversity a source of both more interesting instruction at present and greater cultural understanding in the future.

iii

Social differences arise essentially in the same way as regional ones, through close association with those who speak one variety of the language, and remote association—or none—with those who speak other varieties. Standard or cultivated speech is such because it is used by those people who make the important decisions in the speech community. There is nothing sacred about any particular variety; what was once unacceptable becomes acceptable if its speakers rise to positions of economic and social prestige, and it may change under the influence of other speakers who come into the prestige group. After the Norman Conquest, Winchester yielded to London as the cultural center of the south of England, and by the end of the fourteenth century—despite some brilliant writers in the North—London English was so dominant that even a Yorkshireman like Wyclif had to use it in his writings. But London English did not remain static; under the influence of the rich wool merchants and others from the north of England, it replaced the *-th* of the present indicative third singular with *-s*; it replaced *be* as an indicative plural with *are*; it established *she* as the feminine nominative third person pronoun, and *they* and *their* and *them* as pronouns of the third person plural. And as we are well aware, every long vowel and diphthong of fourteenth-century London English has changed in pronunciation, and some have fallen together, as the verb *see* /se:/ and the noun *sea* /sæ:/ have both become /siy/. For a more recent example we can take the rise in status of the Southern monophthongal /ay/ in *nice white rice*: as a boy I was taught that this was substandard, but it is now widely heard from educated Southerners.¹²

Social differences in language have always been with us, but in the

contemporary American scene there are three forces which make for a different kind of situation from that which prevailed in older societies, more rural than ours. In such older societies, the social intervals in the speech of one community in a given country were likely to be about the same as those elsewhere. Migration was likely to be in terms of individuals, or at most of separate families, and the aspiring—or at least their children—had a fair chance of breaking into the group of standard speakers in their new home. Finally, there was no hard-and-fast segregation between wealthy and poor neighborhoods. To take myself once more as an example, though my parents lived half a block from the richest street in town, we were the same distance from one of the Negro enclaves and not too far from immigrant and less affluent local whites. We all played together even though we didn't all go to school together; we were familiar with most of the local varieties of English and took their existence as a matter of course, assuming that the differences would grow less as more people became educated, and meanwhile delighting in the tunes and figures of speech each group of speakers used. For the most part we not only had the same sound system but—except for such shibboleths as *nice white rice*—the same pronunciations of the vowels and consonants; the differences were in distribution of sounds, in vocabulary and in grammar.

But in metropolitan areas there is now a different kind of situation. Some of this began long ago when—after the rise of the steamboat—immigrants from overseas, brought in to tend heavy industry, settled in ethnic neighborhoods under the watchful eye of their clergy and political leaders; with affluence, many of them left the old neighborhoods and entered into the dominant culture. Their consciousness was perhaps aggravated by the rampant xenophobia of World War I,¹³ but the language tended to disappear. When German—a language used in urban and rural communities on all social levels—could be stigmatized, it is small wonder that the Slavic groups, usually peasants and often illiterate, should give up their language.

During my five-year stretch at Western Reserve, though at least half of my Cleveland students were of East European descent, less than one percent admitted knowing the languages of the countries from which their parents and grandparents had come. Culturally they have been deracinated. Immigrants from other parts of the United States, however, had usually followed the traditional pattern of individual movement, settling in a neighborhood according to their economic situation and mingling with those who were already there. Among Negroes¹⁴ who were born in Chicago before 1900 there is essentially the same range of variation as there is among their white contemporaries.

But the situation changed when it became convenient to encourage heavy migration of unskilled labor from other parts—mostly rural areas—of the United States. This became noticeable during World War I,

when the migration from Europe was cut off; but even before then some companies had found it expedient to introduce Negroes and Southern whites as strikebreakers, to counter the influence of the unions among the recent arrivals from Europe. Like the immigrants from Europe, these new groups—and after them the Puerto Ricans and Mexicans—tended to come in blocks and settle in patterns like the old ethnic neighborhoods, but lacking their structured community life. (Mexicans and Puerto Ricans have had such a community structure, and in this way strikingly differed from Negroes and rural whites). The economic threat these groups posed to those who had arrived just before them—those from Southern and Eastern Europe—provoked hostility and fear, which was especially directed toward the more visible Negro: the bitterness between Negro and Hunkey is an old story, which Rap Brown did not have to invent.¹⁵ The demands for labor during World War II and the later mechanization of Southern agriculture accelerated the northward movement, and the Negro and poor white neighborhoods continued to spread—most noticeably the former. Nevertheless, although the newspapers have ignored the fact, Metropolitan Cleveland contains 200,000 Southern poor whites, most of them disadvantaged.

The very economic forces that led the poor Southerners north contributed to their problems after they arrived, except during times of unusually full employment, as in World War II. The South until very recently has been a region of unskilled labor;¹⁶ the trend in all industry has been to upgrade the skills of labor and to transfer the unskilled work to machinery. With this trend increasing at the same time that migration from the South increased, employment opportunities for the unskilled tailed off, and with them the chance to participate in the well-advertised affluence of the community. Moreover, the Southern tradition of unskilled labor was paralleled by a regional inferiority in the educational system, especially in the schools available to the groups from which the northward migration was drawn. Thus the new arrivals from the South were at an added disadvantage where reading and mathematical skills were required. And in the South, finally, there has always been a wider difference between educated and uneducated speech than one finds in other regions. So what we have seen in the urban slums (especially in the North and West) is the establishment locally of strongly divergent varieties of non-standard English, with a larger proportion of non-standard grammatical forms than one finds in uneducated Northern English, and with strikingly different features of pronunciation. And as the children of uneducated Mississippians and Alabamians grow up hearing at play such varieties of uneducated speech, they tend to perpetuate these varieties even when by chance they go to school alongside sizeable numbers of speakers of Northern types of English. In short we are now witnessing the establishment in our Northern cities of non-standard varieties of English that diverge sharply from the local standard.

Last, we are getting into a pattern of one-class neighborhoods, where we seldom know people of different social strata from our own. We have indicated the rise of such neighborhoods through negative forces—the inability of the poor to buy or rent alongside other groups. But such neighborhoods have also arisen from the ability and desire of the affluent to flock with their kind. The automobile, which (among its other deleterious social effects) isolates the individual traveler from all but his own kind, has accelerated the trend, and so have the corporations, through an insistence that executives live in a style and community befitting their income and status. So there has been an increasing flight from the city, and new bedroom suburbs spring up, with their inmates insulated not only from the city but from all those below or above a narrow economic range. In the ninety-odd major suburbs in northeastern Illinois, a survey about ten years ago worked out a clear pecking order from Kenilworth down to Robbins; as their income grows, there is a clearly defined drift of young executives from Mount Prospect to Barrington; and the turnover of property in Park Forest is nationally notorious.¹⁷ Under these circumstances, not only are some of the more effective models of standard English removed from the city, but those who grow up using these models have no chance to hear at close range what other varieties of English are like and are confirmed in linguistic myths and sociological stereotypes of superiority and inferiority.

iv

I shall not conclude by trying to instigate a crusade. In too many aspects of American life—in education no less than in foreign affairs—we have sounded too many trumpets to hasty action without looking into the possible consequences. But I think we can rationally conclude that the problems of dialect differences are highly complex, and that where—as is apparent with some groups in our cities—these differences interfere with participation in the benefits our society has to offer, we must somehow contrive to bridge these differences. But we must not try to bulldoze out of the way the habitual idiom of the home and neighborhood; whatever we do, for the short term, must be done by adding without taking away, by full appreciation of the fact that all dialects are acquired in the same way, that each is a part of the speaker's personality and that each is capable of expressing a wide range of experience. In the intermediate range, the success of any program of commingling widely diverse neighborhoods in a school will depend on how well the teachers understand the nature of dialects and impart this understanding to their students—particularly to those who up to now have had economic and social advantages. In the long run the solution will come as more communities are opened to a greater variety of ethnic groups and social classes; it is apparently working in such a racially diverse middle-class neighborhood as Hyde Park in Chicago. The new developments in the outer suburbs, such as those which the Weston atomic reactor has already

inaugurated in northern Illinois, are certain to bring to many communities a greater amount of population diversity than they now have. To produce stability, to reduce tensions rather than aggravate them, it is important that teachers and pupils, school board members and the public at large, realize the nature of diversity in language behavior, that aspect of behavior most closely identified with the human condition.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

footnotes

1. See Lee Pederson, *The Pronunciation of English In Chicago: Consonants and Vowels, Publication of the American Dialect Society*, 44 (1965), and William M. Austin and Raven I. McDavid, Jr., eds., *Communication Barriers to the Culturally Deprived*, Cooperative Research Project 2107 (Chicago, 1966).

2. For a dramatic change in attitudes toward certain features, see William Labov, *The Social Stratification of English in New York City* (Washington, D.C., 1966).

3. *The Silent Language* (New York, 1959); *The Hidden Dimension* (New York, 1965).

4. Ray Birdwhistell, *An Introduction to Kinesics* (Louisville, Kentucky, 1954).

5. Robert E. Pittenger, Charles F. Hockett, and John J. Danehy, *The First Five Minutes* (Ithaca, New York, 1960); William M. Austin, "Some Social Aspects of Paralanguage," *Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, XI (1965-66), 31-39.

6. One cannot be reminded too often that "confusions" among *speakers* of a given dialect are usually confusions in the perception of *listeners* accustomed to other dialects. The Southerner makes a clear distinction between *all* and *oil*; the Middle Westerner is not accustomed to perceiving the kind of difference that the Southerner makes.

7. All these differences are characteristic of the South and South Midland areas, from the Potomac and Kanawha south. Older speakers in the areas of early New England settlement distinguished *horse* (with the vowel of *law*) and *hoarse* (with the vowel of *low*), *merry* (with the vowel of *met*) and *marry* (with the vowel of *mat*) and *Mary* (with the vowel of *mate*), but these differences have disappeared as the Yankees moved west into upstate New York and the Great Lakes region.

8. I have a short vowel in *have* and *had*, a higher and longer vowel in *salve* and *sad*, an upgliding diphthong in *halve* and *bad*.

9. In some areas this vowel is unrounded, like the vowel Americans who distinguish these pairs usually have in *father*; in others it is rounded, like the usual vowel in *law*. The significance is that in these areas there is no contrast between such pairs as *cot* and *caught*.

10. In a review of Morton Bloomfield and Leonard Newmark, *A Linguistic Introduction to the History of English*, James H. Sledd observes sardonically that "the agonizing deappraisals of *Webster's Third New International* show that any red-blooded American would prefer incest to *ain't*." *Language*, XL (1964), 473.

11. For example, in early 1965 in Baton Rouge I met the husband of one of my former students, a personnel scout for the Humble division of Jersey Standard, attached to the Baton Rouge office. Later that year he was transferred to Houston; in September, 1967, he was shifted to New York and to suburban living in New Canaan, Connecticut.

12. This vowel, as in *right nice*, is characteristic of the upper Piedmont and mountain regions of the South. As the inhabitants of those regions acquire education and money, their speech acquires prestige; since they constitute the overwhelming majority of white Southerners, it is to be expected that their accents will prevail, like their votes, in the South of the future.

13. In 1917 the Texas legislature abolished the teaching of German in all state institutions because (among other reasons) Eduard Prokosch, head of the German Department in the state university, had referred to English as a Low German dialect.

14. The designation *Negro* is now rejected by many of the self-designated leaders, who prefer *Black*; however, for other members of the group, *Black* is still an offensive label. For various designations of ethnic groups in America, and the record of their acceptance or rejection, see H. L. Mencken, *The American Language* (one-volume abridged edition, New York, 1963), 367-389. As George Schuyler, the distinguished columnist for the Pittsburgh *Courier*, once said, it seems rather trivial to raise points of protocol about designations while those designated lack the right to participate fully in American society.

15. Nor did he invent the pronunciation of *hunky* as *honky*, with the vowel of *law*; the analogous pronunciation of *hungry* is widely used in the rural South, without racial distinction.

16. See Marshall R. Colbert, "Southern Economic Development: Some Research Accomplishments and Gaps," *Perspectives on the South*, Edgar T. Thompson, ed. (Durham, N.C., 1967), 17-32.

17. For information on the local migrations of the upward-mobile in Metropolitan Chicago, I am indebted to Lee Pederson.