Surveying the New Appalachia: Change, Perception, and Influence

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Coastal Carolina University
A region in change

• Less isolation, less poverty
• Recent “coolness” of Appalachia
• Evidence pointing towards language change (Hasty 2011, Childs and Mallinson 2004)
• Perceptions of young Appalachians
Appalachian English

• Traditional/heritage dialect associated with older speakers

• Overrepresentation of West Virginia
  – Older features dying out
    • Hazen 2006, Hazen, Butcher, & King 2010, Hazen, Hamilton, & Vacovksy 2011

• Underrepresentation of Southern Appalachia
Appalachian region
Appalachian language change

- Less salient features fading or limited linguistic frames
- Totemic/salient features still present
Research questions

• Which totemic features persist?
• Who is using these features and where?
• Is there subregional variation?
• Have traditional AppE features spread to the broader South?
Our survey

• Made up of known features of AppE
• Distributed online at universities across App
  – University of Kentucky
  – West Virginia University
  – University of Tennessee
  – Tennessee Technological University
  – Middle Tennessee State University
  – Western Carolina University
  – Appalachian State University
  – Virginia Tech
Methodological concerns

• Web based
  – researchers not present

• Text based
  – how to look at sound
  – register clash
  – lack of context

• Self-report data
Survey design

- Runs from IR server at CCU
- [this link is to a test version of the survey, for the actual survey link, please email jhasty@coastal.edu]
Survey design

Language Changes in the South

In the following sections of the survey, you will see a list of words, pronunciations, or sentences. For each one, please tell us:

- How often you use it (is it something you would say)?
- How often you hear this used around you (is it something you hear others say)?
- Who uses it most (what age, gender, type of person) and/or where (what region or setting)? You may not be able to answer this part each time.

An example how this type of question will look, and how it might be answered, is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often...</th>
<th>Do you use this expression?</th>
<th>Do you hear others use this expression?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>never</td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh my God!</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical, dude.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who uses "$Oh my God"? Young girls
Who uses "$Radical, dude"? Teenage boys
Where? At the mall
Where? At the skate park
### Language Changes in the South

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>Where?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plumb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yonder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y'all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y'uns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right-pretty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bald</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fodder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reckon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tote</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plumb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yonder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y'all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y'un</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right-pretty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poke (for a sack)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bald (for a mountain formation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fodder shock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>holler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reckon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tote (for carry)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carry (for take)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Phonological items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 1</th>
<th>Item 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>feel</td>
<td>fill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheer</td>
<td>chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>air</td>
<td>hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pin</td>
<td>pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tire</td>
<td>tar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fool</td>
<td>full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphosyntactic items</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You might should eat before you go.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might could do that for you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want for John to come over.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He was a-runnin like crazy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give me some of them crackers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m fixin to go to the store.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any more, I ride the bus home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The board is 5 foot long.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We had us a cabin by the lake.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me and my dad, we would toss the ball.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She don’t know him yet.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I done told you once.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Open responses and attitudes

• Report pronunciations as “joking around”
• Referencing “correct” pronunciation
  – Being lazy
  – Doesn’t bother to pronounce the “right way”
  – Doesn’t know any better
• Negative labeling of “who uses”
  – Rednecks, hillbillies
  – Hoods, ghetto rats
  – Poor, low class, uneducated
What is a holler?
## Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>region</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachia</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>56.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>43.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>63.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>36.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gender</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>68.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>30.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>58.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>41.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>age</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>72.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>58.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use lexical

- Y'all
- Holler
- Reckon
- Carry
- Tote
- Yonder
- Plumb
- Right-pretty
- Y'uns
- Bald
- Poke
- Fodder shock

Legend:
- Appalachia
- South
App vs South lexical

• y’all
  – South use more: A 3.65—S 4.15 (p 0.00)
• carry
  – South use more: A 2.24—S 2.64 (p 0.02)
  – South hear more: A 2.64—S 3.04 (p 0.02)
• poke
  – App use more: A 1.18—S 1.08 (p 0.04)
  – App hear more: A 1.37—S 1.19 (p 0.01)
• bald
  – App hear more: A 1.47—S 1.24 (p 0.02)
Use phonology

- pin/pen
- ten/tin
- fool/full
- feel/fill
- air/hair
- tire/tar
- cheer/chair

Appalachia
South
Hear phonology

- pin/pen
- ten/tin
- fool/full
- feel/fill
- air/hair
- tire/tar
- cheer/chair

(Appalachia vs. South)
App vs South phonology

• full/fool
  – App use more: A 2.44 — S 1.95 (p 0.01)
  – App hear more: A 3.16 — S 2.47 (p 0.00)
• feel/fill
  – App hear more: A 3.16 — S 2.82 (p 0.04)
• cheer/chair
  – App hear more: A 2.10 — S 1.70 (p 0.00)
• tire/tar
  – App hear more: A 2.79 — S 2.40 (p 0.01)
• pen/pin merger
  – Both groups report high
Use syntax

- fixin to
- dem them
- 5 foot
- she don't
- compl done
- might could
- might should
- had us
- pleonastic
- a-prefixing
- for to
- positive anymore

Bar chart comparing the use of syntax in Appalachia and the South.
Hear syntax

- fixin to
- dem them
- 5 foot
- she don't
- compl done
- might could
- might should
- had us
- pleonastic
- a-prefixing
- for to
- positive anymore

(Appalachia vs. South)
App vs South syntax

• Positive anymore
  – App hear more: A 2.32 — S 1.64 (p 0.00)

• Zero plural measurement
  – App use more: A 2.37 — S 2.02 (p 0.04)
  – App hear more: A 3.14 — S 2.60 (p 0.00)

• Competitive done
  – South use more: A 1.84 — S 2.41 (p 0.00)
App vs South females

• **yall**
  - South use more:  
    A 3.65 — S 4.29 (p 0.00)

• **carry**
  - South use more:  
    A 2.30 — S 2.85 (p 0.01)
  - South hear more:  
    A 2.66 — S 3.33 (p 0.00)

• **tote**
  - South hear more:  
    A 2.64 — S 3.04 (p 0.05)

• **cheer/chair**
  - South use more:  
    A 1.17 — S 1.44 (p 0.03)

• **Comple8ve done**
  - South use:  
    A 1.73 — S 2.63 (p 0.00)

• **she don’t**
  - South use:  
    A 1.88 — S 2.37 (p 0.02)
App vs South females

- **plumb**
  - App hear more: A 2.03 — S 1.71 (p 0.04)

- **cheer / chair**
  - App hear more: A 2.06 — S 1.71 (p 0.03)

- **fool / full**
  - App hear more: A 3.16 — S 2.59 (p 0.01)

- **Positive anymore**
  - App hear more: A 2.29 — S 1.72 (p 0.00)

- **Zero plural measurement**
  - App hear more: A 3.18 — S 2.47 (p 0.00)
App vs South males

• bald
  – App use more: A 1.48 — S 1.15 (p 0.05)
  – App hear more: A 1.68 — S 1.22 (p 0.01)

• poke
  – App hear more: A 1.39 — S 1.15 (p 0.04)

• air/hair (h insertion)
  – App use more: A 1.61 — S 1.20 (p 0.04)
  – App hear more: A 2.09 — S 1.57 (p 0.04)

• cheer/chair
  – App hear more: A 2.19 — S 1.68 (p 0.03)

• tire/tar
  – App hear more (2.81 v 2.15 (p 0.01)

• fool/full
  – App hear more (2.91 v 2.26 (p 0.02)

• positive anymore
  – App hear more (2.45 v 1.54 (p 0.00)

• zero plural measurement
  – App use more (2.63 v 1.98 (p 0.03)
• Preliminary analysis
• App males reporting higher use of marked features
  – might could: m 2.10 — f 1.79 (p 0.18)
  – completive done: m 2.15 — f 1.73 (p 0.10)
  – personal dative: m 2.10 — f 1.68 (p 0.04)
  – she don’t: m 2.50 — f 1.88 (p 0.01)
Preliminary age results

• Older leading Younger in Appalachia
  – use of lexical items
    • yonder, yall, right-pretty, poke, fodder shock, reckon
  – use of cheer /chair

• Younger leading Older in Appalachia
  – use and hear phonological items
    • fool/full, feel/fill, pin/pen
  – hear morphosyntactic items
    • a-prefixing, demonstrative them, zero plural measurement, she don’t, completive done
Open responses and attitudes

• Report pronunciations as “joking around”
• Referencing “correct” pronunciation
  – Being lazy
  – Doesn’t bother to pronounce the “right way”
  – Doesn’t know any better
• Negative labeling of “who uses”
  – Rednecks, hillbillies
  – Hoods, ghetto rats
  – Poor, low class, uneducated
Conclusions

• Some AppE lexical items fading
• Some unique AppE features
  – later stages of Southern Shift
  – positive anymore and zero plural measurement
• Apparent gender difference
  – more claimed usage by males
• Age differences pointing towards Young reclaiming features
Upcoming plans

• More responses from AppE speakers
• Subregional differences in App
• Looking at identity
• Factor analysis, multivariate analysis
Thank y’all

- Molly French, CCU; Brooke Parker, CCU
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