Speak Softly, But Carry a Big Stick: Tom Sawyer and Company's Quest for Linguistic Power

A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Tom Sawyer Abroad*

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Chapter 1: Sociolinguistic Foundations

"In the beginning," as John 1.1 states, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In order to bring creation to life, God used language—the entity that sets humans above the animals and lower creation. The language that God intended, however, was one that was unified. People could freely communicate and understand one another with no barriers, as the Genesis account records that the people were "of one language and one speech" (Gen. 11.1). However, this linguistic concord was not to last. As the people on earth became prideful, they desired to build a tower as high as heaven, and to punish them, God "confound[ed] their language" (11.9). Since this biblical event, linguistic diversity abounds and languages continually change and develop, but even today, language diversity can be regarded as a curse. Often, when people struggle to understand each other in speech, they develop a distrust, a dislike, or a prejudice. As we shall see, certain languages (and the people who speak them) have become stigmatized; and consequently, language often becomes a powerful divider of people.

Many languages and variations of these languages have developed since God confounded our speech, and linguists contributing to *The Ethnologue* estimate the number to be around 7,000 (10). English is only one of these thousands of languages, and since the Norman Conquest of 1066, researchers have noted that certain English dialects have been more esteemed than others. Also, it is certainly well-documented that those who spoke these prestigious varieties were the authority figures. Sociolinguists have determined that one's identity is inextricably bound with the way one speaks. Though English has changed significantly since the eighth century, it is not surprising that scholars were aware of changes before linguistics became a realm of study. Even the Venerable Bede, who penned *The Ecclesiastical History of English People* (731), records an anecdote explaining the connection between social status and language. He writes about a well

bred young soldier who attempts to con his enemies into thinking he is merely a peasant, but his imitation of the medieval vernacular does not dupe his inquisitors (Bede 209). The soldier is betrayed through his native speech; he cannot convince his assailants of a less than noble birth. As illustrated, the way humans speak reveals much about who they are, and the way they speak influences how others perceive them and with whom they associate.

The sociolinguistic phenomena that connect a man's social stature with his language were thoroughly explored by researchers in the twentieth century. As a language describes the way a person views the world, it also indicates how one integrates with society. Sociolinguistics, defined by Richard A. Hudson, is "the study of language in relation to society" (1). Linguist Elaine Chiaka expounds on this definition by suggesting that "[l]anguage and society are so intertwined that it is impossible to understand one without the other. There is no human society that does not depend upon, is not shaped by, and does not itself shape language" (2). Without a language, a society could not function properly: there would be no way for humans to express their identities and character; there would be no means by which to express laws that govern them; there would be no way to gain an education, and people could not interact with each other (Chiaka 3). Therefore, it is evident that a person functions and interacts in the world according to the language he uses. So then, according to Chiaka, a person's language use is "a window" of his society (3)—language explains how a person identifies himself and how a person relates with others.

Though some linguists believe that language can be appropriately examined as a self-contained entity, sociolinguists argue that the study of language cannot occur without the proper social context in which the illocutionary acts occur. William Labov, a pioneer in sociolinguistic studies, writes in *Sociolinguistic Patterns* that "[t]he point of view of the present study is that one

cannot understand the development of a language change apart from the social life of the community in which it occurs" (3). Therefore, succinctly, it is important for sociolinguists to study language in use as it derives its meaning from how it is used. Robert Longacre, author of *The Grammar of Discourse*, reiterates this by stating, "Language is language only in context" (1). Other linguists prefer to study language apart from its social context, but Longacre asserts that it is essential to look at dialogue as a part of a whole; studying "isolated" sentences only leads to "ambiguity" (1). The study of language is most potent when one looks at how it is utilized in communication, or how it is used in context. To reiterate this, Halliday writes, "Now one important fact about speaking and understanding language is that it always takes place in context. We do not simply 'know' our mother tongue as an abstract system of vocal signals, or as it was some sort of a grammar book with a dictionary attached. We know it in the sense of knowing how to use it; we know how to communicate with other people" (13). Therefore, Halliday determines that a functional standpoint is best when studying language. As an illustration, he writes:

> [T]he individual's language potential is interpreted as the means whereby the various social relationships into which he enters are established, developed and maintained. This means we are taking a functional view of language, in the sense that we are interested in what language can do, or rather in what the speaker, child or adult, can do with it; and that we try to explain the nature of language, its internal organization and patterning, in terms of the functions that it has evolved to serve. (16)

Instead of focusing solely on a particular aspect of language (such as phonetics, syntax, or morphology) or studying how language originates in the human mind, the sociolinguist decides

to look at language as how it functions in society, connecting language with how humans interact with each other. Because of this, sociolinguists can determine that language does indeed reflect a social status, though this may be difficult to prove empirically.

However, Labov, a pioneer in these sociolinguistic studies, did set out to prove empirically that social status and language are indeed connected. This linguist wanted to find how the upper classes speak differently from the lower classes in the United States, as Wolfram and Schilling-Estes state that those of a lower social class tend to "emulate" the speech of those in upper classes, while those in the upper classes tend to distance themselves from them linguistically (36). This is precisely why Labov conducted his sociolinguistic experiment; he wished to prove empirically that different classes of people speak differently, thus connecting their language with a social hierarchy. In New York City, for instance, the assumption is that the lower classes spoke a vernacular dialect (perhaps inferior to the upper classes). One distinct difference was in the pronunciation of the phoneme [r]. Those speaking the vernacular frequently omit the postvocalic [r], while those in the upper classes pronounce it distinctly. Describing his experiment, Labov writes about his intentions in determining which social classes in New York City pronounced the phoneme [r] differently:

> [P]reliminary studies led to the definition of the major phonological variables which were to be studied, including [r]: the presence of absence of consonantal [r] in postvocalic position in *car*, *card*, *four*, *fourth*, etc. This particular variable appeared to be extraordinarily sensitive to any measure of social or stylistic stratification . . . the linguistic variable [r] is a social differentiator in all levels of New York City speech . . . The study of [r] in New York City department stores

> which I will report here was conducted in November 1962 as a test of these ideas. (Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* 44)

While expecting to find different pronunciations of the phoneme [r] in three different New York City department stores: Saks (the most prestigious department store), Macy's (the middle class department store), and S. Klein (the lowest prestige department store), Labov hypothesized that "[i]f we select three large department stores, from the top, middle, and bottom of the price and fashion scale, we can expect that the customers will be socially stratified" (45). Further discussing his hypothetical results, Labov writes, "[T]he hypothesis will predict the following result: salespeople in the highest-ranked store will have the highest value of [r]; those in the middle-ranked store will have intermediate values of [r]; and those in the lowest-ranked store will show the lowest values" (45). After randomly sampling the salesperson's pronunciations of [r], he found that his hypothesis was indeed correct. Those residents of New York who were of higher social status pronounced their [r] more carefully; he found that those employees of Saks (the more prestigious store) pronounced [r] most often, and those employees of S. Klein pronounced it the least. He used the "Observer's Paradox" in order to acquire these results, meaning his goal "is to observe the way people use language when they are not being observed" (61). As the sociolinguist's work is dependent on context, it is important to note how one behaves naturally (as a person's speech would be more rigid when he is aware of observation). So, in order to carry out this study, Labov posed as a customer and asking department store employees simple questions; he did not disrupt the daily routine of those he interviewed. Additionally, Labov notes that age was also an influence regarding how New Yorkers pronounced [r]; also, he observes that people have a tendency to feel insecure about their vernacular pronunciations:

> This r-less norm can be seen in the formal speech of upper-middle-class speakers, over 40, and lower-middle-class speakers over 50 . . . The lower-middle-class speakers who now shift to (r-1) in formal styles have abandoned their prestige norm and are responding to the form used by the younger high-status speakers that they come into contact with . . . The pattern which we have observed in the department-store survey is therefore a reflection of the linguistic insecurity of the lower middle class, which has led the older generation to adopt the most recent norm of (r-1) in preference to the older norm. (Labov, *Sociolinguistic Patterns* 65)

In order to appear more powerful, those who are self-conscious have a tendency to "hypercorrect" their language use, so one will alter his speech in order to sound more prestigious and worthy of a higher rank on the social echelon. As language does affect how one is perceived, this hypercorrection is common, especially among the middle class (those people who wish to attain higher social status). However, Labov's experiment was critical in the field of sociolinguistics and helped prove that the language we speak often indicates the roles we play in society.

While Labov's experiment proved that even the smallest pronunciation differences can indicate a difference in how one is perceived by others, the different varieties of English spoken in America are nearly innumerable. A dialect—defined "loosely" by *American English*-- is "a variety of language typical of a given group of speakers" (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 2), and often dialects are indicative of where the speaker is from. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes write, "A sentence, a phrase, or even a word is often enough to trigger a regional, ethnic, or social classification" (1). However, it is difficult to deem a dialect a dialect without a standardized

version of a language, and the definition of Standard English has been the subject of many debates for centuries.

Standardization, defined by Peter Trudgill, "consist[s] of the processes of language determination, codification, and stabilization" (117). To further explain his terms, he writes:

> Language determination refers to decisions which have to be made concerning the selection of particular languages or varieties of language for particular purposes in the society or nation in question. Codification is the process whereby a language variety acquires a publicly recognized and fixed form. The results of codification are usually enshrined in dictionaries and grammar books. Stabilization is a process whereby a formerly diffuse variety undergoes focusing [sic] and takes on a more fixed and stable form. (Trudgill 117)

Succinctly, a standard language is one that other varieties of the language are measured against. While some linguists argue that a standard is a myth, others do not embrace language diversity. Noah Webster, arguing language diversity was abominable, stated in 1834, "The diversities of language among men may be considered a curse, and certainly one of the greatest evils that commerce, religion, and the social interests of men have to encounter" (289). Because of this diversity, some insisted on standardizing the English language from its "rude, rusty, cankered, and dull" (qtd. in Bailey 46) state (as John Skelton once described the language in the sixteenth century before efforts to standardize English commenced). Standardized English became an important issue in seventeenth and eighteenth century England, as H.L. Mencken describes the people as being "wracked by a movement to standardize the language, alike in vocabulary, in pronunciation and in spelling, and it went far enough to set up artificial standards that still survive" (126). Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) played a crucial role in this effort to

standardize; however, English in the Americas continued to coin and borrow words freely. It seemed as though American English was ever changing and distinguishing itself from the English spoken in Britain (Mencken 126). But, despite the changing nature of American English, some reformers wished to institute a language academy in order to combat "linguistic decay"; in 1820, William S. Cardell did create the American Academy of Language (Baron 99, 101). However, it did face opposition as Thomas Jefferson wrote about the need for language diversity and change: "The new circumstances under which we are placed, call for new words, new phrases, and for the transfer of old words to new objects . . . the dread of innovation . . . has, I fear, palsied the spirit of improvement" (302). Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, schools and dictionaries were developed in order to provide some standard to the American English voice, and language etiquette was quickly becoming synonymous with good behavior. Thus, those who spoke in the vernacular dialects were freely looked down upon, and this type of discrimination is still evident today. For example, African-American Vernacular English is a variety of English that is often stigmatized among Americans. Andy Kirkpatrick, author of *World Englishes: Implications for International Communication and English Language Teaching*, states that "a speaker of AAVE is likely to be pigeon-holed as being capable of only certain types of work. For example, an AAVE speaker can be successful in the sports and entertainment industries but not in others . . . An African-American accent would be more acceptable in a physical education teacher for example than it would be in a teacher of speech" (60). While the African-American Vernacular dialect differs from the standard and is sometimes the object of discrimination, these differences provide solidarity and distinctness to this particular culture.

As previously stated, although all people innately have the ability to utilize language, not all languages garner social equality. Though all languages are created equal, they are not all perceived as equal. Some dialects are not esteemed as highly as others, and are often labeled "ungrammatical." However, there is no such thing as an "ungrammatical" language, as the Linguistic Society of America writes, "[A]ll human language systems—spoken, signed, and written—are fundamentally regular" (qtd. in Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 7). All languages function according to intricate rules, and all languages display the amazing capabilities of the human mind to create, order, and reason. Sadly, some dialects generate a social stigma, and the "non-academic" speech of some is considered a form of stupidity or the mark of a lower social class. If a word's pronunciation deviates from the standard, the person's way of speaking is thought to be incorrect, an incorrect assumption according to linguists Wolfram and Schilling-Estes:

> [I]t is important to understand that socially favored, or 'standard,' varieties constitute dialects every bit as much as those varieties spoken by socially disfavored groups whose language differences are socially stigmatized . . . [furthermore], [d]ialects, like all language systems, are systematic and regular; socially disfavored dialects can be described with the same precision as standard language varieties. (2, 8)

Therefore, the authors suggest that dialects are not "deviant forms of language" (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes 3), but different systems that still operate under intricate rules. Therefore, social stigma should not be attached to those who speak these variations.

The variations in American English, however, are great in number. In order for linguists to distinguish these dialects, they transcribe the sounds using the symbols of the International

Phonetic Alphabet (1993). A copy of the IPA is included in the attached appendix. Each symbol has a corresponding sound, and because it is difficult to describe sound using the traditional alphabet, linguist Richard Shuy states, "Our standard alphabet cannot record the many sounds in American English pronunciation" (6). Dialects in the American language began with the settlement of Jamestown in 1607, though the settlers spoke distinctly British English. This was not to last, however, as a distinct American voice began to emerge. Settlers began to coin "Americanisms" because the new terrain required new names for unfamiliar places and objects[1] (Mencken 3). H. Kahane, author of essay "American English: From a Colonial Substandard to a Prestige Language," writes that American English distanced itself from British English because of "a decline in respect for 'things' English" as well as foreign influence and the "leveling of social dialects"—no longer was one individual dialect regarded as more prestigious (232). However, despite this "leveling" of dialects and the leveling of social classes that occurred in America, certain dialects and language varieties still accrue a certain amount of discrimination. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes indicate that, as the settlers began to develop their own distinct way of speaking, Jamestown, Boston, Philadelphia, Charleston, and New Orleans became the "cultural hearths" that influenced American speech the most since the country's colonization (114). Varieties of American English emerged with expansion, and contributors to *American Speech* identify three specific catalysts for the varieties of American English: "accelerating metropolitanisation, increasing migration, both domestic and foreign, and expanding ethnic diversity" (Tillery, Baile, and Wikle 228). As people came into contact with different languages and those who spoke those languages, the American language began to take on some of these

[1] Mencken defines "Americanisms" as colloquial words that deviate from traditional British English; thus, these words helped construct a unique American identity and helped define the American experience (17). For example, the author identifies the following terms as "Americanisms": "shack," "livewire," "cinch," and "bootlegger" (Mencken 16-7).

foreign linguistic features. Now, while there is certainly more language variety in American than can be accurately recorded, researchers distinguish four main dialect areas in the United States: Inland North, the South, the West, and the Midland. Specific linguistic features of the Southern and Midland dialects will be discussed more thoroughly later.

Not unrelated to the term dialect, register is a linguistic term defined by Chiaka as a "style" of speech that "may be associated with a particular social occasion" (52). In theory, people vary their word choice, syntax, voice, and even dialect when speaking in certain occasions. For example, it would be inappropriate for a young student to address a classroom professor with the colloquial expression "dude," and equally inappropriate for this professor to refer to the student as "sir" or "ma'am." Often, the register used indicates the appropriate level of formality a speaker wishes to express in a certain social circumstance. Chiaka explains register further by writing, "One uses one register at a funeral and another in the receiving line at a wedding. Sometimes, an occasion calls for switching into a second dialect for bidialectal speakers, or even into another language for bilingual speakers. Both the dialect and language switches are associated with occasion or even mood" (52). Mark Twain (1835-1910), the Realistic novelist, was well aware of the importance of register, and sought to incorporate the concept in literature: "[Tales] require that when the personages . . . deal in conversation, the talk shall sound like human talk, and be talk such as human beings would be likely to talk in the given circumstances" (Twain, "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses" 542). Accordingly, people alter their speaking style depending on their social circumstances, indicating their need for solidarity.

However, as people wish to establish solidarity with each other, they also desire to assert power over others through their speaking styles. Frequently, humans use language to manipulate

others, assert authority, protect their identities, and develop intimate relationships. Deborah Tannen, notable sociolinguist, claims "the dynamics of power and solidarity have been fundamental to sociolinguistic theory" (*Gender and Discourse* 22). In order to define the power and solidarity linguistic concept, Tannen writes:

> Any show of solidarity necessarily entails power, in that the requirement of similarity and closeness limits freedom and independence. At the same time, any show of power entails solidarity by involving participants in relation to each other. This creates a closeness that can be contrasted with the distance of individuals who have no relation to each other at all. (*Gender and Discourse* 23)

Individuals thus communicate in ways to assert authority over others or desire to have relationships and camaraderie. While asserting their authority, they wish to establish their rank on the social hierarchy, and while establishing solidarity, they want to associate with others despite their socioeconomic status. Since people do use language as an instrument of wielding control over others, it makes sense that they would alter their vocabulary or manner of speaking to make themselves appear more prestigious or establish rapport with a certain group of people, and as Roger Fowler, Gunther Kress, and others write, "Syntax can code a world-view without any conscious choice on the part of the writer or speaker" (185). For example, Roger Brown and Albert Gilman's paper, "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity," explains how syntax reveals personal motivations. Languages contain certain second-person pronouns; Brown and Gilman classify them as "T" and "V" (for the French 'tu' and 'vous') (Fowler, et.al 191). ("Tu" and "Vous" are the French pronouns for "you.") The authors of *Language and Control* explain:

> T/V encodes a relationship in which power is unequal; T has acquired a social meaning of authority, condescension [sic], V subservience, deference . . . people

> who do not know each other well make the 'safe' choice V, encoding respect, distance, formality. However, people in an intimate relationship, or whose social roles suggest a parity of status, address one another as T: children, lovers, members of the same family, close colleagues, particularly those who work down in an institutional hierarchy. This is . . . the 'solidarity semantic.' (Fowler, et. al 191)

As *Language and Control* demonstrates, the language we use reveals our subconscious desires for power and solidarity.

Furthermore, when attempting to assert power over each other, people attempt to use words of a higher register in order to make themselves appear prestigious or more intelligent. If a boss were attempting to gain respect from his employees, for example, he or she might use multisyllabic words to distance himself from those he considers professionally inferior. Though, when this boss wishes to establish rapport with his employees, he might switch into a lower register so that he can earn their trust and respect. Insults are also ways to express power and solidarity. When wishing to make one feel inferior, an assailant may assert his power by calling one a derogatory name. However, insults can also be used in an intimate setting, as Chiaka expounds, "The same [word] can be used to insult and to show endearment" (64). Since the meaning of a word often depends on the context in which it is used, hence the importance of always studying language in its proper social setting.

Naturally, as language expresses interactions between people of all socioeconomic status, many of these linguistic concepts are expressed in the written word, as well. Though linguistics and literature are two fields that are thought of as separate entities, it is important for the student of literature to consider linguistic analysis. All literary works are comprised of language, and as

literature is an expression of the human condition, inevitably the way characters interact with each other would be of importance to the literature scholar. Justifying this concept, Halliday writes:

> The realm of literature . . . is all too often treated as if it was something insulated from and even opposed to language: 'we concentrate mainly on literature here—we don't do much on language', as if 'concentrating on literature' made it possible to ignore the fact that literature is made of language . . . One can hardly take literature seriously without taking language seriously. (12)

Therefore, linguistic analysis could be an important component when one endeavors to study literature holistically. Additionally, with the rise of realism, many authors began to incorporate dialects into their prose. Particularly, Mark Twain, a nineteenth-century realist, sought to portray American life as he "heard it," transcribing Missouri dialects into his prose. He also artfully colors his prose with the varied dialects and voices of the Mississippi River Valley region. One who reads Twain's literature might note one of his greatest gifts as a writer: his remarkable ear for language. Certainly, Twain is a gifted linguist who translates the plethora of voices heard throughout his life into the pages of his novels. He writes in an explanatory note prefacing *Huck Finn*:

> In this book a number of dialects are used, to wit: the Missouri negro dialect; the extremest form of the backwoods South-Western dialect; the ordinary Pike-County dialect; and four modified varieties of this last. The shadings have not been done in a hap-hazard fashion, or by guess-work; but painstakingly, and with the trustworthy guidance and support of personal familiarity with these several forms of speech. I make this explanation for the reason that without it many

> readers would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not succeeding. (Twain 2)

As Twain explains in his note, these voices are not the product of "haphazard" guesswork. In fact, Twain had a penchant for language variety his entire life, and he was a meticulous grammar student. In addition, Twain also subtly incorporated sociolinguistic elements within the dialects of his most beloved characters. According to author David Sewell, "The vernacular of his good bad boys, Huck and Tom, serves as a running commentary on the moral inadequacies of the standard language with which social authority expresses itself" (25). As the language a man uses is a window into his very soul, Twain's use of the vernacular in his writings could be a form of rebellion against staunch structures (standardized language included). Perhaps it is not stated explicitly by many, but Twain's connection of social status and dialect qualifies him as a groundbreaking sociolinguist.

As exemplified in literature, language does tell much about one's place in society. For instance, many make false assumptions about a person because he or she is different from them or speaks differently from them. The careful study of dialects used in literature can perhaps prove that the language one speaks assigns a person his place in society and can dispel the stigma that arises when one speaks a language that is not "the standard." Therefore, as all people were created by God as equals, one can consider the varieties of language they speak equals as well. Also, as we will see, analyzing one's speech is a vital key in understanding his deepest motivations and quests for linguistic power and solidarity.

Chapter 2: "Trying to Help Jim": The African American Vernacular

Mark Twain's characteristic ambivalence regarding the important issues of his era makes it difficult for scholars and critics to decipher many of his philosophical, political, or religious beliefs. Among these beliefs are those concerning racism and slavery. While America was divided by the Civil War (Twain himself participated half-heartedly in the Confederacy), citizens had to choose a side: were they to be abolitionists, or did they choose to perpetuate the practice of slavery? Some say that Twain's abolitionist beliefs were apparent, while others accuse him of being a staunch racist. While it is difficult to identify Twain's precise views on the matter, the modern reader may assume that the "racist" language used prolifically throughout his masterpiece novel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* deems him as deeply prejudiced.

Furthermore, Twain's character Jim, the African American slave who accompanies Huck on his journey down the Mississippi, has been the subject of much linguistic scrutiny. Critics debate as to whether Twain's portrayal of Jim is an abysmal representation of the African American race, or if his selfless and endearing qualities make him stand out as the one positive adult influence in Huck's life. Regardless, as the language one speaks reflects much about who that person is, a critic could argue that, because Jim's written dialect is at times unintelligible, he appears less human than other characters[2]. However, an analysis of Jim's dialect reveals that Twain's written dialect reflects accurate characteristics of African American Vernacular English, a speech that evolved from West African languages; therefore, it is possible that Twain portrayed Jim's dialect realistically and respectfully and did not intend to create racial controversy through the use of his dialect.

[2] While this point is made by many, Thomas A. Tenney and James S. Leonard are two particular critics who do so in an introduction called "Huck Finn and the Authorities." This introduction is found in *Satire or Evasion? Black Perspectives on Huckleberry Finn* (13-5).

Mark Twain's portrayal of dialect in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a large factor in why it is such a highly regarded work. It was one of the first novels that truly "speaks American." Though first drafts of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* were written in the first person vernacular, it did not to remain written as such (DeVoto, *Mark Twain at Work* 8). Twain did not truly perfect his dialect until he wrote *Huck Finn*[3], where he transcribed the plethora of voices encountered throughout his years living in Missouri. Twain's list of interesting life experiences and careers allowed him to know and converse with people from across the country, all of whom spoke interesting dialects indicative of their various homelands. These voices, recorded in *Huck Finn*, make the novel both realistic and linguistically innovative, and these voices provoked Ernest Hemingway to exclaim that "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*" (22). Lionel Trilling writes in "The Greatness of *Huckleberry Finn*" that Twain's use of the vernacular sets him apart from writers such as Poe, Melville, and Hawthorne:

> As for the style of the book, it is not less than definitive in American literature. The prose of *Huckleberry Finn* established for written prose the virtues of American colloquial speech. This has nothing to do with pronunciation or grammar. It has something to do with ease and freedom in the use of language . . . Yet at the same time that the language of ambitious literature was high and thus always in danger of falseness, the American reader was keenly interested in the actualities of daily speech. (51)

While other serious writers did not attempt to imbue their writing with the "daily speech," Twain did. Though his attempts at dialect are sometimes thought of as an expression of his humor and it

[3] Twain published *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in 1876 and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in 1884 (Peck xi); therefore, he would have had eight years to "perfect" the dialect he uses within *Huck Finn*.

is debatable as to whether Twain's dialects were actually "accurate," a phonetic analysis indeed proves that Twain's representation of African American English has similarities to actual vernacular speech. Either way, there is no doubt that Twain's literature revolutionized the American canon and influenced great American authors to come.

Despite *Huck Finn's* literary and linguistic achievements, the novel remains controversial. Twain's diction, one of his greatest strengths as a writer, also brought him the most critical scrutiny. In fact, certain modern readers believe Twain was a racist because of the language he uses to refer to slaves within *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.* However, despite the depiction of slavery in Twain's novels and the frequent use of "nigger[4]" within his masterpiece novel, Twain makes several statements that indicate his opposition to slavery, and he seems to accept the black race as an equal race to the whites. While Twain was indeed equipped to entertain (and sometimes did so at the expense of others' foolishness), there is ample evidence suggesting he did not intentionally scorn the black race. In *The Autobiography*, Twain writes about his mother's "incorrect" perception of slavery: "[W]e lived in a slaveholding community . . . I do not think she was conscious that slavery was a bald, grotesque and unwarrantable usurpation" (30). Of a memorable slave companion, Twain writes, "He had served me well these many, many years . . . It was on the farm that I got my strong liking for his race and my appreciation of certain of its fine qualities. This feeling and this estimate have stood the test of sixty years and more have suffered no impairment. The black face is as welcome to me now as it was then" (6). William Dean Howells, a close friend of Twain's and the editor of his books, writes that Twain "held himself responsible for the wrong which the white race had done the black race in slavery" (qtd. in Dempsey xx). Though these statements would indicate Twain's

[4] A reference to *Donahoe's Magazine* volume 31 (1894) explains that the term "nigger" was actually "equivalent" to "slave" (294); additionally, some American Literature anthologies explain the equivalence of the two words.

bold rejection of slavery, the language used in his literature was indeed racially offensive. His *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been controversial since its publication in 1884 because of its language, and numerous libraries banned it (Leonard and Tenney 2). *The Boston Transcript* records the public outcry the controversial novel caused in Concord, Massachusetts:

> The Concord (Mass.) Public Library committee has decided to exclude Mark Twain's latest book from the library. One member of the committee says that, while he does not wish to call it immoral, he thinks it contains but little humor, and that of a very course type. He regards it as the veriest trash. The library and other members of the committee entertain similar views, characterizing it as rough, course, and inelegant, dealing with a series of experiences not elevating, the whole book being more suited to the slums than to intelligent, respectable people. (qtd. in Leonard and Tenney 2)

Twain's attempts to translate the realistic language and lifestyle of a small, slaveholding Missouri town were not well-received by all, and its language still incites controversy in schools today .

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn remains one of the most widely read novels in schools but also one of the most widely banned (Leonard and Tenney 13). Peaches Henry, contributor to *Satire or Evasion? Black Perspectives on Huckleberry Finn*, writes, "Black protestors, offended by the repetitions of 'nigger' in the mouths of white and black characters, Twain's minstrel like portrayal of the escaped slave Jim and of black characters in general, and the negative traits assigned to blacks, objected to the use of *Huck Finn* in English courses" (26). Furthermore, James S. Leonard and Thomas Asa Tenney note that if Twain were trying to demean blacks, he did well: "The language of the text and some elements of characterization tend to advance ethnic

and racial stereotypes particularly of the black characters, who are repeatedly termed 'niggers' and are represented as superstitious, childlike, and generally insubstantial" (2). One of the largest public outcries against *Huckleberry Finn* occurred in 1957, when, as Henry describes, the New York City Board of Education banned the novel from its middle school and high school reading lists because of its "belittling racial designations" (qtd. in Henry 26). Other schools sought to ban *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as well. Claiming the "n" word has "deleterious effects" on children, school administrator John Wallace has devoted twenty-eight years to having *Huck Finn* banned from public schools because of the humiliation black children would experience when hearing members of their race referred to as "nigger" (Henry 27).

Though this term is pejorative in today's contexts, the term "nigger" has not always been as such. Author Randall Kennedy explains the origins of the racial slur in his book *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*. He writes that "*[n]igger* is derived from the Latin word for the color black, *niger*. According to the *Random House Historical Dictionary of American Slang*, it did not originate as a slur but took on a derogatory connotation over time" (4). A variation of the word "nigger" first appeared in writing in the seventeenth century, and was used to describe slaves shipped to Virginia (Kennedy 4). While it is unknown how the term evolved into such a pejorative epithet, Kennedy notes that in the first third of the nineteenth century it began to take on its negative connotations (4). Geneva Smitherman, expert in African American language studies, writes that the term "nigger" became a derogatory reference to a black person when a white person did not know whether to refer to a man was enslaved or free (44). Smitherman also traces the development of "sociolinguistic realities" (or, the linguistic treatment received by a group of people), for African Americans, writing that they demanded more respectful terminology. Thus, they were referred to as "Coloreds" or "Negroes" in the 1920s

through 1950s, "Black" in the 1960s, and "African-American" most recently since the 1980s (*Talkin that Talk: Language, Culture, and Education in African America* 46). Currently, though not in Mark Twain's era, "nigger" is an extremely disrespectful term used towards African Americans, but, while never pleasant, it was once merely descriptive. Twain, a notable realist, sought to describe the realities of life in his literature. While this language may be considered demeaning, it was accurate to the time period in which he wrote. The language Twain uses in his literature was one way in which he realistically portrayed common life in the nineteenth century.

Despite Twain's criticism for his repetitive use of "nigger[5]," he was also questioned for his use of dialect. While Huck does speak in a distinct voice, his speech is not as marked as Jim's. This has caused the reader to wonder if Jim's dialect is accurate, or merely an eye dialect intended to mock. Eye dialect, defined by Winthrop Nelson Francis's *The Structure of American English* is "[a] crude but common device often utilized to convey the illusion of substandard pronunciation . . . a quasi-phonetic re- spelling of common words" (541). Furthermore, discourse analysts Jane Anne Edwards and Martin D. Lampert state that "eye dialect not only reduces readability . . . [it] tends to trivialize . . . utterances by conjuring up pejorative stereotypes while neither representing the phonetic level more precisely nor capturing detail relevant to the analysis" (97). Eye dialect was a common practice for authors of the nineteenth century, as an author wished to capture the phonetic sounds of a word through its spelling. However, the reading of this speech was sometimes unintelligible. Some have argued that Twain employed this eye dialect through his character Jim (Leonard and Tenney 5).

However, through careful investigation of Jim's speech in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the reader will see that Jim's dialect contains similarities to those features pointed out by

[5] Twain uses the word "nigger" over 200 times throughout *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.*

notable linguists. Twain's ear for language was astute, and he once told reporter Raymond Blathwaite in an interview:

> I lived a great deal of my boyhood on a plantation of my uncle's, where forty or fifty Negroes lived belonging to him, and who had been drawn from two or three States and so I gradually absorbed their different dialects which they had brought with them. It must be exceedingly difficult to acquire a dialect by study and observation. In the vast majority of cases it probably can be done as in my case, only by absorption. So a child might pick up the differences in dialect by means of that unconscious absorption when a practiced writer could do it twenty years later by closest observation. (qtd. in Dempsey 3)

Twain was deeply immersed in the language of his native Missourians, and it is by this immersion that his portrayal of Jim's dialect has close accuracy to linguistic features of the African American Vernacular English (AAVE). However, the development of AAVE, the dialect Jim would have spoken, has been the subject of racial discrimination for centuries. As previously stated, language discrimination is apparent, and it is often perceived that those of "lower" classes speak a "lesser" language. Geneva Smitherman writes about the ongoing prejudice of African American English and the stigma attached to it: "For African Americans, the semantics of race have been recurring themes in our sociolinguistic constructions of reality since 1619 when the first cargo of African slaves landed at Jamestown" (*Talkin that Talk* 43). Smitherman writes that a shipment of twenty Africans instigated the cruel practice of slavery of Africans in the United States. While there are no tape recordings to illustrate how these people spoke, it is known that they spoke a West African language—one very different from the English of the settlers in Colonial America. In order to communicate with the strange people to whom they had become

enslaved, the Africans developed a pidgin speech: a language used for transactional purposes (Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin* 5). While it was difficult to trace the exact development of these slaves' language to the African American Vernacular currently studied by linguists, Smitherman notes that the dialect transcribed by settlers in their diaries as well as dialect literature was helpful in uncovering the phonetic and syntactical developments of black English (*Talkin and Testifyin* 5).

A survey of linguistic analysis of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and Jim's speech as transcribed by Mark Twain reveals several similarities (which will be exemplified later in this chapter). The development of AAVE is described by William Labov in *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* as "the whole range of language forms used by black people in the United States: a very large range indeed" (xiii). Interestingly enough, H.L. Mencken notes in *The American Language* that white southern vernacular and the AAVE possess several similarities and that white speech was actually influenced by AAVE dialects:

> The popular belief ascribes some of the characters of General Southern American—for example, the elision of *r* before consonants and the intrusion of the *y* before certain vowels—to Negro influence. This belief is not of recent origin, for on April 15, 1842, Charles Dickens, who was then in the United States, wrote home to his wife: 'All the women who have been bred in slave States speak more or less like Negroes, from having been constantly in their childhood with black nurses.' (362)

Furthermore, Labov also observes that some African American speech is similar to that of the whites, especially that of southern whites: "In the South the overlap is much greater. There is

good reason to think that most features of the black speech pattern have their origin in dialects spoken by both blacks and whites in some parts of the South. Almost every feature of [the Black English Vernacular] can be found among some white speakers in the South" (7-8). While the African American Vernacular English deviates from Standard English, it truly is its own system with distinguishable patterns. In fact, Labov claims that the characteristics of this language are relatively uniform (xiii). Instead of considering this dialect as one inferior to that spoken by White English speakers, one should look at it as a legitimate language system that is not at all an inferior language.

The African American Vernacular includes various features that follow distinguishable patterns. Twain's character, Jim, demonstrates many of these patterns in the speech recorded throughout *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Labov lists these features within *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black Vernacular*. The first feature he lists is "r-lessness." Similar to his studies in the department stores of New York City, Labov notes that in the AAVE speakers frequently omit the phoneme [r]: "Black speakers show an even higher degree of *r-lessness* than New Yorkers or Bostonians" (13). Also, according to *Talkin that Talk: African American Language and Culture,* the omission of the [r] actually "reflect West African language influence dating from the enslavement era" (Smitherman 2). For example, Labov writes that a speaker of AAVE would pronounce "guard" as "god," "nor" as "gnaw," "sore" as "saw," and "court" as "caught", and AAVE speakers nearly omit [r] at the end of words such "four" (13). In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Jim also leaves out [r]. After Huck escapes from Pap and fakes his death, he meets Jim (who has run away from Miss Watson). When Huck asks Jim if he has had anything else to eat, Jim states, "No s**ah**—nu**ff**n else" (42). Instead of pronouncing "sir," he omits the [r] just as Labov describes is typical of AAVE. However, it seems that Jim's [r]

omissions occur after vowels, whereas he pronounces other [r]s normally or in place of other consonants. For example, ""I come heah de night arter you's killed'" (41). Labov notes that words like "yeah" can rhyme with "fair" when the [r] is omitted; hence, in Jim's dialect "heah" would indeed sound like "yeah." In this particular aspect, Twain's depiction of Jim's speech is an accurate depiction of the African American Vernacular speech.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note Jim's pronunciation of "nu**ff**n": instead of pronouncing the "th" (in this case the voiceless dental fricative ð), he substitutes /f/. Geneva Smitherman points out that the phoneme [f] is often substituted for [ɵ] or [ð]. She indicates that this is also a feature of West African language (*Talkin' that Talk* 2). Jim illustrates this linguistic concept when he says words such as "mou**f,**" (113) where "th" would be at the end of the word. Additionally, Jim does not pronounce the ending consonant cluster "–ng"; this is another feature of the AAVE. Labov notes that these speakers will often drop or simplify the endings of their words:

> [O]ne of the most complex variables appearing in black speech is the general tendency towards the simplification of consonant clusters at the ends of words. A great many clusters are involved, primarily those which end in /t/ or /d/, /s/ or /z/. [I]n conventional spelling we have words such as *past, passed, lift, laughed, bent, bend, fined, hold, poled, old, called, raised, aimed*. In all these cases, if the cluster is simplified, it is the last element that is dropped. Thus we have homonyms such as: past=pass, rift=riff, meant=men. (*Language in the Inner City* 15)

In addition, those consonant clusters ending in /c,k/ often take on /s,z/ sounds; for instance, "sick" would become "six" (Labov, *Language in the Inner City* 18). Therefore, it is common that AAVE speakers often drop or change the endings of their words, specifically, the consonants at

the end of the word. This is demonstrated by Jim when he says, “What’s de use to **ax** dat question?” (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 45). Instead of pronouncing the “sk” cluster at the end of “ask,” as Labov indicated in his linguistic study, he pronounces “ax” instead. Also, when he is consulting his “hair ball oracle” concerning Huck’s future, Jim states: “De be**s’** way is to re**s’** easy en let de ole man take his own way. Dey’s two angels hoveri**n’** rou**n’** ‘bout him” (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 19). Other examples of Jim’s omission of word endings include “lan’” for “land” (112), “doan” for “don’t” (264), and “a-comin’” (45). There are other numerous examples that show Jim’s omission of word endings.

Furthermore, one might also note in the previous passage that Jim also substitutes [d] for voiced and voiceless dental fricatives (particularly at the beginning of words). Voiced and voiceless dental fricatives, [ɵ] and [ð] are sometimes replaced with [d] in AAVE according to John R. Rickford of *African American Vernacular English* (4). Jim does this many times, but noticeably when he and Huck leave their original hiding place in the canoe. Jim says to Huck, “Well, you wouldn’t ‘a’ ben here ‘f it hadn’t ‘a ben for Jim. You’d ‘a’ ben down **d**ah in **d**e woods wi**d**out any dinner . . . **d**at you would, honey” (48). Other differences of the AAVE are also apparent throughout Jim’s speech. Rickford of explains that the “neutralization/merger of [ɪ] and [ɛ] before nasals” is characteristic of AAVE speech. Jim exemplifies this when speaking to Huck: “A body can’t tell y**i**t which one gwyne to fetch him at de las . . . you’s gwyne to g**i**t hung” (19). Instead of pronouncing [ɛ] in “yet” and “get,” Jim substitutes [ɪ] in these words.

Additionally, the syntactical structure of AAVE differs from White English. As AAVE developed from West African languages, Smitherman points out syntactical elements of these languages that translated into the AAVE. She writes that “West African languages allow for the

construction of sentences without a form of the verb 'to be'" (*Talkin and Testifyin* 5). While Jim does not often delete a form of the verb "to be" throughout *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he does erratically use "to be" verbs. Often, his use of the verb "to be" will not agree with its antecedent. For example, when the reader first encounters Jim, he says to Huck, "Say, who **is** you? Whar **is** you? . . . Well, I know what **I's** gwyne to do: **I's** gwyne to set down here and listen tell I hears it ag'in" (7). His use of "is" remains irregular throughout the novel, but it seems Jim is following patterns typical of English. Because "you" is singular, it seems odd that Standard English would implement the plural verb "are." Jim uses "you is" many more times throughout the novel. When he finds Huck after the Grangerford and Shepherdson feud, he exclaims, "**I's** jus' dis minute a-startin' de raf' down towards de mouf er de crick . . . Lawsy **I's** might glad to git you back ag'in, honey" (113). Aside from the unusual use of "to be" verbs, another characteristic of AAVE exemplified by Jim is subject repetition. This repetition is a feature of West African language from which AAVE evolved (Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin* 8). For example, Jim continually repeats his name (as he refers to himself in the third person) when revealing his affection or Huck: "**Jim** won't ever forgit you, Huck. You's de bes' fren' **Jim's** ever had; en you'd de only fren' ole **Jim's** got now" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 87). As well as mentioning the subject (himself) repetitiously, Jim reasserts his own identity through this exchange.

Though Jim is referred to as "nigger" throughout *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, he remains one of the few "noble" characters in Huck's life. Pap, Huck's father, is crude and abusive, the King and the Duke are swindlers, and even Tom Sawyer shows little value for human life when he tries to "free" Jim at the end of the novel. Incidentally, Twain's depiction of these characters' language is also indicative of their character and social class (which will be

discussed in a later chapter). Jim's positive characteristics are shown through his proclamation of loyalty and thankfulness for Huck: "Pooty soon I'll be a-shout'n for joy, en I'll say, it's all on accounts o' Huck; I's a free man, en I couldn't ever ben free ef it hadn' ben for Huck; Huck done it. Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 86-7). Also, Jim is protective of Huck when he does not reveal Pap's dead body: "Come in, Huck, but doan' look at his face—it's too gashly" (50). Though it is argued Jim is portrayed as simplistic and superstitious and his dialect is difficult to read, he is steadfast throughout his imprisonment, going along with Tom Sawyer's ridiculous scheming. Though it can be said Twain's dialect for Jim was just another device to bring scorn those enslaved, Ralph Ellison argues against the assertion that Jim's characterization was just an element of Mark Twain's satire:

> Writing at a time when the blackfaced minstrel was still popular, and shortly after a war which left abolitionists weary of those problems associated with the Negro, Twain fitted Jim into the outlines of the minstrel tradition, and it is from behind this stereotype mask that we see Jim's dignity and human capacity—and Twain's complexity—emerge. (422)

While the debate over Jim's characterization or the profuse use of "nigger" in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* will likely continue, one can say that Twain's portrayal of Jim's dialect is not a farce. The similarities between Jim's speech with noted linguists' observations about African American Vernacular English is telling that Twain's transcription of dialect was not part of his subtle mockery. Twain was a realist, and in *Huck Finn* he sought to portray life and language as it truly existed. Therefore, while Jim does face the stigma of his race, the fact that his speech differs from Standard English does not make him a lesser being than other characters throughout the novel.

Chapter Three: "It's Natural and Right for 'em to Talk Different From Each Other": Huck and Jim's Linguistic Solidarity

As noted in chapter two, the voices of African American slaves and white southern countrymen did not actually differ a great deal, and in many cases, the African American vernacular actually influenced the southern white vernacular[6]. Mencken notes that this was because of the influence of "black nurses" (362), but this could also be because the influence of African American culture permeated the lives of so many American Southerners (Mark Twain was certainly not an exception to this[7]). In Twain's novel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, not only does Jim speak African American Vernacular English as his dialect, it is hypothesized that Huck's speech does not differ much from Jim's dialect. However, it is important to note that Huck and Jim's dialects likely differ from Standard English. Often, those who do not speak the standard are not regarded as the ones who hold power in society; thus, a certain stigma is attached to their speech. Accordingly, Huck and Jim's speech does help define their "lower" place in society, but the linguistic bond they share helps them achieve a form of solidarity as they journey along the muddy waters of the Mississippi.

Often, the way one speaks distinguishes his social class, and Twain incorporates this sociolinguistic concept into his literature[8]. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and even in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, a character's place in society can be defined by the way he or she speaks. For example, David Sewell writes, "In Twain's linguistic economy, Standard English, like paper money, has no inherent value: it is worthless if the issuer does not possess the fund of

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[6] This refers to HL Mencken's note in *The American Language* that explains how AAVE affected white vernacular speech (362).

[7] Additionally, in chapter two of this thesis, Twain's relationships with a few notable slaves are described as influential (according to *Autobiography*).

[8] This sociolinguistic concept is discussed in further detail in Chapter 1, where the Venerable Bede describes a man whose real social status cannot be concealed by his speech.

social authority that his or her language promises. A character like Judge Thatcher is literally 'as good as his word' . . . Standard English indicates merited social, moral, and intellectual position" (202). Sewell also notes that the villainous characters, such as Pap, speak "heavily shaded dialect[s], and [Pap's] scorn for literacy marks him as 'ornery,' an occupant of the lowest rung of white society" (203). While it may be erroneous to generalize Twain's characters as "good" if they speak well or "bad" if their grammar is erratic, one can determine something about their social origins through their transcribed dialect. One might infer that, because Huck and Jim's dialects differ from the standard, these characters have received less education and are indeed occupants of a lower social class. However, it is the dialects that Huck and Jim speak that make them truly unique and memorable characters throughout the American canon of literature.

Huck's unique narrative voice helped shape the course of modern American literature. Huck speaks in the vernacular voice that shaped the way other American writers penned their dialogues and dialects, and Twain paved the way for modernists to write unique narrative voices. Because of this, William Faulkner deemed Twain "the father of American literature" (qtd. in Fishkin 9). These accolades likely came because Huck was among the first American literature heroes to speak "American": his voice was unfiltered, unadulterated, honest, and refreshing. In *Colloquial Style in America,* Richard Bridgman describes Huck's dialect and his vivid lexicon: "[His] dialect—nonce, slang—is that of poetry. And they contribute to the gradually accumulating feeling in American literature for the importance of the single word" (118). Twain's passion for "the right word" is manifested in Huck's lexicon, and his colorful syntax is exemplified in this particular passage: "I clumb up the shed and crept into my window just before day was breaking. My new clothes was all greased up and clayey, and I was dog-tired" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 12). Here, Huck assembles a unique collection of words, and he

speaks vivaciously and vibrantly, breaking the mold of "correct" grammar and "model prose." He often adds inflections to words (for example, clayey); he invents verb tenses to his liking (clumb), and he utilizes nouns as adjectives (such as dog-tired). Huck additionally shortens words and uses the term "ain't" frequently, thus "riddling his speech with formal errors" (Sewell 85). Frequently, Huck will use the prefix "a" in front of progressive verbs, such as "a-spinning": another strange colloquial feature of Missourian speech (35). The boy also frequently omits the endings of adverbs, such as "This shook me up considerable" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 25). Though these errors have caused many to shun the novel as a terrible grammatical example for young students, Sewell explains, "After Robin Hood's fashion, Huck's verbal outlawry victimizes only those who usurp authority unjustly; it is ever ready to bow the knee to a linguistic Richard the Lionhearted" (86). The use of a young boy's vernacular could be considered offensive to the pious grammarian, but truly, Huck's "outlawry" is a testament to Twain's quest for honesty and realism, as his speech is authentically American.

Similar to Huck's speech, Jim's syntax and usage are also unconventional. An example of this usage occurs in a clause (which will be examined later for its phonetic structure). Jim states, "Dog my cats ef I didn' hear sumf'n" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 6-7). Jim uses the noun 'dog' as a verb, yet 'dog' is implied as an agent as well. Another example of Jim's unique usage occurs in his pronunciation, which is detailed in the last chapter (as well as below). Throughout the course of *Huckleberry Finn*, Jim and Huck share numerous conversations and verbal exchanges. Though their speech differs phonetically and syntactically, a few similarities are readily observed. In fact, some trace the similarity of speech of young boys such as Huck to an African American dialect, because so many of them were raised by black women (Mencken 362). Though Huck was not one of these raised by a "black nurse," a 1993 study examining

Huck's dialect questions if the protagonist's speech was actually that of an African-American dialect. Shelley Fisher Fishkin, a current Twain scholar and author of *Was Huck Black: Mark Twain and African-American Voices*, argues the possibility that the voice of Huck was actually based on that of a little black boy who fascinated Mark Twain (16). While it is inconclusive as to whether Huck's dialect is based on that of an African American child, there do remain similarities (and many differences) between his speech and Jim's. It is, however, an objective of this chapter to determine how similarly Huck and Jim do speak, and it is interesting to note how their unique dialects may strengthen their portrayed "friendship" throughout *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Procedure

In order to phonetically analyze Huck and Jim's speech to determine similarities and differences, the sounds of his specific dialect will be transcribed, using the *International Phonetic Alphabet* (a copy of which is attached in the appendix of this thesis). Notably this transcription is a difficult undertaking, as the clauses being compared are not actually spoken dialogue. The dialect written by Twain is a representation of actual speech. As stated in the last chapter, Jim's dialect does contain many similarities to the present African American Vernacular English, as studied by scholars such as Geneva Smitherman and William Labov[9], so the reader trusts that Twain's dialect is not an exaggerated version of what speech did actually sound like in nineteenth century Missouri.

Proceeding to compare Huck and Jim's phonetic speech, twenty-seven clauses from each character's dialogue (nine taken from the first third of the novel, nine taken from the middle, and nine taken from the latter third of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*) will be examined. An

[9] References to Labov's work *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* and Smitherman's book *Talkin' and Testifyin'* are provided in the previous chapter. Both works describe characteristics of the African American Vernacular English.

inventory of these sounds will be taken, and this inventory will be compared to an inventory taken of the sounds transcribed in Jim's dialect. The projected outcome of this analysis is that while Huck and Jim's dialect will both deviate from what is considered Standard English, perhaps both of their dialects will share similarities that may not be noticeable to the casual reader. Additionally, a speech by Mark Twain has been transcribed, so that the reader can observe the differences between Huck and Jim's portrayed vernacular speech and Twain's transcribed Standard English.

Indeed, certain passages of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* do show the noticeable differences between the two characters' speech (even to the casual reader). It is not necessary always to do a phonetic analysis to see how Twain portrays Huck and Jim's speech as both similar and different. For example, note the following dialogue between Huck and Jim (Huck's speech is in bold print):

> 'What's de use er makin' up de camp-fire to cook strawbries en sich truck? But you got a gun, hain't you? Den we kin git sumfin better den strawbries.'
> **'Strawberries and such truck,' I says. Is that what you live on?'** 'I couldn't git nuffn else,' he says. **'Why, how long you been on the island, Jim?'** 'I come heah de night arter you's killed.' '**What, all that time**?' 'Yes-indeedy.' '**And you ain't had nothing but that kind of rubbage to eat?'** 'No sah—nuffn else.' (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 41-2)

First, Huck's language, though not grammatically perfect, is a bit easier to decipher than Jim's for one familiar with Standard English. Thus, Huck's language may indicate that he occupies a higher place in society than Jim (who is a slave). A noteworthy observation is Jim's use of the vowel [ɪ] in "git" and "kin," while Huck's vowel usage is, for the most part, standard. Also, Jim

has an unusual use for the phone [ɹ]; he omits it in the word “heah,” and inserts it in the word “arter.” Also, he substitutes [ɑ] for [ɹ] in “sah.” Jim’s language runs together a bit more than Huck’s; one can note difference of pronunciation of “strawbries” and “strawberries.” While Huck seems to use the phone [ɹ] in a standard way throughout the novel, both he and Jim manipulate their syntax in unique ways, and implement a varied lexicon. Further examples of the speech differences and similarities will be noted as the chapter progresses.

Sample of Standard English

In order to determine how Huck and Jim’s dialects differ from Standard English, it is necessary to provide a sample of this speech. While Judge Thatcher does speak Standard English throughout the novel, he does not have enough lines in order to collect an adequate sample for analysis. Thus, this provided sample of standard English comes from *Mark Twain’s Speeches,* collected by William Dean Howells. This particular speech was written in honor of Oliver Wendell Holmes and “delivered at the dinner given by the publishers of “The Atlantic Monthly” [sic] . . . in honor of [Oliver Wendell Holmes’s] seventieth birthday” (57). The speech was delivered on August 29, 1879 (57), and it is titled “Unconscious Plagiarism.” Due to the length of the speech, the first paragraph is included in this chapter, and the remainder can be found in Appendix C:

I WOULD have travelled a much greater distance than I have come to witness the paying of honors to Doctor Holmes;

[ʔaɪ] [wʊd] [hæv] [tʰɹævəld] [ʔeɪ] [mətʃ] [gɹetəɹ] [dɪstəns] [ðæn] [ʔaɪ] [hæv] [kʰəm] [tʰu] [wɪtnəs] [ði] [pʰeɪŋ] [ʔəv] [ʔɑnəɹz] [tʰu] [dɑktəɹ] [holmz]

for my feeling toward him has always been one of peculiar warmth.

[fɔɹ] [maɪ] [filŋ] [tʰəwəɹd] [hɪm] [hæz] [ʔɔlweɪz] [bɪn] [wən] [ʔəv] [pʰəkjuljəɹ] [wɔɹmθ]

When one receives a letter from a great man for the first time in his life, it is a large event to him,

[ʍɛn] [wən] [ɹəsivz] [ʔeɪ] [lɛɾɹ] [fɹəm] [ʔeɪ] [gɹeɪtʰ] [mæn] [fɔɹ] [ðə] [fəɹstʰ] [tʰaɪm] [ʔɪn]

[hɪz] [laɪf] [ʔɪtʰ] [ʔɪz] [ʔeɪ] [lɑɹdʒ] [ʔivɛntʰ] [tʰu] [hɪm]

as all of you know by your own experience.

[ʔæz] [ʔɔl] [ʔəv] [ju] [no] [baɪ] [jɔɹ] [ʔown] [ʔɛkspiɹiɛns]

You never can receive letters enough from famous men afterward to obliterate that one,

[ju] [nɛvəɹ] [kʰæn] [ɹisiv] [lɛɾɹz] [ʔinəf] [fɹəm] [feɪməs] [mɛn] [ʔæftəɹwɹd] [tʰu] [ʔəblɪtəɹetʰ]

[ðætʰ] [wən]

or dim the memory of the pleasant surprise it was, and the gratification it gave you.

[ʔɔɹ] [dɪm] [ðə] [mɛmɔɹi] [ʔəv] [ðə] [pʰlɛsəntʰ] [səɹpɹaɪz] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [ʔænd] [ðə]

[gɹætəfəkæʃən] [ʔɪtʰ] [gæv] [ju]

Lapse of time cannot make it commonplace or cheap.

[læps] [ʔəv] [tʰaɪm] [kʰænnɑtʰ] [meɪkʰ] [ʔɪtʰ] [kʰɑmənples] [ʔɔɹ] [tʃipʰ]

Well, the first great man who ever wrote me a letter was our guest—Oliver Wendell Holmes.

[wɛl] [ðə] [fəɹstʰ] [gɹeɪtʰ] [mæn] [hu] [ʔɛvəɹ] [ɹotʰ] [mi] [ʔeɪ] [lɛɾɹ] [wəz] [ʔawɹ] [gɛstʰ]

[ʔɑləvəɹ] [wɛndəl] [holmz]

He was also the first great literary man I ever stole anything from—

[hi] [wəz] [ʔɔlso] [ðiˌ] [fəɹstʰ] [gɹeɪtʰ] [lɪtəɹæɹi] [mæn] [ʔaɪ] [ʔɛvəɹ] [stol] [ʔɛniθɪŋ] [fɹəm]

and that is how I came to write to him and he to me.

[ʔænd] [ðætʰ] [ʔɪz] [haʊ] [ʔaɪ] [kʰæm] [tʰu] [ɹaɪtʰ] [tʰu] [hɪm] [ʔænd] [hi] [tʰu] [mi]

The frequency of consonants used in this sample standard English speech are shown on the following chart:

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p (21) pʰ (24) b (34)			tʰ (119) t (46) d (128)				k (27) kʰ (27) g (18)			ʔ (208)
Nasal	m (99)			n (149)				ɳ (20)			
Trill											
Tap				ɾ (5)							
Fricative		f (50) v (50)	ɵ (15) ð (57)	s (93) z (71)	ʃ (10)						h (55)
Affricate					ʧ (8) ʤ (7)						
Lateral fricative											
Approximant				ɹ (166)		j (17)					
Lateral approximant				l (101)							

Voiced labio-velar approximant [ʍ]:69

Voiceless labio-velar approximant [ʍ]:1

Vowels occurring in the sample Standard English speech:

Front	Central	Back
i = 130		u= 43
ɪ= 204		ʊ= 18
e= 55	ə= 186	O=45
ɛ= 80		ɔ= 44
æ= 106		
		a= 79 ɑ= 34

A quick analysis of this Standard English speech shows that, because Mark Twain's diction is fairly complex and multisyllabic, he utilizes many sounds in the English language (as is true for any literate or illiterate speaker). Unsurprisingly, as these consonants are among the most common sounds in English, he utilizes the alveolar approximate, [ɹ], nasal consonant [n], voiced plosive [d], and aspirated voiceless plosive [t^h] most frequently. Twain uses a variety of affricates and fricatives as well—perhaps evidence that Twain's vocabulary is quite broad. Additionally, Twain relies on front and central vowels: [ɪ], [i], and [ə], as these are most common in his speech. Most likely, the use of these vowels indicates that Twain speaks in a relaxed fashion because he is speaking from the front of his mouth. By comparison, Huck's diction is likely less complex than the Standard English sample, though his speech will likely be relaxed due to his informal nature. Below is the phonetic analysis of 27 clauses spoken by the boy:

Huck: Clauses 1-9

These sentences, in context, are found in Chapter III: "We Ambuscade the A-rabs." These particular clauses were chosen for analysis because they display Huck's unique narration, as he

is not speaking to anybody in particular. Because of this, Huck would likely speak naturally, uninfluenced by social circumstances. Even in Huck's narrative voice, he speaks authentically, delightfully misusing various verbs, vowel sounds, and generally implementing informal language. In this particular passage, Huck, after joining Tom Sawyer's gang, returns home to the harsh chides of Miss Watson. When Miss Watson tells Huck to pray, he thinks nothing comes of it. These clauses describe Huck's musings about the futility of prayer (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 12):

I set down one time back in the woods,

[ʔaɪ] [sɛtʰ][daʊn][wən] [tʰaɪm] [bækʰ] [ʔɪn] [ðə] [wʊdz]

and had a long think about it.

[ʔænd] [hæd] [ʔeɪ] [lɔŋ] [θɪŋk] [ʔəbaʊtʰ] [ʔɪtʰ]

Why can't the widow get back her silver snuff box that was stole?

[ʍaɪ] [kæntʰ] [ðə] [wɪdoʊ] [gɛtʰ][bækʰ] [həɹ] [sɪlvəɹ] [snəf] [baks] [ðætʰ]

[wəz] [stoʊl]

Why can't Miss Watson fat up?

[ʍaɪ] [kæntʰ] [mɪs] [ʍɔtsən] [fætʰ] [ʔəp]

No, I says to myself,

[no] [ʔaɪ] [sɛz] [tʰu] [maisɛlf]

There ain't nothing in it.

[ðɛr] [ʔeɪntʰ] [nəθŋ] [ʔɪn] [ʔɪtʰ]

I went and told the widow about it

[ʔaɪ] [wɛntʰ] [ʔænd] [tʰold] [ði] [wɪdoʊ] [ʔəbawtʰ] [ʔɪtʰ]

And she said the thing a body could get by praying for it was 'spiritual gifts'

[ʔænd] [ʃi] [sɛd] [ði] [θɪŋ] [ʔe] [bɑdi] [kʊd] [gɛtʰ] [baɪ] [pɹeɪŋ] [fɔɹ] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [spɪɹɪʃəwəl]

[gɪfts]

This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant

[ðɪs] [wəz] [tʰu] [mɛni] [fɔɹ] [mi] [bətʰ] [ʃi] [tʰold] [mi] [wətʰ] [ʃi] [mɛntʰ]

Clauses 10-18

These sentences are located in Twain's chapter "The Duke and Dauphin Come Aboard." Located in the middle portion of the novel, these clauses were chosen for analysis because, as in the previous set of clauses, Huck is in a relaxed atmosphere where his speech would be authentic. Additionally, these clauses were chosen because they display Huck's interesting lexicon: he uses unconventional words such as "crawly" and "dern." Thus, it seemed that these clauses would be a good representation of Huck's normal speech. Also, in this particular passage, Huck and Jim enjoy each other's company on the raft before the Duke and Dauphin arrive. While conversing with Jim about the fog on the Mississippi, Huck feels as though he should rectify Jim's superstitious ways (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 115):

It made you feel crawly;

[ʔɪtʰ] [meɪd] [ju] [fil] [kʰɹɔli]

It was like spirits carrying on that way in the air

[ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [laɪkʰ] [spɪɹəts] [kʰæɹɪɪŋ] [ʔɑn] [ðætʰ] [weɪ] [ʔɪn] [ði] [ʔɛɹ]

Jim said he believed it was spirits; but I says:

[dʒɪm] [sɛd] [hi] [bəlivd] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [spɪɹəts] [bətʰ] [ʔaɪ] [sɛz]

“No; spirits wouldn’t say, ‘Dern the dern fog.’”

[no] [spɪɹəts] [wʊdʔntʰ] [seɪ] [dɹn] [ðə] [dɹn] [fɔg]

Soon as it was night out we shoved

[sun] [ʔæz] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [naɪtʰ] [ʔaʊtʰ] [wi] [ʃəvd]

When we got her out to about the middle we let her alone

[wɛn] [wi] [gatʰ] [hɹ] [ʔaʊtʰ] [tʰu] [ʔəbaʊtʰ] [ðə] [mɪdəl] [wi] [lɛtʰ] [hɹ] [ʔəlon]

And let her float wherever the current wanted her to

[ʔænd] [lɛtʰ] [hɹ] [flotʰ] [wɛɹɛvɹ] [ðə] [kʰəɹəntʰ] [wəntəd] [hɹ] [tʰu]

Then we lit pipes

[ðɛn] [wi] [lɪtʰ] [pʰaɪps]

And dangled our legs in the water

[ʔænd] [dængld] [ʔawəɹ] [lɛgs] [ʔɪn] [ðə] [ɯatəɹ]

Clauses 19-27

These clauses are from the chapter “We Cheer Up Jim.” These clauses were chosen for analysis because, in this particular scene, Huck’s unusual diction is especially apparent. Huck continues to color his narration with unique pronunciations, such as “yaller,” “warn’t” and “pison”. When Huck narrates this passage, he has just witnessed the “pitiful end to royalty” (217), meaning the townspeople have just tarred and feathered the Duke and King. Nevertheless, Huck has decided that “human beings *can* be awfully cruel to one another,” (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 222), and he muses about the human conscience (222-23):

So we poked along back home

[so] [wi] [pʰokd] [ʔəlɑŋ] [bækʰ] [hom]

And I warn't feeling so brash as I was before

[ʔænd] [ʔaɪ] [ɯɑɹntʰ] [filiŋ] [so] [bɹæʃ] [ʔæz] [ʔaɪ] [wəz] [bəfɔɹ]

But kind of ornery, and humble, and to blame somehow—

[bʰətʰ] [kʰaɪnd] [ʔəv] [ʔɔɹnɹi] [ʔænd] [həmbəl] [ʔænd] [tʰu] [bleɪm] [səmhaw]

though I hadn't done nothing

[ðo] [ʔaɪ] [hædʔntʰ] [dən] [nəθŋ]

But that's always the way;

[bətʰ] [ðætz] [ʔɔlweɪz] [ði] [weɪ]

A person's conscience ain't got no sense, and just goes for him anyway

[ʔe] [pʰɹsənz] [kanʃəns] [ʔeɪntʰ] [gɑt] [no] [sɛns] [ʔænd] [dʒəstʰ] [goz] [fɔɹ] [hɪm] [ʔɛniwe]

If I had a yaller dog

[ʔɪf] [ʔaɪ] [hæd] [ʔe] [jalɹ] [dɔg]

that didn't know no more than a person's conscience does

[ðætʰ] [dɪdʔntʰ] [no] [no] [mɔɹ] [ðæn] [ʔe] [pʰəɹsənz] [kʰanʃəns] [dəz]

I would pison him.

[ʔaɪ] [wʊd] [pʰɪzən] [hɪm]

Noticeably, Huck's vowel pronunciation deviates from Standard English in these clauses; for instance, he provides a unique pronunciation for "yellow," normally pronounced [ʔjɛlo], and his

pronunciation for “poison” differs as well; instead of fully pronouncing the dipthong [ɔj], Huck uses [ɪ] instead. An inventory of Huck’s sounds is recorded in the following charts:

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p (7) pʰ (5) b (18)			tʰ (51) t (10) d (40)				k (5) kʰ (9) g (10)			ʔ (59)
Nasal	m (17)			n (59)				ɳ (9)			
Trill											
Tap				ɾ (0)							
Fricative		f (13) v (5)	ɵ (4) ð (19)	s (35) z (19)	ʃ (8)						h (14)
Affricate					ʧ (0) ʤ (2)						
Lateral fricative											
Approximant				ɹ (33)		j (2)					
Lateral approximant				l (26)							

Voiced labio-velar approximant [w]:31

Voiceless labio-velar approximant [ʍ]:5

The following chart shows Huck's vowel sounds:

Front	Central	Back
i = 30		u= 7
ɪ= 61		ʊ= 12
e= 15	ə= 55	O=18
ɛ= 22		ɔ= 12
æ= 28		
		a= 30 ɑ= 7

As seen from the sample of Huck's speech, he frequently utilizes the common consonants noted in the Standard English speech: [tʰ], [d], [ɹ] and [n]. He also uses the voiced dental fricative [ð]; most likely because, as shown in this sample, Huck does use many demonstrative pronouns (that, this, and there) in his narration. However, compared to the standard, Huck uses far less affricates, [ʧ] and [ʤ]. This could be because his diction is less complex than the standard; hence, the words he uses would be more simply constructed. For example, Twain's vocabulary consists of many multisyllabic words, whereas Huck's vocabulary is a bit more basic. Like the Standard English sample, Huck also utilizes the common front and central vowels most frequently ([ɪ] and [ə]), but his use of back vowels is also interesting because he uses so many of them (particularly [o] and [a]). Notably, he uses [ʊ] almost as often as Twain uses in the entirety of "Unconscious Plagiarism." Comparatively then, Huck's speech is similar to the Standard because of the consonant use aside from affricates, and also fairly similar in vowel use (aside from the back vowel [ʊ]). This finding likely shows that, though Huck does color his narration with a noticeably different pronunciations, his voice may not differ from Standard English as much as originally hypothesized. Next, Jim's speech will be transcribed for frequency of sound

in order to determine its similarities and differences with Standard English and Huck's narrative voice.

Jim: Clauses 1-9

These clauses are from the second chapter of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. These clauses were chosen because they were among the first Jim speaks in the novel, and they distinguish his vernacular dialect from the other characters. In these specific clauses, he is speaking to Huck (who sneaks out to join Tom Sawyer in their boyhood escapades) (Twain 6-7):

Who dah?

[hu] [da]

Whar is you?

[waɹ] [ʔɪz] [ju]

Dog my cats ef I didn' hear sumf'n

[dɔg] [maɪ] [kæts] [ʔɛf] [ʔaɪ] [dɪdʔn] [hɪɹ] [səmfɪn]

Well I know what I's gwyne to do:

[wɛl] [ʔaɪ] [no] [wətʰ] [ʔaɪz] [gwɪn] [tʰu] [du]

I's gwyne to set down here and listen tell I hears it ag'in

[ʔaɪz] [gwɪn] [tʰu] [sɛtʰ] [dawn] [hɪɹ] [ʔænd] [lɪsɛn] [tʰɛl] [ʔaɪ] [hɪɹz] [ʔɪtʰ] [ʔəgɪn]

The following clauses, taken from page 19, represent the next time Jim speaks in the novel. Here, Jim is informing Huck of what he should do about Pap (who has returned to take Huck's money):

Yo ole father doan' know yit what he's a-gwyne to do

[jo] [ʔol] [fɑðəɹ] [doən] [no] [jɪtʰ] [wətʰ] [hiz] [ʔə] [gwɪn] [tʰu] [du]

Sometimes he spec he'll go 'way

[səmtaimz] [hi] [spɛk] [hil] [go] [weɪ]

En den ag'in he spec he'll stay

[ʔɛn] [dɛn] [ʔəgɪn] [hi] [spɛk] [hil] [steɪ]

De bes' way is to res' easy en let de ole man take his own way

[di] [bɛs] [weɪ] [ʔɪz] [tʰu] [ɹɛs] [ʔizi] [ʔɛn] [lɛtʰ] [di] [ʔol] [mæn] [tʰeɪkʰ] [hɪz] [own] [weɪ]

Clauses 10-18

Jim speaks freely with Huck on the raft, and these clauses, found in "What Royalty Did to Parkville," show that Jim loses faith in the Duke and the Dauphin; he finally realizes (as Huck did almost immediately) that these two men are not who they claim to be (130). These clauses were chosen for analysis because they represent interesting features of the African American Vernacular dialect, such as the shortening of words, the use of [d] for dental fricatives, and the pronunciation of [gw] instead of the back vowel [o]:

Huck, does you reck'n we gwyne to run acrost any mo' kings on dis trip

[həkʰ] [dəz] [ju] [ɹɛkən] [wi] [gwɪn] [tʰu] [ɹən] [ʔəkɹɔstʰ] [ʔɛni] [mo] [kʰŋz] [ʔɑn] [dɪs]

[tʰɹɪpʰ]

Dat's all right den.

[dæts] [ʔɔl] [ɹajtʰ] [dɛn]

I doan mind one er two kings, but dat's enough.

[ʔaɪ] [don] [majnd] [wən] [ʔəɹ] [tʰu] [kɪŋz] [bətʰ] [dæts] [ʔinəf]

Dis one's powerful drunk

[dɪs] [wənz] [pʰawəɹfəl] [dɹənkʰ]

En de duke ain' much better

[ʔɛn] [di] [dukʰ] [ʔeɪn] [mətʃ] [bɛrɹ]

Jim's dialogue is not continued until page 148, in Twain's chapter "The Orneriness of Kings." Here, Jim and Huck discuss the corrupt characteristics of the Duke and Dauphin (148).

Don't it s'prise you de way dem kings carries on, Huck?

[dontʰ] [ʔɪtʰ] [sʔpɹaɪz] [ju] [də] [we] [dɛm] [kʰɪŋz] [kʰɛɹiz] [ʔɑn] [həkʰ]

But, Huck, dese kings o' ourn is regular rapscallions

[bətʰ] [həkʰ] [diz] [kʰɪŋz] [ʔo] [ʔɑɹn] [ʔɪz] [ɹɛgulɹ] [ɹæpskælyənz]

Dat's jist what dey is

[dætz] [dʒɪstʰ] [wətʰ] [dej] [ʔɪz]

Dey's regular rapscallions

[dɛz] [ɹɛgulɹ] [ɹæpskælyənz]

Clauses 19-27

These clauses describe Jim's meeting with Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer at the Phelps's farm in the chapter titled "We Cheer Up Jim." Tom is planning Jim's "romantic" escape from his imprisonment, and naturally, Jim is surprised to see the boys and hear of their "dark, deep-laid" plans (which are described in the subsequent chapter) (227-8). Additionally, these clauses were

chosen for analysis because they portray Jim's unique pronunciations, particularly for words "heah" and "hain't":

En' good lan'!

[ʔɛn] [gʊd] [læn]

Ain' dat Misto Tom?

[ʔeɪn] [dætʰ] [mɪsto] [tʰam]

Why de gracious sakes!

[ʍaɪ] [di] [gɹeʃəs] [seɪks]

I hain't said nothing, sah.

[ʔaɪ] [heɪntʰ] [sɛntʰ] [sɔ]

The last five clauses are spoken by Jim to Tom in the chapter "Here a Captive Heart Busted." Tom continues to discuss his ridiculous plans in the fiasco to free Jim (251). These clauses continue to emphasize Jim's use of "Mars" for "Master," as well as the omission of the postvocalic [r] in "thoo" and "heah":

De goodness gracious sakes alive

[di] [gʊdnəs] [gɹeʃəs] [seɪks] [ʔəlajv]

Mars Tom!

[mɑɹz] [tʰam]

Why, if dey was a rattlesnake to come in heah

[ʍaɪ] [ʔɪf] [de] [wəz] [ʔe] [ɹætəlsnekʰ] [tʰu] [kʰəm] [ʔɪn] [hiə]

I'd take en bust right out thoo dat log wall

[ʔaɪd] [tʰekʰ] [ʔɛn] [bəst] [ɹajtʰ] [ʔawtʰ] [θu] [dætʰ] [lɑg] [wɑl]

I would, wid my head

[ʔaɪ] [wʊd] [wɪd] [maɪ] [hɛd]

The following charts show Jim's use of consonants and vowels:

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p (5) p^h (2) b (5)			t^h (34) t (8) d (44)				k (10) k^h (14) g (15)			ʔ (210)
Nasal	m (16)			n (52)				ɳ (5)			
Trill											
Tap				ɾ (1)							
Fricative		f (6) v (1)	ɵ (1) ð (1)	s (32) z (25)	ʃ (2)						h (10)
Affricate					ʧ (1) ʤ (1)						
Lateral fricative											
Approximant				ɹ (28)		j (11)					
Lateral approximant				l (21)							

Voiced labio-velar approximant [ʍ]:25

Voiceless labio-velar approximant [ʍ]:2

Front	Central	Back
i = 18		u= 16
ɪ= 55		ʊ= 3
e= 18	ə= 39	O=15
ɛ= 28		ɔ= 4
æ= 12		
		a= 25 ɑ= 9

After completion of this phonetic analysis, the reader finds that Jim's voice differs from Huck's more than hypothesized; his voice also differs from Standard English significantly. While Jim does utilize the common English consonants at a similar frequency to Huck (for example, counts on [ɹ], [m], and [s] are similar), one also finds that Jim uses fewer dental fricatives ([ɵ] and [ð]), and less fricatives ([f] and [v]) in general. While this is a difference between Jim's speech and Huck's speech, it is also the largest difference between Jim's speech and the standard sample as well. The lack of dental fricatives in Jim's speech could be explained by Geneva Smitherman's claim that the omission of dental fricatives is a feature of West African languages (*Talkin and Testifyin* 2)[10]. Also compared to Standard English, Jim uses far less fricatives and affricates (and this is also a difference between Huck's speech and the standard).

Surprisingly, however, Huck and Jim's use of [d] is similar. Because Jim does substitute [d] for dental fricative clusters (shown in words like "dey"), one would think this consonant would occur more frequently in his speech. Additionally, Jim uses fewer voiced plosive [b] than Huck, and far fewer plosives than used in the Standard English sample. Jim also utilizes the nasal

[10] Smitherman's research, as well as a discussion of specific features of Jim's dialect, are described in greater length in chapter two of this thesis.

consonant [ŋ] less than both Standard English and Huck. However, as Jim does often drop –ing endings in his speech, this was not a surprising finding. Furthermore, Jim uses the glide [j] a bit more than Huck, and compared to the standard, Jim uses [j] nearly as much as Twain does in the entirety of his speech. Perhaps this is because Jim does often use "y" sounds in unconventional places ("gwyne" is the most prominent example of this).

However, despite the differences Huck and Jim display in their consonant use, their vowel sounds contain similarities. Both Huck and Jim utilize front and central vowels [ɪ] and [ə] most often, and this is also true in Twain's sample of Standard English. The schwa is also a common vowel between Twain, Huck, and Jim's speech. This vowel sound comes from the middle of the mouth, indicative of a relaxed speaker. Perhaps the frequency of this vowel shows that Twain, Huck, and Jim each spoke in an easy, free fashion. However, while Jim uses the schwa a bit less than Huck, the only back vowel he uses more than Huck is [u]. Jim also uses front dipthong [æ] less than Huck, but, surprisingly, the vowel use between Huck and Jim does not differ as widely as their use of consonants. Perhaps this is evidence that, though the sounds of Huck and Jim's speech do inevitably differ, there is some credence to the fact that the two do talk (somewhat) alike.

As Huck and Jim's speech do share some similar similarities, one might note that this helps to solidify their unique bond: both Huck and Jim share solidarity in that they themselves deviate from standard society (as their speech, for the most part, does differ from Standard English). Through the bond of this shared language, Huck and Jim create a place of linguistic security: the raft. The raft is the place where they can reveal their true identities. In fact, as Huck and Jim float down the Mississippi River together, they share easy conversation; they are comfortable, and several times throughout the novel, Twain describes the raft as a place of

freedom from restraint as well as a place of peace. As a testimony to the freedom and solidarity Huck and Jim share, Huck narrates, "[W]e was always naked, day and night" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 115). While on the raft, Huck and Jim literally strip away all that stands between them, including their clothing. Thus, they develop an authentic bond that transcends most societal constraints. Additionally, after Huck spends time within the confines of society with the Grangerfords, he further describes the sensation of freedom while aboard the raft: "We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft" (*Huckleberry Finn* 113). On the raft, Huck and Jim can make their own rules, and as expressed above, they are free; here, they exist outside of a predetermined social hierarchy.

As Huck and Jim try to maintain this solidarity, they do not communicate freely with outsiders. For example, when Huck and Jim encounter the wreck of the Walter Scott, Jim protests Huck's leaving the raft to explore. Eventually, Huck narrates, "Jim grumbled a little, but give in" (65). Once Huck and Jim leave the raft, however, they do encounter trouble: murderous thieves. Both Huck and Jim dash back to the raft, avoiding conversation with the criminals. These are not the only people Huck and Jim encounter along the river, and Huck lies to other people and Jim encounter in order to protect their identities. When the Duke and Dauphin come aboard, Huck relinquishes some of the solidarity he and Jim enjoy. Despite their intrusion on Huck and Jim's raft, Huck expresses his desire to keep the peace, though he knows the two intruders are just that (fraudulent intruders): "[F]or what you want, above all things, on a raft, is for everybody to be satisfied, and feel right and kind towards others . . . If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn't no objections, 'long as it would keep peace in the family"

(121). Huck withholds speaking the truth so that peace can be preserved, and Twain portrays the raft as a safe place where all people (even con-artists and thieves) can speak peaceably.

On the raft, Huck and Jim build their linguistic solidarity: they are free to speak with one another, though, as a vagabond orphan and a slave, they would not be able to speak as loosely with those who occupy higher rungs of the social ladder. Often, and as discussed in a later chapter, Huck refrains from communicating extensively with other adults, and (for the most part), Jim's interaction occurs mostly with Huck (and Tom Sawyer as well, towards the end of the novel). Because Jim is so fond of Huck and his friendship, the slave openly verbalizes his appreciation-- an appreciation that defies racial stereotypes and discrimination: "Jim won't ever forgit you Huck; you's de bes' fren' Jim's ever had; en you's de only fren' ole Jim's got now . . . de ole true Huck; de on'y white genlman dat ever kep' his promise to ole' Jim" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 87).

Throughout the entirety of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Jim is the only adult with whom Huck speaks freely. Perhaps it is because of their similar speech and inferior social status (though it must be noted that, while Huck was an uneducated scamp, he was not a slave), Huck feels safe with Jim; Jim too confides in Huck. Through their unique bond of language, Huck and Jim continue to ford the Mississippi River, doing their best to protect each other from various predators (particularly, those attempting to sell Jim back into slavery) and preserve their friendship along the way. When Huck and Jim are alone on the raft, their communication is uninhibited. However, while both characters do acquire stigma for their social status, they manage to find solidarity and freedom through their many interesting and intelligent conversations.

Chapter 4: "We Ain't Burglars and Funeral Orgies": An Analysis of Lofty Speech

As the dialect one speaks can indicate social status, individuals will often manipulate the type of language they use in order to assert power over others. For instance, one who wishes to appear more intelligent will use words of a higher register, and one who wishes to control a situation may employ more forceful terminology in order to intimidate those around him. Register is a term to describe when "a single speaker will use different linguistic forms on different occasions . . . and speakers . . . make choices in pronunciation and word choice depending on . . . nonlinguistic factors" (Biber 1). As Douglas Biber explains in *Dimensions of Register Variation: A Cross-Linguistic Comparison*, there are many ways to say different things (1). The English language is complex, and often speakers will manipulate their syntax or word choice in order to attain whatever it is they desire or to influence a person's perceptions of them.

Additionally, register is not merely a one dimensional term, and it can serve many purposes in the realm of sociolinguistics. Register shows the level of formality or technicality involved in an interaction, and often, one who uses more formal, technical terms will try to assert linguistic power over one regarded as subordinate. Richard A. Hudson distinguishes the levels of technicality with an illustration of four simple sentences:

> We obtained some sodium-chloride. [formal-technical]
>
> We obtained some salt. [formal, non-technical]
>
> We got some sodium chloride [informal-technical]
>
> We got some salt [informal, non-technical]. (Hudson 47)

In these sentences, Hudson indicates that "obtained" is a formal way of saying "got," though both words have nearly the same semantic meaning. Furthermore, sodium-chloride is the scientific term for salt, so that it is indicative a higher register. A person may express the same

sentence; however, the way he says it will differ due to the formality of the social situation. Also, a person trying to impress or assert power over others would tend to use the formal-technical register, while a person intending to establish solidarity with others would most likely use the colloquial informal-nontechnical register. While it would be normal for a professor lecturing or for one with a high level of education to speak in a higher register, these words often seem pretentious or intimidating, depending on the audience. Furthermore, a person who is insecure about his intellectual capabilities may utilize the formal-technical register in order to impress those around him, though his language is not authentic to his identity (Hudson 47). The inflated, higher register would most likely be spoken to intimidate a perceived subordinate speaker, while a speaker uses a lower register in order to develop unpretentious friendships.

In this vein, register indicates the type of speech one uses in order to assert power over a perceived subordinate speaker, or could indicate the type of speech used in order to achieve linguistic solidarity. As Mark Twain was a brilliant orator and understood how language could be used to manipulate a situation, he knew when to switch pronunciation or word choice depending on the context of one's social situation. As we shall see, he incorporated this linguistic concept in his literature, particularly with Tom Sawyer, the Duke, and the King: these characters attempt to control or manipulate others through their "lofty" speech.

Twain first introduces the reader to Tom Sawyer in his first novel, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). Twain portrays Tom as a character prone to "showing off." He especially does so when he is introduced to "the Adored Unknown," Becky Thatcher, and her father, Judge Thatcher (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 24). Because he wishes to impress the Thatchers, Tom uses a higher, formal register when introduced: "The Judge put his hand on Tom's head and called him a fine little man, and asked him what his name was. The boy stammered, gasped, and got it out:

'Tom.' 'Oh no, not Tom—it is—' 'Thomas.' . . . 'Thomas Sawyer—sir'" (33). He continues to show off—"cuffing boys, pulling hair, making faces—in a word, using every art that seemed likely to fascinate a girl and win her applause" (31)-- but he is soon embarrassed by his lack of apparent biblical knowledge when he tells his Sunday school class the names of the first two disciples were "DAVID AND GOLIATH" (34). Certainly Tom was embarrassed in front of those he wishes to impress, and as the reader will learn, Tom often flaunts his knowledge (whether it is real or not). Indeed, Tom's use of a higher register is quite humorous. In an attempt to appear more intelligent (and in an attempt to play hooky from school), he tells Aunt Polly that "'[his] sore toe's mortified'" (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 42). Tom's incorrect use of the word "mortified" amuses Aunt Polly so that she "sank down in her chair and laughed a little" (42).

Sometimes Tom is manipulative, and he sometimes uses his language to coerce others into obedience. When forced to whitewash a fence, Tom figures out how to shirk his duties by choosing his words carefully. When asked if he likes whitewashing, Tom answers: "'Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?' That put the thing in a new light" (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 17). While Tom does not implement a higher register in this particular passage, he chooses words that make the mundane seem more adventurous. Shortly, he had the boys in the village paying him to whitewash while he lazily lounges:

> Tom gave up the brush with reluctance in his face, but alacrity in his heart . . . the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents . . . He had a nice, good, idle time all the while—plenty of company—and the fence had three coats of whitewash on it! If he hadn't run out of whitewash, he would have bankrupted

> every boy in the village . . . The boy mused a while over the substantial change which had taken place in his worldly circumstances, and then wended toward headquarters to report (18-9)

Interestingly, Twain uses militaristic terminology to refer to Tom, and in a sense, this jargon is a higher register: "slaughter of more innocents" and "headquarters to report" are only two examples in this passage. However, though Tom does not necessarily use a higher register to speak to his cohorts in this passage, he obviously exerts influence over them. Perhaps Twain's use of military terminology when describing Tom is indicative of this: Tom is the leader; the boys submit to him, even if he is not as smart or as "tough" as the company of boys perceive him to be.

As shown above, Tom delights in spending time with his fellow boys, and his use of higher register is especially apparent when he is "playing" or pretending. Tom's flights of fancy are accompanied by antiquated language. Note the following dialogue between Tom and his boyhood cohorts as they reenact Robin Hood:

> Tom called: 'Hold, my merry men! Keep kid till I blow!' . . . 'Hold! Who comes here into Sherwood Forest without my pass?' 'Guy of Guisborne wants no man's pass. Who art thou that—that— ' 'Dares to hold such language,' said Tom, prompting—for they talked 'by the book,' from memory. 'Who art thou that dares to hold such language?' 'I, indeed! I am Robin Hood, as thy catiff carcase soon shall know.' 'Then art thou indeed that famous outlaw? Right gladly will I dispute with thee passes of the merry word. Have at thee! (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 58)

Here, Tom reveals his proclivity for reading romantic literature, as the book he knew by heart was *Robin Hood and His Merry Foresters*, written in 1840 by Joseph Cundall (Peck 207).

Tom's wielding of large words, such as "catiff" (which, according to Daniel Peck, means "cowardly" (58)) and "carcase" are higher register; however, Tom does not always use his words or expressions correctly. For instance, Peck points out that when Tom says, "The books says, 'Then, with one backhanded stroke he slew poor Guy of Guisborne.' You're to turn around and let me hit you in the back.' There was no getting around the authorities, so Joe turned, received the whack and fell," Tom actually misunderstands the term "backhanded" (Peck qtd. in Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 58). However, note Joe's blind obedience to Tom when he is ordered to receive the slap. Because Tom wields the words of romantic literature, the boys he frequently plays with succumb to his orders (though, as illustrated, he does not always have the knowledge he claims).

Tom Sawyer continues his attempts to commandeer other discourse with his vocabulary from history or romantic literature. When he, Jim, and Huck are floating around the world in a hot-air balloon in Twain's *Tom Sawyer Abroad* (1894), he flaunts his knowledge (and, by extension, his vocabulary) to make his companions feel intellectually inferior. First, Tom tries to explain the term "crusade" to Huck: "'What's a crusade?' I says. He looked scornful, the way he always does when he was ashamed of a person, and says, 'Huck Finn, do you mean to tell me you don't know what I crusade is?'" (Twain, *Tom Sawyer Abroad* 29). While crusade may be a higher register word for the uneducated of the frontier, Tom's assumes authority over Huck because his vocabulary is more complex. However, as Tom proves through his dialogue, his reason is not always accepted by Huck or Jim (which usually provokes more insult from Tom). For example, Jim does not submit so willingly to Tom's attempts to assert power, and he argues with Tom's definition of a crusade: "Jim shook his head and says, 'Mars Tom, I reckon dey's a mistake 'bout it somers—dey mos' sholy is. I's religious myself; en I knows plenty of religious people, but I hain't run acrost none dat acts like dat'" (31).Though Jim questions Tom (an act

that suggests he does not, in this social context, feel inferior), he refers to him respectfully, because of Tom's "authority," Jim calls him "Mars Tom" (short for "Master"). However, Tom becomes indignant at the questioning of his vocabulary. Thus, he continues to use words (and names) of a formal register in response, though his knowledge is hardly believable. As well as using a formal register, he mixes these words with pronunciations from the Missouri vernacular, reminding the reader of his linguistic roots, and that his speech is not that much different than Huck and Jim's. For example, Tom retorts:

> Well, it's enough to make a body sick, such mullet-headed ignorance. If either of you knowed anything about history, you'd know that Richard Cur de Lyon, and the Pope, and Godfrey de Bulloyn, and lots more of the most noble hearted and pious people in the world hacked and hammered at the paynims for more than two hundred years trying to take their land away from them and swum neck-deep in blood the whole time. (Twain, *Abroad* 31)

Lower register words he uses are "mullet-headed ignorance," obviously a derogatory slang term, "swum neck deep," and colloquial "knowed." However, Tom's reference to medieval crusaders would be of a higher register. The word "paynim" is an archaic term, defined as "a pagan" or as a "non-Christian" ("Paynim," def. 1.). This word is also a higher register term, as it is outdated and most used in the romantic literature in which Tom frequently references. While Tom speaks patronizingly to Huck and Jim, they often reply defensively (as Jim does in this particular passage). For example, Huck narrates that "[w]e knowed well enough that he was right and we was wrong, and all we was after was to get at the how of it, that was all; and the only reason he couldn't explain it so we could understand it was because we was ignorant" (Twain, *Abroad* 31).

However, though Tom may be in charge, he has not mastered these higher register words as he displayed in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Tom also attempts to assert authority by using a higher register in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), the companion novel to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. However, in the beginning of this novel, Tom summons Huck Finn with a "*me-yow*": an interesting term of solidarity (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 6). The reader would assume that, by this informal greeting, the boys are familiar with each other: Tom's call is one of endearment and camaraderie. However, Tom's scheming does not truly begin until he describes the purpose of his "gang": "Now, we'll start this band of robbers and call it Tom Sawyer's Gang. Everybody that wants to join has got to take an oath, and write his name in blood" (9). Tom's word choice is particularly elevated for that of an adolescent boy. The word "oath" in particular is a formal word, but this is only the beginning of his elevated usage. The boys in the gang, though they admire Tom, realize that his language comes from another source, namely, romantic literature. Huck comments on the romantic "airs" of Tom's speech: "Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it out of his own head. He said some of it, but the rest was out of pirate-books and robber-books, and every gang that was high-toned has it" (9). Similar to the examples from *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, the boys are submissive to Tom because they feel as though he is more knowledgeable than they are. He wields facts about historical figures and events that he reads about in books, and this gives him a power over his companions who may have acquired less education.

Nevertheless, the example in which Tom asserts the most linguistic authority over Huck is in the controversial ending of *Huckleberry Finn.* In this ending, Tom and Huck attempt to "free" Jim (who has already been freed according to Miss Watson's will) from his "captivity."

Despite the situation (which Huck does not know about), Tom (who does know) romanticizes Jim's escape by trying to make it into a dramatic escapade. To ensure Huck submits to his scheming, Tom patronizes Huck with his words, and Huck willingly submits. Through this, the dichotomy of linguistic power and solidarity is demonstrated. The familiarity of the boys is shown through insults—if Tom respected Huck as a superior, clearly he would refrain from patronizing him with remarks such as these:

> Well, if that ain't just like you, Huck Finn. You *can* get up the infant-schooliest ways of going at a thing. Why, hain't you ever read any books at all? –Baron Trenck, nor Casanova, nor Bevenuto Chelleeny, nor Henri IV nor none of those heroes? Who ever heard of getting a prisoner loose in such an old-maidy way as that? No; the way all the best authorities does is to saw the bed-leg in two . . . and there's your horses and your trusty vassles, and they scoop you up and fling you across a saddle, and away you go to your native Langudoc, or Navarre, or wherever it is. It's gaudy, Huck. I wish there was a moat to this cabin. If we get time, the night of the escape, we'll dig one. (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 220)

Analyzing this particular passage, one notes that Tom asserts himself with references (once again) to the language of the romantic heroes he idolizes. Aside from insulting Huck's intelligence ("you've got the infant-schooliest ways of going at a thing"), he mentions men who have made daring escapes, and "the first three wrote memoirs recounting them" (Blair, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* 419). Tom's register (when mentioning these famous men) is both formal and technical, as he is mentioning men his illiterate and uneducated friend would not be familiar with. He also uses words "gaudy" and "vassels"; the former could have been substituted for a lower register word such as "bright," and the latter, "slave."

Additionally, Tom expresses solidarity, surprisingly, with insults. Christina Kakavá, a contributor to *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* notes that insults are also a way of determining who dominates discourse (and, by extension, a relationship): "[C]hildren view argumentative talk as 'status assertion.' . . . An important aspect of the boys' disputes was to establish a dominance hierarchy which helped them frame their role in a relationship (who the leader was) and the outcome of disputes" (660). She also notes that "argumentative talk" can be regarded as "ritual insults" (660). For instance, in *Tom Sawyer Abroad,* Tom continually "talks down" to Huck and Jim as he insults their intelligence. Tom indignantly states, "'Oh, shut your head! You make me tired. I don't want to argue no more with people like you and Huck Finn, that's always wandering from the subject and ain't got any more sense than to try to reason out a thing" (31). Though Huck admits that he and Jim are "ignorant" (or, at least that is how he perceives himself), he tends to argue back. Indeed, when Huck feels as though he "gets the best" of Tom in an argument, as even Jim even states, "'he got you *dis* time'" (40), Huck narrates, "I never felt so good in my life" (Twain, *Abroad* 40). Thus, the boys' ritual insults and argumentative talk proves to be an expression of their friendship and solidarity.

However, in *Adventures o f Huckleberry Finn,* Huck does not often argue back to Tom. Huck seems to believe he is inferior to Tom (perhaps because of the commanding way he speaks to Huck), so Huck continues to carry out his ridiculous plan to "rescue" Jim. Asserting his higher register and authority over Huck, Tom states and Huck obediently carries out his wishes: "'When a prisoner of style escapes it's called an evasion. It's always called so when a king escapes, f'rinstance.' So Tom he wrote the nonamous letter, and I smouched the yaller wench's frock that night, and put it on, and shoved it under the front door, the way Tom told me to" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 258). Huck's lower register is shown through words like "nonamous" and

"smouched," but he does not attempt to "put on airs" as Tom so often does. Eventually, Jim is rightfully freed, as he would have been without the evasion scene. However, Tom felt the need to put "style" unnecessarily into relieving Jim of his captivity, quite like he puts "style" into his way of speaking in order to manipulate others.

However, in Twain's canon of literature, Tom is not the only character who attempts to manipulate others through the use of language. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck and Jim meet the Duke and the King as they raft along the Mississippi River. Huck, the narrator, describes them as looking like anything but royalty. In fact, both of them appear as though they are ragamuffins: "One of these fellows was about seventy or upwards, and had a bald head and very gray whiskers. He had an old battered up slouch hat on, and a greasy blue woolen shirt, and ragged old blue jeans britches stuffed into his boot-tops" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 117). Additionally, the other man is described as "about thirty, and dressed about as ornery . . . and both of them had big, fat, ratty-looking carpet bags" (117). Interestingly, however, despite their similar ragged appearances, they both have different ways of speaking. The "younger one," as Huck describes him, is the Duke. He speaks Standard English (for the most part) when he first encounters Huck. He is speaking to the King when the two scam artists pretend to meet each other for the first time:

> Well, I'd been selling an article to take the tarter off the teeth—and it does take it off, too, and generly [sic] the enamel along with it—but I stayed up about one night longer than I ought to, and was just in the act of sliding out when I ran across you on the trail this side of town, and you told me they were coming, and begged me to help you to get off. So I told you I was expecting trouble myself,

> and would scatter out *with* you. That's the whole yarn—what's yourn? (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 117)

As the King asks the Duke for his "story," the reader notes the King's difference in dialect. Instead of speaking Standard English in this particular meeting, the King is fluent in the Missourian vernacular of other Twain characters:

> Well, I'd ben a-runnin' a little temperance revival thar 'bout a week, and was the pet of the women folks, big and little, for I was makin' it mighty warm for the rummies, I *tell* you, and takin' as much as five or six dollars a night—ten cents a head, children and niggers free—and business a-growin all the time, when somehow or another a little report got around got around last night that I had a way of puttin' in my time with a private jug on the sly. (117)

Notably, the Duke and the King have marked differences in their speech. The King's vernacular is actually similar to Jim's dialect in some regards: he drops endings, and similar to Huck's speech, he adds the prefix –a to progressive verb forms. The reader might assume, however, that since the Duke speaks in Standard English he is smarter or more educated than the King. The reader will see though that both use language to make themselves appear smarter, more powerful, and higher in the social hierarchy.

Despite these men's ragged appearances (and despite the fact that they carry all of their possessions in carpet bags), they tell Huck and Jim that they are actually royalty, and they claim to have expertise in fields probably unknown to Missouri vagabonds. Of his alleged royal birth, the Duke asserts, "Alas! . . . I am the rightful Duke of Bridgewater; and here am I, forlorn, torn from my high estate, hunted of men, despised by the cold world, ragged, worn, heartbroken, and degraded to the companionship of felons on a raft!" (119). The Duke's vocabulary is not basic,

nor is his pronunciation typical of the Missouri vernacular. The Duke chooses his words carefully, and his sentence nearly sounds rhythmical and poetic as some words, such as "forlorn" and "torn" even rhyme. While Twain's proper characters such as Judge Thatcher speak SE, the reader will see that the Duke's character is not comparable with that of the good judge. Through his use of the SE, the Duke appears educated and well-to-do, and he tells the King that he is a "[j]our printer by trade; do a little in patent medicines; theater-actor—tragedy, you know; take a turn to mesmerism and phrenology when there's a chance; teaching singing-geography school for a change; [and] sling a lecture sometimes" (118). A "jour printer," short for "journeyman printer," was essentially an apprentice; however, terms such as "mesmerism" and "phrenology" most likely would stump the uneducated frontier man. Phrenology, "the theory that the mental powers or characteristics of an individual consist of separate faculties, each of which has its location in an organ found in a definite region of the surface of the brain" ("Phrenology," def. 2.), is a word in the formal-technical register. Additionally, the Duke's other choice occupations do make him appear to be more educated than he is; through his use of other higher register words such as "mesmerism" and "geography", he tries to con an uneducated boy, an uneducated slave, and an uneducated "king" by inflating the register of his speech. However, not unlike Tom Sawyer, his use of lower register words (such as "you know" and "sling a lecture") also reveal his true identity: a Missourian vagabond.

The King also tries to con Huck and Jim, though by his speech he would appear less educated than the Duke's. Like the Duke, he also professes royalty, only he does so in a laughable manner: "Yes, my friend, it is too true—your eyes is lookin' at this very moment on the pore disappeared Dauphin, Looy the Seventeen, son of Looy the Sixteen and Marry Antonette . . . Yes, gentlemen, you see before you, in blue jeans and misery, the wanderin',

exiled, trampled on, and sufferin' rightful King of France" (120). Certainly, the "King's" historical facts are awry, and his vernacular Missouri accent does not necessarily indicate French royalty. Additionally, the King cannot even pronounce the Duke's title ("Bridgewater"); instead, he continually calls him "Bilgewater," (which is, in a sense, an insult, too) (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 121) further evidence that the King is not as educated as he claims to be. Regarding his "education," the King describes his "lay" to the Duke: "I've done considerable in the doctoring way in my time. Layin' on o' hands is my best holt—for cancer and paralysis, and sich things; and I k'n tell a fortune pretty good when I've got somebody along to find out the facts for me. Preachin's in my line, too, and workin' camp-meetin's, and missionaryin' around" (118). He does not attempt to use the higher register of the Duke; however, he still attempts to pretend to be what he is not (and does so in a less convincing manner than the former).

The Duke and the King attempt to con Huck and Jim through the use of their language, and at first, they are believable (though Huck does recognize their fraudulence almost immediately). Huck narrates after the Duke announces his noble birth, "Jim pitied him ever so much, and so did I . . . He said we ought to bow when we spoke to him, and say, 'Your Grace,' or 'My Lord,' or 'Your Lordship'—and he wouldn't mind if we called him plain 'Bridgewater,' which, he said, was a title anyway, and not a name; and one of us ought to wait on him at dinner, and do any little thing for him he wanted done'" (119). Jim and Huck subserviently speak to the Duke and the King after their pronouncement of royalty. On the raft, the Duke and the King (though they are lying) decide to come to terms with their less-than noble births, as the King states:

> Like as not we got to be together a blamed long time on this h-yet raft, Bilgewater, and so what's the use o' your bein' sour? It'll only make things

> oncomfortable. It ain't my fault you warn't born a king—so what's the use to worry? Make the best o'things the way you find 'em, says I—that's my motto. This ain't no bad thing that we've struck here—plenty grub and an easy life—come, give us your hand, duke, and le's all be friends. (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 121)

Huck, who has not realized that the King is not who he says he is, simply agrees. He narrates, "[F]or what you want, above all things, on a raft, is for everybody to be satisfied, and feel right and kind towards others" (121). However, it does not take Huck long to learn that these two men are merely con-artists; they are not who they pretend to be. The Duke and the King's speech has betrayed them, and Huck realizes they are not descendent of any European royalty: "It didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars warn't no kings nor dukes at all, but just low-down humbugs and frauds" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 121). Because of their language, Huck realizes that the King and the Duke are manipulative people, and in order to keep peace, he avoids conflict by revealing their true identities.

The Duke and King do not keep up their charade for long. An astute doctor recognizes the con-men's fraud through their speech (as Huck realizes earlier). Not only are they attempting to be Englishmen, but the King in particular is also embarrassing himself by trying to use words of a higher register that he does not know the definitions of (which, in a sense, puts him on a lower level within the social hierarchy). Speaking of the deceased Wilks' father, the king states, "[F]or he respected everybody, he liked everybody, and so it's fitten that his funeral orgies sh'd be public" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 162). The Duke, who is slightly more intelligent and even more conniving than the king, notes the verbal faux pas; he slips a note to the king saying the term "obsequies" should be used (Twain 162). However, the King unabashedly continues:

> I say orgies, not because it's the common term, because it ain't—obsequies bein' the common term—but because orgies is the right term. Obsequies ain't used in England no more now—it's gone out. We say orgies now in England. Orgies is better, because it means the thing you're after more exact. It's a word that's made up out'n the Greek *orgo*, outside, open, abroad, and the Hebrew *jeeseum*, to plant, cover up; hence in-*ter*. So, you see, funeral orgies is an open er public funeral. (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 163)

Obsequies, which by definition means "funeral rite[s] or ceremonie[s]" ("Obsequies," def. 1a.), is certainly different than the "common term," "orgies." The king, assuming that these people have no knowledge of the language of England, tries to assume a higher register. He flaunts his vocabulary, but he does so incorrectly. However, only the doctor, a family friend of the Wilkes, sees through his façade: "'*You* talk like an Englishman, *don't* you? It's the worst imitation I ever heard. *You*, Peter Wilks's brother! You're a fraud, that's what you are!'" (163). The doctor "wash[es his] hands of the matter" (164) and storms away as the King mocks him. However, the Duke and the King meet their unfortunate fate in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* when they are tarred and feathered, which causes Huck to surmise that "human beings can be awful cruel to one another" (222).

Perhaps one way humans are cruel to one another is through the manipulation of language in order to assert power or authority over others. However, pretense is a common theme in Twain's literature, and language seems to be one more device to show that human beings are not only cruel, but hypocritical at times, as well as desirous of power and influence. In this sense, the fact that Tom, the Duke, and the King pretend through their language reveals their hypocritical natures, and their language indicates that they cared deeply that others regard them

as more powerful than they really are. Through the inflated registers of these characters, and especially in the case of the Duke and the King, Twain seems to imply that pride comes before a fall (Prov. 16.18). Because these characters attempt to speak so highly, they fall quite hard when they choose the wrong words, and they are not able to “live” and “work” on the social level to which they aspire.

Chapter Five: "She Never Licks Anybody": The Linguistic Power Struggle between Adult and Child

The first line of Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer* is spoken by Aunt Polly. Exasperated, she shouts, "TOM!," yet she receives no answer. In *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, Twain exposes a power struggle between the adults and children, often reflected through their discourse with each other. Adult women (particularly, Aunt Polly, the Widow Douglass, and Miss Watson) continually emphasize propriety in the children, and as expressed in Twain's autobiography, this struggle is similar to the relationship Twain had with his own mother, Jane Clemens. Though women's roles in society have changed significantly since the time of Twain's Realistic fiction (in the late nineteenth century), one principle essentially remains: women are, in general, regarded by society as the purer sex. Often, women are subjected to greater moral scrutiny than men, as Parry Gwynne wrote in 1856 that while "[a] young man may talk recklessly . . . a lady may *not* . . . Women are the purer and the more ornamental part of life, and when *they* degenerate, the Poetry of Life is gone" (qtd. in Bailey 259). More so than men, society expects women to maintain a certain element of linguistic decorum. This concept is apparent in Twain's life as well as in his writings; as his biographers note, he often regarded the women in his life as the symbols of propriety.

While influencing Twain morally, the coterie of women surrounding him made more of an impact on him literarily than some might realize. His wife Olivia and daughters Susy, Clara, and Jean all made significant contributions to his literary art (or at least provided literary inspiration). In light of this, author Laura E. Skandera-Trombley asserts in *Mark Twain in the Company of Women* that the author's critics do not take the role of women as seriously as they should when assessing his literary works:

> [B]iographers have not recognized . . . that Clemens's interactions with women helped define his boundaries. In both the personal and literary realms, he was a man voluntarily controlled and influenced by women. Women shaped his life, edited his books, provided models for his fictional characters, and, through their correspondence, heavily influenced his fiction and literary works. (2)

Twain's mother, wife, and daughters were often an inspiration for his writings, and he often read and published the literary works of women throughout his lifetime (Skandera-Trombley 2-3). As a direct illustration of how the women in Twain's life appear in his writings, his autobiography reveals that Twain's own mother was the basis for Tom Sawyer's Aunt Polly, and it is also written that Mrs. Clemens, while Christian-spirited, was a devout punisher of childhood folly (Twain, *Autobiography* 33). For example, Twain writes of one childhood incident where "she merely gave me a crack on the skull with her thimble that I felt all the way down to my heels" (34). Additionally, Twain recalls that his mother "had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it" (33). Despite these harsh chidings he received as a child, Twain grew to respect and cherish his mother, admiring her vivacity and warm heart (26). These family members that impacted him often became caricatures for the women in his novels. Additionally, these women attempt to coerce Twain's "good-bad boys" (Sewell 25) into submission, and notably, these boys speak in different registers to them than to their boyhood companions. In fact, it seems there is a constant power struggle between Tom, Huck, and those authorities (notably, the women that discipline them), and through various linguistic maneuvers, characters attempt to wield power over or establish solidarity with others throughout the novels.

Numerous sociolinguists, specifically Deborah Tannen, have examined the social dynamics behind adult and child discourse. The first theme Tannen addresses in her work *Family*

Talk: Discourse and Identity in Four American Families is the power vs. solidarity language dichotomy (previously introduced in chapter one). Explaining that "[f]amiles are the cradle of language, the original site of everyday discourse, and a touchstone for talk in other contexts" (3), Tannen implies that the way a family talks explains much about the members' relationships to one another. For example, a mother will simultaneously seek linguistic connection with her child (solidarity) and assert power in order to keep her child "in check" (Tannen 32). Additionally, Tannen notes that children speak to their mothers in both "respect" and "familiarity" registers (30), as she gleans from Hildred Geertz's studies concerning familial discourse. The "respect" register entails formality; children might refer to mothers as "ma'am" or fathers as "sir."When children feel less intimidated by their mothers than their fathers, they will often speak to them in the "familiarity" register, thus their language becomes more casual. Furthermore, implementing the familiarity register, children may talk back to their mothers (Tannen, *Family Talk* 30). Geertz notes in her work that "children use the familiar register when speaking with their parents and siblings until about the age of ten or twelve, when they gradually shift to the respect register in adulthood" (qtd. in Tannen, *Family Talk* 30). However, Geertz also writes that "[m]ost people continue to speak to the mother in the same way as they did as children; a few shift to respect in adulthood" (qtd. in Tannen 32). Another important dichotomy (no doubt related to the familiarity/respect dichotomy) describing how adults and children interact, according to Tannen, is "closeness and distance" (30). When a person desires to establish familiarity (or solidarity) with another, he will use the "closeness" register, and when he wishes for respect, he will utilize the "distance" register. Tom and Huck linguistically engage with their respective mother figures using this dichotomy frequently: in few cases, the boys show respect to the Widow Douglass, Miss Watson, or Aunt Polly, but in many cases, they are avoidant, often dodging or avoiding

questions. Thus, the boys utilize the "close" register when playing pranks or speaking directly to these mother figures; however, they are also linguistically distant, thus guarding their mischievous motives and plots from authoritative figures.

While Huck and Tom do not have mothers, per se, they do interact with adult women that act as guardians and, in a sense, share a mother/son relationship with these boys. Mothers, as Tannen explains, are nearly the center of the family sphere. Indeed, they are often the crux of familial communication: "If the family is a key locus for understanding the complex and inextricable relationship between power . . . and connection . . . nowhere does this relationship become clearer than in the role of a key family member, mother. It surfaces both in the language spoken to mothers and the language spoken by mothers" (*Family Talk* 31). Mothers, usually regarded by society as the ones who wish to uphold decorum (as explained above), are also generally regarded as the more compassionate parent. Thus, they are often desirous to establish a connection with their children, but this may lead to the child's speaking to his mother in a less respectful register than the father:

> This leaves open the question whether mothers are addressed in the familiar rather than the respect register because they receive less respect than fathers, or because their children feel closer to them. I suspect it is both at once, and that each entails the other: feeling closer to Mother entails the other: feeling closer to mother entails feeling less intimidated by her and therefore less respectful; feeling less need to demonstrate respect paves the way for greater closeness. (*Family Talk* 32)

As Tannen points out, the mother, a female, desires intimate connection with her children; thus, she may be more familiar to the child. She also notes that in American culture, "mothers more than fathers tend to be seen . . . as responsible for their children's shortcomings"; therefore, they

are more apt to punish their children because of their own embarrassment (81-2). Therefore, Twain's depictions of Aunt Polly, the Widow Douglass, and Miss Watson as constant disciplinarians are accurate, according to Tannen. They would have been concerned that those boys under their tutelage, Tom and Huck, would perform misdeeds reflective of their poor parenting or poor moral system. However, the male characters in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* also play a part in the linguistic interactions of Tom and Huck, but are, for the most part, more passive in issuing disciplinary action. While Tom does not have a father, Huck's Pap is one of the most memorable (and infamous) characters in American literature. Huck and Tom interact differently with the adult men in the novels than with the women, partially due to the level of respect these men attain, but this concept will be discussed later in the chapter.

Often, as the mother figures of Twain's novels, Aunt Polly and the Widow Douglass frequently chastise Tom and Huck for their behavior, thus asserting their "power" over them. As mentioned, in the first line spoken in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Aunt Polly (Tom's guardian) asserts power over Tom by yelling his first name loudly—Twain capitalizes the letters for emphasis (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 7). However, as seems to be common in Twain's novels, the boy is not present, nor does he mind his aunt's chidings, as Twain simply writes Tom's response as "No answer," and the reader will find he is plotting a prank (which, as the reader knows, is not uncharacteristic for Tom Sawyer) (7). Polly's consternation at Tom's disappearance is apparent; she seems to be talking to herself. She continues, "'What's wrong with that boy, I wonder? You TOM!' No answer . . . 'Well, I lay if I get of hold of you I'll—'. . . She did not finish, for by this time she was bending down and punching under the bed with the broom, and so she needed breath to punctuate the punches with. She resurrected nothing but the cat. 'I never did see the

beat of that boy!'" (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 7). However, while Polly utilizes threats in order to assert her power over him, she reveals her affection for Tom through a "gentle laugh" (8); she also confesses that her threats are indeed empty:

> Hang the boy, can't I never learn him anything? Ain't he played me tricks enough like that for me to be looking out for him by this time? . . . But my goodness, he never plays them alike, two days, and how is a body to know what's coming? He 'pears to know just how long he can torment me before I get my dander up, and he knows if he can make out to put me off for a minute and make me laugh, it's all down again and I can't hit him a lick . . . Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says . . . he's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow . . . every time I hit him my old heart almost breaks. (Twain, *Tom Sawyer* 8)

So, while Aunt Polly is at times frustrated with Tom, she reveals her gentle heart for him, and later in the novel, she calls him "the best hearted boy that ever was" (Twain 94). While her verbal chidings and threats seem severe, she, like many mothers, aches when she has to discipline him. In this passage, Polly's threats to punish Tom are power maneuvers, and these disciplinary actions imply distance. However, her sympathy for Tom (revealed in her monologue) is evidence of her desire to be "close" to him, thus Polly is demonstrating the other side of Tannen's dichotomy: the "closeness register" (*Family Talk* 33). As Tannen argues throughout her body of sociolinguistic work, two elements of a language dichotomy are often combined, and in many interactions "distance" and "closeness" are not mutually exclusive.

However, in Twain's literature, dichotomies are often exclusive and apparent, as adults' motives are often juxtaposed against the children's. In some senses, those adults are seen as

threats, thwarting the children's plans and interfering with their solidarity with each other. Literary critic Peter Messent notes that "[b]eltings and beatings play a prominent role in Twain's boy fictions" (220), and in the same sense, verbal beatings (though Aunt Polly does not follow through with these most times) also serve as severe disciplinary measures. Thus, Twain's linguistic play for power is established, and often, adults battle children over whose motives will be attained.

Sometimes, however, Aunt Polly refrains from using explicit commands in order to get Tom to submit to her authority. Frequently, she will ask him questions, but these questions are pointed, and her motives are evident: what Aunt Polly verbalizes is different than what she means. Though he is not generally regarded as a sociolinguist, Robert Longacre points out that in a text, each statement has an *emic* structure (meaning the surface structure, or what is actually said), and an *etic* structure (the deeper structure, or what is actually meant) (8). This process occurs often in interactions with people, as Aunt Polly demonstrates as she questions Tom about his whereabouts. The reader assumes that, from Tom's characteristics, that he has not been doing what he is "supposed to do"; thus, the mother figure, the constant disciplinarian, must find out if Tom was truly playing "hooky" (as she suspects). First, Twain reveals Aunt Polly's motives behind questioning the boy: "When Tom was eating his supper, and stealing sugar as opportunity offered, Aunt Polly asked him questions that were full of guile, and very deep—for she wanted to trap him into damaging revealments. Like many other simple-hearted souls, it was her pet vanity to believe she was endowed with a talent for dark and mysterious diplomacy" (Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* 9). Because Aunt Polly is Tom's mother figure, as Tannen explains, she feels responsible for his wrongdoings; in a sense, Tom's actions reflect upon her. This is why

she wishes to uncover his misbehavior. In order to provoke Tom to confess, Aunt Polly asks him the following questions:

> Aunt Polly:'Tom, it was middling warm in school , warn't it?'
>
> Tom:'Yes 'm.'
>
> Aunt Polly:'Powerful warm, warn't it?'
>
> Tom: 'Yes 'm.'
>
> Aunt Polly: 'Didn't you want to go in a-swimming, Tom?'
>
> Tom: No'm—well, not very much.'

Instead of asking Tom forthright whether or not he played hooky (which he did), Aunt Polly resorts to indirect questioning tactics. In her book *Gender and Discourse,* Tannen notes some sociolinguists' beliefs that "women's tendency to be indirect is taken as evidence that women do not feel entitled to make demands" (32). Others associate these indirect questions with subversiveness, as Aunt Polly confesses to this before asking Tom these questions. However, she also notes that these indirect questions are a subtle maneuver of gaining power; one who is "powerful" need not assert herself in such a forthright manner. Indeed, Tom knows what she is truly asking, as Twain narrates, "A bit of scare shot through Tom—a touch of uncomfortable suspicion. He searched Aunt Polly's face, but it told him nothing'" (9). The boy is aware of Polly's suspicion, but he is combating Aunt Polly for power as well. However, he does so in a submissive manner (which can also be interpreted as subversive). Addressing Aunt Polly as the respectful title "ma'am" is a maneuver of solidarity (he wants to show her respect so that she trusts him), but he also desires the power of concealing his own wrongdoings and motives (as the reader knows "Tom did play hooky, and he had a very good time" (Twain 9)). However, while Aunt Polly thinks she is being sly by probing Tom with these indirect questions, Tom is

constantly plotting (as usual), and he is one step ahead of his aunt. Hiding all of the evidence of an afternoon swim, Tom escapes Aunt Polly's devious interrogation. However, the woman feels remorse because of her suspicions: "She was half sorry her sagacity had miscarried, and half glad that Tom had stumbled into obedient conduct for once" (10). Judging by Tom's character, however, the reader knows that Polly's remorse is nullified-- the boy was indeed out and about, stirring his usual trouble. So, in this instance, as Tom has achieved his desired end from his interaction with Aunt Polly, it is safe to say he attains linguistic power in this particular circumstance.

Similarly, Huck's guardian, the Widow Douglas, dually expresses compassion for Huck (a maneuver of solidarity), yet she (and her sister, Miss Watson) attempt to wield power over him. Huck narrates in the beginning of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, "The Widow Douglas she took me for a son, and allowed she would sivilize me; but it was rough living in the house all the time, considering how dismal regular and decent the widow was in all her ways" (Twain 3). As a Christian mother would do for her child, the Widow teaches Huck biblical lessons and hopes to instill good morals in him, however opposed Huck is to learning those morals. The reader notes that, by nature, Huck is rebellious: "[W]hen I couldn't stand it no longer I lit out. I got into my old rags and my sugar-hogshead again, and was free and satisfied" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 3). However, the Widow's attempts to civilize Huck are not as obtrusive as Miss Watson's, "a tolerable slim old maid" (4). Huck recounts her domineering ways: "She worked me middling hard for about an hour, and then the widow made her ease up, I couldn't stood it much longer" (4). Different than Aunt Polly's indirect questioning, Miss Watson's commands and attempts to assert power come in the form of short, direct commands. For example, Miss Watson "kept pecking at me" (5), issuing the following statements in order to

reform Huck: "'Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry': and 'Don't scrunch up like that Huckleberry—set up straight'; and pretty soon she would say, 'Don't gap and stretch like that Huckleberry—why don't you try to behave?' Then she told me about the bad place, and I said I wished I was there. She got mad then, but I didn't mean no harm" (4). Judging from the text, Huck's response to Miss Watson's directness is silence. While this is, as some would judge, a means of submission, Huck's silence is actually a power maneuver. Tannen, in *Gender and Discourse*, writes that "[s]ilence alone, however, is not a self-evident sign of powerlessness, nor volubility a self-evident sign of domination . . . Indeed, taciturnity itself can be an instrument of power" (37).

However, this is not the only time Huck resorts to silence or minimal responses in his interactions with adults. For example, when encountering an adult stranger, Huck gives simple, straightforward answers (often lies), to guard his own identity (and to protect Jim's identity lest he be caught by a slave trader). For instance, when Huck meets a member of the Grangerford family along the Mississippi River, he is immediately interrogated:

> Grangerford: "Be done, boys! Who's there?"
>
> Huck: "It's me."
>
> Grangerford: "Who's me?"
>
> Huck: "George Jackson, sir."
>
> Grangerford: "What do you want?"
>
> Huck: "I don't want nothing, sir. I only want to go along by, but the dogs won't let me." (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 93)

With these short statements, Huck achieves his desired end, which is actually secrecy. Sometimes, withholding information is actually a means of protecting oneself against threatening situations or people.

Similarly, Huck reacts this way when interacting with his estranged father, Pap. While Pap clearly tries to dominate a conversation with forceful words and threats, Huck's taciturnity illustrates avoidance; he would rather not take part in this conversation. In fact, it is likely Huck would wish to avoid Pap at all; however, the foul-smelling and foul-mouthed man has come to retrieve guardianship of his son (only because Huck has acquired a large amount of money). As Tannen notes, men are normally the aggressors in conversation, and the sociolinguist also finds "male speakers to be competitive and . . . likely to engage in conflict" (40). Pap, though most of his orneriness is provoked by whiskey, demonstrates this aptness to argue. He attempts to coerce Huck into filial obedience (this obedience, however, involves Huck surrendering the large sum of money he and Tom acquired from a previous adventure). Their dialogue, entailing Huck's education and money, proceeds as follows:

> Pap: "What's this?"
>
> Huck: "It's something they give me for learning my lessons good."
>
> Pap: I'll give you something better—I'll give you a cowhide. Ain't you a sweet scented dandy though?. . . I never see such a son. I bet I'll take some o' these frills out o' you before I'm done with you. Why, there ain't no end to your airs—they say you're rich. Hey? –how's that?
>
> Huck: "They lie—that's how."
>
> Pap: "Looky here—mind how you talk to me; I'm a-standing about all I can stand now—so don't gimme no sass. I've been in town two days, and I hain't heard

> nothing but about you bein' rich. I heard about it away down river, too. That's why I come. You git me that money to-morrow—I want it."
>
> Huck: "I hain't got no money."
>
> Pap: "It's a lie. Judge Thatcher's got it. You git it. I want it."
>
> Huck: "I hain't got no money, I tell you. You ask Judge Thatcher; he'll tell you the same." (21)

Pap's aggression, shown through such phrases as "I'll give you a cowhide," and also through direct commands such as "git me that money to-morrow" entail power; however, Huck's simple responses show power maneuvers as well. Instead of retaliating aggressively, Huck responds matter-of-factly, thus assuring the reader of his confidence: he does not *have* to raise his voice in order to accomplish his desired goal (which is essentially to keep Pap from hitting him). Huck does not give any more information to Pap than is required of him, and, in an effort to end the conversation, he tells Pap to talk to a third party—Judge Thatcher. Additionally, the discourse between this father and son reflects familiarity: Huck speaks in a colloquial register to Pap, as Pap openly threatens Huck. Neither tries to inflate his speech in order to appear more prestigious, and neither shows any sort of deference to the other. This dialogue is a clear display of father and son struggling for linguistic power, defined by Richard Watts as "the ability of an individual to achieve her/his desired goals" (145). Evidently, in this dialogue, both Huck and Pap utilize different linguistic strategies to achieve their "desired goals": Pap desires Huck's fortune, and Huck desires for Pap to disappear from his life. However, in this specific discourse, Pap resorts to methods of aggression, while Huck's lack of response serves as a defense mechanism; he will not give his father the information he desires.

Evidently, through the example of Pap, while the women in Twain's novels are, as discussed, often symbols of decorum (linguistic and otherwise), the men in his novels are sometimes morally despicable. However, in Twain's boyhood bildungsromans, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, there serves one model of an upright man: Judge Thatcher. Judge Thatcher is different from most adult characters in the novels: Tom and Huck, while normally battling other adults for control, submit to and respect him. When Thatcher is introduced in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, the town is clearly in awe, and each member goes about "showing off" in his own way: "The middle-aged man turned out to be a prodigious personage—no less a one than the county judge—altogether the most august creation these children had every looked upon" (31). In a sense, it would be assumed that each member of the town would speak (and behave) in a higher register to Judge Thatcher, and Tom and Huck are no exception. In order to impress the good judge, the townspeople of St. Petersburg bestow "honorifics" upon the judge because he is a respectable individual. In their work, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Use*, Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson describe "honorifics" as a means of speaking in a higher register, and, in a sense, these honorifics do display the registers distance and unfamiliarity in relationships. The authors state, "[H]onorifics [are] motivated by a strategy of giving deference" (Brown and Levinson 23). Both Tom and Huck show deference to Thatcher throughout the novels, as they consistently refer to the judge as "sir"; for example, in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom, intimidated by the judge, introduces himself by stammering his name: "Thomas Sawyer—sir" (31), and Huck, when conversing with the Judge about his money, refers to the judge as "sir" twice when answering his questions:

> Judge Thatcher: "Why, my boy, you are all out of breath. Did you come for your interest?"

> Huck: "No sir, is there some for me?"
>
> Judge Thatcher: "Oh, yes, a half-yearly is in last night—over a hundred and fifty dollars. Quite a fortune for you. You had better let me invest it along with your six thousand, because if you take you'll spend it."
>
> Huck: "No, sir, I don't want to spend it. I don't want it at all—nor the six thousand, nuther. I want you to take it; I want to give it to you—the six thousand and all" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 17).

When conversing with Judge Thatcher, Tom and Huck are genuine in bestowing an honorific, and, in a sense, they are acting as polite young men (even if they are not polite young men in other social circumstances). Hence, the boys speak politely to Judge Thatcher because of their respect for him. Politeness, in this case, is a way of establishing solidarity with one who is perceived to be higher on a social echelon; it can also be a way of submission to one who is higher on a social echelon. For example, Huck immediately obeys Judge Thatcher when given a command: "'Now you sign it.' So I signed it, and left'" (18). Because of the judge's impressive social status in St. Petersburg, Tom and Huck are willing to comply with his wishes; they respect him, and their language towards him is indicative of that respect. However, in a different social circumstance, honorifics can be used as an element of satire. Huck uses honorifics to refer to the Duke and the Dauphin, but he uses them satirically and to keep peace on the raft: "If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn't no objections, 'long as it would keep peace" (121). Unlike his feelings for Judge Thatcher, Huck does not believe these men to be worthy of respect; in fact, he calls them "humbugs and frauds" (Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* 121). The honorifics used to describe the Duke and Dauphin are ways for Twain to poke fun at a hypocritical society that, as Twain aptly illustrates, often uses its language as a means to inflate its own social status.

Often, Huck's attempts at attaining power through interlocutionary acts are more passive; he seeks to keep peace, and often goes along with life so as not to disrupt the flow. However, as illustrated through Tom's interactions with Aunt Polly (and his interactions with his boyhood cohorts described in the previous chapter), Tom frequently desires linguistic dominance (as well as dominance in other forms of life). As described above, often those women who care about Tom and Huck try to coerce them into obedience, but the boys do not readily comply. Additionally, Pap attempts to assert power of Huck through his use of imperative commands and threats, but Huck's avoidance of his statements reflects his own more subtle desire for power, though his motives (unlike Pap's) are unselfish. Instead of trying to dominate conversations, Huck reflects and withholds his words, and many times, his own inner-dialogue is what alerts the reader to his quest for linguistic power and linguistic solidarity—he is just more reserved than Tom and other more dominant characters.

Chapter 6: A Brave New Linguistic World—Ideas for Further Studies

This thesis expresses the benefits of utilizing linguistic theory in order to closely read literature. Literature is filled with characters who, through their language, manipulate others, assert authority, protect their identities, and develop intimate relationships. As expressed within the chapters of this thesis, Mark Twain's characters (who are among the most memorable in the American canon) are no different. As language is intimately connected with the way a person's social status is perceived, characters such as Tom Sawyer, the Duke and the King attempt to use a higher register in an attempt to gain a higher social rank (as well as power). Characters such as Aunt Polly and Pap use language in order to attain control over children and expose secrets of those who may have different motives than they do. Characters such as Huckleberry Finn and Jim use language in order to achieve solidarity in a world that regards them as second-class citizens. Therefore, a good understanding of literature would entail a good understanding of what encompasses it: language.

While one may believe the scholarship opportunities regarding Mark Twain's literature have been exhausted, this study provides a fresh way of examining and understanding literature—through the lens of linguistic theory. Nigel Fabb, in his 1997 book *Linguistics and Literature: Language in the Verbal Arts*, asserts that literature is an ample resource for a linguistic study because literature is developed by linguistic formations:

> Verbal behavior is the production of texts, products which have verbal form in the media of writing or speech. Some of those texts are verbal art, also called 'literature': they are literary texts. Literary texts have linguistic form because they are texts (the product of verbal behavior), and they also have literary form . . . [T]hose aspects of literary form . . . are an adaption of linguistic form. (1-2)

As literature is "a product" of spoken language (Fabb 1), applying linguistic phonetics to study the rhythm or meter of poetry could prove to be an interesting study. Additionally, the linguistic study of phonetics can also be applied to literature that incorporates representations of actual dialects. While this thesis examines the phonetic sounds of Huck and Jim's speech, a new study could perhaps compare the sounds of other authors' representations of dialects to those dialects of Twain's drafting. Harriet Beecher Stowe published *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1851, "prompted by the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act" (Kazin i). Though Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was published thirty-three years later in 1884, a scholar might take interest in comparing Stowe's representation of the African American Vernacular dialect to Twain's. For example, in a particularly poignant section of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe describes a slave auction where a slave mother, Hagar, attempts to convince the auctioneers to avoid separating her from her son. Hagar's dialect actually sounds a bit similar to Jim's from *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: "'Dey needn't call me worn out yet,' said she, lifting her shaking hands. 'I can cook yet, and scrub, and scour,--I'm wuth a-buying, if I do come cheap;--tell me dat ar,-- you *tell* em' . . . 'He an't gwine to be sold without me!'" said the old woman, with passionate eagnerness; "he and I goes in a lot together; I's rail strong yet, Mas'r, and can do heaps o' work'" (135). Similar to Jim, the slave woman Hagar replaces dental fricatives for [d]; she meshes together the [g] and [w] sounds instead of pronouncing the vowel [o], and she additionally uses "I's" instead of "I am"; these are all interesting features of Jim's represented dialect as well. Additionally, other writers of the Realistic time period represented African American as well as other American regional dialects in their writings. Along with Stowe and Twain, Charles Chesnutt (1858-1932), and Kate Chopin (1850-1904) portrayed regional dialects within their works. Nonetheless, a

comparative study of the dialects within these author's novels would be fascinating as well as an excellent way to fuse linguistic theory into literary criticism.

Furthermore, because so much of literature is social criticism, perhaps further studies regarding sociolinguistic theories can be done as well. As illustrated in Twain's literature, characters will often use language to claim power over "lesser" people, or, as Huck did when speaking to those who threatened him, often characters will choose silence. Because these actions are replications of a person's actual linguistic behavior, certainly one can apply sociolinguistic theory to explain the motivations underlying characters' various interlocutions. This could prove to be an ample field of study as well, because, as proven, a person's identity and motivations can be established through the way he or she speaks. While this thesis touches on the various interlocutions between adult and child, a study dedicated to the way children characters verbally interact with adults could also prove to be fruitful and interesting. Undeniably, the study of linguistics is easily applicable to literary criticism and should perhaps be more readily applied to such studies. Halliday claims that understanding language and how it is used in social context is "an area which we have hardly yet begun to understand," (*On Language and Linguistics* 91), so while sociolinguists will continue to unearth the secrets of language in its everyday use, perhaps literary critics can do the same in their own fertile research ground: literature.

While this thesis is just perhaps a stepping stone for others to embrace other related areas of study, it also significantly contributes to the realm of Christian scholarship. First, since Christians are taught to embrace equality, they should seek to rectify those societal prejudices created by society. Since a common misconception exists that not all varieties of language are equal, and discrimination subliminally arises in a person's mind (whether Christian or not) when

one speaks in a way we stereotype as "nonstandard." Many of Twain's characters speak in a nonstandard dialect, though many times their actions prove them as noble as those who speak "correctly." According to linguists, nonstandard English is not as different from the standard as people perceive, as William Labov states: "[D]ialects show slightly different versions of the same rules, extending and modifying the grammatical processes which are common of all dialects of English" (17). Through the study of dialect literature, scholars can realize that all varieties of language are intelligent and systematic and that people are not less intelligent if they do not speak what is deemed "proper" English.

In addition, this thesis should encourage important discussion about language, as scholars and Christians should not be timid about discussing controversial issues that still figure largely in society. Twain's novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* uses the pejorative term *nigger* over 200 times, which has led to the book's public ban. Many continue to decry the novel on basis of its alleged racist undertones. However, readers should carefully consider the contexts for novels instead of quickly passing judgment. As discussed above, Twain was actually an abolitionist and during his time period the term "nigger" was merely descriptive. Its negative connotations have grown through the years into the maelstrom it creates in the twenty-first century. While the church should indeed be sensitive to such racial terms, and even avoid them because of negative connotations, Christians should be wary of shirking intelligent discussion of important cultural matters.

Furthermore, this study should encourage linguists and literary critics to study language in its proper context in order to faithfully interpret a text. While linguists are highly aware of language diversity, some believe the biblical account of Babel is merely mythical. Other linguistic theories tend to study language apart from context, as Robert E. Longacre states,

"Language is language only in context" (1); that is, language only makes sense if it is in use. If one is to properly study literature (especially the Bible), it is essential to look at dialogue as a part of a whole; studying "isolated" sentences only leads to "ambiguity" (Longacre 1). The study of language is most potent when one looks at how it is utilized in communication, or how it is used in context. It is hoped that this thesis would contribute to the scholarship written where language *is* studied in context.

As a last statement, it is the author's wish that that other literary scholars will consider the fusion of the dynamic field of sociolinguistics and literature when undertaking future projects. Not only is this technique innovative, but it is also relevant, and a better understanding of language will only lead to a better understanding of literature and even our culture in general. This particular study is worthwhile because, though scholarship is plentiful about the canon of Mark Twain, his works remain relevant in schools and society, and the methods used to analyze his literature are innovative and differ from previous research. Furthermore, and especially for Christians, a solid understanding of how language functions within society is crucial to acknowledge and understand. Since language is so very powerful in society, people must appreciate its relevance, and, as Mark Twain did through his writings, celebrate its diversity.

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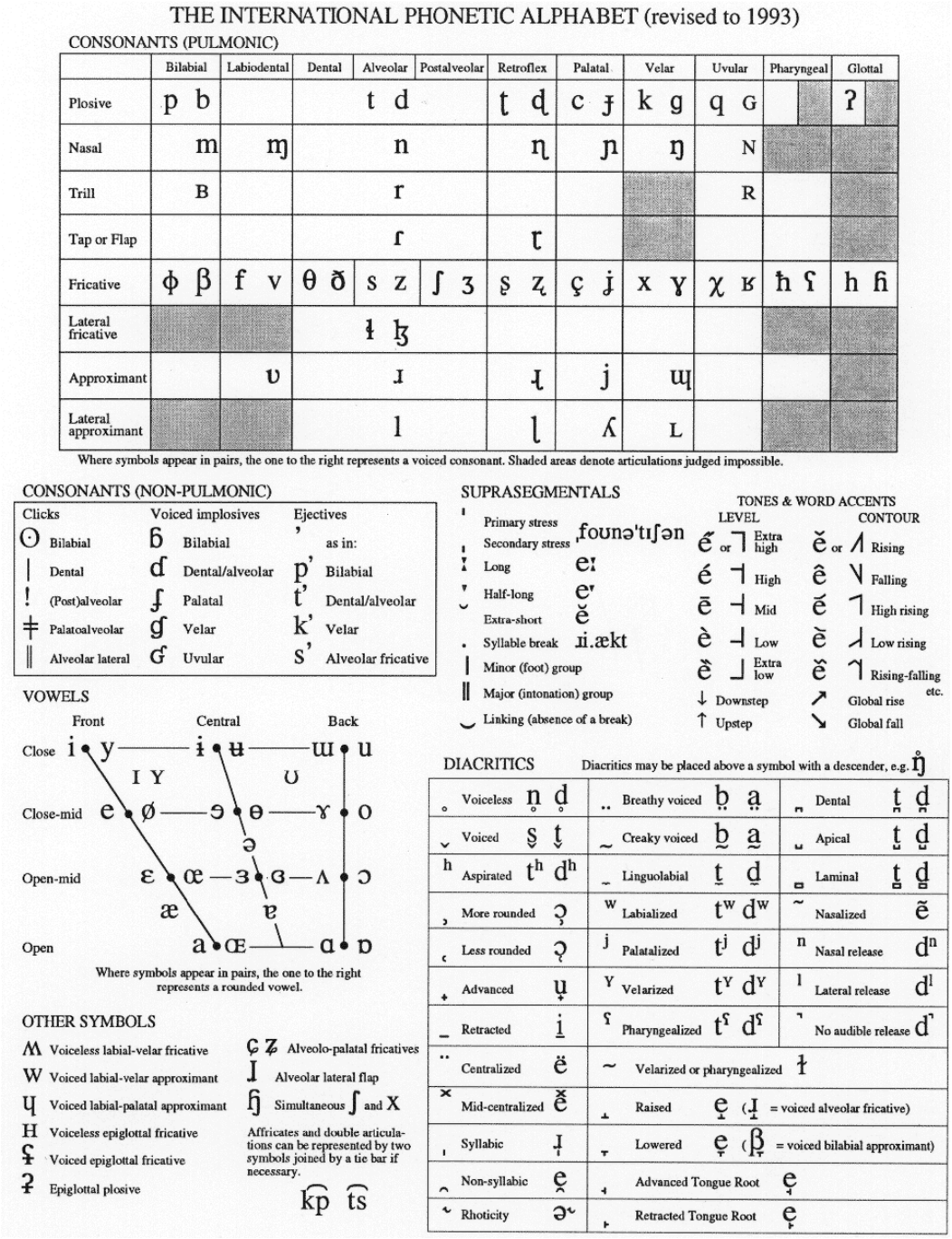
Appendix A: International Phonetic Alphabet (1993)



THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 1993)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k g	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap				ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks		Voiced implosives		Ejectives	
ʘ	Bilabial	ɓ	Bilabial	ʼ	as in:
|	Dental	ɗ	Dental/alveolar	pʼ	Bilabial
!	(Post)alveolar	ʄ	Palatal	tʼ	Dental/alveolar
ǂ	Palatoalveolar	ɠ	Velar	kʼ	Velar
‖	Alveolar lateral	ʛ	Uvular	sʼ	Alveolar fricative

VOWELS

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

OTHER SYMBOLS

ʍ	Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ	Alveolo-palatal fricatives
w	Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɺ	Alveolar lateral flap
ɥ	Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ʩ	Simultaneous ʃ and x
ʜ	Voiceless epiglottal fricative		
ʢ	Voiced epiglottal fricative		
ʡ	Epiglottal plosive		

Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.

k͡p t͡s

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ	Primary stress	ˌfounəˈtɪʃən	
ˌ	Secondary stress		
ː	Long	eː	
ˑ	Half-long	eˑ	
˘	Extra-short	ĕ	
.	Syllable break	ɹi.ækt	
|	Minor (foot) group		
‖	Major (intonation) group		
‿	Linking (absence of a break)		

TONES & WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL		CONTOUR	
é or ˥	Extra high	ě or ˩˥	Rising
é ˦	High	ê ˥˩	Falling
ē ˧	Mid	ě ˧˥	High rising
è ˨	Low	è ˩˧	Low rising
ȅ ˩	Extra low	ȅ ˥˧	Rising-falling
↓	Downstep	↗	Global rise
↑	Upstep	↘	Global fall

etc.

DIACRITICS

Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. n̊

◌̥	Voiceless	n̥ d̥	◌̤ Breathy voiced	b̤ a̤	◌̪ Dental	t̪ d̪
◌̬	Voiced	s̬ t̬	◌̰ Creaky voiced	b̰ a̰	◌̺ Apical	t̺ d̺
◌ʰ	Aspirated	tʰ dʰ	◌̼ Linguolabial	t̼ d̼	◌̻ Laminal	t̻ d̻
◌̹	More rounded	ɔ̹	◌ʷ Labialized	tʷ dʷ	◌̃ Nasalized	ẽ
◌̜	Less rounded	ɔ̜	◌ʲ Palatalized	tʲ dʲ	◌ⁿ Nasal release	dⁿ
◌̟	Advanced	u̟	◌ˠ Velarized	tˠ dˠ	◌ˡ Lateral release	dˡ
◌̠	Retracted	i̠	◌ˤ Pharyngealized	tˤ dˤ	◌̚ No audible release	d̚
◌̈	Centralized	ë	◌̴ Velarized or pharyngealized	ɫ		
◌̽	Mid-centralized	e̽	◌̝ Raised	e̝	(ɹ̝ = voiced alveolar fricative)	
◌̩	Syllabic	n̩	◌̞ Lowered	e̞	(β̞ = voiced bilabial approximant)	
◌̯	Non-syllabic	e̯	◌̘ Advanced Tongue Root	e̘		
◌˞	Rhoticity	ə˞	◌̙ Retracted Tongue Root	e̙		

Appendix B: Phonetics

Richard Shuy provides a pronunciation key for English dialects in his book *Discovering American Dialects* (on page 7). Of consonants, he provides the following analysis:

Symbol	**Key Word**
p	*p*in
b	*b*in
t	*t*in
d	*d*in
k	*k*in
g	*g*et
m	*m*an
n	*n*an
ŋ	si*ng*
l	*l*ip
r	*r*ip
h	*h*at
w	*w*in
y	*y*ellow
ɵ	*th*in
ð	*th*en
f	*f*ish

v	*v*ery
s	*s*it
z	*z*ip

The consonants do not differ immensely from what is expected in the traditional alphabet; the vowel sounds, however, do. Shuy writes, "The vowels of English are much more difficult to represent because our alphabet only provides five symbols for a great many sounds" (8). A basic understanding of each vowel sound is provided by the following key words on page 10 of Shuy's *Discovering American Dialects*:

	Front	Central	Back
High	i (b*ea*t) ɪ (b*i*t)		u (m*oo*n) ʊ (p*u*ll)
Mid	e (s*a*y) ɛ (s*e*t)	ə (sof*a*, c*u*t)	o (*o*ver)
Low	æ (s*a*t)	ɑ (f*a*ther)	ɔ (f*a*ll)

Furthermore, certain vowel sounds can be combined into what linguists call "diphthongs" or "vowel glides." Shuy notes the following as examples: [ɑɪ] in r*i*de, [ɑʊ] in co*w*, and [əɪ] in bo*y* (11). By using the symbols on the International Phonetic Alphabet (1993), linguists are able to transcribe and compare any dialect or language they choose.

Appendix C: “Unconscious Plagiarism” by Mark Twain

When my first book was new, a friend of mine said to me, "The dedication is very neat."

[wɛn] [maɪ] [fəɹstʰ] [bʊkʰ] [wəz] [nu] [ʔeɪ] [fɹɛnd] [sɛd] [tʰu] [mi] [ði] [dɛdəkeʃən] [ʔɪz]

[vɛɹi] [nitʰ]

Yes, I said, I thought it was.

[jɛs] [ʔaɪ] [sɛd] [ʔaɪ] [θɔtʰ] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz]

My friend said, "I always admired it, even before I saw it in *The Innocents Abroad*."

[maɪ] [fɹɛnd] [sɛd] [ʔaɪ] [ʔɔlwez] [ʔædmaiɹd] [ʔɪtʰ] [ʔivɛn] [bifɔɹ] [ʔaɪ] [sɔw] [ʔɪtʰ] [ʔɪn] [ði]

[ʔɪnosɛnts] [ʔəbɹɔd]

I naturally said: "What do you mean? Where did you ever see it before?"

[ʔaɪ] [nætʃəɹəli] [sɛd] [wətʰ] [du] [ju] [min] [wɛɹ] [dɪd] [ju] [ʔɛvəɹ] [si] [ʔɪtʰ] [bifɔɹ]

"Well, I saw it first some years ago as Doctor Holmes's dedication to his *Songs in Many Keys."*

[wɛl] [ʔaɪ] [sɔw] [ʔɪtʰ] [fəɹstʰ] [səm] [jɪɹz] [ʔəgo] [ʔæz] [dɑktəɹ] [holmzʔɛz]

[dɛdəkeʃən] [tʰu] [hɪz] [sɔŋz] [ʔɪn] [mɛni] [kʰiz]

Of course, my first impulse was to prepare this man's remains for burial,

[ʔəv] [kʰɔɹs] [maɪ] [fəɹstʰ] [ʔɪmpəls] [wəz] [tʰu] [pʰɹipɛɹ] [ðɪs] [mænz] [ɹimeɪnz] [fɔɹ]

[bəɹiəl]

but upon reflection I said I would reprieve him for a moment or two

[bətʰ] [ʔəpɑn] [ɹiflɛkʃən] [ʔaɪ] [sɛd] [ʔaɪ] [wʊd] [ɹipɹiv] [hɪm] [fɔɹ] [ʔeɪ] [momɛntʰ] [ʔɔɹ]

[tʰu]

and give him a chance to prove his assertion if he could.

[ʔænd] [gɪv] [hɪm] [ʔe] [tʃæns] [tʰu] [pʰɹuv] [hɪz] [ʔəsɛɹʃən] [ʔɪf] [hi] [kʰʊd]

We stepped into a book-store, and he did prove it.

[wi] [stɛpd] [ʔɪntu] [ʔeɪ] [bʊkstɔɹ] [ʔænd] [hi] [dɪd] [pʰɹuv] [ʔɪtʰ]

I had really stolen that dedication, almost word for word.

[ʔaɪ] [hæd] [ɹɪli] [stolən] [ðætʰ] [dɛdəkeʃən] [ʔɔlmostʰ] [wɹd] [fɔɹ] [wɹd]

I could not imagine how this curious thing had happened;

[ʔaɪ] [kʰʊd] [notʰ] [ʔɪmædʒən] [haw] [ðɪs] [kʰjʊɹiəs] [θɪŋ] [hæd] [hæpənd]

for I knew one thing—that a certain amount of pride always goes along

[fɔɹ] [ʔaɪ] [nu] [wən] [θɪŋ] [ðætʰ] [ʔe] [səɹtən] [ʔəmawntʰ] [ʔəv] [pɹaɪd] [ʔɔlwez] [goz]

[ʔəlɔŋ]

with a teaspoonful of brains,

[wɪθ] [ʔeɪ] [tʰispunfʊl] [ʔəv] [bɹeɪnz]

and that this pride protects a man from deliberately stealing other people's ideas.

[ʔænd] [ðætʰ] [ðɪs] [pʰɹaɪd] [pʰɹətɛkts] [ʔeɪ] [mæn] [fɹəm] [dəlɪbəɹətli] [stilɪŋ] [ʔəðəɹ]

[pʰipəlz] [ʔaɪdiəz]

That is what a teaspoonful of brains will do for a man—

[ðætʰ] [ʔɪz] [wətʰ] [ʔeɪ] [tʰispunfʊl] [ʔəv] [bɹeɪnz] [wɪl] [du] [fɔɹ] [ʔeɪ] [mæn]

and admirers had often told me I had nearly a basketful—

[ʔænd] [ʔædmaɪɹəɹz] [hæd] [ʔɔfən] [tʰold] [mi] [ʔaɪ] [hæd] [niɹli] [ʔeɪ] [bæskɛtfʊl]

though they were rather reserved as to the size of the basket.

[ðo] [ðe] [wəɹ] [ɹæðəɹ] [ɹizəɹvd] [ʔæz] [tʰu] [ði] [saɪz] [ʔəv] [ði] [bæskɛtʰ]

However, I thought the thing out, and solved the mystery.

[howɛvɹ] [ʔaɪ] [θɔtʰ] [ði] [θɪŋ] [ʔaʊtʰ] [ʔænd] [salvd] [ði] [mɪstəɹi]

Two years before, I had been laid up a couple of weeks in the Sandwich Islands,

[tʰu] [jiɹz] [bifɔɹ] [ʔaɪ] [hæd] [bɪn] [leɪd] [ʔəpʰ] [ʔeɪ] [kʰəpəl] [ʔəv] [wiks] [ʔɪn] [ði]

[sændwɪtʃ] [ʔaɪlɛndz]

and had read and re-read Doctor Holmes's poems

[ʔænd] [hæd] [ɹɛd] [ʔænd] [ɹiɹɛd] [daktəɹ] [holmzʔɛz] [pʰoɛmz]

till my mental reservoir was filled up with them to the brim.

[tʰɪl] [maɪ] [mɛntəl] [ɹɛzəvwaɹ] [wəz] [fɪld] [ʔəpʰ] [wɪθ] [ðɛm] [tʰu] [ði] [bɹɪm]

The dedication lay on the top, and handy, so, by-and-by, I unconsciously stole it.

[ði] [dɛdəkeʃən] [leɪ] [ʔan] [ði] [tʰapʰ] [ʔænd] [hændi] [so] [baɪ] [ʔænd] [baɪ] [ʔaɪ]

[ʔənkanʃəsli] [stol] [ʔɪtʰ]

Perhaps I unconsciously stole the rest of the volume, too,

[pʰəɹhæps] [ʔaɪ] [ʔənkanʃəsli] [stol] [ði] [ɹɛstʰ] [ʔəv] [ði] [valjum] [tʰu]

for many people have told me that my book was pretty poetical, in one way or another.

[fɔɹ] [mæni] [pʰipəl] [hæv] [tʰold] [mi] [ðætʰ] [maɪ] [bʊkʰ] [wəz] [pʰɹri] [pʰoɛtɪkəl] [ʔɪn]

[wən] [weɪ] [ʔɔɹ] [ʔənəðɹ]

Well, of course, I wrote Doctor Holmes and told him I hadn't meant to steal,

[wɛl] [ʔəv] [kʰɔɹs] [ʔaɪ] [ɹotʰ] [dɑktəɹ] [holmz] [ʔænd] [tʰold] [hɪm] [ʔaɪ] [hædnʔtʰ] [mɛntʰ]

[tʰu] [stil]

and he wrote back and said in the kindest way that it was all right and no harm done;

[ʔænd] [hi] [ɹotʰ] [bækʰ] [ʔænd] [sɛd] [ʔɪn] [ði] [kʰaɪndɛstʰ] [weɪ] [ðætʰ] [ʔɪtʰ] [wəz] [ʔɑl]

[ɹaɪtʰ] [ʔænd] [no] [hɑɹm] [dən]

and added that he believed we all unconsciously worked over ideas gathered in reading

[ʔænd] [ʔædʔəd] [ðætʰ] [hi] [bəlivd] [wi] [ʔɔl] [ʔənkɑnʃəsli] [wəɹkd] [ʔovɹ] [ʔaɪdiəz]

[gæðəɹd] [ʔɪn] [ɹidŋ]

and hearing, imagining they were original with ourselves.

[ʔænd] [hiɹŋ] [ʔɪmædʒənŋ] [ðeɪ] [wəɹ] [ʔəɹɪdʒənəl] [wɪθ] [ʔaʊəɹsɛlvz]

He stated a truth, and did it in such a pleasant way,

[hi] [steɪtəd] [ʔəɪ] [tʰɹuθ] [ʔænd] [dɪd] [ʔɪtʰ] [ʔɪn] [sətʃ] [ʔeɪ] [pʰlɛzəntʰ] [weɪ]

and salved over my sore spot so gently and so healingly,

[ʔænd] [sælvd] [ʔovəɹ] [maɪ] [sɔɹ] [spɑtʰ] [so] [dʒɛntli] [ʔænd] [so] [hilŋli]

that I was rather glad I had committed the crime, for the sake of the letter.

[ðætʰ] [ʔaɪ] [wəz] [ɹæðəɹ] [glæd] [ʔaɪ] [hæd] [kʰəmɪtəd] [ði] [kʰɹaɪm] [fɔɹ] [ði] [seɪkʰ] [ʔəv]

[ði] [lɛrɹ]

I afterward called on him and told him to make perfectly free

[ʔaɪ] [ʔæftəɹwɹd] [kʰɔld] [ʔon] [hɪm] [ʔænd] [tʰɑld] [hɪm] [tʰu] [meɪkʰ] [pʰəɹfɛktli] [fɹi]

with any ideas of mine that struck him as being good protoplasm for poetry.

[wɪθ] [ʔɛni] [ʔaɪdiəz] [ʔəv] [maɪn] [ðætʰ] [stɹəkʰ] [hɪm] [ðæz] [biŋ] [gʊd] [pʰɹotoplæzm]

[fɔɹ] [pʰoɛtɹi]

He could see by that that there wasn't anything mean about me;

[hi] [kʰʊd] [si] [baɪ] [ðætʰ] [ðætʰ] [ðɛɹ] [wəzʔntʰ] [ʔɛniθŋ] [min] [ʔəbaʊtʰ] [mi]

so we got along right from the start.

[so] [wi] [gɑtʰ] [ʔəlɔŋ] [ɹaɪtʰ] [fɹəm] [ði] [stɑɹtʰ]

I have not met Doctor Holmes many times since;

[ʔaɪ] [hæv] [nɑtʰ] [mɛtʰ] [dɑktɹ] [holmz] [mæni] [tʰaɪmz] [sɪns]

and lately he said— However, I am wandering wildly away from the one thing

[ʔænd] [leɪtli] [hi] [sɛd] [hɑwɛvɹ] [ʔaɪ] [ʔæm] [wɑndəɹŋ] [waɪldli] [ʔəweɪ] [fɹəm] [ði] [wən]

[θŋ]

which I got on my feet to do; that is, to make my compliments to you,

[wɪtʃ] [ʔaɪ] [gɑtʰ] [ʔɔn] [maɪ] [fitʰ] [tʰu] [du] [ðætʰ] [ʔɪz] [tʰu] [meɪkʰ] [maɪ]

[kʰɑmpləmɛnts] [tʰu] [ju]

my fellow-teachers of the great public,

[maɪ] [fɛlo] [tʰitʃərz] [ʔəv] [ði] [gɹetʰ] [pʰəblɪkʰ]

and likewise to say that I am right glad to see that Doctor Holmes is still in his prime

[ʔænd] [laɪkwɑɪz] [tʰu] [se] [ðætʰ] [ʔaɪ] [ʔæm] [ɹaɪtʰ] [glæd] [tʰu] [si] [ðætʰ] [dɑktəɹ]

[holmz] [ʔɪz] [stɪl] [ʔɪn] [hɪz] [pʰɹaɪm]

and full of generous life; and as age is not determined by years,

[ʔænd] [fʊl] [ʔəv] [dʒɛnɛɹəs] [lajf] [ʔænd] [ʔæz] [ʔeɪdʒ] [ʔɪz] [nɑtʰ] [ditəɹmənd] [baɪ] [jiɹz]

but by trouble and infirmities of mind and body,

[bətʰ] [baɪ] [tʰɹəbəl] [ʔænd] [ʔɪnfəɹmətiz] [ʔəv] [maɪnd] [ʔænd] [bɑdi]

I hope it may be a very long time yet before any one can truthfully say,

[ʔaɪ] [hop] [ʔɪtʰ] [meɪ] [bi] [ʔe] [vɛɹi] [lɔŋ] [tʰaɪm] [jɛtʰ] [bifɔɹ] [ʔɛni] [wən] [kæn] [tɹuθfəli]

[seɪ]

"He is growing old."

[hi] [ʔɪz] [gɹowɪŋ] [ʔold]