WillStartSmall.com

Views of linguists and anthropologists on the Ebonics issue (Part 1)

Compiled by Leila Monaghan of Pitzer College for the February 1997 Society for Linguistic Anthropology column

"We're not here for glamor or FAshion
but here's the question I'm askin
Why isn't young black kids taught BLACK?
They're only taught to read, write, and act
It's like teaching a dog to be a cat
you don't teach a DOG to be a cat
you don't teach WHITE kids to be BLACK
why IS that?
Is it because we're the miNOrity?"

KRS-1/BoogieDownProductions "Why Is That?" From *Ghetto Music: THe Blueprint of Hip Hop.* Copyright 1989 Jive Records (BMG)

Leila Monaghan, Gender and Feminist Studies, Pitzer College

The Oakland School Board's December 18, 1996 proposal to recognize "Ebonics," often known as African American Vernacular English or Black English Vernacular, raised a storm of protest from around the country. In this piece and in this month's Society for Linguistic Anthropology column, a number of linguistic anthropologists and linguists examine some of the issues surrounding the debate and try to place the situation in linguistic and cultural perspective. In this discussion, Jack Sidnell summarizes a few of the technical differences between AAVE and Standard English. Leanne Hinton gives her perspective as someone who was at the Oakland School Board meetings where the proposal was discussed. Marcyliena Morgan emphasizes the connection of African American varieties of English to culture, social class, geographic region and identity. John McWhorter argues that linguistic issues are the least of the Oakland school district's problems -- more important is understanding that the schools are chronically under funded and often awful. John Rickford gives us

background information on how schools have failed many African American students and argues for linguistically aware teaching techniques. Ron Kephart, writing from the perspective of his experience working with Creole speakers in Grenada also supports the recognition of language differences as a positive step that can help.

These six views are only brief introduction to this large and complex topic. English used by African Americans ranges from the distinctive styles of master orators like Martin Luther King and Jesse Jackson, through urban and rural vernaculars influenced by Southern roots (this is what is most commonly called AAVE), to the language of recent immigrants from the Caribbean, Africa and elsewhere, to Standard and local Englishes identical to those used by members of other communities. The discussion continues in the SLA column but also included there are ways to get more information on this topic -- a bibliography of the works mentioned below and some of the other key literature in this area and websites where further bibliographies, newspaper reports and discussions are available.

Jack Sidnell, Linguistic Anthropology, University of Toronto

Although there are important differences at many levels between African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and White dialects in the United States (including in such crucial areas as discourse markers), I would like here to briefly outline a few of the most widely documented structural linguistic differences. AAVE is not simply an accent. It differs grammatically from other dialects in important respects. Some of these differences show a striking resemblance to patterns in Caribbean Creoles and West African languages.

A. A summary of major points (adapted from Labov 1982):

1. It is a separate subsystem of English with a distinct set of phonological and syntactic rules that are aligned in many ways

with the rules of other dialects.

2. It incorporates some aspects of Southern phonology, morphology and syntax but the influence is not unidirectional. Black and White speakers have exerted influences on each other.

3. Present forms of AAVE may show evidence of an earlier creole close in structure to the Creoles of the Caribbean.

4. It has a highly developed "aspect system" (the way verbs reflect notions of time and activity whether activities are in progress or finished, are active or stative) which is quite different from the aspect systems of other dialects.

B. Some specific points:

1. Forms characteristic of SE formal registers - such as /test/, /hold/, /left/ and /stabd/ - variably reduce to /tes/, /hol/, /lef/ and /stab/ in some varieties of AAVE.
   This is not the tranference of a general rule from West African languages. Twi, for example does not have /st/, /ld/, /rd/, or /nd/ clusters in single syllables (unlike English) but does have /kp/, /gb/, and /jw/. Caribbean Creoles, on the other hand, do show such consonant cluster reduction quite consistently.
   Rickford (1977), however, argues that since both White and Black dialects have some consonant cluster reduction, that the real difference lies not in the presence or absence of consonant cluster reduction but in the different weightings of phonological (sound-oriented) and grammatical constraints. In AAVE phonological constraints are paramount, while in White dialects grammatical are usually more important.

2. Rickford also argues that a distinct intonation contour is a characteristic of the speech of many African-Americans who would not normally be considered speakers of AAVE proper.

3. Among the semantic and syntactic differences between AAVE and SE is use of the verb /bin/, a stative verb implying a distantly initiated state which is still in force or relevant. Rickford found for the phrase "She bin married" that 23 of 25

Black people surveyed thought "she" was still married, while only 8 of 25 White people survey thought so. White speakers were more likely to interpret this as the Standard English present perfect: "She’s been married" which implies that she was married but now she’s not.

4. The copula system (the organization of the forms of the auxiliary verb "to be") in AAVE is different from other dialects of English. Where other dialects show two forms of the copula: "He is tired out" and "He’s tired out", AAVE has four "He is tired out," "He’s tired out," "He tired out," and "He be tired out." Labov argues that where other dialects contract, Black English Vernacular can delete the copula, (e.g. "He’s tired out" can become "He tired out" in BEV). The "He be tired out" in AAVE implies long and ongoing tiredness.

   Labov's work has been reassessed by Baugh (1983) who split apart one of the grammatical categories used by Labov into two separate ones - locatives (which identify where things are) and adjectives. Baugh found that AAVE strongly disfavored a copula before adjectives just like creoles - and favored the presence of copula before locatives - again like creoles. The situation for contraction in White dialects is generally reversed.

5. Some forms of AAVE are camouflaged forms, similar or identical to forms in Standard White English, but with a different accepted meaning. An example would be the use of the verb "come" to express the speaker's indignation about an action, "He come walkin' in here like he owned the damn place." That this "come" isn’t a verb of motion can be seen in the grammatically correct AAVE sentence "She come going in my room - didn't knock or nothing" which wouldn’t be allowed in SWE because it includes two verbs of motion that imply movement in different directions.

Leanne Hinton, Linguistics, UC Berkeley

The furor over Oakland's recently-adopted resolution regarding Ebonics is based in large part on these issues: (1) there is a misunderstanding that the Oakland school system wants to teach Black English in the schools; (2) there is a sense of outrage among some that a stigmatized variety of English would be treated as a valid way of talking.

When I attended the school board meeting where the Ebonics resolution was adopted, all discussion in support of the resolution, by board members, parents, and teachers, was centered around the importance of teaching standard English to children. This resolution is not about teaching Black English, but about the best way of teaching standard English. The children the board is concerned about have learned Black English at home, a linguistic variety that has many differences from standard English. In order to teach them standard English, the board has rightfully concluded that teachers need to understand and be able to teach children the differences between these two linguistic varieties. It has also rightfully concluded that Black English is not just some random form of "broken-down English" that is intrinsically inferior to standard English, but is rather a speech variety with its own long history, its own logical rules of grammar, discourse practices that are traceable to West African languages, and a vibrant oral literature that is worthy of respect. Black English has also been one of the major contributors of vocabulary to American English in general.

Whether Ebonics is a separate language or not in any technical sense is not really what I think educators are concerned with here. What they are after is elevating the status of African American English (AAE). While from a linguistic point of view, these notions are being carried to an unscientific extreme, the proponents of Ebonics are battling an even more unscientific set of extreme prejudices against AAE. The Oakland Board is trying to promulgate a new set of political ideas about AAE as a legitimate form of speech, partly for the sake of African-American pride, but mainly for the sake of teaching standard English in an emotionally positive way.

The notion that there is something just plain "bad" about nonstandard varieties of English is so deeply imbedded in the minds of many people that they tend to believe that children speak Black English out

of contrariness, and need to be corrected by punishment. Educators have known better than that for a long time now, and don't want to be disrespectful of African American children’s way of speech; but that very respect has left them without a way of teaching standard English. The method being embraced now by the Oakland School Board fills that void. By escaping the trap of thinking of nonstandard Black English as a set of "errors," and instead treating it as really is, a different system, not a wrong one, standard English can be taught by helping children develop an awareness of the contrast between their two speech varieties, and learn to use one without losing their pride in the other.

Marcyliena Morgan, Linguistic Anthropology, UCLA

After sitting through a string of tasteless jokes about the Oakland School District's approval of a language education policy for African American students, I now realize that linguists and educators have failed to inform Americans about varieties of English used throughout the country and the link between these dialects and culture, social class, geographic region and identity. After all, linguists have been a part of language and education debates around African American English (AAE) and the furor that surrounds them since the late 1970s. Then, the Ann Arbor School District received a court order to train teachers on aspects of AAE so that they could properly assess and teach children in their care.

Like any languages and dialects, African American varieties of English, which range from that spoken by children and some adults with limited education to those spoken by adults with advanced degrees, are based on the cultural, social, historical and political experiences shared by many people of African descent in the US. This experience is one of family, community and love as well as racism, poverty and discrimination. Every African American does not speak AAE. Moreover, some argue that children who speak the vernacular, typically grow up to speak both AAE as well as mainstream varieties of English. It is therefore not surprising that the community separates its views of AAE, which range from loyalty to abhorrence, from issues

surrounding the literacy education of their children. Unfortunately, society's ambivalent attitudes toward African American students' cognitive abilities , like Jensen's 1970s deficit models and the 1990s "Bell Curve", suggest that when it comes to African American kids, intelligence and competence in school can be considered genetic.

African American children who speak the vernacular form of AAE may be the only English speaking children in this country who attend schools, in their own communities, where the teachers are not only ignorant of their dialect, but refuse to accept it exists. This attitude leads to children being marginalized and designated as learning disabled. The educational failure of African American children can, at best, be only partially addressed through teacher training on AAE. We must recognize that when children go to school, they not only bring their homework and text books, but their language, culture and identity as well. Sooner, rather than later, the educational system must address its exclusion of cultural and dialect difference in teacher training and school curriculum.

John McWhorter, Linguistics and African-American Studies, UC Berkeley

In the weeks after the Oakland School Board’s proposal came out, I interviewed with just about every media outlet in the country on Ebonics. Often, I was selectively quoted as if to say that the whole issue is absurd because Black English isn't separate enough from standard English to justify concern.

This is not what I have been trying to say. My feeling, in a nutshell, is simply that the Oakland school board misidentifies the reason for black students' failure in attributing it, in any significant way, to the difference between the dialects. Black children fail because:

1. Inner city backgrounds do not prepare many children to be receptive to education in school;

2. The schools are under funded and often awful;

3. Reading is not taught properly in many schools period, compounding the ill effects of the above.

These are the problems which must be addressed with money and study.

I have no problem with taking Black English into account in schools. But when this goes as far as translation exercises or textbooks in Black English, I am opposed. This is because:

1. Because translation between these close dialects is not the problem, doing this would be like trying to put out a house fire with an eyedropper. Sure, it might do some tiny, insignificant good here and there but WHILE IT WAS DOING THIS ---

2. It would make black kids look stupid, as if they were incapable of making the two-inch jump between such close dialects while kids in Brooklyn, Appalachia and white Mississippi do it without comment (or -- if they fail in school, dialect is not thought to be the reason).

There does need to be, however, a book for the general public outlining what a dialect is, how the concept differs from "slang", and how this relates to good old Black English. It has shocked me how ignorant the public is on this despite us teaching the concepts year after year at universities. Thinking about this, however, it occurred to me -- there already ARE books on Black English, at least, long readily available in paperback such as Dillard (1972) and Smitherman (1986). Both are accessibly written but seem to have had little impact on public perception. It is our responsibility to enlighten the public about these issues, to do something. The question of course is how?

John R. Rickford, Linguistics, Stanford

The Oakland School Board's decision to take Ebonics into account in teaching Standard English to African American (and other) students deserves commendation rather than the misinterpretation and vilification which it has received.

One good thing about the Oakland decision is that it brings to national attention the fact that existing methods of teaching English work are often failing miserably for working class African American children. For instance, in the 1990 California Assessment Program, third grade kids in the primarily white, middle class Palo Alto School District scored on the 94th percentile in writing; by the third grade, they had topped out at the 99 percentile. By contrast, third grade kids in primarily African American working class East Palo Alto (Ravenswood School District) scored on the 21st percentile in writing, but by the sixth grade, they had fallen to the 3rd percentile, almost to the very bottom. Several other studies also show that the longer African American inner city kids stay in school, the worse they do. Labov (in Gadsden & Wagner, 1995) reported that in 1976, 73% of the kids in one African American elementary school scored below the mean; by the senior high level, that failure rate had soared to 95%, and the 1992 results were equally ominous.

Another good thing about the Oakland decision is that it is putting into practice findings from over three decades of research, both in this country and abroad (e.g., Sweden) that show teaching methods which DO take vernacular dialects into account in teaching the standard work better than those which DO NOT. For instance, Hanni Taylor (1991) reported on a study where she tried to improve the Standard English writing of inner city university students from Chicago using two methods. With the experimental group, she raised students' metalinguistic awareness of the differences between Ebonics and Standard English through contrastive analysis, and tailored pattern practice drills. With the control group, she did not do this, but simply followed "traditional English department techniques." After nearly three months of instruction, the experimental group showed a 59% reduction in the use of Ebonics features in their SE writing, while the control group, using traditional methods, showed a slight INCREASE (8.5%) in the use of AAVE features.

Other studies have shown similar results for the teaching of reading. Students at all levels who are taught by methods that take the dialect into account show dramatic improvement in their skills in reading and writing as well as in the standard variety (J Rickford & A. Rickford, 1995).

Ron Kephart, Linguistic Anthropology and English, University of North Florida

My take on the "Ebonics" issue has to do with my being a linguistic anthropologist, and also with my having conducted research on reading in Creole English on Carriacou, Grenada. In both cases, one of the hardest problems seems to be making people understand what you are doing.

For example, a major criticism of the Oakland proposal I have heard is that teachers will be wasting time "teaching" AAVE when the kids should be learning standard English. On Carriacou I often found it necessary to explain that I didn’t have to "teach" the children Creole; they were already native speakers of it when they got to school. I was giving them access to literacy through Creole and then attempting to test to what extent this helped them acquire literacy in standard English.

On Carriacou, "educational experts" claimed that my taking children out of their standard English classes and working with them in Creole would slow them down and confuse them. I found neither to be the case: while working in Creole they continued to improve in reading standard English as fast as other children who were working entirely in standard. And, they never seemed to confuse the two (it helped, no doubt, that I wrote Creole with a broadly phonemic spelling system that it made it look different).

My research was interrupted by the coup and subsequent US invasion of Grenada and Carriacou in late 1983. As a result, I was not able to draw the strong conclusions I would have liked. Still, I showed that

spending time working on Creole did not slow down or confuse the children, and I was able to present some evidence that reading Creole helped their reading of standard. On a more qualitative note, they enjoyed it. Other teachers told me they had never seen children fight with each other over who was going to read to the class. And, they had rarely taken school books home to read before getting the little booklets in Creole that we produced. Even children who were not in the Creole class asked for the booklets.

Ultimately, of course, this is a political issue. My experience on Grenada suggests that recognition of AAVE in Oakland can't hurt. Surely it can't hurt children to discover that what they bring with them to school, as a realization of the universal human potential for language and culture, is worthy of respect, worthy enough to be valued and used in their formal education. And, it can't hurt teachers (those who need to) to learn this, either, although some of them will be most resistant. How much will it help? We have research from all over the world on the positive effects of native language first literacy acquisition and early schooling. Since it can't hurt, it seems to me worth finding out whether these results can be replicated in Oakland, and elsewhere, for AAVE.

At the same time, we have to remain skeptically (realistically?) aware that simply gaining greater command of the standard language will not help unless the society is willing to adjust its attitudes toward the people involved. Otherwise, discrimination and exploitation will continue as before; the racists will have one less justification they can trot out, that's all. Perhaps this is where anthropologists and linguists have their most important work to do, in raising public awareness and understanding of what linguistic, cultural, and biological differences mean and, most importantly, what they don't mean.

Views of linguists and anthropologists on the Ebonics issue (Part 2)

Compiled by Leila Monaghan of Pitzer College for the February 1997 Society for Linguistic Anthropology column

This is the second half of a discussion begun earlier in the newsletter on the Oakland School Board's Ebonics controversy. In this column Charles Fillmore discusses some of the language used in the declaration, Susan Ervin-Tripp points out some of the differences between students who speak AAVE and English as a Second Language students, and John Clark discusses how differences are "accomplished" by various actors in a such situations. Also below are a bibliography of further works, a list of websites and the traditional "Useful Addresses" of every SLA column. Many thanks to all who helped put this issue together, particularly Aaron Fox who circulated the lyrics to "Why is That?"

Charles J. Fillmore, Linguistics, UC Berkeley

"Language" is one of the words responsible for much of the confusion in the discussion about the Oakland School Board's decision. Others are "dialect", "slang", "primary language", and, unfortunately, "genetic". Neither side in these debates uses these words in ways that facilitate communication. Perhaps a linguist can introduce some much-needed clarification.

The words "dialect" and "language" are confusingly ambiguous. These are not precisely definable technical terms in linguistics, but linguists have learned to live with the ambiguities. We can use the word "language" to refer simply to the linguistic system one acquires in childhood. In most normal contexts, everybody grows up speaking a language. If there are systematic differences between the language you and your neighbors speak and the language my neighbors and I speak, we can say that we speak different dialects.

The word "language" is also used to refer to a group of related dialects, but there are no scientific criteria for deciding when to refer to two linguistic systems as different dialects of

the same language or as different languages of the same language family. There are empirical criteria for grouping ways of speaking to reflect their historical relationships, but there is an arbitrary element in deciding when to use the word "language" for representing any particular grouping. (Deciding whether BBC newsreaders and radio evangelists from Lynchburg, Virginia, speak different dialects or different but related languages is on the level of deciding whether Greenland is a small continent or a large island.)

There is a different and misleading way of using these words for situations in which, for social or political reasons, one dialect comes to be the preferred means of communication in schools, commerce, public ceremonies, etc. According to this second usage, reflecting a kind of folk theory, what the linguist would simply call the standard dialect is referred to as "the language", the others as "mere dialects", thought of as falling short of the perfection of the real language. An important principle of linguistics is that the selection of the prestige dialect is determined by accidental extralinguistic forces, and is not dependent on inherent virtues of the dialects themselves. According to the folk theory, the "dialects" differ from the language itself in being full of errors.

On the question of whether there is a definable linguistic system, spoken by many African Americans, with its own phonology, lexicon and grammar (and dialects!), there is already a huge body of research. The question of whether twenty-seven thousand African American children in Oakland schools come from families that speak that language has to be an empirical question, not an issue for tapping people's opinions.

There is a common-sense core to the Oakland school board's plans. All over the world children show up in school speaking a variety of language that differs in some great or small way from the variety they're about to start learning. Where the discrepancy is slight, and where (as in most parts of the world) nobody would think of telling the children to give up their home language, the difference can be easily bridged. But in all cases it is just commonsensical for teachers to do whatever they can to make students aware of the differences. The case made by the board is for doing this in a way that isn't demeaning to the children. Such elementary concern for the children's self-esteem has been ridiculed by some as a meaningless gesture of "political correctness", a belief that children should never be corrected. But clearly, a child who can say freely, "In my dialect we say it like this" is better able to profit from a language-learning experience than a child who is simply always told that everything he says is "wrong".

The Oakland school board's public statements should, however, show a clearer understanding of what they are getting into. The changes needed will not be trivial, and will have to include the daunting job of sensitizing teachers to a language many of them have wanted to believe does not exist. Much of the public debate suggests that the new classroom practice will be mostly a matter of displaying respect for the children's home

language, and making students aware of the pronunciation of "with" as "wif", the uses of "be", and multiple negation. But anybody who has looked at the linguistic structure of the African American vernacular knows that there's a lot more to it than that.

The school board has made an important proposal: that the work of helping speakers of AAVE to learn the language of the school will be easier and more effective if it is seen as building on a home language whose properties the children are encouraged to examine, rather than as an endless process of "correcting mistakes". If that's all the new policy achieves, it will have been worth all the fuss. If teachers can attain precise understandings of the nature of that language, that will be even better. And if all of this discussion encourages everyone involved to make whatever other changes need to be made to improve the school performance of African-American students in the district, Oakland will achieve a new and more welcome kind of fame.

Susan Ervin-Tripp, Psychology, UC Berkeley

An important distinction seems to be lost in the analogy between AAVE and bilingual situations. In the case of immigrants, comprehension and even phonological discrimination are at issue (in ESL classes I used to ask students to raise their hands to identify whether I had said shit or sheet, bitch or beach, so I know they couldn't HEAR the difference.)

American children understand media English well since they have been exposed all their lives to these forms of standard English in films and television. What we are talking about is speaking in a certain way, which is fundamentally a social-emotional issue in the case of social variation. Children's capacities to do highly effective role playing and code-switching suggest a route to deal with developing this kind of oral practice, if that is what school boards want. That is a way to turn receptive knowledge into oral use. Whether piecemeal "error-correction" labeled as "translation" works remains to be seen. It appears that this move by the Oakland schools was basically intended to change teacher attitudes and clean up the idea that these kids have "lazy speech".

John T. Clark, Linguistics, Georgetown

My research looks at how African American high schoolers acquire or choose not to acquire elite-aspiring (a.k.a. "Standard English") rhetorical discourse styles. I would like to point out one aspect of the debate that has received little attention. And that aspect is the students' own choice in the matter of learning elite-aspiring English. I am surprised that this is the case, given the fact that much of the recent media attention _before_ the Oakland brouhaha (in every venue from the NY Times and the Washington Post to the Oprah Winfrey Show) being paid to the question of African American students and their language seemed to focus on the students own choice in the matter, especially when the choice turned out to be the refusal to "talk White." (check out Signithia Fordham's work in which she reports on how successful Black students cope with the "burden of acting White")

The exact role that cultural differences play in the breakdown of smooth communication is a sort of chicken-and-egg question. Do, as John Gumperz argues, differences in conversational strategies precipitate a breakdown in communication, or, as Ray McDermott and Frederick Erickson have pointed out, do social actors seize upon these cultural discourse differences in order to accomplish the breakdown? I have found that resistance theory as articulated by Erickson 1987 captures the complexity of the issue: After the linguists and the media have laid out what the language differences (whether morphosyntactic or discourse/rhetorical) are, after talented, dedicated teachers in well-heated buildings become skilled in drawing the students' attention to AAVE/elite-aspiring English differences, it is the students who have the final word. Heck, they have the first word as well as they _know_ what the linguistic differences are, and they are skilled at either deliberately learning them or deliberately not learning them and shunning those who choose otherwise. The pedagogical issue, as Erickson says, is the issue of trust. This trust is both an institutional phenomenon, (located over broad stretches of time and access to monetary and cultural capital) as well as it is an emergent one ("the short time scale of everyday encounters between individual teachers, students and parents")

Bibliography

Below is a short selection of articles and books cited by the authors in this issue of AN, and some of the other classics and cutting-edge works in the field. The list has been compiled from works suggested by the authors and other members of the linganth e-mail list and books suggested by the Linguistics Society of America. As has been pointed out, much of

this work is widely available but little known, and public discussion suffers because of it. Further bibliographic information can be found at the websites listed below.

Baugh, J. (1983) *Black Street Speech: its history, structure and survival* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Bloome, D. and J. Lemke, eds. (1995) Special Issue: AfricanizedEnglish and Education. *Linguistics and Education* 7:2.

Butters, R. (1989) The death of Black English: *Convergence and divergence in American English*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Dandy, E. (1991) *Black communications: Breaking down the barriers*. Chicago: African American Images.

DeStephano, J. ed. (1973) Language, society and education: *A profile of Black English*. Worthington, OH: Charles A. Jones.

Dillard, J. L. (1972). *Black English: Its history and usage in the United States.* New York: Random House.

Erickson, F. (1987) "Transformation and School Success: The Politics and Culture of Educational Achievement" *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 18: 4.

Fordham, S. (1996) *Blacked Out: Dilemmas of Race, Identity, and Success at Capital High.* U. of Chicago Press.

Gadsden, V. and D. Wagner , eds. (1995). *Literacy among African American youth.* Creskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Kochman, T. (1981). *Black and white styles in conflict.* New York: Holt Rinehart.

Labov, W. (1972) *Language in the inner city: Studies in the Black English vernacular.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Labov, W. (1982) "Objectivity and Commitment in linguistic science: The case of the Black English trial in Ann Arbor" *Language in Society*, 2: 165-201.

McDermott, R.P. and K. Gospodinoff. (1981) "Social Contexts for Ethnic Borders and School Failure" in H. Trueba, G.P. Guthrie and K. Hu-Pei Au, eds. *Culture and the Bilingual Classroom.* Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.

Morgan, M. (1994a) "Theories and Politics in African American English" Annual Review of *Anthropology*, 23: 325-45.

Morgan, M. (1994b) "The African-American Speech Community: Reality and Sociolinguists." in M. Morgan ed., *Language and the Social Construction of Identity in Creole Situations.* Los Angeles: UCLA Center for African American Studies.

Mufwene, S. S., J. R. Rickford, G. Bailey and J. Baugh, eds. (To appear). *African American English.* London: Routledge.

Ogbu, J. and S. Fordham. "Coping with the Burden of Acting White" In *Urban Review* 18:3 1986.

Rickford, J. (1977) "The Question of Prior Creolization in BlackEnglish." in A. Valdman ed. *Pidgin and Creole Linguistics.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Rickford, J. R. and A. Rickford (1995) "Dialect Readers Revisited" in *Linguistics and Education*, 7:2.

Rickford, J. R., and L. Green. (To appear). *African American Vernacular English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, E. A. (1994) *The historical development of African American Language.* Los Angeles: Watts College Press.

Smitherman, G. ed. (1981). *Black English and the Education of Black Children and Youth.* Detroit: Center for Black Studies, Wayne State University Press.

Smitherman, G. (1986). *Talkin and testifyin: The language of Black America.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Smitherman, G. (1994) *Black Talk.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Spears, A.K. (1988) "Black American English" in J.B. Cole, ed. Anthropology for the Nineties. New York: Free Press.

Taylor, H. (1991) Standard English, Black English, and bidialectalism: a controversy. New York: Peter Lang.

Williams, R. L. 1975 E*bonics: The true language of Black folks.* St. Louis: Institute of Black Studies.

Wolfram, W. 1991. *Dialects and American English.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ; Prentice Hall and Center for Applied Linguistics.

Websites

Three websites with information and extensive bibliographies on African American English are:

John Rickford's (Stanford): http://www.stanford.edu/~rickford/

A website at Colgate: http://www2.colgate.edu/diw.SOAN244bibs.html

and Harold Schiffman's (U Penn) webpage on AAVE and education: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/~haroldfs/540/handouts/aave/aave.html

Jim Wilce's (N Arizona U) website has an archive created by Susan Ervin-Tripp (UC Berkeley) of newspaper articles on the subject as well as an archive of the original discussions on the linganth e-mail network. Included here are the original and revised Oakland School Board declarations and the official statement from the Linguistic Society of America: http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jmw22/ebind.html

The linganth list homepage has links to all of the above: http://www.beta-tech.com/linganth

Useful Addresses

Judith Irvine, Journal of Linguistic Anthropology Editor, Dept of Anth, Brandeis U, Waltham, MA 022549110; irvine@binah.cc.brandeis.edu; fax 617/7362232.

Pamela Bunte, SLA Program Chair, Dept of Anth, CSU-Long Beach, Long Beach, CA 90840; pbunte@beach1.csulb.edu

AAA 9197 Orthography Panel: Alexandra Jaffe, Dept. of Anthro/Soc, U of Southern Mississippi, Box 5074, Hattiesburg, MS 39401; ajaffe@ocean.st.usm.edu or Harriet Ottenheimer, Dept of Soc/Anthro & Social Work, Waters Hall, Kansas State U, Manhattan, KS 66506; mahafan@ksu.ksu.edu.

Leila Monaghan, SLA column editor, monaghan@borges.ucsd.edu, Pitzer C, 1050 N. Mills Ave, Claremont, CA 91711, fax 909/621-8481.