

Do Americans really speak “English”?

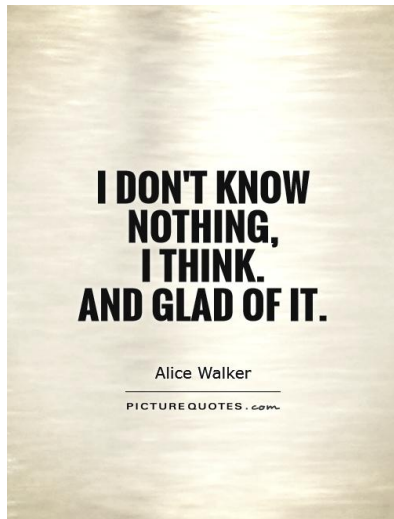
Jinyuan Wu

November 11, 2022

Variation of English

Besides English as we know it, what do Americans speak?

- Spanish?
- Englishes!

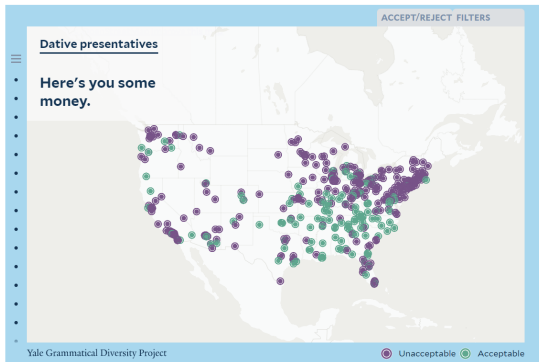


⁰Picture from Picture Quotes.

Variation of English

Yale is famous for its humanities, and thanks for a bunch of people in this building, we have . . .

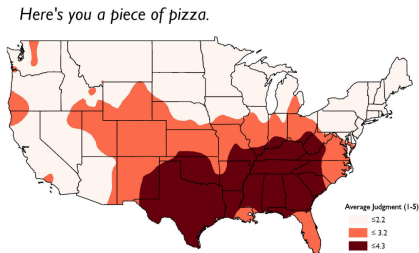
Yale Grammatical Diversity Project English in North America



Example: *Here's you a piece of pizza*

On the page about dative presentatives:

Who says it



Syntactic environments

- [*Here's [John/you]_{dative:NP} a glass of iced-tea*]_{existential, declarative}
- [*Where's [me]_{dative} a screwdriver*]_{existential, interrogative}

Example: negative concord

On the page about negative concord:

Who says this

- 1) I *ain't never* been drunk.
'I've never been drunk.'
(Alabama English; Feagin 1979)
- 2) *Nobody ain't doin' nothing'* wrong.
'Nobody is doing anything wrong.'
(West Texas English; Foreman 1999)
- 3) I *don't never* have *no* problems.
'I don't ever have any problems.'
(African American English; Green 2002)

Types of negative concord

- Negative adverb after negated auxiliary: *I ain't never lost a fight*
- Negative pronoun with negated auxiliary: *Nobody couldn't handle him*
- Even in complement clause: *I don't feel like [nobody pets me]*

Why recording these

- General linguistics:
 - Providing evidences for universal constraints on *possible* natural languages
 - Providing evidences for typological *tendencies* (not absolute)
- English philology:
 - Simply for fun: stamp collecting is also interesting!
 - More expressive language

Conclusion

- English dialects have exotic constructions
- They can be found in <https://ygdp.yale.edu/>!