

# Contents

Acknowledgements .....	vii
List of abbreviations .....	xiv
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Education: where it all started.....	2 ✕
1.2 The synchronic description of AAE and its comparison to other varieties of English.....	3
1.3 The debate about the origins of AAE .....	4 ✕
1.4 The sociohistorical background for the evolution of AAE .....	6 ✕
1.5 The divergence of AAE from other varieties of English .....	8
1.6 Sources for the historical reconstruction of AAE .....	9
1.7 The aims of the present project .....	10
1.8 A final note on terms.....	11
Chapter 2 Data and methods.....	12
2.1 Mississippi samples from the ex-slave narratives Rawick (1977 / 1979) [WPA MS].....	12
2.2 The Virginia WPA project [WPA VA].....	20
2.3 The ex-slave recordings [ESR] .....	22
2.4 Samples from Hyatt's hoodoo interviews [HOODOO1 and HOODOO2].....	24
2.5 Linguistic evaluation of the subcorpora.....	28
2.6 Methodological possibilities of a combined corpus of Earlier AAE .	32
2.6.1 Comparison of subcorpora.....	32
2.6.2 Studying change in progress – apparent time analyses .....	33
2.6.3 Analysis by state .....	35
2.6.4 Gender differences.....	38
2.7 Summary .....	39
Chapter 3 Negation patterns in Earlier AAE .....	40
3.1 Introduction.....	40
3.2 Verbal negation.....	41
3.2.1 The distribution of <i>ain't</i> and its standard counterparts .....	41
3.2.1.1 Verbal negation by subcorpus .....	41
3.2.1.2 Verbal negation in apparent time .....	47
3.2.1.3 Verbal negation by state .....	51
3.2.1.4 Verbal negation by gender .....	53
3.2.2 The functions of <i>ain't</i> .....	54
3.2.2.1 The functions of <i>ain't</i> by subcorpus.....	55

3.2.2.2	The functions of <i>ain't</i> in apparent time .....	56
3.2.2.3	The functions of <i>ain't</i> by state .....	59
3.2.2.4	The functions of <i>ain't</i> by gender .....	60
3.3	Multiple negation / Negative concord.....	61
3.3.1	Overall frequencies of negative concord and standard negation.....	62
3.3.1.1	Negative concord and standard negation by subcorpus.....	62
3.3.1.2	Negative concord and standard negation in apparent time...	62
3.3.1.3	Negative concord and standard negation by state .....	64
3.3.1.4	Negative concord and standard negation by gender .....	64
3.3.2	Variability of negative auxiliaries in indeterminate contexts....	65
3.3.2.1	Variability of negative auxiliaries by subcorpus .....	67
3.3.2.2	Variability of negative auxiliaries in apparent time.....	70
3.3.2.3	Variability of negative auxiliaries by state .....	73
3.3.2.4	Variability of negative auxiliaries by gender.....	77
3.4	Negative attraction .....	78
3.4.3	<i>Never+did+V(inf)</i> .....	80
3.5	Negative postposing.....	81
3.6	Summary .....	83
Chapter 4	The copula in Earlier AAE .....	89
4.1	Introductory remarks.....	89
4.2	Methodological considerations .....	90
4.2.1	Setting the stage for an analysis: identifying count and don't count items.....	93
4.2.1.1	The copula in past tense environments.....	93
4.2.1.2	Habitual BE <sub>2</sub> and non-finite BE .....	94
4.2.1.3	Clause final and emphatic copula.....	94
4.2.1.4	<i>There + copula / here + copula</i> .....	94
4.2.1.5	<i>This + copula</i> .....	96
4.2.1.6	Questions .....	97
4.2.1.7	<i>What / it / that (WIT)</i> .....	97
4.2.1.8	Negation .....	99
4.2.1.9	<i>Am</i> .....	99
4.2.1.10	<i>Are</i> .....	104
4.2.1.11	Phonological environments.....	107
4.2.1.12	Survey of copula usage in Earlier AAE.....	108
4.2.2	Full, contracted and zero forms of the copula.....	109
4.2.2.1	Straight vs. Labov (and Romaine).....	112
4.2.2.2	Differences between <i>is</i> and <i>are</i> contraction and deletion...	113
4.2.2.3	Comparison across data sets.....	113

4.3	The variability of <i>is</i> in Earlier AAE .....	115
4.3.1	Possible constraints on <i>is</i> realization .....	115
4.3.2	Variability of <i>is</i> by subcorpus .....	119
4.3.2.1	Subject type by subcorpus .....	120
4.3.2.2	Following grammatical environment by subcorpus.....	126
4.3.2.3	Phonological environment by subcorpus.....	133
4.3.2.4	VARBRUL analysis of <i>is</i> in the combined corpus.....	136
4.3.3	Variability of <i>is</i> in apparent time .....	139
4.3.4	Variability of <i>is</i> by state .....	147
4.3.5	Variability of <i>is</i> by gender.....	152
4.4	Summary .....	154
Chapter 5 Relativization in Earlier AAE .....		156
5.1	Methodological remarks .....	156
5.1.1	Relativization in Standard and Nonstandard English .....	157
5.1.2	Humanness of the antecedent head .....	162
5.1.3	Category of the antecedent head .....	166
5.1.4	Adjacency of relative marker and antecedent head.....	166
5.1.5	Summing up the factors for the present analysis.....	167
5.2	Relativization by subcorpus .....	171
5.2.1	Humanness of the antecedent.....	173
5.2.1.1	Frequency of relative markers by environment .....	174
5.2.1.2	Comparison of relative markers across environments .....	175
5.2.2	Category of the antecedent.....	176
5.2.2.1	Frequency of relative markers by environment .....	176
5.2.2.2	Comparison of relative markers across environments .....	178
5.2.3	Adjacency of antecedent and relative marker .....	178
5.2.3.1	Comparison of relative markers across environments .....	179
5.2.4	Summary .....	181
5.3	Relativization in apparent time .....	182
5.3.1	Humanness of the antecedent.....	184
5.3.1.1	Subject relatives .....	184
5.3.1.2	Non-subject relatives .....	185
5.3.2	Category of the antecedent.....	187
5.3.2.1	Subject relatives .....	187
5.3.2.2	Non-subject relatives .....	188
5.3.3	Adjacency of antecedent and relative marker .....	189
5.3.3.1	Subject relatives .....	189
5.3.3.2	Non-subject relatives .....	190
5.3.4	Summary .....	191
5.4	Relativization by state .....	193

5.4.1	Humanness of the antecedent.....	195
5.4.1.1	Subject relatives .....	195
5.4.1.2	Non-subject relatives .....	196
5.4.2	Category of the antecedent.....	197
5.4.2.1	Subject relatives .....	197
5.4.2.2	Non-subject relatives .....	198
5.4.3	Adjacency of antecedent and relative marker .....	200
5.4.3.1	Subject relatives .....	200
5.4.3.2	Non-subject relatives .....	201
5.4.4	Summary .....	202
5.5	Relativization by gender .....	203
5.5.1	Humanness of the antecedent.....	204
5.5.1.1	Subject relatives .....	204
5.5.1.2	Non-subject relatives .....	205
5.6	Summary .....	206
5.6.1	Subject relatives .....	208
5.6.2	Non-subject relatives.....	209
5.6.3	VARBRUL analysis of subject and non-subject <i>that, what,</i> and zero.....	209
Chapter 6 Comparison of written and spoken Earlier AAE .....		212
6.1	Two sources of written Earlier AAE.....	212
6.1.1	Letters from Liberia (and Alabama) [LAL] .....	212
6.1.1.1	Validity of transcripts .....	215
6.1.2	Letters written during or after the Civil War (Freedmen's Bureau Letters [FBL]).....	219
6.2	Manuscript letters as linguistic data .....	221
6.3	Negation.....	224
6.3.1	Verbal Negation .....	224
6.3.2	Negative concord .....	226
6.3.3	Negative attraction .....	230
6.3.4	Negative postposing.....	231
6.3.5	Summing up .....	233
6.4	The copula.....	234
6.4.1	The copula in special contexts ( <i>there, here, this, WIT</i> ) .....	234
6.4.2	Full, contracted and zero forms of <i>am, are, and is</i> .....	237
6.4.3	Summing up .....	242
6.5	Relativization .....	242
6.5.1	Humanness of the antecedent.....	245
6.5.2	Category of the antecedent.....	247
6.5.3	Adjacency .....	250

6.5.4 Summing up.....	251
6.6 Summary: Written sources of Earlier AAE.....	253
Chapter 7 Conclusions.....	254
Appendix 1: Informants by subcorpus.....	259
Appendix 2: Informants by year of birth .....	266
Appendix 3: Informants by state.....	269
Appendix 4: Historical demographics of the American South .....	272
Appendix 5: Detailed listings of negated auxiliaries in indeterminate contexts by sub-corpus .....	283
Notes.....	291
References .....	311
Index .....	328