

## **The Use of Black English in American Literature: The Case of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn**

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### **Abstract**

The main interest of this research paper is the exploration of the use of Black English in literature, selecting the American novel: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, henceforth (AHF), (1884) by Mark Twain (1853-1910) as a field of investigation. This novel is chosen since it is a fertile scope of the study, abundant with various cultural elements used by characters. The focus is set on a selection of literary, linguistic, and sociolinguistic approaches. The data gathered from the novel have been analyzed and interpreted to provide and reflect a vivid image of the novel's fictional characters with a purpose to increase dialect awareness among readers of literary dialect. The study of the implementation of vernacular elements in American literature does not only extract the enjoyable side about the character's social background but also offers a unique glamour and beauty to American literary works.

**Keywords:** Black English Vernacular, cultural aspects, Huckleberry Finn, literary dialect, Mark Twain, sociolinguistic factors

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## **The Use of Black English in American Literature: The Case of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn**

Dialect use as a complex phenomenon has been the interest of many scholars, especially dialectologists. Yet, it has employed other fields of study, chiefly sociolinguistics, and literature. It is of crucial importance to mention that there is a wide range of different varieties related to non-standard English, as Black English Vernacular, which is often used in American literary works. Therefore, it enables authors to portray their own experiences and adventures by painting an authentic picture for readers to become involved. Besides, it has contributed to the outstanding success of American literary works.

Dialect use makes American literary works more vibrant, more complex, and, therefore, more exciting and attractive. Also, it is very useful in depicting American society and is very faithful to its spirits. Besides, it provides much pleasure to readers while exploring the vernacular language and helps push them to embrace American literature. This research paper focuses on the importance of dialect use in writing by spotting light on various characteristics of vernacular elements and providing social parameters that characterize the speakers of dialect. The scope of this research paper also tends to reveal the artistic relation between sociolinguistics and literature.

### **Black English vs. Standard English**

The distinction between Black English Vernacular and Standard English occurs at the phonological, morphological, and syntactical levels. But at the same time, many features of Standard American English are shared with Black English. In this respect, Labov(1972) says: "what speakers of African American Vernacular English possess is basically the same grammar that all speakers of English possess." (p.42) This means that African American Vernacular English speakers have their own rules along with the English speakers.

Thus, both Black English and Standard English are used in various social contexts, and each one has its status in American society.

### **Literary Dialect**

Dialect in literature is called a literary dialect. It is the implementation of non-standard spellings generally used in novels and short stories to provide and reveal a real picture of an authentic speech to readers.

Many definitions have been put forward by distinctive scholars in describing the concept of literary dialect; Poussa(1999) refers to it as: The representation of non-standard speech in the literature that is otherwise written in Standard English... and aimed at a general readership, (dialect literature) aimed essentially, though not exclusively, at a non-standard dialect speaking readership.(p.28)

Dialect use in literature is written another way in a standard form to get a broad and distinctive readership, literate, and illiterate ones.

According to Ives(1971), literary dialect is considered as a means “to represent in writing a speech that is restricted regionally, socially or both.” (p.146) That is, the dialect in literature is used by authors to reveal a character’s regional or social status and at the same time, by providing an exact picture of the original speech of each character.

In the same vein, Lake(2005) adds: “The use of proper dialect helps to vividly express a character’s identity.” (p.40) Thus, literary dialect may interpret the speech of an individual and convey a special meaning to the readership.

### **Literary Dialect Implementation**

The implementation of dialect in literature has been regarded as the outstanding element of the enormous success that American literary works have made. In this respect, Ferguson(1959) declares that: “The use of dialect in novels is inherently problematic, both technically and because of its sociolinguistic link, but it is also so potentially expressive that it is not easily avoided or controlled.” (p.13)

Dialect is used in everyday conversation by laypeople to convey their individual needs while it is used by authors in literary works, especially to reveal particular features to the reader. Thus, the author has some difficulties with the features and the different aspects of the dialect that he is going to select in his literary works. In this sense, Riley(1892) affirms:

The real master not only knows each varying light and shade of dialect expression, but he must as minutely know the inner character of the people whose native tongue it is, else his product is simply a pretense, a willful forgery, a rank abomination.(p.20)

The author using dialect in literature is considered, as Riley (1892)states, “this master only who, as he writes, can sweep himself aside and leaves his humble characters to do the thinking and the talking.” (p.20) The writer is regarded as a master who gives a real picture of his characters.

Literature is known for its diversity, particularly when observing its beauty and power. In this spirit, Macaulay(1994)points out that: “There is nothing more complex, structured, and revealing of our human nature than ordinary talk and nothing more interesting than learning to notice it and to understand it as an object of beauty.”(p.111)

Therefore, dialect is used in literature to convey several features. It reveals a character’s educational background and attitude. As Minnick(2004) suggests:

In order to give thorough evaluation of an artist’s work with respect to literary dialect, neither exclusively linguistic or exclusively literary that incorporates imaginative recreation of the sounds of the language along with the social themes surrounding the places in time that are recreated.(p.149)

A great number of authors may include their dialect in their novels or short stories. For example, the case of Mrs. Gaskell who published her novel 'Mary Barton' with a sub-title: 'A Tale of Manchester Life' to use Lancashire dialect in her writings. However, others may implement several forms of dialect within the same script as Mark Twain in 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn', where he included 'The Missouri Negro dialect', 'South-Western dialect', and 'the ordinary Pike-Country dialect'.

In the same stream, McArthur(1996)adds that “dialect was used by Shakespeare and others to depict various provincial and rustic characters and a distinctive form of South-Western speech.”(p.275)Thus, various aspects of speech are used by writers in the literature to reveal the regional and social background of the character to get an appropriate picture of authentic expression to the audience. It is vital to mention that every literary writer has a goal of entailing dialect in novels like setting or characterization, as Serir-Mortad(2012) states

It becomes more essentially clear when some of the characteristics of saying novels are discussed like characterization or setting which are very essential in use in the development of any told story in a literary genre where events take place; this evokes the call for dialect to cope with different places.(p.40)

In fact, literary dialect use enables novelists to portray their own experiences and to convey several distinctive features.

### **Literary Dialect in American Literature**

All walks of life have contributed to the outstanding success of American literature, and this is mainly due to the implementation of dialects and other varieties in many American novels. It is worth mentioning that there are a significant number of black vernacular types existing in American literary works, and the use of these varieties has been regarded as a characteristic from its beginning. In this vein, Minnick(2004) suggests that:

By the nineteenth century, dialect began to appear more frequently in works by American authors after a few eighteenth-century forays into dialect representation, especially in novels and plays with colonial themes as well as in travel writing by Europeans exploring the colonies.(p.3)

Minnick's view means that the use of dialect has been a characteristic of American literature from its beginnings while it is found in many national essays. In addition to this, Minnick(2004) states:“The inception and growth of literary dialect as a significant tradition in the United States is usually identified with the nineteenth century and as a component of humorous writing.”(p.3)Thus, literary dialect appeared in earlier periods of writing in American literature.

### **American Literature**

American literature is unique, particularly when observing its beauty and power, and this is due not only to its great writers and orators but also to dialects and other varieties, which have contributed a lot to the success of American literary works.

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States went through significant circumstances and especially after the decades that followed the Civil War, which was marked by a shift from Romanticism to Realism. The Realistic period, which includes the Civil War, the significant industrial inventions, and a vast commercial expansion that followed it, is one of the most turbulent and creative in American history. Therefore, the first manifestation of Realism in America was called “Local Color Fiction”, which became an essential part of American literature, focusing on a particular region of the country, seeking to represent the culture and beliefs of that area accurately. In this vein, High(1986) points out that local color, “tried to show what was special about a particular region of the nation.”(p.76) Furthermore, it highlighted accurate portrayals of the physical landscape as well as the habits, occupations, and speech or dialect of a given area. In the same stream, Grellet(2009) adds that local color “often combined sentimental plots and an accurate description of regional America, with its manners and dialects.”(p.117)

Local color writers, also known as Regionalists, used to convey an authentic description of a particular region of the country with its habits and different forms of varieties. In addition to this, American society during the period of post Civil War was filled with social injustice and crime, and it was, in reality, just a “*Gilded Age*” as High(1986) suggests, “The gold was just a thin layer.” (p. 81). It means that gold was only on the surface, and for this account, Mark Twain named his next novel *The Gilded Age* (1873), co-written with Charles Warner, as an attempt to reveal the new morality of post-Civil War America.

Thus, Local Color writers include, among others: Bret Harte (The West, particularly the mining camps of California), Kate Chopin (particularly with her Louisiana Dialect stories about Creoles, Cajuns and Negroes), Willa Cather (the Midwest, particularly Nebraska), Mary Wilkins Freeman (the New England area). Mark Twain was regarded as one of the most outspoken leaders of the “Local Color” school of Realism.

Among Twain’s writings, we find his portrayal of Mississippi life and even our case study *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which tried to give an exclusive description of a particular region with its characteristics and beliefs.

### **Mark Twain’s Biography**

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known by his pen name of Mark Twain, was one of the principle authors of American fiction. Twain is also regarded as the greatest humorist in American literature. Twain’s literary career started while he was working as a journalist in a small local paper called Hannibal Journal, and it was mainly about humorous sketches. Therefore, Mark Twain gave up journalism and began his writings as tales, short stories, and novels which were very popular in American society. Twain first published letters, which became his first major book, *The Innocents Abroad*(1869). He also published short stories and novels. Titles include: *A tramp Abroad*(1880), *Roughing It* (1872), *The Tall Tale*, *The Gilded Age* (1873), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*(1884), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1889), *The Man that Corrupted Hadley burg* (1900), *The Mysterious Stranger* (published in 1916, after Twain’s death).

Twain's varied works entail novels, travels, narratives, short stories, sketches, and essays. His writings about the Mississippi River, such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Life on the Mississippi*, and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, have been particularly popular among modern readers. Furthermore, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which is investigated throughout this research work, is considered Twain's most significant work; it was highly respected by famous authors like Ernest Hemingway, who declares that "All modern American literature comes from Huckleberry Finn." High(1986) also states that "Many see the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as the great novel of American democracy. It shows the basic goodness and wisdom of ordinary people."(p.30). High(1986) adds: "The novel has also been called The School of Many Late Western Writers."(p.30)

It is agreed that Twain, in his novel, used a realistic language to be faithful to his characters, and he also employed several forms of speech to bring an authentic picture and to involve the reader in the context he tried to convey.

### Summary of Huckleberry Finn

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was published first in the United Kingdom in 1884 and second in the United States in 1885 during the post-Civil War period. It is acknowledged as the most significant literary achievement American has yet produced.

This novel is characterized by its peculiar story, which takes place along the Mississippi River, and the use of various forms of dialects used by characters gives the story its particular flavor. The story tells us about the adventures of two runaways –the boy Huck Finn and the black slave Jim- and their journey down the great Mississippi River. The main interest of this novel is to reveal the constant struggle between freedom and slavery as it exists for both Huck and Jim. Therefore, the novel's pages are dotted with descriptions of the mighty river and the surrounding forests, and even with Huck's good nature and unconscious humor, which pervaded the whole story.

### Dialect Representation of Cultural Elements in the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

The novel of Huckleberry Finn is full of cultural elements or folkloric beliefs that are still present in some regions and societies which are part of the American culture of that time, among these, riddles, superstition, the belief in sorcery, myth, and legend as they are described in table1:

Table 1. *Main cultural elements used in Huck Finn*

Cultural elements in the novel
Anecdotes and riddles
Superstition
The beliefs in sorcery
Sayings and Proverbs

Table 1 highlights the main cultural elements used in Twain's novel, which summarizes the character's folkloric beliefs and traditions.

**Examples of Literary Dialect Used in the Novel**

There are a high number of forms of contractions used in the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn(AHF). Therefore, in table2, we shall see some of these contractions used by various characters.

Table 2. *Some Forms of Contractions used in the Novel*

<b>Forms of contractions</b>	<b>Standard form</b>	<b>Page number</b>
Don't	Do not	11
Ain't	Does not	11
Couldn't	Could not	11
Wasn't	Was not	13
You've found	You have found	13
Hadn't	Had not	13
You'd killed	You had killed	13
Wouldn't know	Would not know	13
We'll start	We shall start	16
She'll	She will	17
That's	That is	17
You're	You are	19
'em	them	19
It's	It is	19
I'm agreed	I am agreed	19
Won't	Will not	19
Didn't	Did not	19
Can't	Cannot	19
Let's	Let us	47
I reckon	I reckon	49
No! w'y	No! why	49
Sumf'n	Something	14
How'd	How do	49
Comin'	Coming	51
Kep'	Kept	51
An'	And	52
I uz	I was	53
'bout	About	53
I on'y	I only	53
Goin'	going	73

The novel of Mark Twain in the AHF is written in a vernacular variety, which is known as Black English Vernacular. Therefore, it is essential to mention that the entire book of the AHF is full of contractions since it is written in a non-standard form of language.

Moreover, other dialectal utterances reveal the double negation which is regarded as a feature of a non-standard language; some of these utterances are shown in table 3:

Table 3. *Some Utterances of Double Negation use in the Novel*

Double negation	Standard form	Page number
I couldn't do nothing	I could not do anything	11
They don't know nothing	They do not know anything	12
I couldn't see no advantage	I could not see any advantage	12
It warn't no use	It was not any use	12
He hain't got no family	He has not got any family	17
I don't take no stock	I do not take any stock	19
I ain't got nothing to say	I have not got anything to say	19
We hadn't robbed nobody	We had not robbed anybody	21

We can notice an extensive range of dialectal utterances, which include the feature of double negation used in the novel.

There are several varieties used in the novel of the AHF as it is written at the beginning by the author. Thus, we are not going to mention all these various forms of expression since it is still a matter of debate among critical scholars, whether these several forms of speech exist or not. It is worth to mention that Huck's address is different from Jim's one; the former is known as the ordinary 'Pike-county' dialect; whereas, the latter is called the Missouri Negro dialect.

Therefore, table 4 will reveal some dialectal utterances which are presented in the folkloric aspects of the novel.

Table 4. *Some Dialectal Utterances used in the Cultural Aspects*

Dialectal Utterances used in Cultural Aspects	The Cultural Aspects	Page number
'Give a nigger an inch and he'll take an ell'	Saying	92
'Spos'n, he can't fix that leg jut in three shakes of a sheep's tail'	Saying	266
'we'd a seed de raf'	Saying	114
'a good deed ain't ever forgot'	Proverb	70
'efyou's got hairy arms en a hairy breas', it's a sign dat you'd agwyne to be rich'	Superstition	52

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‘there is ways to keep of some kinds of bad luck, but this wasn’t one of them kind; so I never tried to do anything, but just poked along low-spirited and on the watch-out’	Superstition	24
I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that on its mind and can’t make itself understood and so can’t rest easy in its grave and has to go about that way every night grieving	Sorcery	13
“niggers would come from all around there and give Jim anything they had, just for a sight of that five-center piece, but they wouldn’t touch it, because the devil had had his hands on it.	Sorcery	16
‘Miss Watson’s nigger Jim, had a hair-ball as big as your fist, which had been took out of the fourth stomach of an ox, and he used to do magic with it ‘he said there was a spirit inside of it, and it knowed everything’	Sorcery	25
It makes you feel mournful, because you feel like it’s spirits whispering spirits that’s been dead ever so many years and you always think they’re talking about you.	Sorcery	212

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As we have mentioned above, the AHF is full of colloquial elements that are slowly introduced in the folkloric beliefs of different characters.

### **The Analysis of Dialectal Features**

The data collected from the novel AHF includes the primary dialectal utterances used by a slave character Jim, slave owner characters, and by Huck, the narrator of the story, in their speech. However, there are many characters from a different age, gender, and social levels which have employed the dialect. Still, there is a slight focus on some individuals through whom the novelist uses the vernacular for the sake of avoiding the standard form, which seems to be, sometimes, impossible to use.

Therefore, a lot of data are collected from Huck and Jim. For this reason, the analysis relies intensely on the dialectal variables used by them. However, this is not to say that other characters will not be taken into account. Thus, many colloquial features will be analyzed at phonological and syntactical levels to distinguish the dialect from the standard one. The lexical level will not be taken into consideration for the sake of space limits concerning this scope of this research.

### **Phonological Representation**

There are distinct styles involved within speech (inclusive) varying from very informal (casual) to very formal (careful). These forms are associated with phonological features which include

elements of pronunciation that are, in turn, crucial for data analysis at a phonological level. In this respect, Trudgill(2002)points out that “phonology is also highly sensitive to style.” (p. 162)

A large number of different forms of non-standard language are used in the speech of various characters employed by Mark Twain in his novel. He attempts to portray his own experiences and adventures through the use of dialect and to reflect the original speech of the characters.

**Contraction** There are several colloquial utterances that are contracted on the one hand, and vowels and consonants are transformed differently from the standard one, on the other hand. Therefore, contracted words are considered as one of the main essential features of various forms of non-standard language. Then, the missing letters of different dialectal words are, sometimes, replaced by the authors by apostrophes.

Plenty of contractions forms are used in the AHF, as the case with Jim, a slave character as shown in table 5:

Table 5. *Contracted Words by Jim in AHF*

Character	Contracted words
Jim	‘way, roun’, ‘bout, ‘em, t’other, las’, flyin’, breas’, on’y, los’, b’longs, fo’, ‘f, o’course, ‘nough, reck’n, inves’, sho’, lan’

The other characters in the novel also employ contractions in their speech as shown in table 6:

Table 6. *Contracted Words by Other Characters*

Character	Contracted words
Huck	T’other, couldn’t, warn’t, don’t, didn’t, you’ve
Tom Sawyer	Per’aps, there’s, ‘em, hadn’t, hain’t
Pap	O’, better’n, look’n-glass, bein’
The Duke	Runnin’, ‘bout, makin’, takin’, a-growin’, puttin’, mornin’, getherin’

Contraction takes place in the characters’ speech within pronouns, verbs, and nouns, which reveals that characters use contraction to provide some communicative tools as rapid speech.

**Vowel/Consonant Transformation.** Further analysis of the data demonstrates that vowels and consonants have been sometimes deleted or added from words by characters as:

\*Deleted vowels /a, e, o, i/ in:

‘way, ‘bout, agin, b’longs, ‘nough, off’n, look’n-glass, spos’n.

\*/i/ turns to /e/ in:

ef, tell, set.

\*/e/ turns into /i/ in:

Git, yit, forgit.

\*/o/ and /a/ turns to /e/ in:

Er, getherin’.

\*Consonant

\*Contracted /g/ from nouns and verbs in:

Flyin’, bein’, runnin’, makin’, takin’, growin’, puttin’, mornin’, getherin’.

\*Contracted /t/ in:

Las’, breas’, los’, inves’, didn’, raf’, nex’.

\*Contracted /th/ from:

‘em

**Consonant transformation.**

/s/ and /d/ turns to /n/ in:

‘yourn’, ‘hearn’

/s/ turns to /x/ in: ‘axe’

/k/ turns to /t/ in: ‘ast’

There are other changes in the speech of Jim as shown in table 7:

Table 7. *Dialectal Words Used by Jim in AHF*

Dialectal words	The words in the Standard
Whar	Where
Sumf’n	Something
Mouf	Mouth
Kase	Because
Jes’	Just
Fust	First
Fum	From
Thar	There

Therefore, some other changes occur in pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, auxiliaries, verbs and articles in terms of pronunciation used by Jim as it is shown in table 8:

Table 8. *Various Dialectal Utterances Used by Jim in AHF*

Dialectal features	The standard form
Dey	They
Dis	This
Dat	That
I’s	I am

Gwyne	Going
Doan'	Do not
En	And
De	The
Uv	Of
Un um	Of them

Some of the words have been changed by Jim, as shows table9:

Table 9. *Other Dialectal Terms Used by Jim in AHF*

Character	Dialectal words	Words in the standard
Jim	Gals	Girls
	Sah	Sir
	Dah	Dear
	Awlwz'	Always
	Wunst	Once
	Nuffin	Nothing
	Sumfn'	Something
	Heah	Here

\*Consonant to vowel transformation

/d/ turns to /e/ in:

'tole', 'ole', fine'

There are other examples of vernacular features from main characters in the AHF, revealing that the novel is rich in the dialect used by Mark Twain to reflect the original speech of the characters that the standard would be unable to provide.

**Grammatical Representation.** We may find that contraction and vowel-consonant transformation occur within grammatical construction in words like 'I'uz, 'I aint', 'I's', 'hain't', instead of 'I was', 'I am not', 'has not'. This calls for Labov's crucial question(1972) when he states "is it a phonological rule which operates at a lower level in the grammar?"(p.73), at his study in the general nature of the deletion rule and its relation to contraction of the English auxiliary in Black English Vernacular. This means that it is not easy to neglect the phonological feature within the grammatical structure as it is described in the examples below:

\*standard English verbal suffix -s:

The third-person singular represents indicative verbal ending -s is problematic in the speech of dialect characters who delete it when it should not be and add it when not necessary. Therefore, Jim's speech employs the /s/ of the third pronoun of the present tense to other pronouns than 'he', 'she', 'it' as: 'I says'; 'I owns', 'I hear's', 'I jis knows it', 'you knows', 'you'sgwyne', 'they sings'.

However, we find other characters who delete the /s/ of the third pronoun of the present tense as: ‘he say’, ‘he take’.

Table 10 will reveal some dialectal grammatical utterances used in the novel

Table 10. *Deviant Grammatical Forms by Jim in AHF*

Character	Dialectal Grammatical Utterances
Jim	I owns, I knows, I hears, I been, I’s gwyne, I doan’ want, I k’n stan’ He say, he take. You’sgwyne, you knows Dey wuz, they sings, they must a been, we’s safe There was, ther’s ben Wher you bee?, who is you, Signs is signs, ain’t no mater, they don’t do nothing

\*Pronouns dey:

In the novel, Jim uses a great deal of the pronoun ‘dey’ differently in his speech, which is regarded as a dialectal feature that affects pronunciation instead of ‘they’ which is found in the Standard.

\*Demonstrative pronouns: dat, dis

Indeed, Jim uses these demonstrative pronouns extensively in his speech as: ‘dat’, ‘dis’ instead of ‘that’ and ‘this’. Thus, Jim’s accent also affects consonants.

\*Double negation:

The AHF is very rich by the use of double negation which is regarded as one of the various features of Black English Vernacular as they are represented in table 11 of both characters Huck and Jim:

Table 11. *The Use of Double Negation by Huck and Jim*

Characters	Double negation	Standard form
Huck	That ain’t no matter I couldn’t do nothing They don’t know nothing	That does not any matter I could not do anything They do not know anything

	I couldn't see no advantage	I could not see any advantage
	I don't take no stock	I do not take any stock
	We hadn't robbed nobody	We had not robbed anybody
	Don't tell nobody	Do not tell anybody
	Dey ain't no witches	They do not any witches
	He couldn't fine no way	He could not find any way
<b>Jim</b>	Dey won't look into noth'n	They will not look into anything
	He ain'tcomin' back no mo'	He is not coming back no more

Moreover, Black English Vernacular involves many characteristics related to grammar as the deletion of the auxiliary 'to be' as illustrated in the following example: 'what you going to do?' instead of 'what are you going to do?'

It is essential to bear in mind that the dialectical features of a character's speech might be the reflection of a character's social status. Therefore, Jim's statement is entirely different. Words are joined and combined. Also, Jim employs a non-standard variety, which is used and spoken by slaves living in the South. Thus, it reveals that he is a black slave who is illiterate, poor, superstitious, and uneducated.

The various phonological and grammatical representations extracted in AHF denote the different dialectal features of Black English Vernacular.

### Data Interpretation

Most vernacular elements in the AHF have been characterized by contractions and vowel/consonant transformations where one or more segments of the component words are phonetically altered, reduced, or deleted, and sometimes replaced by the novelist by an apostrophe.

There are other grammatical forms employed by characters in the novel under consideration and are mostly deviate from the Standard; this indicates that these speakers are informal between each other, which denote accuracy and carelessness in speaking. As it is illustrated in the tables mentioned earlier, Jim's speech is entirely different from other characters. Words are sometimes joined and combined, and another time, vowel and consonants are either transformed, reduced, or deleted.

### Sociolinguistic Perspectives in Literary Dialect Analysis

Indeed, literary dialect has a wide range of perspectives that the researcher should take into account. Cole has expressed the importance of studying and analyzing a literary dialect. He asserts that literary dialect analysis should not only focus on phonological representation, as indicated before by some scholars like Ives Summer, but also include other elements as Minnick states (2004)

Col's charge that the literary dialect analyst must look at how dialect functions in the work is an important point. However, this whole sale dismissal of structural analysis will not make sense to linguists interested in what an author's representation of features, can say about

language variation and change or about perceptions of and attitudes toward language varieties and their impact on social organization, for example.(pp.31-32)

There is a set of sociolinguistic parameters which control speech; these parameters are called by Gumperz social rules. These rules refer to “the individual’s perception of his and interlocutor’s social rule.” (p.16) and in terms of “communication which ‘reflects speakers’ attitudes to each other, and to their topics” (Hymes,p. 37).

Moreover, many scholars have encouraged the relationship of sociolinguistics to literary dialect analysis as Fenell, and Bennett with Esau, Bagnall and Ware who state that: “Approaching the social systems which are set up in literary works through the medium of linguistic analysis, rather than looking at the social system alone, is often a much more concrete and revealing approach” (qtd. in Minnick 2004:37).In the same vein, Minnick(2004) adds that:

Additionally, the observer of literary dialect must also consider what an author’s use of dialect, including which characters are represented as speaking dialectally and to what effect the dialect is represented, might say about an author’s social and racial attitudes, as well as about how authors perceive such attitudes as existing among his or her audience.(p.37)

It is essential to mention that several scholars highlight and support the relationship of sociolinguistics to literary dialect analysis and at the same time, by shedding light on the cultural perspectives with literary dialect.

### **Conclusion**

All that has been stated in this research paper is just an attempt to reach a specific target of the importance of dialect use in American literary works with an investigation at various dimensions and different levels of analysis.

In any speech community, language carries a lot of means of interaction and reveals our social behavior. For this account, it is a crucial element in any literary work which is used along with different forms of non-standard language.

Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is rich with the use of dialect, for the sake of realism and to cope with the characters’ educational and social background as well. Therefore, it is a more direct way to connect with the reader without a filter of criticism, just a full heart to heart connection through a book. Also, dialect use in literature may attract the reader’s attention and provide him with a vivid image of the atmosphere of the literary work;then it is also considered as flexible and intelligible.

A lot of data have been gathered from the speech of a slave character, Jim. Afterwards, they have been analyzed in terms of the phonological and grammatical aspects. Jim employs a non-standard variety, which is used and spoken by slaves living in the South called the Missouri Negro Dialect from the so-called Black English Vernacular. Therefore, Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*

tends to reveal from Jim's speech that he is a black slave who is illiterate, poor, superstitious, and uneducated.

The main focus of this research work is to shed light on the importance of dialect use in literature and to raise dialect awareness among readers.

The present research work also attempted to provide a study and analysis of dialect use in literature, and findings are taken under consideration from the research scope mainly:

- The use of dialect in writing is an excellent contribution to diversity and characterization.
- This literary work gives pleasure to the readers while exploring the vernacular language and to push them to embrace American literature.
- Dialect use makes American literary works more productive, more complex, and therefore more exciting and attractive.
- The use of dialect leads readers to the discovery of the magnificent realistic side of universal literature. It makes the literary work itself more approachable, more accessible to readers as if to let a simple layman reader more comfortable and familiar.

This research work may be of crucial significance in terms of revealing the artistic relation between sociolinguistics and literature and at the same time, by providing the link between these two different disciplines.

In further research, it would be very interesting to look at the various functions of these dialectal elements written in a vernacular variety known as Black English Vernacular used in Huckleberry Finn's novel. Researchers can contribute by providing a thorough analysis to phonological, grammatical and lexical items of this vernacular. Besides, answering the question of: 'what is the impact of dialect use on readers in American literary works?' can be a door for further investigation.

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