

LAGS WORKING PAPERS, FIRST SERIES (1981)

WORKING PAPER NUMBER FOUR

Toward the Publication of the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States

Lee Pederson

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The National Endowment for the Humanities has recently funded LAGS through 1980, enabling us to complete 750 protocols, to edit them for microfiche (and/or film) reproduction, and to compose the handbook for the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States.¹ This editing of the basic materials will begin in October, 1976. With more than 700 tape-recorded interviews in hand, all fieldwork should be completed in 1977. With more than 300 protocols completed to date, all transcription of these analogues should be finished in 1978. In 1979-1980, the protocols will be edited, 50-100 typescript analogues will be prepared,² and the handbook will be written. Our funding for this phase is generous, and a good staff is here to do the work. Before this gets underway, however, it is necessary to look ahead in order to make the best use of these resources.

If we follow the plan as outlined in the NEH grant, most of the descriptive work will remain to be done, and the only models for such references are the productions of American linguistic geography.³ Although Allen's approach was a step in the right direction,⁴ his material is also disjunctive and difficult to retrieve. The plan outlined below combines the methods of historical lexicography with dialectology, bringing it all together in a coherent publication.

Instead of an index and a series of monographs and books on the LAGS data, a linguistic atlas in dictionary form is proposed here for your consideration. This would include five to seven substantial quarto volumes in

addition to the microfiche reproduction of the protocols and the four thousand hours of tape-recorded Gulf States speech. These volumes would include a handbook (vol. 1), an exhaustive lexicon of all recorded forms from the protocols (vols. 2-3-4), and several hundred maps of the Gulf States illustrating forms described in the lexicon (vols. 5-6-7). All of this must be considered in light of the current plan and its expected results (by September, 1980).

Expected Results: From NEH Grant⁵

"By 30 September, 1980, the protocols will be fully transcribed in narrow phonetic notation, edited, indexed and photographed in microfiche form. This will be the Linguistic Atlas of the Gulf States. The graphic texts will be supported by a complete audial record in the form of a tape collection and described by a two-volume handbook in hard copy form. The microfiche reproduction will include 1,000 96-frame fiche: the 600 rural records (108 pp. each) in 675 fiche (64,800 pp.) and the 150 urban records (140 pp. each) in 219 fiche (21,000 pp. each), with the remaining 106 fiche (10,176 pp.) reserved for description, guidance, and indices.

"The 750 field records preserved on magnetic tape are all based on the work sheets (questionnaire) of the LAGS Project, fully reproduced in A MANUAL FOR DIALECT RESEARCH IN THE SOUTHERN STATES--pp. 98-208, + 32 pp. urban supplement to be included in the 3rd edition of the MANUAL and the handbook.⁶ Approximately 2/3 of the entire tape corpus is relaxed and free conversation, rather than direct interrogation. The 85,800-page-protocol reproduction provides full phonetic transcription of all items in the work

sheets, a guide and index to the tapes, and extensive marginalia for descriptive, explanatory, and supplementary information. Apart from several additions (underlined below), the LAGS HANDBOOK will follow Kurath's HANDBOOK OF THE LINGUISTIC GEOGRAPHY OF NEW ENGLAND (1939, 1973). The LAGS text will be in two volumes. The first will include seven chapters: 1) a description of the major dialect areas of the Gulf States with 50-100 maps and tables, indicating the regional and social dialects in terms of phonological, grammatical, and lexical patterns, as well as the characteristics of clearly defined subregions of Southern speech in terms of patterned, incipient, and recessive forms; 2) a review of the methodology of the LAGS Project, including a revision of "An Introduction to the LAGS Project" as it now appears in the MANUAL (1-31); 3) a settlement history of the Gulf States that will concentrate upon social stratification from a historical perspective; 4) a description of the tape corpus; 5) a description of protocol format, the method of transcription--and the relationships among those notes and the tapes--a description of the interviews from which the data were gathered, all phonetic symbols and other abbreviations (coded forms) used in the protocols, and the methods of retrieving the audial data; 6) a reproduction of the work sheets with the urban supplement, as presented in the revised MANUAL (1974); 7) a descriptive summary of the communities investigated and the informants interviewed in the survey. The second volume will include an exhaustive index of all items recorded in the protocols, including phonological, grammatical, and lexical data elicited through the work sheets, as well as all supplemental data noted by scribes and recorded in the protocols.

"In addition to LAGS with its tapes and handbook and the books, monographs, and articles already published or in progress, several other large works will be inevitable. These, however, will be reflexes, rather than

components, of the LAGS Project, as described here and funded by NEH. Indeed, these works might well be produced by other specialists with no prior association with the LAGS Project because the material will have been published and will stand in the public domain. At least three such volumes will be necessary to analyze and describe pronunciation, morphology and syntax, and vocabulary in the Gulf States. In addition to those works--that the PI [principal investigator] would like to direct--a final goal is the composition of a substantial, but non-technical, historical description of Southern speech for the general reader. This would include the findings from all American atlas projects that border or share the territory. Such a book could be a useful addition to the literature of general education, as well as a clear explanation to both our informants and the general public who might wonder why linguistic geography is studied and who might like to learn just what the discipline provides."

Expected Results: Revised

This proposal fully preserves the integrity of the funded grant, but that work will proceed mindful of the completed atlas (1985-1990). These revisions include 1) modification of the fiche content, 2) modification of the handbook content, and 3) plan for the composition of the remaining volumes. With all of these modifications, the basic materials--the indexed tapes, the fiche reproduction, and the handbook will be completed by 30 September, 1980.

Revision of the Fiche Format. Modification here looks forward to the essential phonological component in the hard copy. In addition to the protocols, and as

many full typescripted field records as we are able to produce (perhaps 100 x 90 pp. single-spaced in 9,000 fiche frames), we will use an additional 750 frames to provide synopses of stressed vowels (after PEAS) for all informants. This will leave 426 frames (or pages) for further description, guidance, and indices.

Revision of the Handbook Format. The handbook will include everything described in the NEH proposal with the exception of the index, which will be expanded as the entry list for the dialect dictionary that will follow. If a sound justification can be provided to preserve the index as originally planned, it will certainly be done.

Composition of LAGS Format. With the vowel synopses preserved in fiche and the maps deferred to the final two volumes of the atlas, preliminary essays on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary could be presented as three introductory essays to the first volume of the dictionary. Indeed, the three standard references of American linguistic geography (Kurath 1949; Atwood 1953; Kurath and McDavid 1961) are tersely written, and, without maps and indices, comprise fewer than 200 pp. in all. Since LAGS is approximately half the size of LANE and LAMSAS combined, comparable texts should be possible in fewer than 200 pp. This, of course, would not preclude the possibility of retrieving those essays with appropriate maps, synopses, and indices to provide separate and more convenient volumes at a later date.

Looking forward to the composition of an atlas/dictionary of the Gulf States after 1980, we could begin at once with the organization of entry and citation slips. This would begin with the expanded index (circulated last year with the urban work sheets), enlarged with a complete inventory of all protocol forms, and concluded with the composition (undertaken after 1980)

of a dialect atlas/dictionary, modeled after Craigie and Mathews.

The dictionary text involves all of the complicated problems. Although it would be wrong to rehearse the basic information in the historical dictionaries and DARE, LAGS must be internally complete and consistent, describing every form recorded in the protocols from morpheme to sentence. If we begin to plan entry format four years before composition of the dictionary begins, we stand a fair chance of working out the problems in advance.

An entry might include these symbols:

- * indicating the form in the English language before 1600;
- + indicating origin of the form in the United States;
- // indicating an individualism (Cassidy's oner);
- { } indicating earliest and/or latest citation dates in the historical dictionaries;
- [] indicating etymology;
- 1.1 indicating fiche (protocol) page and line;
- s. indicating speech part;
- 1 indicating map number;
- A-C indicating grid restrictions of subregional distribution.

Other symbols, no doubt, will be established, but the entry will need these additional components:

- a phonological representation (cued to the prefatory essay);
- a cross reference to historical dictionaries, DARE, and other American atlases;
- an indication of frequency (a generalization, not statistics);
- a regional distribution;
- a social distribution, sensitive to sex, age, education, social caste, and social class;
- other appropriate usage labels;
- definitions with as many subdivisions as senses require;
- citations from LAGS corpus;
- photo reference

By 1980, we should know the range and substance of our data. We will then dispatch a professional photographer to get useful pictures to be included to illustrate artifacts, animals, and whatever else might be useful to the reader. The photographic component will not be merely ornamental; those plates will serve to simplify description in the entries. It would be good to have a very large number of these photographs included in the text (perhaps at the end of each appropriate volume).

The final volumes of the atlas will be the maps. Because of the breadth of the territory from Georgia to Texas, it will be necessary to use two pages for each map that includes the entire LAGS region, but subregional maps, no doubt, will also be used, and these will vary in size.

Since the greatest material obstacle concerns publication costs, it seems best to envision this work in liberal, rather than conservative, terms.⁷ We can reasonably expect to find support for the editorial work through Emory and federal agencies, but the publication costs of six or seven large quarto volumes will no doubt be large. Even with fascicle subscription, outside subsidy will surely be necessary to produce an edition with the physical characteristics of Craigie's DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN ENGLISH (i.e., four volumes: the handbook and three volumes of lexicon) with an additional two volumes of maps.

All of these problems must be considered before an agreement is reached with a university press for the publication of the fiche production and the handbook. Our present grant will underwrite the photography of the fiche negatives and the cartography for the handbook, but the entire atlas should be published by the same press, so decisions must be made fairly soon.

This form of the proposal is not intended for circulation. It is being sent to those friends of LAGS addressed in the cover letter. If the proposal is viable, it will be included in the final report to NEH for the data-gathering phase (1973-76) and will be included in LAGS INTERIM REPORT THREE to be submitted to AMERICAN SPEECH in December, 1976. All suggestions will be appreciated.

2 September, 1976

Notes

¹On 2 September, 1976, this proposal was sent to these 19 LAGS consultants: John Algeo, Harold B. Allen, Walter S. Avis, Charles E. Billiard, Frederic G. Cassidy, Alva L. Davis, Audrey R. Duckert, Charles W. Foster, Hans Kurath, Raven I. McDavid, Jr., James B. McMillan, Raymond K. O'Cain, A. Hood Roberts, I. Willis Russell, Gerald R. Udell, William R. Van Riper, Juanita V. Williamson, H. Rex Wilson, and Gordon R. Wood. Their recommendations led to the major revisions of the plan as it was developed during the next five years.

See "Tape/Text and Analogues," American Speech 49 (1974): 5-23, for definitions of protocol (née field record) and analogues (to the field records, which are the tape-recorded interviews).

²During the past year, we have learned that the Urban Language Series approach to typescripting, i.e., turning it over to a secretary, is wholly unacceptable. Only trained phoneticians can do that work effectively, and much additional thought and discussion are also needed in the organization of an automatic (or mechanical or systematic) method of dialect writing with conventional orthography. Louise DeVere, Polly Roach, and I began working on this earlier this year, and we hope to have a technique, other than phonemics or phonics, for reducing speech to writing for the fiche production.

The implication in "Tape/Text and Analogues" that all field records will be typescripted must be corrected at once. We find that court reporters trained to do this work would need \$250,000 to do the entire job. We expect to have trained phoneticians prepare at least 100 fully typescripted records for inclusion in the fiche. These will be selected evenly from all sectors of the

LAGS territory, which, by the way, has been enlarged to include the entire state of Arkansas and all of East Texas through the Blackland Prairie (Fort Worth-Dallas, Waco, Austin, and San Antonio) and across the South Texas Plain as far west as Laredo. All of that typescripted material, of course, will be included in the atlas.

³H. Kurath, A Word Geography of the Eastern United States (1949), E.B. Atwood, A Survey of Verb Forms in the Eastern United States (1953), H. Kurath and R.I. McDavid, Jr., The Pronunciation of English in the Eastern States (1961), H.B. Allen, The Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest, vols. 1&2 (1973, 1975).

⁴Allen's integration of handbook, word geography, and atlas in Volume 1 was convenient, but the full effectiveness of the work cannot be properly evaluated until Volume 3, Pronunciation, is published. However well that might be done, it will still be necessary to consult three separate volumes for phonological, morphological, and lexical information on a single form, e.g., hoofs.

⁵The following three paragraphs are reproduced from pp. 11-13 of the NEH RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION, submitted for consideration, 11-75, approved and funded 7-76.

⁶Since November, 1975, Charles Billiard and I have presented two articles to Orbis; these will be published there: "Composition of the LAGS Urban Complement," and "The Urban Work Sheets for the LAGS Project." The availability of this information in the journal of record for international dialectology may make the preparation of a 3rd edition of the MANUAL unnecessary.

⁷It seems better to be extravagant in estimating the dimensions of a work

not yet written, rather than to be dishonest in proposing an economy model that would inevitably lead to cost overruns of Lockheedian proportions.