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Future Educators' Perceptions of African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

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Teachers are responsible for educating students'. Unfortunately, many teachers, however, are not prepared to meet the increasing need of the students' population that they encounter in the classroom. One area in which teachers do not receive adequate training is language diversity. In particular, African American Vernacular English is often an unfamiliar language for many educators. This study employed a language attitude scale to assess the attitudes toward African American Vernacular English of pre-service teachers in a multicultural, undergraduate education course. The findings revealed that European American students expressed a belief that African American Vernacular English is a negative and inferior dialect of English, while African American and Hispanic students expressed more favorable views of African American Vernacular English. The study suggests that pre-service teachers should receive training on the different dialects of English that students may speak in the classroom.

Keywords: Language diversity, educators, language attitude scale, pre-service teachers, AAVE.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, minority population account for approximately 24% of the total population, and over the next ten (10) years, they are projected to increase by 30%. The US Bureau of Census [1] estimate that by 2050, more than 47% of the total US population will be of non-European origin. In 1989, the Children's Defense Fund [2] predicted that by 2030, the populations of Hispanic or Latino children will increase by 5.5 million and African American children by 2.6 million, while the population of European American children will decrease by 6.2 million. The 1990 US census showed that the population of individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (i.e., African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native American populations) exceeded 60 million. Nearly a decade later, the US Bureau of the Census [1] reported that African American and Hispanic individuals constituted 15% of population in 1998 and were projected to comprise, respectively, 15% and 16% of the population by the year 2000. This report also projected that by 2010,

the number of African Americans would increase to 16% of the population and Hispanics to 19%. According to the US Bureau of the Census [1] 12.5% of the population were identified as Hispanic and 12.3% as African American; additionally, 3.6% were identified as Asian native, and 0.9% as Native American. Although these figures are lower than anticipated, it remains that minority populations represent a significant proportion of the US population, which will present important challenges to future teachers in the education sector with regard to educating the students'.

In the state of Florida, the office of strategic planning [3] identified several significant trends in the supply of minority teachers and the ethnic compositions of their classrooms. According to this report, the two largest minority groups represented were African Americans and Hispanics. From 1977 to 1991, the ratio of African American teachers to African American students was 25.7:29.4 to one. According to the reported findings for Fall 1991, 24% of the students in Florida's public school classrooms were African American compared with only 14.5% of classroom teachers. Among the total number of

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students graduating from teacher education programs at state universities, the proportion of African American students is only 2.7%. Unfortunately, more recent data could not be obtained as the state ceased reporting teacher shortages in the same manner.

Florida is characterized by a unique diversity of school districts providing Special Education Service (SES) to urban and rural populations. The University of South Florida (USF) serves a large service area of fifteen (15) school districts. These districts range from those among the largest in both the state and the nation, to those, on the other extreme, that are among the state's smallest. For example, the Florida Department of Education, Division of Public Schools, Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students [4] reported that the PL 94-142 entitlement for districts within the USF service area for the 1996-97 fiscal year ranges from a high of 27,295 exceptional students in Hillsborough County to a low of 167 in Glades School District. In contrast to the exceedingly large numbers of children served in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, more remote districts (i.e., Hernando, Hardee, Hendry, Glades, Desoto, and Charlotte), located one to two hours away from Tampa, serve only a fraction of their numbers. In such rural areas, although student populations are smaller, student-teacher ratios are often larger, resulting in far less desirable working conditions and a consequent exodus of existing teachers to larger school districts. The diverse populations of children served by these larger districts bring to the classroom their different languages and dialects, including African American Vernacular English (AAVE). However, the majority of the teachers in such districts are prepared to teach only students who speak mainstream English, and there are few teacher education programs that focus on specific issues related to different dialect in the classroom. Although existing research has examined teacher attitudes toward students from different language and dialect backgrounds, including AAVE, as well as, the impact of teachers' attitudes and knowledge of language diversity on students' academic performance, there has been little research exploring how teachers' attitudes toward dialect diversity may differ at various stages of teacher training and practice. The primary purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes of pre-service teachers at USF toward African American Vernacular English.

Language

This section presents a brief overview of the definition and characteristics of African American Vernacular English followed by a description of studies of language attitudes toward AAVE. Linguists have defined "African American Vernacular English" as culturally, an appropriate term to refer to the language used by some (but not all) African Americans. This type of English is a systematic

rule-governed dialect of Standard American English (SAE). AAVE is also known as Black English Vernacular, Ebonics, Black English, African American English Vernacular, and nonstandard English. Speakers of AAVE vary in their use of this dialect. Some individuals speak in AAVE without exception, while others may code-switch between SAE and AAVE, depending on the situation and the audience. Table 1 lists the most salient features of AAVE.

Previous Research of Language Attitudes

AAVE and perceptions of its speakers have been hotly debated over the last 40 years. Previous studies [5-11] have proved that African American Vernacular English is governed by its own rules and that children know these rules by the time they enter school. Knowledge of these rules reflects linguistic competence of their dialect as well as SAE. Seymour et al. [12] demonstrated that African American children who use AAVE are not in language disordered or academically or cognitively incompetent.

In spite of such research, the language that African American children speak in the classroom is devalued in the school setting because of its lack of conformity with the teachers' language and language expectations. Research findings indicating the disproportionate number of AAVE speakers in special education raise the question of whether educators who work in urban areas with this population are competent to work with children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds [13,14]. For example, Artiles et al. [14] reported that African Americans represented 2.54% of children labeled as mentally retarded, five times the number of Asian/Pacific Islanders and more than twice the number of European American children in special education.

The expectations, beliefs, and attitudes of educators can affect more than referrals to special education services. They can shape the way other educators respond to and instruct children. One study found that when teachers hold high expectations for students they make demands on those students that improve their classroom performance. Such demands include frequently calling on the students, pressing them to respond to questions, and holding the students to stricter performance standards [15]. Entwisle and Alexander [15] also demonstrated that when teachers have low expectations or a deficit view of children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, teacher-student interaction is reduced to the management of behavior, which contributes little to the improvement of academic performance. The negative attitudes and beliefs of teachers also can impact the type of literacy instruction that students receive. Cecil [16] examined teachers' attitudes toward African American students who spoke AAVE and Standard English (SE). In a study involving two groups of children, one of AAVE speakers, the other of SE speakers, (five children in each, matched for grade,

Table 1. Syntactic and Morphological Characteristics of African American Vernacular English

VERB MARKING	
Form	Example
Regular past tense marking (<u>-ed</u>) is not obligatory and is sometimes omitted. Irregular past tense is marked on some verbs and not on others. Regular and irregular third person marking is not obligatory. Future tense is often marked with <u>gonna</u> rather than <u>will</u> When <u>will</u> is contracted, its pronunciation may be reduced. When <u>will</u> is required before <u>be</u> in SAE, it may be deleted in AAVE. Contractible forms of copula and auxiliary <u>be</u> verbs are not obligatory, though uncontractible forms are obligatory. Perfect tense is expressed by <u>been</u> to denote action completed in the distant past. Habitual state of verbs is marked with uninflected <u>be</u> , compared with SAE's use of adverbs and inflected forms of <u>be</u> . Double modals are allowed in AAVE.	"And this car crash" "And then them fall" "He go yesterday." "She gonna call the doctor if he got a fever." "I be home later." "He here." "Is he here?" "She been gone." "She be workin' two jobs." "We might could go."
NOUN INFLECTIONS	
Form	Example
Plurals are not obligatory when quantifiers are present. Possessives are not obligatory when word order expresses possession.	"He has two dollar." "He hit the man car."
PRONOUNS AND DEMONSTRATIVES	
Form	Example
Pronominal apposition (noun followed by pronoun). Reflexive pronoun forms are regularized so that all reflexive forms are produced by adding <u>-self</u> to a possessive pronoun Relative pronouns are not obligatory in most cases (in SAE only the <u>that</u> form is optional). <u>These here</u> and <u>Them there</u> combinations used. <u>Them</u> substituted for forms used in SAE (<u>these</u> , <u>those</u>).	"My mother she home." "hisself" and "theyself" "He the one stole it." "These her cars." "I want them shoes."
COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE MARKERS	
Form	Example
Endings <u>-er</u> and <u>-est</u> can be added to most adjectives. <u>More</u> and <u>most</u> can be combined with superlative and comparative markers.	"baddest," "worse" "most smartest"
NEGATION	
Form	Example
Double and triple negative markers may be used. <u>Ain't</u> is used as a negative marker.	"I don't got no brothers." "Why she ain't comin'?"
QUESTIONS	
Form	Example
Indirect questions are produced with the same form as direct questions. A clause beginning with "if" in SAE is produced with "do" in and indirect question in AAVE.	"Do you know what is it?" "I want to know do you want to play with us?"

SES, intelligence, and gender), 52 second-grade teachers were asked to listen to tapes of the recorded speech of both groups. A Likert scale measured attitudes toward the dialect spoken by the children, rated from 1 (*very low*) to 5 (*very high*) was employed. A t-test indicated a significant difference between teachers' attitudes toward the two groups. The author concluded that the teachers held higher expectations for African American children who spoke standard English, perceived children who spoke standard English as more intelligent than those who spoke AAVE, and assigned higher reading ability to children who spoke SE.

In another study by Washington et al. [17], the authors examined interactions between second-grade teachers with varying degrees of knowledge of AAVE and their responses to children who spoke AAVE. Two second-grade African American teachers in two schools in a low-SES neighborhood were selected for the study. From the first teacher, a total of 33 students participated; 17 of which are African American and 16 are Hispanic. From the second teacher, a total of 26 students participated; 21 of which are African American and 5 are Hispanic.

Based on classroom observations of the teachers', the authors identified patterns in the teachers' interactions during reading sessions with the students who spoke AAVE. Teacher one, who was less knowledgeable about AAVE, gave more non-supportive responses to students' miscues during reading. However, teacher two, who possessed more knowledge of AAVE, gave more supportive responses to the students' in her classroom. In conclusion, the authors argued that teachers' ability to recognize dialect influences on reading and to respond appropriately is essential for effective reading instruction.

Koch et al. [18] examined African American adults' perceptions of African Americans who use black English, standard English, and code switching. In the study, African American undergraduates were asked to listen to four audiotapes of an African American speaker using black English, standard English, and code switching and to rate the speaker using the revised speech dialect attitude. The post-hoc test revealed participants' preference to work with either the standard English speaker or the code-switching speaker.

Boyd [19] studied classroom climate and teacher attitudes toward AAVE. The study participants included 72 parents and 504 students from grades 2-6 in elementary schools. The language attitude scale was administered to the teachers. To assess student perception of classroom climate, My Class Inventory was administered to all student participants. Findings indicated that teachers overall had a negative attitude toward AAVE, but that African American teachers held more favorable views than European American teachers.

Although linguists have asserted that AAVE is a dialect, many in the education community and beyond have not accepted AAVE's legitimacy as a dialect. Students who

speak AAVE are continued to be labeled inferior, as they were in the 1960s, revealing the continued need to educate teachers about language and dialect diversity and legitimacy. In addition, teaching philosophy and pedagogy should embrace all dialects spoken by children.

In light of existing research indicating that teacher attitudes toward AAVE have changed minimally in 40 years and that a disproportionate number of AAVE speakers are referred to special education, the aim of this study is to assess pre-service teachers' attitudes toward children who are AAVE speakers. The following hypotheses, based upon existing research on the attitudes of practicing teachers, guided this study: A) Pre-service teachers' attitude of students who speak AAVE are negative; and B) African American pre-service teachers view students who speak AAVE more favorably than pre-service teachers from other ethnic groups.

METHOD

Multicultural Education Class Population

A university located in southeast Florida has offered for the past eight years, a state mandated course titled 'Teaching Diverse Populations'. This course is required for all students in the state of Florida who are interested in obtaining a bachelor's degree in education and is a prerequisite to pursuing admittance to the College of Education.

As a mandatory course for prospective pre-service teachers, the course had a high student enrollment. The student population, although primarily white and female, was somewhat diverse, in ways both visibly identifiable (related to race, ethnicity, gender, and age) and less recognizable (related to social class, exceptionality, sexual orientation, and religion).

Participants

Participants were 136 undergraduate, pre-service education majors, selected from two sections of an undergraduate course titled 'Teaching Diverse Populations'. The sample population was 75% female (n=102) and 23.5% male (n=32); 1.5% (n=2) did not provide any gender. Participants were predominantly of European American origin (76.5%; n=104), although approximately 8.1% (n=11) were African American, 8.8% (n=12) Hispanic, and 4.4% (n=6) "other"; 2.2% (n=) left the category blank.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was a modified version of the Language Attitude Scale (LAS). [19,20] (See

Appendix A.) Surveys required indication of gender, race/ethnicity, year in school/pre-service program, and prior teaching experience. To protect participants' anonymity, names were not required. The instrument consisted of 25 Likert scale questions, rated on a 4-point scale: *strongly disagree* (1), *disagree* (2), *agree* (3), and *strongly agree* (4). There were 15 questions examining the pre-service teachers' general attitude toward AAVE; the remaining 10 questions addressed the pre-service teachers' perceptions of AAVE as a legitimate dialect for use in an academic setting. There were three open-ended questions examining whether AAVE and its legitimacy as a dialect had been addressed in pre-service teachers' educational training. The questionnaire was assessed for internal reliability and was found to be highly reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha value of .93.

Procedure

The modified LAS was administered to the participants on the first day of class for two sections of the Teaching Diverse Populations course. Participants were instructed to complete the survey anonymously and were provided no further information about the survey. Participants were not given a time limit; however, all participants completed the survey in approximately 20 minutes. The survey was returned to the second author for data entry.

RESULTS

The survey results (n=136) were compiled and entered into Microsoft Excel for later data analysis. Total scores across all racial groups were used for data analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-16) was used to analyze the data.

As previously stated, 75% of the sample population was female (n=102), 23.5 % male (n=32), and 1.5% (n=2) unknown. The students were mainly of European American origin, 76.5 % (n=104), although approximately 8.1% (n=11) were African American, 8.8% (n=12) Hispanic, and 4.4% (n=6) "other"; 2.2% (n=) left the category blank.

The survey data were first analyzed to assess pre-service teachers' attitudes toward AAVE. Of the 136 respondents to the survey, 85%, or 116 respondents, perceived AAVE negatively, supporting our hypothesis that pre-service teachers' attitudes toward AAVE are negative. The data were also aggregated and tested for differences based on gender; this revealed no significant difference between men and women in their attitudes toward AAVE. The survey responses were also examined for correlation between race or ethnic group and attitude toward AAVE, using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) between and within groups to determine the correlation between ethnicity/race on the mean score.

The data revealed a significant effect of race on perception of AAVE, $F(3,123) = 3.53, p < .03$. A post-hoc LSD test was subsequently conducted to test for differences between ethnic groups. The results indicated a difference between African Americans and European Americans. There was, however, no significant difference between African Americans and either Hispanics or other ethnic groups. In addition, the data revealed no significant difference between Hispanic and European Americans and other ethnic groups.

DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the attitudes of pre-service teachers toward AAVE. Analysis of the data collected from a modified Language Attitude Scale revealed two general findings that supported our original hypotheses. First, the results showed that AAVE is viewed negatively by USF pre-service teachers, overall and irrespective of gender. Secondly, the results indicated that African American pre-service teachers are less likely than their European American counterparts to view AAVE negatively. These findings are consistent with the results of earlier studies examining teacher attitudes toward AAVE. For example, Boyd [19] demonstrated both that overall teachers had a negative attitude toward AAVE and that African American teacher expressed more favorable responses than European American teachers.

Another study [16] examining teacher attitudes toward AAVE indicated that teachers held lower expectations of children who spoke AAVE, considered them less intelligent than their SAE-speaking peers, and assigned them a lower expected reading ability than to children who spoke SAE. Although the present study investigated pre-service teachers' perceptions of AAVE and not the intelligence or aptitude of students who speak AAVE, our study does offer some, if limited, indication of pre-service teachers' perceptions about AAVE-speaking children.

As noted above, the results of the current study indicated that African American pre-service teachers' perceptions of AAVE were positive, based on a statistically significant difference in attitudes of African American participants compared with those of other ethnic groups. This finding was consistent with Boyd's study of teacher attitudes toward AAVE. However, our finding appears to contradict a number of other previous studies, which indicated that African Americans have negative attitudes toward AAVE. For example, a study by Koch et al [18] indicated that African American college students expressed a preference to work with Standard English speakers and Code Switching speakers over speakers of African American Vernacular English. Further, the results of a study by Payne et al [21] indicated that African American students preferred listening to Standard English. Finally, Washington et al

[17] found that the degree to which an African American teacher is knowledgeable about AAVE impacted the degree of learning encouragement given to children who speak AAVE. Our results may differ because participants in this study were enrolled in a course preparing students to teach diverse populations and may have been more sensitive to this issue.

Limitations

This study may be limited in both its internal and external validity. The study's internal validity may be compromised by the potential unreliability of participants' survey responses. Participants self-reported their responses to questions related to attitudes toward and training in AAVE. The participants may have edited their responses to conform to opinions they deemed more socially acceptable. The researcher's race and ethnicity may also have compromised the study's internal validity. Participants may have self-edited their responses to survey questions in a way that they believed was suitable given the researcher's race and ethnicity.

The study's external validity may also be compromised. First, the sample population this study was limited to two sections of the Teaching Diverse Populations course at a large urban research university in the southeast US. The course is required in the state of Florida for all prospective entrants to the college of education and can be taken at any two-year or four-year institution in the state. Students enrolled in the course sections included in the present study were of traditional college age, and the findings are limited to the responses by this sample population. If the survey were administered to students enrolled in the same course at a community college, where students are typically older, the results may differ from those presented here. Furthermore, the findings are limited to the sample population of students required to enroll in the Teaching Diverse Populations course at an institution of higher learning located in the state of Florida. The findings may not apply to other geographic locations and sample populations that are not required to take this course. The findings of this study should not be generalized to all pre-service teachers or colleges of education. Future research should include a survey of other states and teacher education programs.

Implications

Research on teacher attitudes about African American Vernacular English has revealed that teachers' perceptions of AAVE speakers have remained consistently negative over the last 40 years. The present study contributes to the findings of this existing research on the attitudes of practicing teachers, an examination of the attitudes toward AAVE of undergraduate pre-service teachers, that is, teachers in training. This contribution is

significant because the results of this and other studies of pre-service teachers can inform curriculum in teacher preparation courses and thereby the attitudes and behavior of future teachers, especially their attitudes toward and expectations of speakers of AAVE.

Our study revealed that pre-service teachers, like their established and practicing counterparts, held a predominantly negative view of AAVE. In light of existing research indicating that teacher expectations impact the quality of students' learning opportunities [22] and that low teacher expectation contributes significantly to the underachievement of African American children [23] especially in the area of reading [24], these negative attitudes toward the language spoken by many African American children should be a grave concern for teacher education programs, if they aim (as they should) to train graduates who promote the academic success of all students, not only speakers of SAE. In response to the generally low academic achievement observed in African American student populations, Van Keulan et al. [25] proposed four key cultural characteristics that negatively affect the performance of African American students' in schools; 1) African Americans have a distinctly different culture with its own dialect and child rearing practices [26]; 2) America's schools do not recognize or utilize African American students' competencies for teaching, learning, and testing; 3) overrepresentation of African American students in special education is directly related to cultural discontinuity between students and teachers, home and school environment, curriculum and learning; and 4) assessment instruments and practices used to evaluate African Americans are inherently biased.

Research, including the present study, demonstrating specifically the negative attitudes held by both current and future teachers about the linguistic culture of African American students' suggests that African American students' in general and African American students' who speak AAVE in particular are at risk for educational failure. In order to counter the tendency for failure by speakers of AAVE, the authors propose that teachers employ a variety of strategies when working with AAVE speakers in order to facilitate academic success. Furthermore, the authors recommend that college of education teacher training programs should be sensitive to: a) students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds; and b) their own expectations of students' who speak AAVE. That is, students' who speak AAVE should be expected to achieve equally as their SAE counterparts. When educators understand that culture provides a context for the teaching and learning of all students', they recognize that differences between home and school cultures can pose challenges for both educators and students García SB et al. [27] moreover, students' success and failure can be understood as the result of a match (or mismatch) between the in-school learning environment and students' learning needs and characteristics García et al.

[28]. The theory of cultural discontinuity suggests that in the case of children of color, there is a mismatch between the students' home culture and the school culture. Children are socialized into language through the activities and experiences in their everyday lives with peers and adults, learning how to think about, talk about, and use language before entering school Heath SB et al. [29]. That is, as studies on AAVE [5-11] have shown, children have developed competency in their native linguistic system before school matriculation. However, this use of language may conflict with the language used in either or both the home and school setting. [30] Therefore, it is important for teachers to be aware of the characteristics of the language(s) brought by their students to the classroom to teach bilingual or bidialectal students effectively.

Furthermore, teachers should be familiar with current linguistic research and theory related specifically to language diversity and language deficits, including studies that have demonstrated both the legitimacy of AAVE as a dialect and the cognitive and linguistic competence of children who speak AAVE. Although speakers of AAVE are frequently attributed with a linguistic pathology [12], American Speech, Language and Hearing Association makes clear that, "no dialectal variety of English is a disorder or a pathological form of speech or language." [31] Prior to the publication of the norm-referenced *DELV-NR* in July 2005 [32], there was no standardized assessment tool to help teachers or clinicians determine language pathology in dialectal speakers (e.g., African American English, regional dialects such as Appalachian English Cajun, Haitian Creole, etc.). However, since its publication, teachers, and school-clinicians now have access to an assessment tool which can be used to effectively determine whether a client's speech can be attributed to language variations that reflect dialectal differences from SAE or deficits in language acquisition.

Yet even with such instruments, the discernment of dialect features from impaired linguistic development is a delicate task, and many speech language clinicians experience difficulty in adequately determining dialect features, whether present in isolation or in conjunction with signs of delayed or disordered cognitive and language development. Because of the potentially grave consequences of rushed judgment and designation to special education, teachers are advised to consider best practices, such as appropriate evaluation of dialectal speakers. In order to determine if a child indeed has a developmental impairment, a number of clinical tasks should occur. These include: (1) gathering a comprehensive case history of the child; (2) determining the child's cognitive and auditory abilities; and (3) assessing the child's comprehension and production of language via observation, language sampling, probing and administering standardized test(s) as outlined by a

linguist and skilled language pathologist [33-35].

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Appendix A

ID#: _____ Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

Race/Ethnicity: _____

Year in School: _____ Major: _____

Teaching experience: ___ years

How much of your teacher training has taken place at the University of South Florida?

Very Little ___ Some ___ Most ___ All ___ None ___

*Note: African American Vernacular English is abbreviated AAVE. Mainstream American English (the language of instruction) is abbreviated MAE.

As an educator, or future educator, please circle your response in terms of your level of agreement with each statement using a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being strongly disagree and 4 being strongly agree).

Agreement Table

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. AAVE is a misuse of MAE.	1	2	3	4
2. AAVE is a clear, thoughtful, and expressive language.	1	2	3	4
3. AAVE has a faulty grammar system.	1	2	3	4
4. Continued usage of AAVE would accomplish nothing worthwhile for society.	1	2	3	4
5. Teachers should allow African American Students to use AAVE in the Classroom.	1	2	3	4
6. AAVE sounds as good as MAE.	1	2	3	4
7. AAVE is cool.	1	2	3	4
8. AAVE is as effective for communication as is MAE.	1	2	3	4
9. If use of AAVE were encouraged, speakers of AAVE would be more motivated to achieve academically.	1	2	3	4
10. In a predominantly African American school, AAVE as well as MAE should be taught.	1	2	3	4
11. Widespread acceptance of AAVE is imperative.	1	2	3	4
12. AAVE should be considered a bad influence on American culture.	1	2	3	4
13. AAVE must be accepted if pride is to develop among African Americans.	1	2	3	4
14. Attempts to eliminate AAVE in schools results in situations that can be psychologically damaging to African American children.	1	2	3	4
15. When teachers reject the native language of a student, they do him great harm.	1	2	3	4
16. One of the goals of the American school system should be the standardization of the English language.	1	2	3	4
17. AAVE should be discouraged.	1	2	3	4

Agreement Table Cont.

18. AAVE should be accepted socially.	1	2	3	4
19. Acceptance of AAVE by teachers will lead to a lowering of standards in schools.	1	2	3	4
20. The scholastic level of a school will fall if teachers allow AAVE to be spoken.	1	2	3	4
21. AAVE is an inferior language system.	1	2	3	4
22. A teacher should correct a student's use of AAVE.	1	2	3	4
23. One successful method for improving the learning capacity of speakers of AAVE would be to replace their dialect with MAE.	1	2	3	4
24. AAVE sounds sloppy.	1	2	3	4
25. The sooner we eliminate AAVE the better.	1	2	3	4

To what extent has the subject been presented to you in your teacher training?

Not at all _____
 Very little _____
 Often _____
 Extensively _____

If AAVE has been a topic of class discussion, in what course(s) did you encounter it?

What is your overall opinion of the use of AAVE in the school setting?

