The Study Of Dialect: An Introduction To Dialectology

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Dialectology, obviously, is the study of dialect and dialects. But what exactly is a dialect? In common usage, of course, a dialect is a substandard, low-status, often rustic form of language, generally associated with the peasantry, the working class, or other groups lacking in prestige. A dialect is also a term which is often applied to forms of language, particularly those spoken in more isolated parts of the world, which have no written form. We will, on the contrary, accept the notion that all speakers are speakers of at least one dialect that standard English, for example, is just as much a dialect as any other form of English and that it does not make any kind of sense to suppose that any one dialect is in any way linguistically superior to any other. The study of dialect: An introduction to dialectology. London: Andre Deutsch Ltd. SAUSSURE, F. (1916). Cours de linguistique générale, ed. English Dialects: An Introduction. London: Athlone Press. WEINREICH, U. (1954). Is a structural dialectology possible? Word, 10, pp: 388-400. WILLIAMS, C.H. (1988). Language in a geographic context. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd. 1 The structural approach to dialect study sees the treatment of linguistic forms as related to parts of a wider system or structure, as opposed to the isolated approach advocated in traditional dialect study (Chambers & Trudgill, 1998:33). Neil Bowen, Swansea University (2011) 9 What is dialect and why study it?
The study of dialects deals with the variant features within a language, their history, differences of form and meaning, distribution, and, more generally, the spoken as distinct from their literary forms. The discipline recognizes all variations within the boundaries of any given language; it classifies and interprets them according to historical origins, principles of development, characteristic features, areal distribution, and social correlates. The Encyclopedia of Ukrainian defines dialectology as the branch of linguistics which studies: a) the dialectal language; b) its spatial distribution. This article introduces dialectology - the study of accents and dialects. It includes discussions of what it is, how it has evolved and how it is done, as well as considering recent developments in the field. The article argues that being a competent fieldworker and data collector is an essential skill in dialectology. A bibliography and list of dialectology web sites is included. Table of contents. Introduction. Traditional dialectology. Criticisms of traditional dialectology. Introduction. Dialectology is the study of the way sounds, words and grammatical forms vary within a language. The term is usually used to describe the study both of accents (the varying sounds used within a language) and dialects (the differing grammatical structures and words used).
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