

## A B S T R A C T

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This study was designed to investigate the use of Standard English by twenty four teachers in primary classrooms. It describes the language used and tests the null hypotheses that the extra-linguistic variables of pattern of training, sex, ethnicity and urbanity in no way affect the quality of language produced.

The analysis shows that despite wide-spread variation in the use of sentence-type, verb type, in sentence and predicate complexity, and in violations, the sample of teachers constituted a homogeneous group of speakers. It is suggested that this homogeneity is the result of linguistic continuity, the absence of native English speakers and mutual reinforcement by similar speakers.

The results suggest that teacher classroom speech (TCS) is a register. The differences which surfaced though not sufficient to discriminate the groups categorically, indicate that pre-service trained teachers (Pattern III)

as relative new-comers to the occupation were not fully assimilated to the norms of the register, and performed more creditably than the others. Some in-service teachers (Pattern II) seemed to be quickly acquiring control of the register and moving towards greater conformity to its rules. They were clearly approaching the norms of the remaining group (Pattern I). Pattern of training appears to be more significant in teachers' language performance than any other extra-linguistic variable.

The study suggests that for second dialect learner-speakers of English, some morphological and syntactic rules are not fully developed nor stabilized even in adulthood; that this coupled with an attempt to eliminate stigmatized forms results in forms and structures which have no validity or currency in either the Vernacular or the Standard language.

Finally, the nature of teachers' classroom speech is discussed in the light of the concept of an inter-language and some implications for the child's language acquisition efforts are examined.