Southern, Texan, or Both?: Southernness and Identity in Deer Park, Texas

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Abstract

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Perceptual dialectology researchers have reported that in "draw-a-map" tasks focused on non-linguists' perceptions of dialect regions, the South is one of the most commonly identified regions in the United States, and that many subjects further differentiate the South into smaller core and peripherally Southern subregions. As a state with a "complex" and "complicated" relationship with the South (Johnstone 1999), Texas may be included in the South, but is often grouped with the West or labelled as its own region (Lance 1999, Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Preston 1986). This "complicated" relationship also has ramifications for Southern identity; research in Texas and other Southern "border" states suggests that residents of these states may claim both Southern and non-Southern identity (Cramer 2010, Hall-Lew and Stephens 2011, Johnstone 1999).

This dissertation explores perceptual notions of "southernness" by examining perspectives in one East Texan community regarding internal differentiation within the Southern dialect region and the meaning of Southern identity. 90 subjects from Deer Park, Texas, indicated which states they considered part of the South, identified smaller subregions within the South, and chose the one state that they considered most Southern. At a more local level, subjects were asked to compare their city to the nearby cities of Pasadena and Houston, which differ from Deer Park in size, ethnic diversity, median income, and education level. 9 of these subjects completed a follow-up task which involved the generation and ranking of identity labels along a magnitude continuum to explore the importance of regional identity and the meaning of particular identity labels for these subjects.

The results suggest that these respondents were heavily influenced by their local point of reference and by notions of Texan distinctiveness; the subregions within the South that subjects identified emphasized distinctions between Texas and other states, and subjects within the youngest age group were particularly likely to single out Texas as its own region. Analysis of the city-level commentary highlights salient distinctions between the Deer Park community and surrounding communities, particularly regarding ethnic diversity and "urbanness," and suggests that subjects are able to engage with the concept of southernness at a more local level than has been explored in previous perceptual dialectology research. The results of the identity task provide evidence of the importance of regional identity for these subjects and illustrate the ways in which Deer Park residents index meaning through contrasting and overlapping regional identity labels.

This study lends additional support to previous research which has argued that responses to perceptual dialectology tasks are sensitive to scale and that distinctions which are salient at the

local level may be obscured in studies which examine dialect differences at the national level (Bucholtz et al. 2007, Evans 2013b). The identity interviews also illustrate the salience of regional identity in border states and permit a more nuanced understanding of how subjects identify with the South. By centering the task on one dialect region, this study allows for a more fine-grained examination of the South as understood by members of a peripherally Southern community.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   OVERVIEW

Since Preston repopularized the term in the 1990s, research into "folk linguistics" (Hoeningswald 1966, Preston 1993), or non-linguists' beliefs about language, has been a growing field. This approach uses the dialect regions non-linguists identify on blank maps to explore folk linguistic boundaries and language attitudes. The regional categories and labels produced by non-linguists are valuable both for comparison to production-based maps and as a unique source of insight into language variation, ideology, and identity (Preston 1993).

As the draw-a-map technique has become more well-known, this method has been used with subjects in numerous regions throughout the United States, including Hawaii, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, Texas, California, Oregon, Washington, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota (Niedzielski and Preston 1999; Benson 2003; Cramer 2010; Cukor-Avila et al. 2012; Fought 2002; Bucholtz et al. 2007 and 2008; Hartley 1999; Evans 2011, 2013a, and 2013b; Hartley 2005; Lance 1999). To gain quantifiable attitudinal data, several researchers have also supplemented the maps with subject ratings of the dialects spoken in each of the 50 states on similarity to or difference from their own dialect, correctness, and pleasantness (Benson 2003, Cramer 2010, Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Hartley 1999, Hartley 2005). The overwhelming majority of these studies have found that the South is among the most commonly identified dialect regions in the United States and that while the South may receive positive evaluations for pleasantness, it receives consistently low scores on correctness. Previous perceptual dialectology research also indicates that while most subjects will at a minimum identify one large Southern dialect region, many subjects further differentiate the South into smaller Southern or peripherally Southern subregions (Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Fought 2002, Hartley 1999, Hartley 2005, Lance 1999). Texas may be included in the South, but is often grouped with the West or labelled as its own region (Lance 1999, Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Preston 1986). This apparent lack of consensus about the state's status as Southern also has ramifications for Southern identity; research in Texas and

other Southern "border" states suggests that residents of these states may claim both Southern and non-Southern identity (Cramer 2010, Hall-Lew and Stephens 2011, Johnstone 1999).

This dissertation expands upon previous research in Deer Park, Texas, carried out by Oxley (2009). Oxley (2009) focused on vowel production and sought to determine whether the distribution of (ay) monophthongization across social groups in the Deer Park dialect was similar to the dialects of other parts of the Southern United States, as compared to previous work by sociolinguists including Fridland (2003) and Labov, Ash, and Boberg (2006). Deer Park was chosen as a site for research based on its geographical position near the periphery of the dialect area linguists refer to as the South (Carver 1987) and based on the results of work done by Thomas (2001) which indicated that young speakers in Texan cities were losing traditional Southern dialect features. Since most dialect research has focused on either large urban areas or rural areas, Deer Park was also chosen because it is suburban in nature, falling between the two extremes which have been the focus of earlier research.

While the goal of Oxley's (2009) research in Deer Park was to collect phonetic data rather than to study perceptual dialectology or identity, the open-ended questions used in that study led to a number of interesting comments about the relationship between Texas and the South. Summarizing the ideas expressed by several of the subjects, Oxley (2009) writes:

> Within Deer Park . . . there is a crucial distinction between Texas and the rest of the South . . . "Texan" and "Southern" are terms that invoke rather different ideas for the subjects I interviewed. Texans were seen as somehow less southern than people from the rest of the South, especially in terms of accent, and subjects were eager to associate themselves with Texas rather than the South at large. (p. 13-14)

It seems, then, that for Deer Park residents, Texas is not unequivocally Southern, and Texan identity does not necessarily entail Southern identity. To better understand the ideas which were hinted at in these earlier interviews, the two studies which comprise this dissertation explore perceptual notions of "southernness" by examining perspectives in the Deer Park community regarding internal differentiation within the Southern dialect region and the meaning of Southern identity.

In the first study, 90 subjects from Deer Park were asked to consider divisions within the larger Southern dialect region via an online perceptual dialectology survey. By centering the task of region labeling on one large dialect region, this study allowed for a more fine-grained

examination of the South as it is understood by members of a peripherally Southern community. The subjects were asked to indicate which states they considered part of the South and to identify smaller subregions within the South. Based on previous work which indicated that southernness is for many subjects not black or white but a matter of degree (Johnstone 1999, Reed 1991, Cooper and Knotts 2010, Hall-Lew and Stephens 2011), this study also prompted subjects to indicate which state they considered "most Southern" and to identify states which were only "partly Southern," an approach which permitted subjects to more accurately locate states which are not prototypically Southern within a broader Southern spectrum. Subjects were also asked to reflect on southernness more locally in rating the southernness of their home town and the nearby cities of Pasadena and Houston, which differ from Deer Park in size, ethnic diversity, median income, and education level.

Unlike many of the studies cited above, which have tended to draw the majority of their data from draw-a-map tasks, this study also included questions designed to provoke subjects to reflect on and explain their responses. In contrast to a predominantly quantitative approach, conducting qualitative analysis of these responses permits a deeper understanding of the social meaning of southernness for these subjects (Eckert 2008). Using demographic information collected from the survey participants, this study also examined differences in language attitudes and folk linguistic concepts across age groups.

Nine of the subjects who completed the online survey for the first study also participated in in-person follow-up interviews for the second study. The subjects in this study were recorded performing a task which guided them through the generation and ranking of identity labels along a magnitude continuum. After they had completed this task, they were asked a series of interview questions designed to explore the importance of regional identity and the meaning of particular identity labels for these subjects and to probe the subjects' understandings of how their identities related to their speech.

The identity label generation task used in this study permitted subjects to provide the set of identity labels which were most important to them and to compare the importance of those labels to a set of labels provided by the researcher. In-depth interviews allowed subjects to describe their identities in their own words and to provide illustrative examples. These discussions serve to illustrate the salience of regional identity in a Southern border state and

permit a more nuanced understanding of how Deer Park residents identify with Texas and the South.

Although regional identity has been a topic of interest within sociolinguistics for decades (Labov 1963), the conclusions reached by previous researchers have often been based on correlations between one or more linguistic features and overly simplistic methods of assessing identity, such as asking subjects about self-reported accent strength, ratings of their state as a place to live, or plans to remain within a region (Tillery 1997, Hasty 2006). Furthermore, research on folk linguistics and regional identity conducted in other parts of the United States can't necessarily be generalized to Texas, a state which serves as a transition zone between two major dialect areas. This dissertation is therefore a first attempt at gathering both quantifiable and qualitative data on folk linguistics and regional identity in a state whose residents have been described by previous researchers as having a "complex" and "complicated" relationship with the South (Johnstone 1999).

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation is organized as follows. §2 provides an overview of the relevant literature on perceptual dialectology and identity which will be drawn on in this study. §3 presents the methods and results of the perceptual dialectology study. Likewise, §4 presents the methods and results of the identity study. Finally, §5 summarizes the major conclusions from these studies and suggests questions to be explored further in future research.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of some of the relevant literature which has informed the perceptual dialectology and identity studies presented in §3 and §4 below. §2.2 summarizes work related to defining the South, drawing primarily on work from sociology and perceptual dialectology. §2.3 presents a summary of literature related to rural, urban, and suburban language and identity. §2.4 summarizes work related to identity types, with an emphasis on work related to regional identity. §2.5 provides some background information on Deer Park, Texas, the community which was the site for the research presented in this dissertation. Finally, §2.6 presents a summary of this chapter.

2.2 DEFINING THE SOUTH

2.2.1 Texas and the South in History, Geography, and Sociology

Linguists and non-linguists alike have struggled to precisely define the boundaries of "the South." While much of the work discussed below considers the South more broadly, the focus in this section will be on the status of Texas within the South. Reed (1972) attempted to quantify the southernness of nearly every state in the contiguous U.S. using an "index of Southern preference," where interview respondents were assigned a score between 0 and 3 based on their answers to three questions which asked about their attitudes toward Southern foods, accents, and women. Responses which indicated "unconditional approval" were scored a 1, while all other responses were scored a 0; thus, a respondent who demonstrated highly positive responses to all three questions would receive a score of 3 on the index. The average scores for respondents from each state are presented below in Figure 2.1. Reed argues that the results indicate that Virginia and North Carolina remain "comfortably Southern," while Texas and Florida are only "marginal."

State	N
Ala.	10
Ariz.	5
Ark.	10
Cal.	99
Colo.	21
Conn.	20
Fla.	47
Ga.	40
Ill.	89
Ind.	49
Iowa	27
Ky.	42
La.	32
Me.	10
Md.	16
Mass.	52
Mich.	61
Minn.	51
Mo.	35
Neb.	26
N.J.	51
N.M.	13
N.Y.	140
N.C.	13
N.D.	10
Ohio	60
Ore.	20
Pa.	127
R.I.	10
S.C.	4
Tenn.	38
Tex.	92
Utah	28
Vt.	10
Va.	19
Wash.	30
W.Va.	11
Wisc.	40
Wyo.	10
D.C.	3
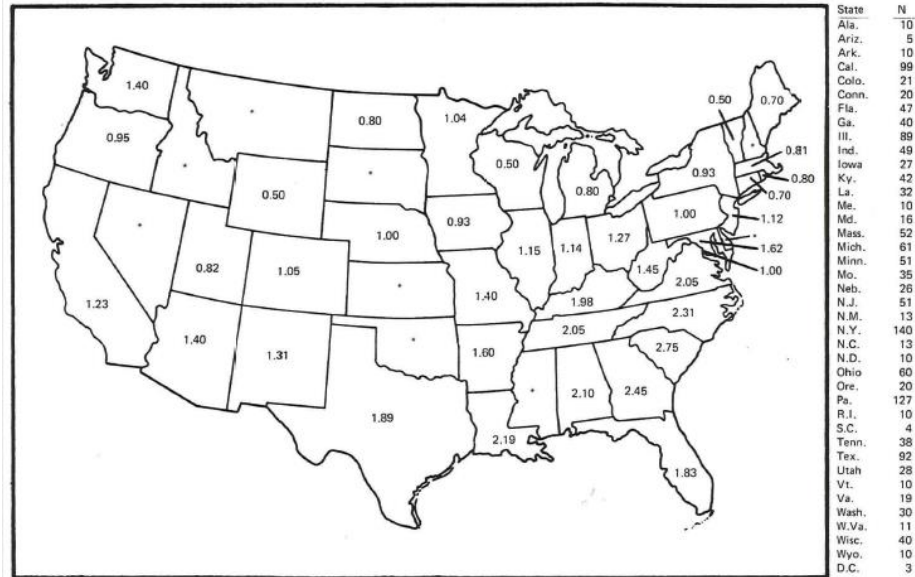
Figure 2.1. Mean scores on index of Southern preference by state of residence. States with no score indicated were not included in sample. (Reed 1972, p. 18; see Appendix C for a U.S. map with state labels)

A more comprehensive approach to examining the ways in which the South might be defined is provided by Reed (1991). In "The South: What is it? Where is It?" Reed (1991) explores many different ways of delineating the South. As a starting point, Reed suggests that one way to decide what the South is would be to simply ask people which states they consider part of the South, as he did with 68 students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Figure 2.2). While Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Tennessee are chosen by at least 90% of Reed's sample, Texas, Florida, Kentucky, and Virginia show less consensus at 50-89%. Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and West Virginia are chosen by only 10-49% of Reed's sample.

Reed also considers a definition of the South based on weather and resulting plant life. Kudzu, an invasive vine which requires long, moist summers, grows in all of the states chosen by 90% or more of his students as Southern, but only parts of most of the states chosen by 10-49% or 50-89% of Reed's students. In Texas, for example, kudzu only grows in the eastern part of the state. Another plant which thrives in the eastern part of Texas but not the West is cotton, with a resulting split in the state with respect to large slave populations in the antebellum South. Decades after the Civil War, the ramifications of slavery in the eastern part of Texas were still

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reflected in the larger concentrations of poor, rural Black Southerners in that part of the state. However, between 1920-1980 this shifted in Texas, with only a few rural counties with large concentrations of Black Southerners left in the state by 1980.
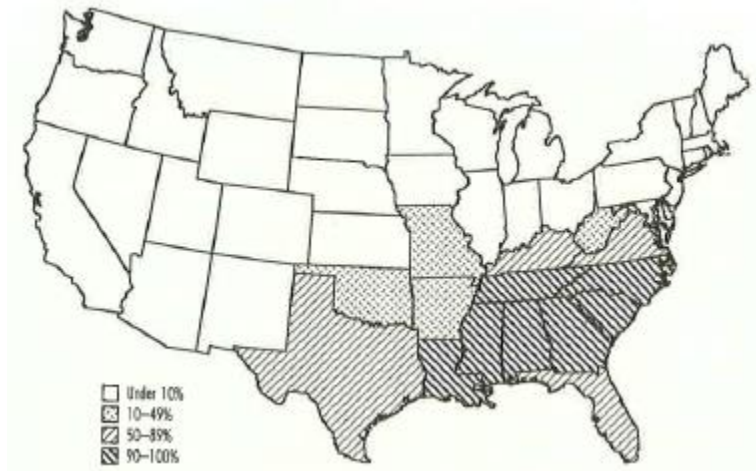
Figure 2.2. Percentage who say each state is Southern, "all in all." Source: 68 students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (Reed 1991, p. 19)

Another way to try to map the South would be by examining features associated with poverty, including outdoor toilets, illiteracy, and bad teeth (Reed 1991). While Texas doesn't group with the rest of the South in having high levels of incomplete plumbing or few dentists, illiteracy rates in Texas are similar to those in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, and New Mexico (Figure 2.3). However, illiteracy rates are even higher in some of more the peripheral Southern and Southwestern states and in New York, suggesting that this measure may be overly inclusive.

Texas groups with the South in having a large number of Baptists throughout most of the state and in producing many country music greats. It also shows much higher rates of homicide than suicide, a pattern found throughout the Deep South, and was one of only eight states which did not have a state law against sex discrimination in 1972 (all Southern). Texas also patterns with Southern states in having more than five active chapters of the Kappa Alpha Order, a college fraternity which Reed describes as having "an explicitly Confederate heritage" (p. 34).

Figure 2.3. Illiteracy rates, 1970. (Reed 1991, p. 26; Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1981)

Symbols of the Confederacy have been particularly hotly contested icons of the South. In research related to one of the most controversial icons of the Confederacy, the Confederate flag, Newman (2007) describes the flag as a "'free-floating' signifier" with "contested and contestable" meanings (p. 263). Similarly, Leib (1998) points out that the meanings of icons are "never settled . . . and are always subject to continuous debate and redefinition . . . just because an 'author' inscribes meaning to an icon, does not mean that 'readers' of that icon will receive the same meaning" (p. 232). The Confederate flag can therefore simultaneously act as a "proud symbol of White southern heritage," a "generic symbol of defiance," and a symbol of racism (Leib 1998, p. 233). Lord (1965) notes that both the Confederate flag and the label "Dixie" to refer to the South have acted as symbols of "organized resistance to civil rights" (p. 18), and Newman (2007) suggests that in more recent times, the flag has become a symbol of "anti-affirmative action, anti-immigration, post-September 11, neoconservative, Dixie South iconography" (p. 264). Based on this association, Reed et al. (1993) compare the label "Dixie" to "singing the song or flying the Confederate flag" (p. 52) and Reed (1976) writes that "while 'Southern' can be substituted for 'Dixie' . . . the converse is not always true" (p. 933). Summing up the difference between the two labels, Reed quips that "'Dixie' has more to do with attitude than latitude" (p. 934).

Reed (1976) further explores the difference between these labels by comparing the use of both labels in American business names as a means of delineating the regions which perceive

themselves as "Southern" or "Dixie." Drawing on listings in telephone directories, Reed reports
that while the percentage of businesses that use "Dixie" in their name as a percentage of
"American" listings is over 25% in the Deep South, rates reach 6-15% in only the far eastern part
of Texas, and are less than 6% in most of the state. However, if we take a less Confederate-
focused approach and instead examine the percentage of businesses that label themselves as
"Southern" as a percentage of "American" listings, the numbers rise to 35-60% in the far eastern
part of Texas and 10-35% throughout much of the rest of the state (Figure 2.4). Based on these
many different approaches to defining the South, Reed (1991) concludes that while most of
Texas would not be included in "the South proper," "few would deny [its] Southern cultural
flavor" (p. 41).
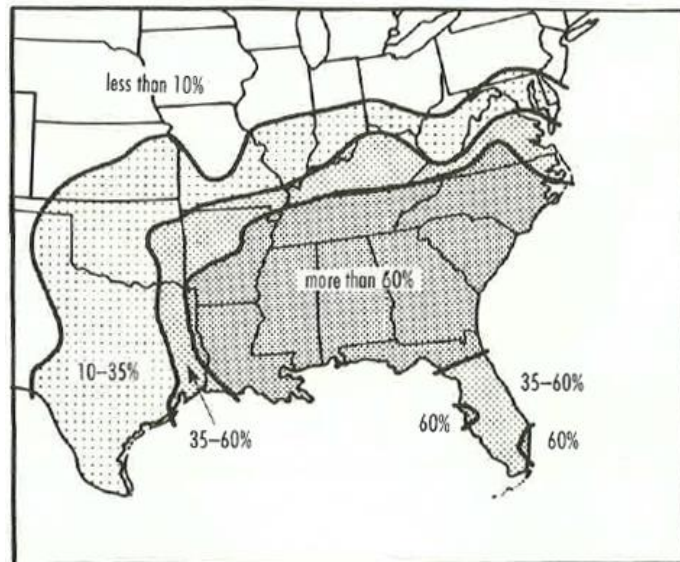
Figure 2.4. "Southern" listings as a percentage of "American" listings in telephone
directories, c. 1975. (Reed 1976, p. 929)

Reed et al. (1993) return to the examination of "Southern" and "Dixie" listings in
telephone directories, comparing the 1976 data above to more recent data from 1988. While the
"core" South remains similar to that in the 1976 study, Reed et al. find a "consolidation" of the
South, with decreased Southern listings compared to American listings in border areas. In
Texas, for example, Reed et al. found that the southernness scores for 7 of the 11 included cities
decreased over the 12 year timespan. On the other hand, scores for cities in several of the "core"
Southern states (Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina) actually increased over

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time. The reduction in business names using "Dixie" is even more apparent, with a clear decline in usage outside the Deep South over time.

Another researcher who has drawn on telephone directories in mapping North American regions is Zelinsky (1980). Zelinsky examined the regional and locational terms used to describe businesses in 276 metropolitan areas in the United States and Canada. The results suggest a set of 14 main vernacular regions. Zelinsky provides maps identifying the areas where each regional term outnumbers other regional terms, with shaded areas delimiting zones where each regional term is the leading regional term and "peripheral zones" in which the term ranks second or third in terms of frequency. Interestingly, some metropolitan areas within Texas are included in 6 of these 14 vernacular regions: the South, the Midwest, the Southwest, the West, the Gulf, and places lacking a regional identity. While only a few Texan cities are included in some of these regions (the Midwest, Gulf, places lacking a regional identity), "Southern," "Southwestern," and "Western" are all either the leading or second/third regional terms in substantial portions of the state (see Figures 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7 below). Although the term "Southwestern" seems to account for a larger portion of the state than any of the other terms, the use of a variety of regional terms demonstrated by these maps suggests that, from the perspective of Texans, it would be overly simplistic to describe Texas as only Southwestern.
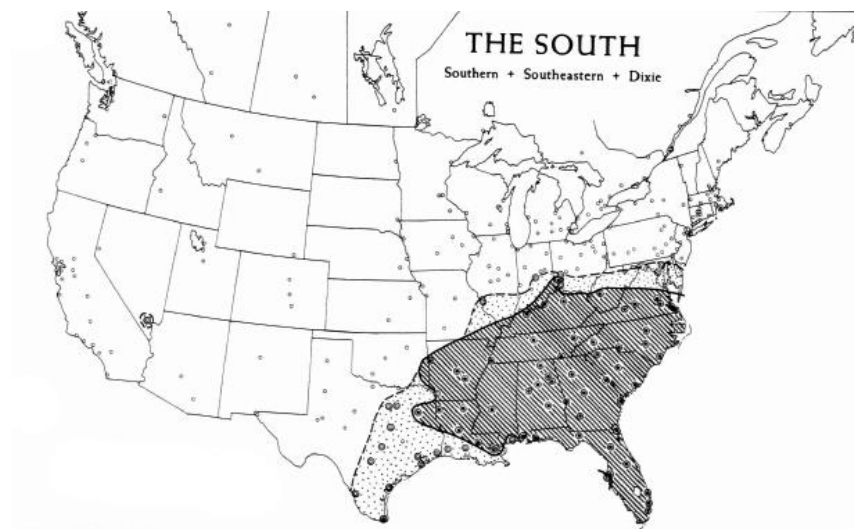
Figure 2.5. "Southern" vernacular region. Darker region = leading regional term; lighter shading = second or third regional term. (Zelinsky 1980, p. 8)
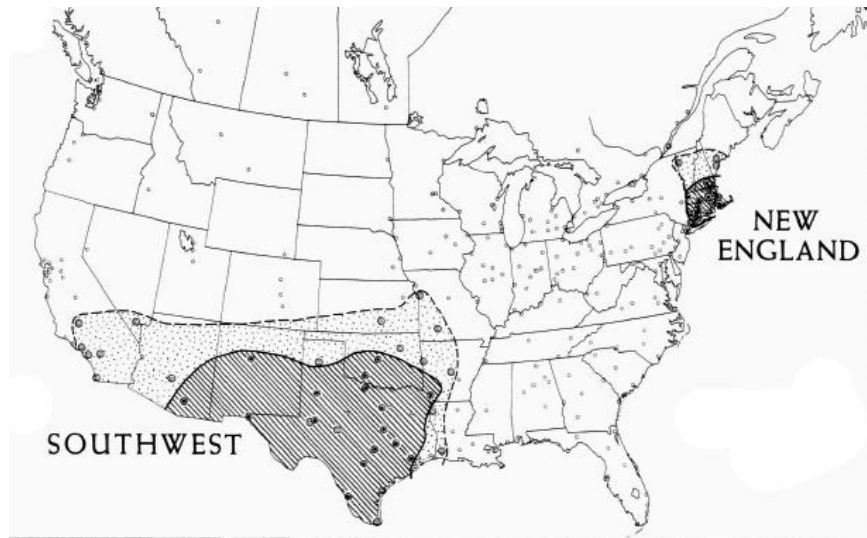
Figure 2.6. "Southwestern" vernacular region. Darker region = leading regional term; lighter shading = second or third regional term. (Zelinsky 1980, p. 9)
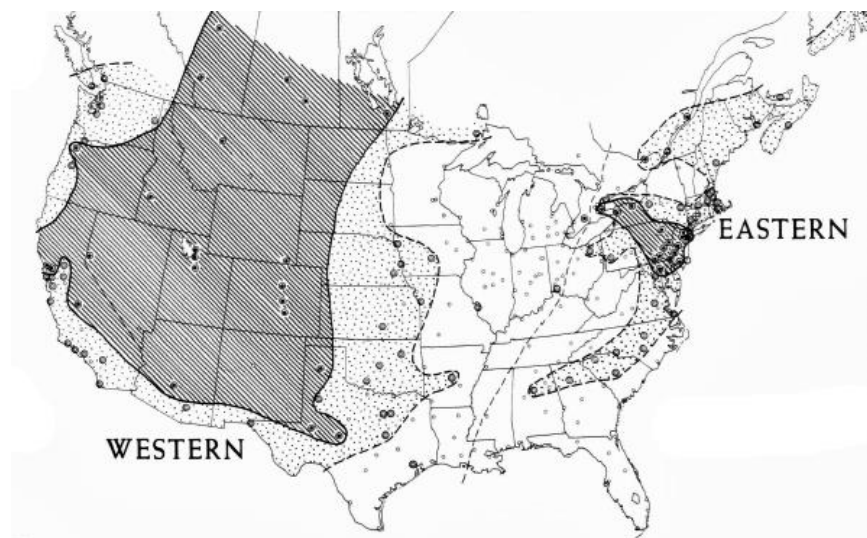
Figure 2.7. "Western" vernacular region. Darker region = leading regional term; lighter shading = second or third regional term. (Zelinsky 1980, p. 9)

Shortridge (1987) focused on "transition zones" by examining regional affiliations taken from warranty cards for citizen band radios purchased from a national company in 1979-1980. The warranty cards asked customers to indicate their age, sex, size of home community, and community location (East, West, South, or Midwest). In a sample of 11,689 warranty cards with completed answers to the community location question, Shortridge received 739 cards from Texas. These Texan respondents demonstrated variation in their regional affiliations: while

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71% chose "South," 13% chose "West," 13% chose "Midwest," and 4% chose "East." Shortridge identifies several "transition zones" between one region and another, which he defines as "places where a minority location designation (i.e., any location label that was not the leading choice for that region) was listed at least one third as often as the leading designation" (p. 327). Two of these transition zones are found in Texas: a South-West transition zone in the western part of the state, and a South-Midwest transition zone in the Dallas area. The 149 respondents from Harris County, which is where the city of Deer Park examined in this dissertation is located, remain more solidly Southern: 89% chose "South" as their community location. The counties surrounding Harris County similarly exhibit a primarily Southern affiliation, with a small minority of respondents choosing "West" as their community location.

While the warranty cards only provided customers with four choices for their community location, a small group of customers (249) either checked multiple boxes or wrote in an answer not provided on the cards. This was the case for 41 Texan respondents, most of whom (81%) indicated that they consider their community location to be "Southwest." Many of these respondents hailed from Southeast Texas, near Harris County. Since "Southwest" was not provided as an option on the printed cards, it is not clear whether more Texans may have chosen this option if it had been provided.

Turning to the relationship between regional affiliation and the demographic data, Shortridge argues that the South may exhibit declining regional alliance due to migration of non-Southerners to the region and due to the "traditional values orientation" of Southern culture, which may not align well with the values of younger, urban, more educated Southerners. However, the data from the warranty cards does not support a clear correlation between rural residence and Southern affiliation. On the other hand, the data from the transition zone in West Texas does suggest a possible female bias towards use of "West" rather than "South."

Lowry and Zonn (1989) asked residents of states included in the U.S. Census South to outline on a map "the region you define as the South" (p. 44). They found that Texas and Arkansas-based respondents behaved similarly in using a fairly broad definition of the South, including all (for Texan respondents) or most (for Arkansas respondents) of Texas. The inclusion of Texas in the South for these respondents is significant because, as Lowry and Zonn note, "no other state in the sample included any major part of Texas in the core or domain of the

South" (p. 47), where "core" refers to areas included in over 75% of maps and domain refers to areas included in 50-74% of maps. This suggests that residents of the Southeast may operate with a more restrictive definition of what constitutes the South than residents in the farther west states of Texas and Arkansas. However, this finding should also be interpreted with caution given the authors' choice to include only subjects who indicated that they considered themselves to be Southerners in the study. This seemingly unanimous inclusion of Texas in the South by Texan respondents may then be misleading since any Texans who did not consider themselves to be Southerners were excluded from the study. That said, it is interesting to note that the Arkansas and Texas respondents demonstrated a "strong east-west bias" in their choice of Southern states, producing maps which extend farther to the West but less far North than those of subjects in other states (p. 46). Combining data from 278 Southerners in a single composite map, Lowry and Zonn find that the eastern part of Texas is included in the South by 50-74% of respondents, while the rest of the state is only included by 25-49% of respondents, a fact that they, like Shortridge (1987), attribute to the state's status as a "transition region" (p. 52).

Similarly, in a study of vernacular regions within Texas, Jordan (1978) found evidence of a distinction between the eastern and western parts of the state in the form of a zone through the middle of the state in which there were no popular regional names. As Jordan explains:

> "this belt describes almost exactly the old border zone between cultural impulses received from the Lower South and Middle Atlantic in the nineteenth century. To the east of this zone the traditional culture, society, and economy are those of the Deep South; to the west, the influence of Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, and Appalachia prevails." (p. 302)

While many of Jordan's respondents assigned vernacular regions labels related to the environment (i.e., Piney Woods, Red River), politics and history (i.e., Free State), promotional names (i.e., Golden Triangle), and ethnicity (i.e., anti-Hispanic terms along the border with Mexico), they also used regional labels related to directional terms (i.e., Central, South, and East Texas). It's worth noting that for Jordan's respondents, Harris County is labeled as belonging to Southeast Texas (see Figure 2.8 below). If the regional labels which fall within the West are combined (i.e., "West," "Southwest," and "Northwest"), the border of West Texas "seldom ranges far from the 100th meridian" (p. 206; see also Ely 2011 below). However, combining the eastern regional labels ("East," "Southeast," and "Northeast") produces a more variable region which extends from Dallas in the north to Houston in the south. Jordan describes East Texas as

the region with the highest identification and one which is "loaded with connotations of the Old South and the defeated Confederacy" (p. 306). Jordan also notes that many of the state's largest cities, including Dallas, Fort Worth, El Paso, and San Antonio, are located in "transition areas" where no single regional label is predominant.
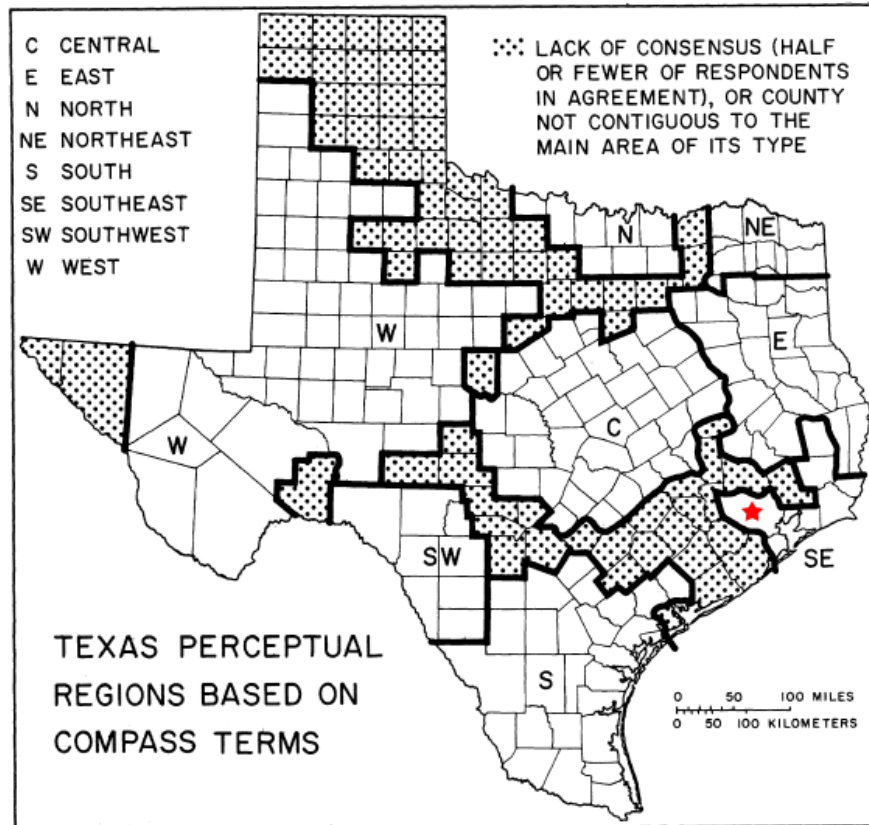
Figure 2.8. Texas perceptual regions based on compass terms. (Jordan 1978, p. 305) Star indicates location of Harris County (added by author).

Echoing the above, Ely (2011) notes that in many ways, "Texas is wrestling with an identity crisis," with scholars arguing that it is Southern, Western, or independent of the South and the West, depending on the evidence they emphasize (p. 4). He suggests that in many ways this is because the state itself is divided; between the 98th and 100th meridians, the climate of Texas shifts from one similar to the lower Mississippi Valley to an arid desert environment that has more in common with the West – a transition zone Ely calls the "Texas Shatterbelt Region" (Figure 2.9). This environmental difference is in part responsible for historical and cultural differences between West and East Texas – while slavery was common east of the 98th meridian

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(Campbell 1989), African Americans made up only 0.006% of the population of West Texas in 1860. In fact, 1860 census figures for 3 major West Texas counties (El Paso, Presidio, and Maverick) indicate that less than 5% of each county consisted of White Southerners – the largest part of the population was Tejano or Mexican American, and even northern or European residents outnumbered White Southerners in West Texas. For comparison, slaves made up over 50% of the population of thirteen counties in East Texas in the same year (Campbell 1989; see Figure 2.10 below).
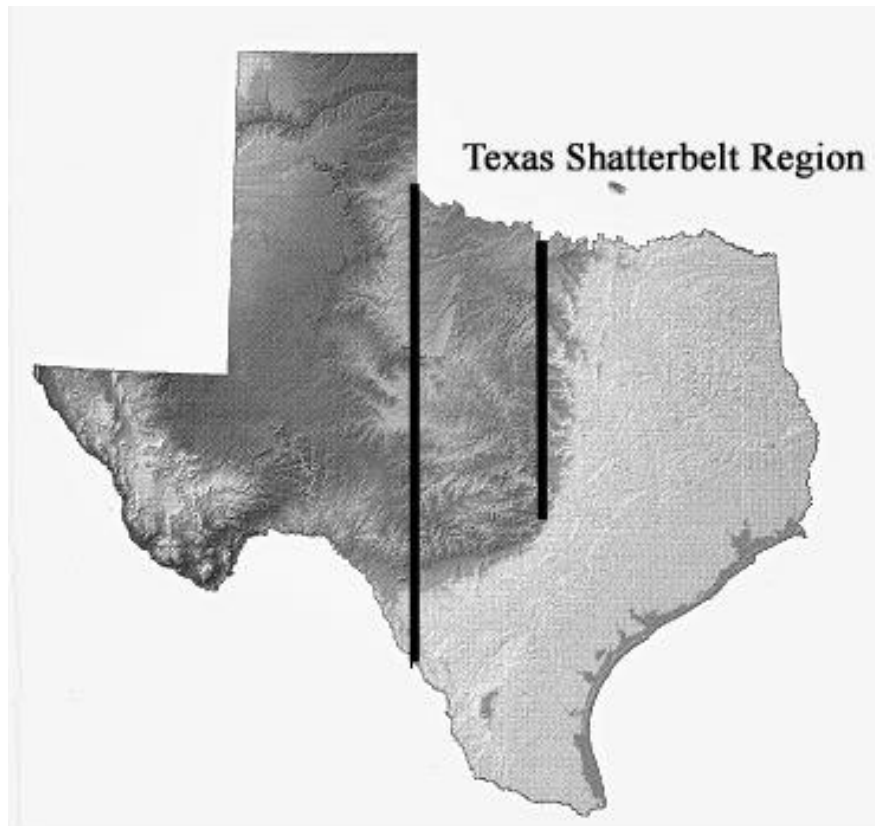
Figure 2.9. Map of the Texas Shatterbelt Region. (Ely 2011, p. 9; larger label and darker boundary lines added by author)

Ely writes that west of the 100th meridian, when asked where they live, most Texas residents answer "The Southwest" or "The West." Unlike East Texas, which has much in common with the traditional South, Ely suggests that West Texas has more in common with New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Additionally, cities in the Texas Panhandle exhibit environmental and cultural aspects of the Great Plains and Midwest, with many early settlers of Amarillo and Lubbock immigrating to Texas from the Midwest. These environmental and

cultural characteristics may therefore lead some Panhandle residents to describe themselves as Midwestern (Brownell 1960).
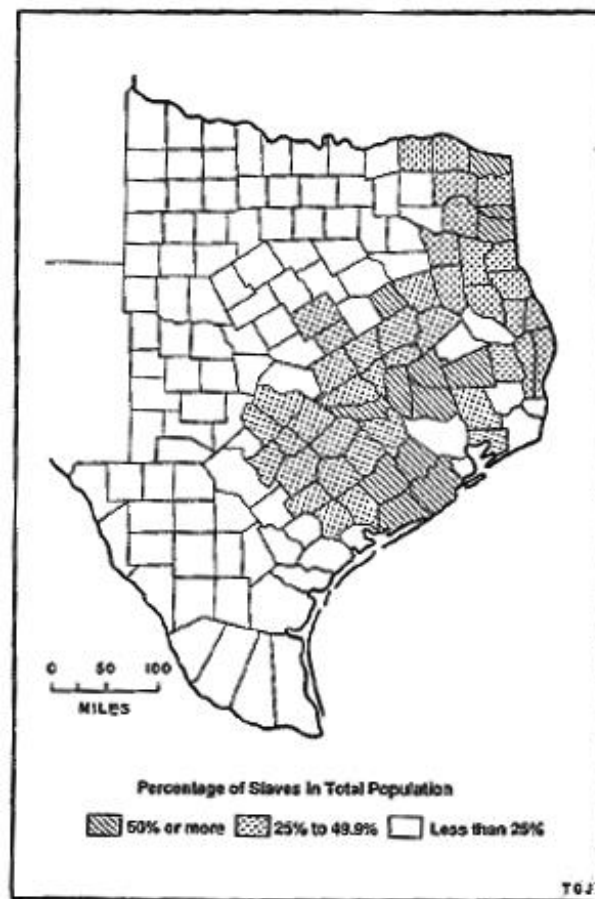
Figure 2.10. Percentage of slaves in populations of
Texas counties, 1860. (Campbell 1989, p. 60)

2.2.2 *Texas and the South in Perceptual Dialectology*

Like the research presented above, perceptual dialectology research also provides evidence that Texas is in some sense simultaneously Southern and not Southern. In draw-a-map tasks with subjects from Hawaii, southeastern Michigan, southern Indiana, western New York, and New York City, Preston (1986) found that "the South" was the most commonly identified region, identified in 94% of all hand drawn maps. The exact boundaries of the South differed – Preston notes that Texas "is often included in the area marked 'South' in these studies . . . but is as often set off as a dialect area of its own. It is perhaps the region which most depends on

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popular culture notoriety . . . for its identification as a single American speech region" (p. 229). Across subjects, Texas alone emerges as the 4th most frequently identified dialect region – more common than the North, New England, the Northeast, or the West. While subjects from most states marked their own state as distinctive, this pattern of marking off Texas as its own region can't be attributed to a tendency for self-identification - Texas is perceived as unique not just within Texas but in states across the country. The Southwest is also identified as its own region by 10% of subjects and 5% of subjects circle an "Upper South" region.

By comparing the regions that at least 50% of the Indiana and Michigan respondents labeled as "the South," Niedzielski and Preston (1999) demonstrate that "the South" is for their respondents a primarily southeastern region – half of Louisiana and most of Arkansas is excluded, and Texas is completely excluded. The southern tip of Florida is also excluded. Niedzielski and Preston also find age differences in what constitutes "the South" for their Michigan respondents, with older respondents circling a much smaller Southern region (Figure 2.11).
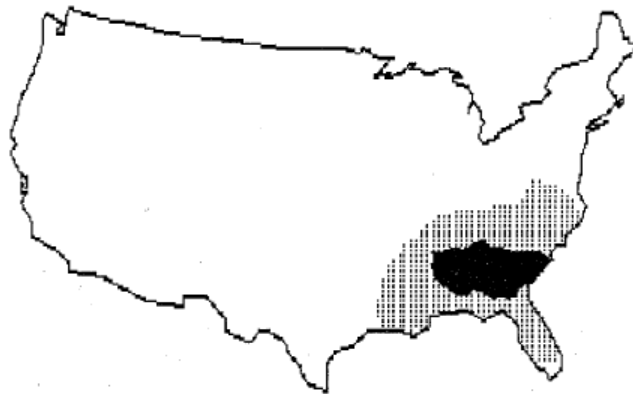
Figure 2.11. Youngest (under 20 – shaded area) and older (over 60 – solid area) Michigan respondent outlines of "Southern." (Niedzielski and Preston 1999, p. 55)

The labels provided by Niedzielski and Preston's subjects provide additional information about subject evaluations of the regions they've labeled. While the Midwest and Inland North were frequently labeled "standard," "regular," or "normal," the South was never assigned positive labels. This suggests that southernness overlaps substantially with non-standardness for these subjects; in other words, the South's distinctiveness is at least partly due to perception of Southern speech as non-standard.

Similar to Preston (1986) and Niedzielski and Preston (1999), Lance (1999) found that subjects from Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, South Dakota, and Washington frequently singled out Texas as its own dialect region. Comparing subjects from more than one region, Lance notes that "37% of the Alabama students included TX in the Southern area, whereas 60% of the South Dakotans did so" (p. 297). South Dakotans were also more likely to include Arizona in the Southern region. Only 55% of respondents across states included Florida in the South, and 20% of respondents labeled Louisiana as distinctly "Creole" or "Cajun." Lance also reports that some participants in his study considered Texas Southern while others considered the state western. 18% of subjects included a "Southwestern" region which centered on New Mexico and Arizona but also frequently included Texas.

Like the researchers above, Hartley (1999, 2005) has also found that subjects in Oregon and Boston frequently single out Texas as its own dialect region in hand-drawn maps. However, Hartley reports for both samples that this distinction between Texas and the South is not as clear in ratings of dialect correctness, pleasantness, or degree of difference. Using multidimensional scaling and *k* means clustering to examine correctness ratings provided by Oregon respondents, Hartley (1999) explains that:

> Although 55.4% of respondents singled out Texas (sometimes including Oklahoma) as a distinct dialect area on their hand-drawn maps, it did not appear as a distinct area in the K-means cluster analysis of any of the other three ratings tasks. It seems, then, that although there is some recognition of a distinct dialect in Texas, this distinctness is not great enough to overcome the general category "southern" in the minds of the Oregonian respondents. (p. 328)

Similarly, Hartley (2005) did not find that Texas constituted a distinct cluster in analysis of these ratings for her Boston subjects, and Niedzielski and Preston (1999) did not find that Texas constituted a distinct cluster in factor analysis of these ratings for their Indiana subjects. Thus, while the Texan dialect may be considered by some respondents to be unique, it also frequently patterns with the South in ratings tasks, and the ratings data reveals that for many non-Texans the Texan dialect is still likely to be perceived as similar to and as stigmatized as the dialects of states in other parts of the South.

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On the other hand, within Texas, these perceptions might be different. Oxley (2014a, 2014b) used probabilistic principal components analysis (PPCA) and *k* means cluster analysis to examine clusters of dialect ratings within state similarity to Deer Park ratings provided by 90 Deer Park residents. The analysis yielded 5 distinct perceptual clusters, indicated by distinct shades of grey in Figure 2.12 below. Clusters 1, 3, and 4 all contain Southern states: Cluster 1 singles out Texas as uniquely similar to Deer Park, Cluster 3 groups together the Deep South states, and Cluster 4 contains more peripherally Southern states. Clusters 2 and 5 primarily serve to divide the non-Southern states into two separate regions: the West and the North/Northeast. This finding of 3 distinct clusters of Southern or peripherally Southern states suggests that for these Texan residents, the distinction between Texas and the rest of the South is salient enough to be reflected not only in map tasks but in dialect rating tasks as well.
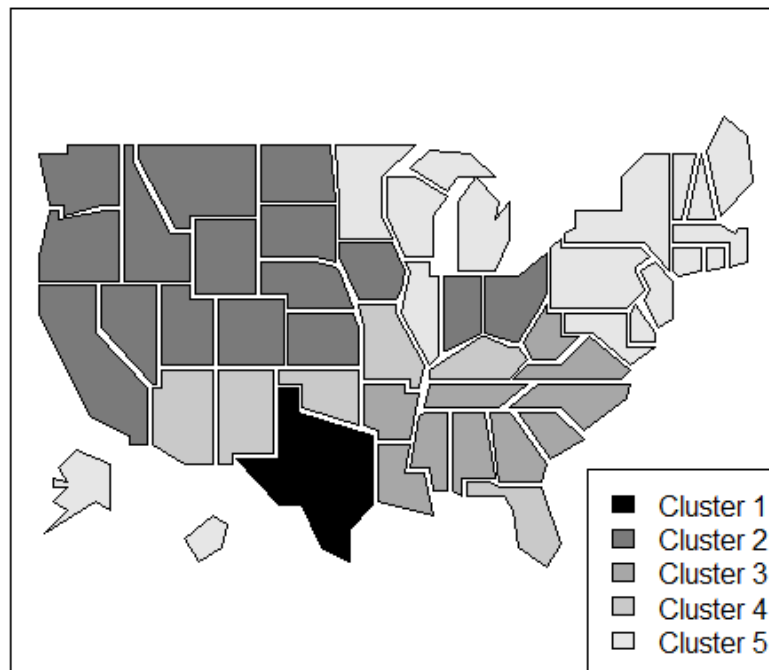
Figure 2.12. PPCA and *k* means clustering of similarity
to Deer Park ratings with *k* = 5 clusters. (Oxley 2014a, 2014b)

In work looking at perceptual dialect regions within Texas, Cukor-Avila et al. (2012) find that some of the most common regional labels for Texan dialect regions include "Spanish"/"Spanglish," "drawl"/"twang," "country," and "normal." "Spanish" and "Spanglish" were the most common labels, provided by 70% of all respondents, and were both primarily used

to label areas along the border with Mexico, leading the authors to suggest that "there is little perceptual distinction between 'Spanish' and 'Spanglish'" (p. 15). While Cukor-Avila et al. describe "drawl" as Southern and "twang" as Western, the label "drawl" is frequently found in the Panhandle and West and the label "twang" is frequently used in the East, with substantial overlap between the terms. "Country" (including "hick" and "redneck") is primarily found in the Panhandle and East Texas, and rarely associated with large cities, which are more likely to be labeled as "normal." Taken together, these regional labels suggest that Texans across the state have a high degree of agreement that Spanish or Spanglish is common near the border, make no clear distinction between the terms "twang" and "drawl," and believe that "country" speech is mostly found in rural parts of the state. As Cukor-Avila et al. note, this work also suggests that "Texans do not view themselves as a homogeneous speech community" (p. 18).

2.2.3 Summary

The research summarized above presents a number of different ways of defining the South and assessing southernness. While Texas appears to be part of the South based on some of these metrics (high illiteracy rates, large numbers of Baptists, producing many country music greats, higher homicide than suicide rates, having no law against sex discrimination in 1972, having more than five chapters of the Confederate fraternity Kappa Alpha Order, and patterning with the South on dialect rating tasks performed by non-Texans), there are also some metrics according to which Texas does not appear to be Southern (prevalence of outdoor toilets, numbers of dentists, business names including the label "Dixie"). There are also many metrics on which Texas appears to be only "marginally" Southern or which divide the state into Southern and non-Southern regions (Reed's index of Southern preference, growth of kudzu and cotton, prevalence of slavery, historical settlement patterns). This split is particularly apparent in research which examines subjects' regional perceptions more directly – such as by quizzing students about which states belong to the South, asking subjects to complete draw-a-map tasks, examining regional business names, or documenting regional affiliations provided on warranty cards. The perceptual dialectology research presented above also demonstrates that for both Texans and non-Texans, the state is frequently considered to constitute its own dialect region. As the state-internal studies summarized above suggest, there is considerable variation within the state of

Texas, including noteworthy contrasts between large metropolitan areas in the state and more rural areas – a topic discussed below.

2.3 RURAL, URBAN, AND SUBURBAN LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

2.3.1 Rural, Urban, and Suburban Language

Many linguists have investigated possible correlations between residence in urban or rural communities and linguistic production or perception. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to provide a full overview of work on the urban/rural dichotomy within the field of linguistics; however, this section will attempt to highlight some of the research which is most relevant due to regional proximity to the community studied in this dissertation or due to its focus on the relationship between urban/rural distinctions and perceptual regions.

Tillery, Bailey, and Wikle (2004) discuss three major demographic changes in the U.S. which they argue must be considered by dialectologists in future research: continuing and accelerating urbanization, expanding migration, and growing ethnic diversification. For the first of these, they note that while in 1860 80% of the U.S. population lived in rural areas and cities with less than 2,500 people, by 2000 the same percentage of the U.S. was focused in 280 metropolitan areas (p. 229). In terms of dialect, this urbanization has resulted in major linguistic divides between rural and urban populations, particularly in the South where urbanization has been rapid (Thomas 1997, Wikle and Bailey 1996). This shift is also apparent in Texas, which by 1990 had a larger percentage of urban residents than either the South or the United States as a whole (see Figure 2.13 below).

Migration to large urban centers within the U.S. has also affected the South at a disproportionate rate compared to other regions. While population growth between 1990-2000 is evident throughout the U.S., Tillery, Bailey, and Wikle report that the percentage of population growth in each of the Sunbelt regions (South and West) is more than that of the other regions (Northeast and Midwest) combined. Much of that growth is also due to foreign migration; in fact, five of the seven fasting-growing metropolises in the United States (Los Angeles, Houston, San Diego, Miami, and Dallas) owe virtually of their population growth to foreign migration (Frey, Abresch, and Yeasting 2001, p. 71). This migration leads to dialect mixing and ethnic

diversification in urban areas – 80% of all population growth in Texas from 1990-2000, for example, was due to the migration of non-Anglos (Murdock 2001). Specifically, Bailey, Tillery, and Wikle report that in Texas, "the growth of central cities is primarily a Hispanic and secondarily an African American phenomenon, while the growth of suburbs is primarily an Anglo and secondarily a Hispanic phenomenon" (p. 241-242). This growth in non-native and non-Anglo populations in urban areas will likely result in further exaggeration of urban, suburban, and rural dialect differences.
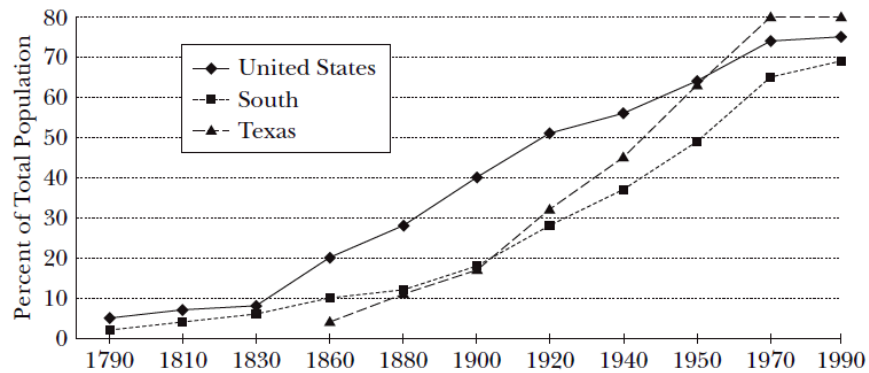
Figure 2.13. Urbanization of the population of the United States, U.S. South, and Texas. (Tillery, Bailey, and Wikle 2004, p. 229)

Thomas (1997) proposes that for Texas Anglos there is a rural/metropolitan split for at least 2 Southern U.S. English variables: /ay/ monophthongization and /ey/ onset lowering. Based on data from the 1989 Phonological Survey of Texas, Thomas finds that while for the oldest age group urbanness level (i.e., residence in a very large metro, metro, or town/rural county based on codings in Texas A&M University's quarterly Texas Poll) is not significant, differences by urbanness level are significant for the 18 to 29 year olds. Thomas writes that "the incidence of monophthongal /ay/ has increased in areas covered under the towns and rural label at the same time that it has declined in areas covered under the very large metro label" (p. 315). According to Thomas, this supports his hypothesis that the rural/metropolitan split in Texas is a recent development. In a VARBRUL analysis of the pronunciation of "night" in the Phonological Survey, urbanness level emerges as the primary predictor. Similarly, in Thomas' previous work (Thomas 1989), /ey/ lowering was more frequent in young Anglos from rural areas than from metropolitan areas. Because the timing of the split between age groups coincides with the timing of post-World War II population shifts in which many Northerners moved to the Sunbelt and

because immigrants have been far more likely to settle in large urban centers of Texas, Thomas concludes that immigration to urban centers from other states is responsible for the current rural/metropolitan split in the dialects of young Anglo Texans.

A word of caution regarding these potential urban/rural differences is in order. Britain (2009) writes that "there is no a priori reason why we would expect to find patterns of variation and change in rural areas to fundamentally differ from those in urban areas" (p. 224). Instead, he argues that the results of sociolinguistic studies that have appeared to uncover urban/rural contrasts are in fact uncovering patterns related to a more meaningful underlying variable: dialect contact/isolation. According to Britain, "there are no causal social processes which affect urban areas but not rural, or vice versa" (p. 224). This is not to say that the findings of Thomas (1997) and Tillery, Bailey, and Wikle (2004) have no sociolinguistic basis, but that the underlying variable being measured is not in fact urban/rural residence but degree of dialect contact. While this point does not actually appear to conflict with the arguments about the underlying mechanisms driving urban/rural differences made by the authors above, it is important to remember to interpret these findings in light of the forces of contact which drive them.

In addition to the work on linguistic production summarized above, an urban/rural distinction is also apparent in much of the recent perceptual dialectology work carried out at the state level. In a study using the draw-a-map task methodology in California, Bucholtz et al. (2007) found that "hicks"/"hillbillies"/"rednecks" was the most common social label (~18%), used primarily in Northern and Inland parts of the state. While these labels haven't typically been applied to California in research conducted outside the state, the authors point out that Californians would be more familiar with the "sizable agricultural industry" in more rural parts of the state. Bucholtz et al. (2008) also report that when asked to identify the places in California "where people speak worst," a small set of respondents (4%) identify rural regions in general rather than identifying a specific location.

Similarly, in perceptual dialectology research conducted in Washington state, Evans (2011), found that the most frequent category label was "country" (consisting of "country," "hick," and "farmer talk"), which accounted for 25% of all labels provided. This label is most frequently used to describe the eastern part of the state (see Figure 2.14 below), which Evans

attributes to settlement of that part of the state by Midlands dialect speakers, the agricultural prosperity of the region, and historical association of the region with the cattle industry and the Ellensburg Rodeo. The category "slang," on the other hand, was primarily assigned to urban areas within the state and only rarely associated with rural areas. In an analysis of comments on the maps of respondents who did not circle any perceptual region, Evans (2013b) also found that these subjects tended to comment on urban/rural distinctions. Considering the reasons why this urban/rural distinction seems to be salient in perceptual dialectology research at the state level but not the national level, Evans (2013a) makes the case for the importance of scale in perceptual dialectology research, arguing that "when respondents are surveyed about variation within their own state or region rather than variation across the country, other kinds of more localized organizational categories, such as an urban/rural distinction, can emerge" (p. 280).
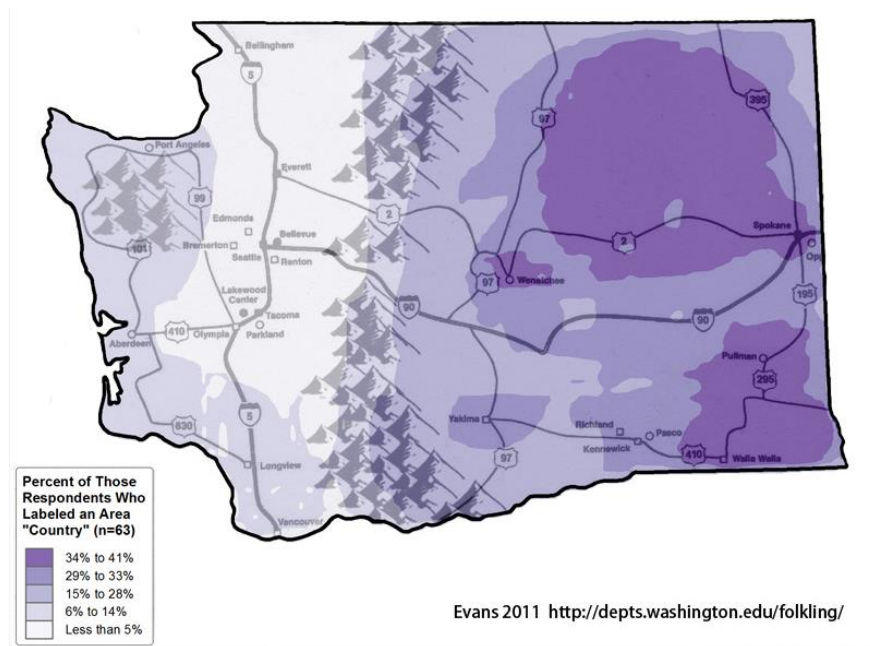
Figure 2.14. Composite map of areas labeled "country"
by Washington residents. (Evans 2011, p. 392)

Most of the work summarized above has focused on the ends of the rural/urban continuum. This is not surprising given historical emphasis on rural and urban areas in linguistics. In describing the goals of one of the antecedents to modern sociolinguistics, traditional dialectology, Chambers (2003) writes that "in their quest for the most distinctive regional speakers, [dialectologists] systematically sought the most isolated speakers as their

subjects" (p. 73). This desire to gather data from isolated, "unadulterated" speakers led dialectologists to prioritize above all data from subjects whose speech was considered "most regional": non-mobile older rural males, or NORMs (Chambers and Trudgill 1980, Malmkjaer 2002). Despite making significant advances in the study of regional dialect features, the sampling methods used in this research meant that dialectologists could only hope to make claims about a very narrowly restricted set of the population. And as the majority of the inhabitants of the United States shifted from residing in primarily rural to primarily urban areas (Tillery, Bailey, and Wikle 2004), the set of speakers who met such strict criteria became very small indeed.

The 1960s brought a shift in focus among sociolinguists researching dialectal variation. The forces of social change which drove speakers to urban areas were no longer perceived as catastrophically wiping out local varieties, but instead became areas of interest in their own right as processes resulting in the genesis of new linguistic varieties. In a reversal of earlier approaches, Labovian urban dialectology idolized major metropolitan areas as "sites of diversity, conflict, contact, complexity, variation, and change" (Britain 2009, p. 227).

Although research conducted within both of these traditions has undoubtedly contributed greatly to field of linguistics, it has also tended to ignore speakers who could not be classified as either rural or urban. As Oxley (2009) writes:

> "While there is certainly much to be learned by studying these two extremes – the epicenters of change and the strongholds of relic features – for intermediate areas to be ignored would mean failing to account for the sociolinguistic workings of a large sector of the population. If, as Labov (1994) writes, rural communities are "suffering from the decline in agriculture and a shrinking local population" (p. 23), it could be advantageous for sociolinguists to pay more attention to the thriving suburban areas which surround major urban centers." (p. 15)

The research presented in this dissertation therefore takes a different approach from that of either early dialectology or Labovian sociolinguistics in drawing a subject pool from a suburban of Houston - the city of Deer Park, Texas.

2.3.2 Rural, Urban, and Suburban Identity

While the articles above focus on rural and urban language, they don't delve as deeply into issues of rural and urban identity, which are the focus of this section. Like Reed (1976),

Reed et al. (1993), and Zelinsky (1980) above, Ambinakudige (2009) examines the use of "Southern" and "Dixie" in business names in electronic telephone directories. Unlike those earlier researchers, Ambinakudige collects data from metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties for counties in each state in the U.S, permitting a comparison of these counties on their use of these labels. Ambinakudige reports that non-metropolitan counties used the labels "Southern" and "Dixie" at higher rates compared to metropolitan and micropolitan counties and proposes that migration to these areas may be leading to an erosion of Southern and Dixie identity over time. This suggests a possible interaction between metropolitan and regional identity, with metropolitan areas exhibiting weakened regional identity compared to non-metropolitan areas.

Vandekerckhove (2010) also argues that increased contact between urban and rural residents may be significant, claiming that "the dichotomy between urban and rural areas and their respective communities proves difficult to hold nowadays" (p. 316). As urban residents move to the countryside and rural residents become more involved in urban life, the closed networks which once characterized rural areas have dissolved. In patterns of hierarchical diffusion, smaller towns have adopted features of larger regions, perhaps as an attempt to accumulate urban prestige. Linguistic features which served as class markers in the metropolitan regions may spread to smaller towns, where they are adopted as markers of "urban lifestyle" (Royneland 2009). The dense, multiplex, norm-enforcing networks which once served as barriers against innovation have in many cases been replaced by more heterogeneous networks linking rural and urban communities.

However, Vandekerckhove cautions that we should not assume that with increased urbanization the contrasts between rural and urban communities will disappear entirely: "if, however, by adopting an innovation, people will be considered disloyal to their local community, violating norms of group solidarity, they will not be inclined to do so" (p. 322). According to Vandekerckhove, this pressure of local solidarity remains stronger in non-urban communities. On the other hand, urban residents may continue to assert urban identity through language as a way of maintaining superiority and distancing themselves from rural residents. In this way, Vandekerckhove argues that "town people may display a remarkable linguistic solidarity, not only distancing themselves from other (smaller) towns, but even more so in distancing themselves from the non-urban hinterland" (p. 326). As urbanization and mobility increase,

speaker networks also tend to become less "local," and local identity may wane in favor of "a more general regional affiliation" (p. 328).

Durian (2007) investigates [ʃtr] use in Columbus with data from both a rapid and anonymous survey and one on one interviews with urban and suburban White middle class speakers. His results suggest that [ʃtr] is more common among younger and working class speakers than older and middle class speakers. For the interview data (where residential history was available), the location in which the speaker was born and raised was also significant, with speakers born and raised in Columbus using more [ʃtr] than speakers born and raised in the suburbs. Based on the higher frequency of [ʃtr] in the speech of younger speakers (who tend to move into the city core rather than out to the suburbs) and qualitative data from subjects born and raised in Columbus proper indicating positive affiliation with the city, Durian argues that [ʃtr] acts as an urban marker in Columbus. Similarly, Durian notes that even among suburban subjects, those subjects who tended to use [ʃtr] most were subjects who expressed positive urban affiliations. In this respect Durian's research echoes Vandekerckhove's (2010) argument that differences between urban and rural speakers may be based not only on separation in physical space but separation in social identity.

Hummon (1986) points out that, compared to research on social identity and regional identity, very little research has been carried out which has focused on community identity. To address this gap in the literature, he conducted interviews with 77 working class and middle class adults from four communities of varying sizes in Northern California. Hummon asked his interviewees whether they thought of themselves as a "city person," "small-town person," "suburbanite," or "country person," or if they did not think of themselves in any of these terms. While most of the interviewees' identities matched up neatly with their city (i.e., San Francisco residents typically described themselves as city people), community identity was not entirely based on residence – for example, a substantial number of suburban residents described themselves as city people.

Based on qualitative analysis of the interviewees' self-descriptions, Hummon argues that the Californians he interviewed "use community imagery to interpret self: Self-designated city people, for instance, characterize themselves as active, liberal, city-wise; small-town people, as friendly, family-oriented, less materialistic, unpermissive; country people, as easy-going,

independent, practical, ordinary, outdoor folk; suburbanites, as people of the middle ground" (p. 3; see also Greene 2010). While Hummon suggests that the suburbs are believed to be clean, safe, homogenous, conservative, middle class communities with good schools, he finds that for his subjects, "the suburbs have relatively little meaning as a form of community," and most suburban residents did not identify as suburbanites (p. 15). He concludes that "suburban ideology lacks sufficient meaning to construct a viable suburban identity" (p. 16).

Community identities are often built not only on what the interviewees are but what they aren't; for example, Hummon's interviewees who considered themselves small town people described themselves as not materialistic, in contrast to their image of city people. Hummon's subjects also demonstrated an awareness of negative stereotypes related to their community identities, such as images of town residents as "provincial, backward, and narrow-minded." Hummon points out that while some town residents "reject the 'small town person' identity because the stigma of this imagery is a threat to their self-esteem," other town residents "challenge the imagery to preserve their self-esteem" – arguing against negative stereotypes associated with their identities as they express their attachment to those identities (p. 11).

Similarly, reflecting on interviews conducted in rural Eastern Kentucky, Greene (2010) writes that "Cultural and linguistic marginalization seems to trigger an oppositional reaction . . . rather than rejecting marginalizing notions about themselves, [these subjects] accept them, but invert the value judgments and play up more positive aspects, such as friendliness, privacy, safety, peacefulness, family-orientation and nature, while playing down more negative aspects, such as poverty, lack of education and lack of sophistication" (p. 15). Greene argues that these characteristics associated with rural life form "chains of meaning" which can be transferred from "from one social category to another" and "from one level of analysis to another" (pg. 137). In this way, features which are associated with rurality can be reinterpreted as features of the South more generally – linking local identities to larger regional identities. As Greene notes, these ideologies and identities may also be influenced by contact with non-rural residents, as when rural natives attend college in urban areas and are exposed to different cultural and linguistic norms, including "marginalizing comments about their speech" (p. 122).

Luhman (1990), who also conducted research related to language attitudes in Eastern Kentucky, found that while urban Kentucky residents showed a lack of identification with

Kentucky-accented speech (based on level of agreement with a question asking whether they thought a recorded speaker sounded like them), rural Kentuckians from all over the state identified with Kentucky-accented speech. Reflecting on the ratings of the Kentucky speakers in his study, which suggested that raters who perceived themselves as similar to the recorded speakers rated the recorded speakers higher on both status and similarity, Luhman writes:

> "The fact that many Appalachians have temporarily lived elsewhere and experienced negative stereotypes and prejudice toward their group creates an additional factor regarding in-group attitudes toward a nonstandard variety that can play a role in the vitality and maintenance of that variety. Knowledge of negative stereotypes about a group's speech exist elsewhere can serve to increase the level of in-group solidarity rather than decrease it . . . negative experiences and stereotypes typically encountered by speakers of Appalachian English…serve to strengthen ethnic identification and group boundaries; in such social settings, linguistic differences become important boundary markers that require careful cultivation." (p. 346)

Luhman argues that his research indicates that "in urban areas there is an increase in positive values attached to Standard English phonology" (p. 338). At the same time, rural Southerners may respond to negative stereotypes of their speech by latching onto the covert prestige associated with their varieties and identifying more strongly as Southern.

2.3.3 Summary

The research presented above argues that the Southern U.S. has become increasingly diverse and increasingly urban over the last several decades. Texas has experienced particularly high rates of foreign migration, with most migrants settling in urban areas, leading to exaggerated contrasts between rural and urban areas in the state with many more non-native residents and greater ethnic diversity in the state's urban centers. This urban/rural contrast is reflected in the speech of younger Texans, whose rates of /ay/ monophthongization and /ey/ onset lowering very depending on their city type. Research in other states also suggests that the urban/rural distinction is ideologically important, with subjects distinguishing between urban and rural areas in state-level perceptual dialectology tasks, employing linguistic variables to signal urban or rural identity, and linking urban and rural identity to other personal characteristics and identities.

While most of this research has focused on the urban/rural dichotomy, there is still much more work to be done on suburban areas like Deer Park. Despite Hummon's (1986) argument

that "suburban ideology lacks sufficient meaning to construct a viable suburban identity" (p. 16), it is clear that his subjects do associate the suburbs with particular characteristics and values, and there is no a priori reason why "suburban" should not emerge as a "localized organizational category" (Evans 2013a) in the same way as "urban" and "rural." While these labels may be critiqued by linguists who argue that linguistic differences attributed to urban and rural residence should actually be attributed to dialect contact or isolation, they remain ideologically important as categories used by non-linguists in organizing their world. They may also be linked to other identities, as when Greene's (2010) subjects associated ruralness with southernness.

Furthermore, given the increased urbanization and diversification of Texas, and especially the growing number of Hispanic residents in suburban cities like Deer Park, it is to be expected that suburbanites will experience increased dialect contact. They may also attach more importance to their suburban identity as that identity becomes more meaningful as a means of distinguishing between their community and that of surrounding rural and urban areas. Bearing this in mind, the identity label ranking task used in this dissertation (§4.3.2) includes the labels "urban," "suburban," and "rural" as well as the regional labels "from Deer Park," "Texan," and "Southern." This methodology permits examination of urban, suburban, and rural identities as compared to other identities and, in asking subjects to reflect on the meaning of these labels, highlights the ways in which these identities intersect with other identities such as those related to ethnicity and region. This approach also allows subjects to indicate the importance of their various identities, bearing in mind Hummon (1986) and Durian's (2007) arguments that identity is not simply a reflection of residence or group membership - a topic explored in further detail in the next section.

2.4 IDENTITY

2.4.1 Defining Identity

While researchers have proposed a number of different ways of defining identity, many of these definitions overlap substantially. Deaux (2001) defines social identity as "those aspects of a person that are defined in terms of his or her group memberships" (p. 1). She further describes social identity as "a label or a category, a way of grouping a number of people together

on the basis of some shared features" and "a way of defining oneself in contrast to others who are members of another group" (p. 4-5). This approach to understanding identity is also hinted at by Tracy (2002) when she notes that identity "reflects the boxes societies use to categorize their members" (p. 17). Kroskrity (1999) takes a similar but more language-focused approach in defining identity as "the linguistic construction of membership in one or more social groups or categories" (p. 111).

The definitions above emphasize social identity as it relates to group membership. Underwood (1998) has critiqued much of the linguistic research on identity, writing that "when used by linguists, identity is at best a vague concept which is closely related to, if not synonymous with, 'membership' or 'association'" (p. 408). Underwood argues that is important to distinguish between membership in a group and identification with a group. For Underwood, the crucial difference between group membership and identification is that identification is "an emotional construct" rooted in "feelings of closeness" with group members (p. 409). The complexity of studying identity can be attributed to this distinction, as it follows that membership does not necessarily entail identity and that the strengths of particular identities may vary across individuals. This distinction also has linguistic ramifications; as Underwood explains:

> "people may very well be members of a group with which they do not want to identify or be identified by others. Consequently, they may choose to be linguistically different from their group. On the other hand, people may desire to identify and be identified with a group to which they may not belong. They will attempt to pattern their language after that of the members of the group with which they seek identification." (p. 418)

This argument from Underwood points to the fact that identity does involve a certain degree of agency, or as Deaux (2001) describes it, "subjectivity." Deaux (1992) cites several studies which have found a lack of complete correspondence between group membership and identity, including research on ethnic identity, gender identity, political identity, and parental identity (Ethier and Deaux 1990, Dion 1989, Lau 1989). Deaux (2001) points out that it is not sufficient to know that someone belongs to a particular group, stating that "knowing how important or central an identity is to the person is necessary in order to predict how much the identity will influence the person's beliefs, emotions, and actions" (p. 6). Likewise, Bucholtz and Hall (2005) move away from a focus on group membership in defining identity more

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broadly as "the social positioning of self and other" (p. 586) and in acknowledging both group and individual influences on identity in their "partialness principle":

> "Any given construction of identity may be in part deliberate and intentional, in part habitual and hence often less than fully conscious, in part an outcome of interactional negotiation and contestation, in part an outcome of others' perceptions and representations, and in part an effect of larger ideological processes and material structures that may become relevant to interaction. It is therefore constantly shifting both as interaction unfolds and across discourse contexts." (p. 606)

Both of these approaches to identity – a more essentialist approach that views identity as linked directly to group membership and a more constructivist approach that views identity as actively produced by speakers – are reflected in the definitions of identity above and have been influential in research on identity to date. Group membership is clearly important – as Kroskrity (1999) notes, some identities may be more directly linked to group membership and less open to manipulation than others (i.e., race or caste). However, it should also be clear from the above that identity is not determined by group membership alone. This dissertation will therefore follow Kroskrity in acknowledging that there are problems with "any approach to identity . . . that does not recognize both the communicative freedom potentially available at the microlevel and the political economic constraints imposed on processes of identity-making" (p. 113).

It is also important to acknowledge that identity is both situational and interactional. Through talk, interactants "engage in strategic communicative work that permits them to interactionally foreground or suppress specific identities" (Kroskrity 1999, p. 112). This "identity work" allows us to make inferences about speakers (Tracy 2002), and, in cases where the speakers are already known to us through many roles, such as conversations with other members of the same small community, "[establishes] which identity is situationally relevant" (Kroskrity 1999, p. 112-112). Bucholtz and Hall (2005) argue that identity "emerges from the specific conditions of a linguistic interaction" (what they call the "emergence principle") (p.588) and "[acquires] social meaning in relation to other available identity positions and other social actors" (what they call the "relationality principle") (p. 598). Thus, situations which serve to highlight identity distinctions, such as being the only woman in a group of men or having one's identity overtly commented on by others, may cause particular identities (i.e., gender) to become more salient (Deaux 2001). According to Deaux, "members of . . . minority [groups] . . . are

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more likely to give prominence to this social identification than are members of the dominant majority group" (p. 3). For example, gays and lesbians may attach more importance to their sexual orientation than individuals who identify as heterosexual. This suggests that there may be an interaction between identity type (i.e., minority versus majority, stigmatized versus not stigmatized) and identity strength. The next section explores some of these identity types in more detail.

2.4.2 Types of Identity

As the preceding section has already suggested, researchers interested in identity may choose to focus on a number of different identity types. Kroskrity (1999) notes that a complete typology of identity would include "national, ethnic, racial, class and rank, professional, and gender identities" (p. 111), but does not attempt to provide a more structured way of organizing these identity types. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) take a more theoretical approach in stating their "positionality principle," which emphasizes that "identities encompass (a) macro-level demographic categories; (b) local, ethnographically specific cultural positions; and (c) temporary and interactionally specific stances and participant roles" (p. 592). This expands on Kroskrity in emphasizing that identity encompasses not only broad social categories but more local identity categories (which Bucholtz and Hall argue may have more explanatory value than the traditional social categories imposed by many analysts) and "temporary roles and orientations assumed by [conversational] participants, such as evaluator, joke teller, or engaged listener" (p. 591).

Deaux (1993) divides identity into two main types: personal identity and social identity. She describes personal identity as "those traits and behaviors that [a] person finds self-descriptive" and social identity as "roles or membership categories that a person claims as representative" (p. 6). In later work, she also describes personal identity as "highly idiosyncratic" compared to social identities which "assume some commonalities with others" (Deaux 2001, p. 1). In this way, Deaux (1993) distinguishes between characteristics like "happy" and "loving" and social roles like "mother" (see Figure 2.15 for a visual representation of personal and social identities for one individual). However, Deaux also argues that "social and personal identity are fundamentally interrelated. Personal identity is defined, at least in part, by group memberships, and social categories are infused with personal meaning" (p. 5). Deaux

also sets up another binary way of categorizing identities which is used by many identity researchers, distinguishing between identities which are achieved (i.e., occupational identities) and identities which are ascribed (i.e., ethnicity).

Tracy (2002) draws on some of the same distinctions as Deaux (1993) and Bucholtz and Hall (2005) in proposing four types of social identity. Reflecting on work which has conceptualized identity as either "stable and fixed" or "[changing] . . . to meet the needs of the moment," she concludes that

> "identities . . . are best thought of as stable features of persons that exist prior to any particular situation, *and* are dynamic and situated accomplishments, enacted through talk, changing from one occasion to the next. Similarly, identities are social categories *and* are personal and unique" (p. 17-18).

Based on these scales of stable to dynamic and social to personal, Tracy proposes four types of identity (see Figure 2.16). Master identities, which Tracy describes as stable, unchanging, and "frequently conceived of as contrastive sets" (p. 18), include the traditional social categories of gender, ethnicity, age, and national/regional origin. Personal identities, which are also stable but more personal and unique, encompass identities related to personality, attitudes, and character. Relational identities are those connected to "[relationships] that a person enacts with a particular conversational partner in a specific situation" (p. 19), such as close or distant and equal or unequal. Finally, interactional identities are described by Tracy as the situation- and relationship-specific "roles people take on in a communicative context with regard to specific other people" and include occupations and other roles like "friend," "husband," or "volunteer" (p. 18). Although these identity types are distinct, Tracy notes that they may also be interrelated – for example, a master identity (i.e., female) may be associated with particular personal identities (i.e., caring, submissive). In fact, Tracy states that "persons who take on identities that are not seen as going together (e.g., a male nurse, a female judge) will experience some communicative difficulties in enacting both identities satisfactorily" (p. 18).

While the identity typologies proposed by Bucholtz and Hall (2005) and Tracy (2002) represent convenient ways of organizing identity types for analysts, they may not necessarily represent identity as it understood by non-analysts. Deaux et al. (1995) took a more experimental approach to understanding identity types, requiring subjects to complete a card sort task in which they grouped identity labels based on similarity. A cluster analysis of the results of

this task yielded five basic identity types: (1) personal relationships, (2) vocations and avocations, (3) political affiliation, (4) stigmatized groups, and (5) ethnic or religious groups. Examples of each of these types are presented in Figure 2.17 below. Interestingly, Deaux et al. find that gender identities cluster with personal relationships, likely due to their association with romantic family relationships, and regional identities cluster with ethnic or religious identities. The separation of identities associated with stigmatized groups into their own cluster also suggests, as Deaux et al. note, that social identities may also differ in terms of evaluation and status.
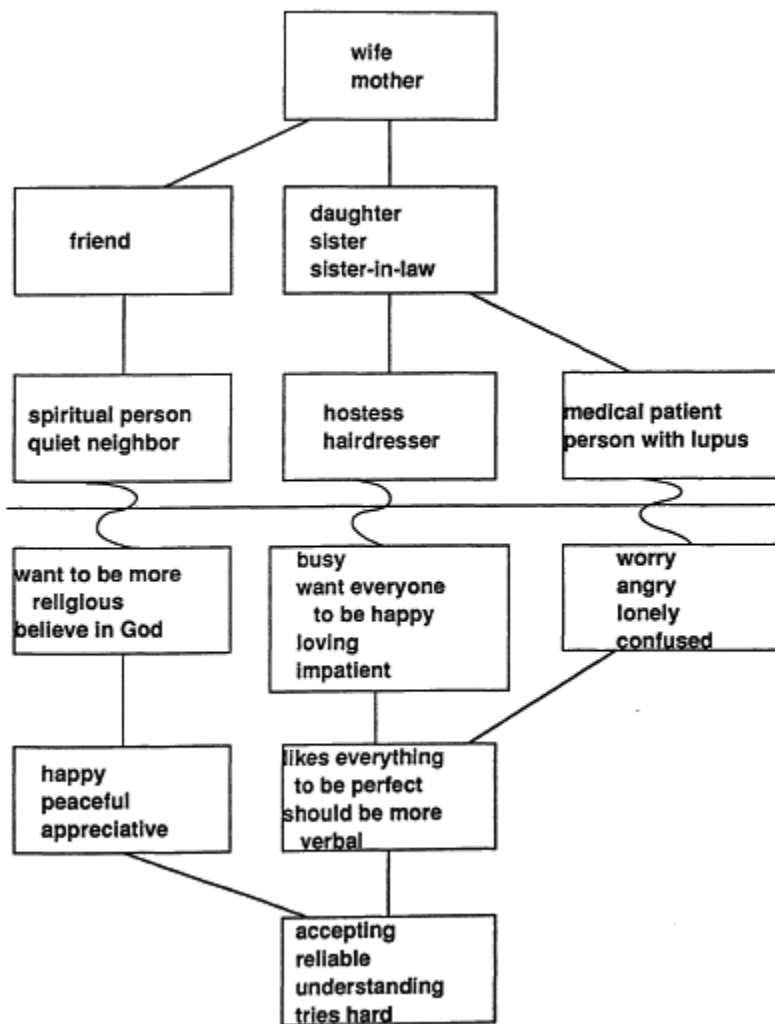
Figure 2.15. Social identities (above the horizontal line) and personal identities (below the horizontal line) for one individual. (Deaux 1992, p. 9)
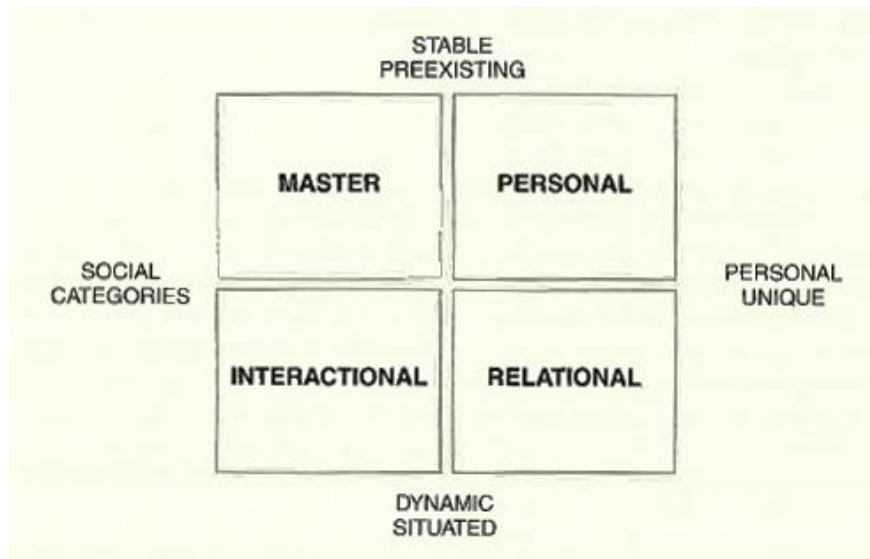
Figure 2.16. Typology of identities. (Tracy 2002, p. 20)

In addition to considering the many ways of categorizing identities into different identity types, it is also worth emphasizing that identities interact and intersect. Deaux (2001) defines intersectionality as "the condition in which a person simultaneously belongs to two or more social categories or social statuses and the unique consequences that result from that combination" (p. 1). Kroskrity (1999) points out that while researchers may in some cases choose to treat different identity types separately, "individuals, as social actors, experience the multiplicity and interactivity of these levels, in their repertoires of identity" (p. 112). Thus, Bowleg (2008) writes that "Black + Lesbian + Woman ≠ Black Lesbian Woman" (p. 312); rather, "being Black and lesbian confers a unique experience, above and beyond being Black or lesbian" (p. 319). Rather than being forced to choose between identities, individuals "may instead maintain dual identification or may use the two sources of identity as the basis for a new emergent form of social identification, for example, as a biracial person" (Deaux 2001, p. 3) Furthermore, while people may engage in self-stereotyping, adopting the stereotypes associated with their identities, they can also redefine identities based on their own experiences; as a result, "the cognitive contents of a social identity are best conceived as a combination of socially shared beliefs and other attributes based on personal experience" (Deaux 2001, p. 5).

Types of Social Identity
Ethnicity and religion
Asian American
Jewish
Southerner
West Indian
Political affiliation
Feminist
Republican
Environmentalist
Vocations and avocations
Psychologist
Artist
Athlete
Military veteran
Relationships
Mother
Parent
Teenager
Widow
Stigmatized identities
Person with AIDS
Homeless person
Fat person
Alcoholic

Figure 2.17. Five identity types. (Deaux et al. 1995, p. 2)

The research summarized above demonstrates that there are a number of different ways of conceptualizing identity types. Although virtually all of the identity types described above are potentially relevant to the study at hand and the methodology used in this study did not prohibit subjects from generating identity labels of any particular type, the study design did encourage subjects to generate identity labels related to social identity rather than personal identity (see §4.3.2). This dissertation will therefore focus primarily on social identity, emphasizing the identities Tracy (2002) describes as "master identities" above – particularly regional identity, which is explored in more detail in the next section.

2.4.3 Regional Identity

Compared to other social identities, such as those related to ethnicity and gender, regional identity has historically received little attention within sociolinguistics (Cramer 2010). In part, this is because region has often been treated as a simple fact by linguists rather than a concept imbued with social meaning. As Johnstone (2004) notes:

"In most work in dialectology and variationist sociolinguistics, place has been implicitly conceived of in objective, physical terms . . . we tend to assume that identifying where someone is, where someone is from, and who else is from there is unproblematic because the relevant criteria are objective and categorical . . . But we do not tend to think about the ways in which 'being in Pennsylvania,' 'being a Texan,' or 'being from a small town' might also be emic, culturally defined categories." (p. 64-65)

Johnstone contrasts this traditional sociolinguistic approach with that of humanistic geography, which treats place as socially constructed and recognizes that "regions are subjectively real but objectively hard to define" (p. 70). By acknowledging that region is socially constructed, we also acknowledge the distinction between simply hailing from a particular region and identifying with that region; as Johnstone writes, "being a 'real' or 'good' Texan can mean acting in certain ways and believing certain things. Being born in Texas can be less diagnostic of Texanness, in this normative sense, than displaying a bumper sticker that says, 'Texan by Choice'" (p. 69). While the former might reflect a fact of someone's group membership, the latter speaks to the emotional, agentive, and social meanings of Texanness (see §2.4.1 above).

Like Johnstone, Llamas (2006) argues for the importance of regional identity, with a particular focus on border areas as "[localities] in which identity construction is particularly fluid and complex" (p. 92). In research on the English town of Middlesbrough, which lies in a dialectal transition area that has been reassigned to several different administrative regions over the past several decades, Llamas finds that speakers from different age groups associate their accent with different regions: older subjects claim to speak with a Yorkshire accent, middle aged subjects claim to speak with a Teeside accent, and younger speakers simply describe their accent as "Middlesbrough," with several subjects claiming that their accents simply can't be associated with a particular region. Although the young males in Llamas' sample use (th) fronting, a Southern England linguistic feature, at high rates, they also show the strongest local orientation.

And while both the male and female young speakers in Llamas' sample exhibit high rates of glottalized (p), a linguistic feature associated with Northeast England, they do not identify with the Northeast, but instead reevaluate glottalized (p) as a Middlesbrough feature. Based on these findings, Llamas argues for the importance of collecting data on regional identity in addition to production data, since inferring identity from production (as linguists have often done) may in fact be misleading and inaccurate. Llamas therefore urges linguists to consider "whether speakers from the same locality would identify the same 'imagined community' (or indeed recognize one imposed on them by the analyst)" when conducting research related to regional identity (p. 96). (See also §2.4.5 below.)

Cramer (2010, 2013) has also argued that borders between regions serve as uniquely interesting sites for the study of identity. In research conducted in Louisville, Kentucky, which is located on an isogloss between the Southern and Midland dialect regions, Cramer (2010) finds that Louisville residents alternate between using Southern and non-Southern dialect features and in draw-a-map tasks assign the city to no region, designate Louisville as its own area, or position it on the border between the South and Midwest. Cramer (2013) further argues that Louisvillians use the city's border status to simultaneously construct identities which are Southern and non-Southern and to "set up a contrast between the 'real' or Deep South and Louisville" (p. 154). In this way, they are able to distance themselves from negative stereotypes of the South (i.e., not wearing shoes, marrying cousins) and characterize their own dialect as "not as bad" as other parts of the South. They also perceive their city as "less Southern" by virtue of being urban, establishing "an implicit icon link between being city-dwellers and speaking well, at least in comparison to being rural residents, who are iconically linked to speaking poorly" (p. 156; see also §2.3 above). In this way, Louisville residents set up a continuum of "real" to "non-real" southernness, with the plantation South and Deep South cities associated with the "real" South, while border towns and urban areas are viewed as less Southern. Thus, Cramer (2010, 2013) critiques what she calls a "static understandings of regionality," arguing instead that regional identity is both fluid and dynamic and that speakers at regional borders are able to draw on a particularly large repertoire of linguistic resources in constructing their identities.

Farther west, Bakos (2013) reaches similar conclusions based on his research with Oklahoma residents. Compared to previous work which found that Oklahomans primarily

considered themselves to be Midwestern, and only secondarily Southern, Bakos finds that this regional identification has reversed, with young Oklahomans primarily identifying as Southern (though they also still identify as Midwestern at fairly high rates). Although all of his subjects are native Oklahomans, Bakos also finds that only 56% strongly agree with a question which asks whether they see themselves as a "typical Oklahoman," and 31% disagree or strongly disagree, which he links to their desire to eschew Southern identity. This stance is supported by an examination of the top ten adjectives Bakos' subjects associate with Oklahoma – "country," "friendly," "cowboy," "farmer," "redneck," "hick," "conservative," "hard-working," "laidback," and "nice." Although several of these adjectives are positive, Bakos argues that his respondents may wish to avoid being labeled rednecks and hicks, and therefore avoid using Southern linguistic features; as Bakos describes it, "many Oklahomans . . . appear to express an influence from the South but do not necessarily embrace it with open arms," instead using a combination of Southern and Midwestern features (p. 66, 165).

Excerpts from Bakos' interviews with his Oklahoman subjects provide additional insight into the ways in which these respondents understand Oklahoma and its relationship to the South. Like Cramer's (2013) interviewees, Bakos' subjects frequently contrast Oklahoma with other parts of the South, describing the Georgia accent as "more Southern" and the Arkansas accent as "more hick" than Oklahoma (p. 69, 88) and mocking the Louisiana accent (p. 88). Opinions on the relationship between Oklahoma and Texas appear to be divided – while some of Bakos' subjects describes Texas as more Southern than Oklahoma (one in particular notes that people from East Texas "have a more Southern 'boll weevil' quality") (p. 88, 99), other subjects perceive their speech as similar to that of Texas, and one claims that Oklahoma does not sound Southern but "more like a Texan" (p. 104, 120). And like Cramer's (2013) subjects, Bakos' tend to describe rural areas of the state as sounding more Southern. Bakos writes that investigating the opinions and attitudes of these Oklahomans makes it possible to gain insight into "what they are trying to accomplish in their speech" and "which aspects of speech Oklahomans knowingly cultivate as part of their identity" (p. 167).

Turning to regional identity within the state of Texas, in research on "country talk" in the region of Texoma along the Texan-Oklahoman border, Hall-Lew and Stephens (2011) find that their Texan subjects frequently characterize their speech as Texan rather than Southern, but their

Oklahoma subjects never describe their speech as uniquely "Oklahoman." While the label "country" was only rarely perceived as negative, "hick" and "redneck" were much more stigmatized. By characterizing their speech as country rather than Southern, hick, or redneck, Texomans "index local membership" and distinguish themselves from "the arrogant cities, the ignorant hick, and the taboo-flouting redneck" (p. 20). Like Cramer (2013) and Bakos' (2013) subjects, Hall-Lew and Stephens' interviewees "presuppose a gradient quality to southernness," setting up the dialects of Alabama, South Carolina, and Mississippi as "much more Southern than ours" (p. 14). According to Hall-Lew and Stephens, this "fluid representation" of southernness and use of the label "country" "allows Texomans to claim the Southern identity without fully equating their language and culture with the areas more widely considered to be prototypically Southern" (p. 15).

Johnstone (1999) further explores the relationship between Texas and the South by examining the use of Southern speech by Texan women. According to Johnstone, Texans see their state as distinct from the rest of the South, both on the basis of its history as a former colony of Mexico and on the basis of its current status as a state which shares features of both the South and the West. When polled, more Texans identify as Texan than Southern or even Texan and Southern. On the other hand, many Texans have ancestors from the South, and "Anglo-Texans who sound stereotypically like Texans also sound like Southerners" (p. 508). Because of the ambiguous position of Texas with respect to the South, Johnstone describes sounding Southern as neither completely ingroup nor completely outgroup for her subjects. "In some cases," according to Johnstone, "speaking any other way is what seems marked; in other cases, sounding Southern is what is marked, switched into" (p. 515).

By presenting the different attitudes towards Southern speech and Southern identity in a set of four Texas women, Johnstone argues that Southern identity is more fluid than traditional sociolinguistic studies have indicated. The women range from Sophie, an older women who uses Southern forms almost categorically and "thinks of herself as combining Western directness with Southern indirectness" (p. 510), to Tracy, a 20 year old college student who uses Southern dialect features more variably and is highly attuned to the ways in which sounding Southern might make her seem like an "inbred backwoods redneck" (p. 511). Johnstone suggests that while "some students in Texas high schools and universities adopt Southern ways of talking . . .

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to express their allegiance to traditional 'small-town' values," migration and increased visibility of Southerners in the media may make younger speakers more aware of the stigma attached to sounding Southern or "rural" (p. 511-512). For these speakers, using Southern speech may instead represent a strategic rhetorical choice, indexing more casual styles or allowing speakers to "turn on the Southern charm" when persuading clients to make a purchase. Johnstone therefore suggests that "region and the speech of people from that region are mediated by individuals' rhetorical and self-expressive choices" and that region is an important symbolic, stylistic, and performative resource (p. 515-6). In focusing on Southern women and highlighting the ways that they use Southern speech to enact (or reject) traditional models of Southern femininity, Johnstone also points to the interaction between Southern identity and other identities, such as gender. These interactions are taken up more fully in the next section.

2.4.4 Interactions Between Regional Identity and Other Identities

Like all identities, regional identity does not operate in a vacuum, but interacts with other identities. For Southern identity in particular, much has been written to suggest that being Southern implies other identities; most frequently, being Southern is associated with being White. Catsam (2008) points to this association when he asks, "Why is it that when most all of us, even the most self-professedly enlightened, think of a Southerner, we think of a white man?" (pg. 237) Likewise, Watts (2008) writes that "in common parlance, Southerners often refers to white Southerners – specifically those white Southerners who proudly identify themselves as such" (pgs. 3-4) and that "some historians . . . attribute Southern distinctiveness to its omnipresent race consciousness" (pg. 7). It therefore seems prudent to consider the relationship between Southern identity and racial and ethnic identities.

Reed and Black (1982) attempt to understand this relationship by examining data survey data collected each election year from 1964 through 1976 to gauge public sentiment towards a variety of political groups. Respondents rated each group on a "feeling thermometer," ranging from "cold" to "warm." Figure 2.18 below presents the results for feelings towards Southerners, comparing the responses of Southern Whites, Southern Blacks, Non-Southern Whites, and Non-Southern Blacks. While the ratings for Whites stay fairly stable over time, both Southern and Non-Southern Blacks demonstrate an increase in "warm" feelings towards Southerners; in fact,

by 1976, Southern Blacks exhibited "warm" feelings towards Southerners at rates equal to Southern Whites. Similarly, the 1976 survey found that Southern Blacks were as likely as Southern Whites to say they "felt close to" Southerners. In interpreting this data, Reed and Black write:

> "Southern blacks have responded [to social and political changes in the South] by reevaluating their white fellow Southerners and by laying claim themselves to the label Southerner . . . In 1964, we suspect, many Southern blacks may have been unclear about whether the category [Southern] was meant to include them and their black friends and neighbors . . . By the 1970s, it appears, many Southern blacks did understand themselves to be Southerners, and they were not unhappy about that fact." (p. 116-117)

Reed and Black also report that in a 1971 survey, 75% of Black respondents to a North Carolina survey considered themselves Southerners - only slightly less than White respondents (82%) (pg. 117). However, Reed and Black caution that data from the election survey does not provide insight into what the referent of "Southerner" might be for Whites, and the percentage of White Southerners who report warm feelings towards did not change between 1964 and 1976. On this basis, they suggest that "'Southerner' still primarily means white Southerner for most of the region's dominant racial group, although many Southern whites would, on second thought, probably allow that Southern blacks are indeed Southerners, too" (pg. 118).

This suggestion is to some degree borne out in more recent work by Thompson and Sloan (2012). Like the authors above, they point out that it is common practice to use the term "Southerners" to refer to White Southerners; however, recent data indicates that rates of Southern identification for Black Southerners have actually surpassed rates of Southern identification for White Southerners (Griffin, Evenson, and Thompson 2005). To better understand this apparent disconnect, Thompson and Sloan conducted interviews with 32 Black and 33 White residents of Tennessee, Louisiana, and North Carolina. They found that their African American respondents were more likely to say that their Southern identity was not important to them (63% of the African American respondents versus 44% of the White respondents); conversely, White respondents were more likely to say that their regional identity was either mildly or very important (56% of the White respondents versus 37% of the African American respondents). Thompson and Sloan's interviewees also drew on different themes in discussing what it means to be Southern – while over half of the Black respondents discussed

race in explaining the importance of their regional identity, none of the White respondents discussed racial issues – not even in discussions of the region's history that touched on the Confederacy and the Civil War. According to Thompson and Sloan, for Whites:

> "history is seen as a hobby, an interesting aspect of the South that is enjoyable to explore, and, for many, a matter of pride or heritage. The deep moral questions of the South's racial past, however, are left untouched. White respondents do not pass judgment on the past, or even, at least openly, view the past through the lens of race. The experience of race for these southerners is an experience of racial privilege, as whites have the luxury of averting their gaze from the uglier scenes of the past. African Americans, especially those who experienced the harsh reality of segregation, do not have this luxury." (pg. 80)
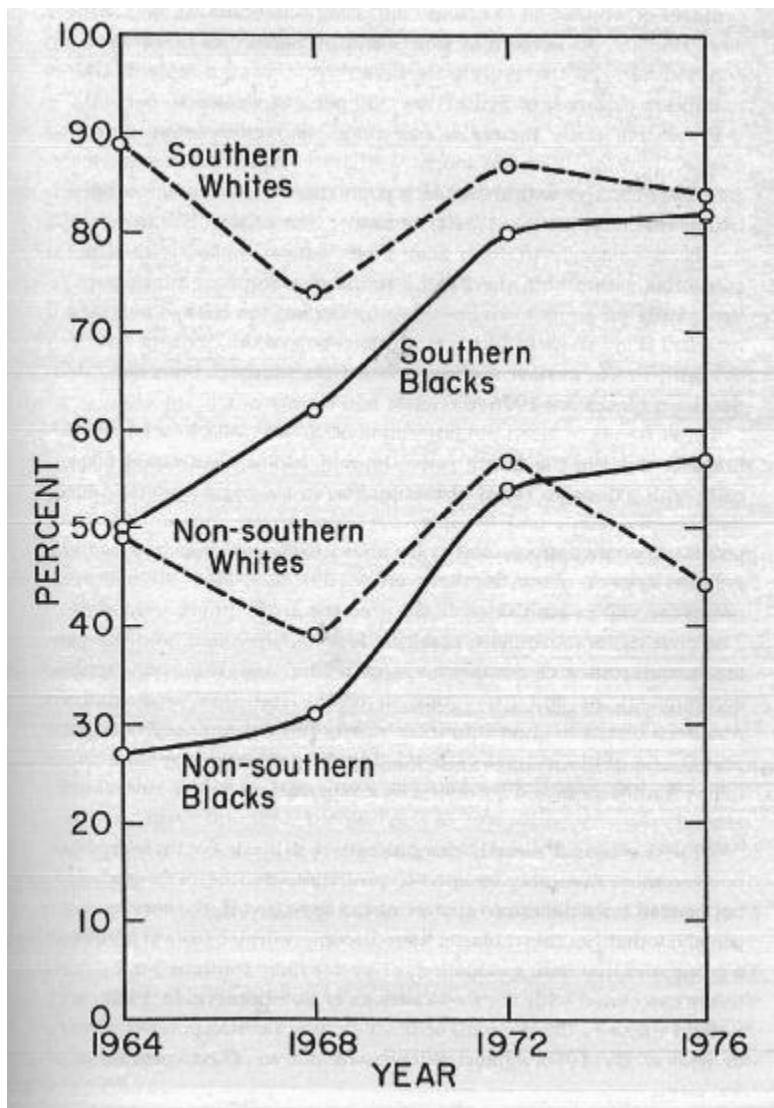
Figure 2.18. Percent who feel "warm" toward Southerners, by race and region, 1964-1976. (Reed and Black 1982, p. 115)

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Thus, while Thompson and Sloan's White interviewees "glossed over the South's history of racial oppression and violence," their Black interviewees drew on precisely that history in elaborating their own Southern identities (p. 92). The frequency with which subjects thought about their regional identity also differed substantially across the two groups: while none of the White Southerners indicated that they never thought about being Southern, 38% of the Black Southerners said that they never thought about being Southern. Furthermore, 23% of the Black respondents expressed uncertainty about whether they were in fact Southern; this uncertainty was not expressed by any of the White respondents.

This trend was reversed for race, with 89% of the Black respondents indicating that their race was an important part of their identity (compared to 46% of White respondents) and 65% indicating that they were made aware of their race on a daily basis (compared to 7% of White respondents). While 41% of Thompson and Sloan's interviewees said that their regional identity was more important than their race, "not a single black respondent said that being southern was more important than being African American" (pg. 86). According to the researchers, "as our white southern respondents were less accustomed to thinking about their own race, our black southern respondents were less accustomed to thinking about their regional identity" (p. 92).

On the basis of their interviews, Thompson and Sloan claim that for White Southerners, their regional identity was "more of a conscious part of their thinking, an identity that they not only think about but also actively use to identify themselves in the larger American context" (pg. 83). Black Southerners, on the other hand, "spoke more emphatically of the importance of their race because of their lived experience as minority group members who are constantly made aware of it" (pg. 84). For their White respondents, Thompson and Sloan argue that regional identity acts as a proxy for racial identity, allowing them to feel that they are part of a larger community, while at the same time allowing them to avoid the discomfort associated with confronting their own privilege. For their Black respondents, "aspects of black culture that might be rooted in the South are still thought of as part of one's racial culture, not just one's southern culture," and region is "seen through the prism of race" (p. 92). Thus, Southern identity may be understood and expressed differently by Black and White Southerners.

Drawing on the results of the Southern Focus Poll, which was administered biannually to inhabitants of Southern states from 1991 through 2001, Griffin, Evenson, and Thompson (2005) present additional data on the relationship between Southern identity and ethnic and religious identities. Based on responses to the question "Do you consider yourself a Southerner, or not?" they report that while Whites predictably exhibit very high rates of Southern identification (75%), African Americans actually identify as Southern at slightly higher rates (78%) (see Figure 2.19 below). They therefore conclude that African Americans "seemingly see no direct contradiction between their racial and regional identities" (p. 11; but see Thompson and Sloan 2012 above). The same does not seem to be true for Hispanics and Asians, who identify as Southern at rates of only 51% and 28%, respectively.

A similar pattern is observed for religion, with 79% of Protestants identifying as Southern compared to only 55% of Catholics, 51% of the unchurched, and 33% of Jews (see Figure 2.20 below). Griffin et al. point out that several of the groups that identify as Southern at lower rates (namely, Hispanics, Catholics, and Jews) are disproportionately found in states that already identify at lower rates, including Florida and Texas. They also note that 86% of Deep South residents identified as Southern compared to 69% of peripheral South residents, that individuals judged by the interviewer to have "strong" Southern accents exhibited Southern identification rates 51% higher than individuals who did not have strong Southern accents, and that there was an 11% difference between rural residents and urban residents (at 80% and 69%, respectively).

Griffin et al. suggest several explanations for why these groups identify as Southern as lower rates. First, "they may feel themselves unwelcome by those purporting to be 'authentic' southerners" (p. 14). Second, many minority group members may already have access to "vibrant ethnic or religious sub-cultures that provide rich identity and material resources—for example, community, a sense of belonging, and social networks—and so have little desire or need to be identified with their region" (p. 14). Third, their other identities may lead to "culture clash" leading to conflict between their regional identities and their other identities. Finally, they may simply lack familiarity with the South and therefore do not identify with the region.
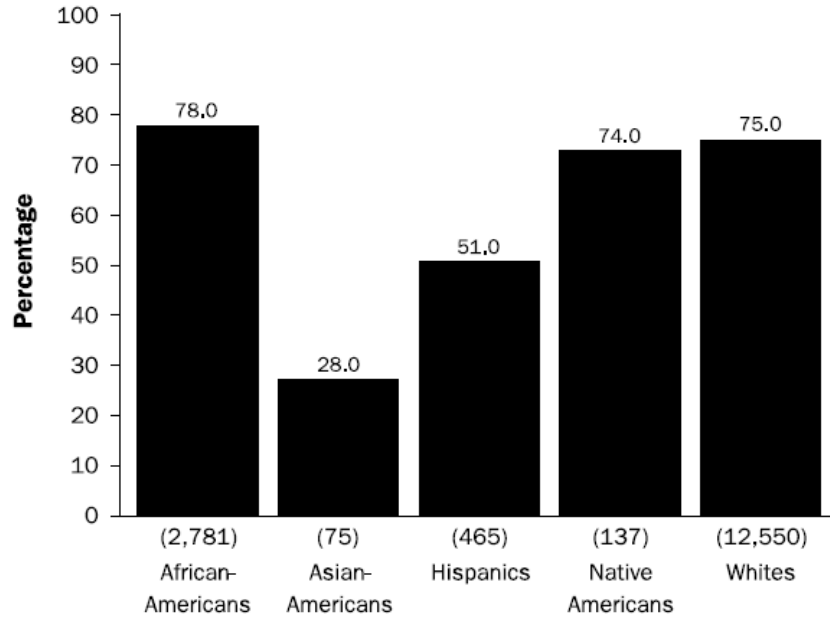
Figure 2.19. Percent of respondents claiming Southern identity by race and ancestry. Numbers in parenthesis are the number of respondents in each group. (Griffin, Evenson, and Thompson 2005, p. 12)
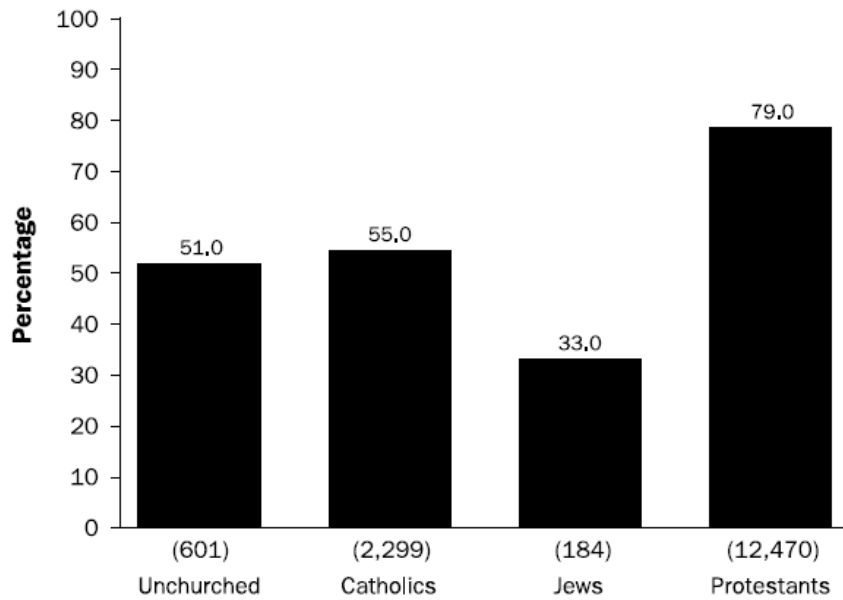
Figure 2.20. Percent of respondents claiming Southern identity by religion. Numbers in parenthesis are the number of respondents in each group. (Griffin, Evenson, and Thompson 2005, p. 12)

Griffin et al. also report differences across ethnic and religious groups in examining "lapsed Southerners," those who ascriptively should identify as Southern but do not, and "assimilated Southerners," those who migrated from other regions and are least ascriptively Southern but still choose to identify as Southern (Reed 1983). They report that Native Americans from other regions are the most likely to assimilate (44%), while African Americans, Whites, and Hispanics assimilate at lower rates (30%), and Asian Americans only rarely assimilate (10%). While the lapsing rate for Whites is only 3%, that number is tripled for African Americans (9%), and Hispanics are eight time as likely as Whites to lapse (25%). Similar patterns are observed for religion, with Baptists and Church of Christ members more likely to assimilate and Catholics and the irreligious most likely to lapse. This suggests that other social identities, particularly ethnic and religious identities, have serious consequences for regional identity.

In considering the relationship between regional identity and ethnic identity, it should be emphasized that Texas occupies a particularly important position as an "access state" or point of entry into the United States (Bankston 2007). According to Bankston, Texas has higher immigration rates than any other Southern state and is settled by more immigrants than any state except California and New York. Texas is home to the third largest Vietnamese population in the U.S., and Texas has historically had a large population of Mexican-born immigrants; Bankston writes that "By the end of [the Mexican Revolution], nearly one out of every five Texans was either of Mexican birth or was the child of a Mexican-born father" (p. 27). This immigration to Texas has continued to the present day, with over 60% of Texan immigrants coming from Mexico in 2000 and 2005. This distinguishes Texas from other parts of the South, which has historically experienced little immigration from Latin America and has seen little immigration in general compared to the rest of the country at the turn of the 21st Century. This suggests that immigration may play a particularly important role in Texas, and that there is more work to be done on the interaction between Southern, Texan, and Hispanic identity in the state.

While the discussion above has focused on the relationship between ethnic identity and Southern identity, interactions between Southern identity and other identities have also been touched on by several researchers working in the field of Southern studies. As alluded to by Catsam's (2008) question above ("Why is it that when most all of us, even the most self-

professedly enlightened, think of a Southerner, we think of a white man?"), the prototypical Southerner is usually male. Woods (2009) reports that compared to the teenage girls she studied, boys more frequently identified as Southern and "engaged in Southern behavior" (p. 58). The term "redneck" in particular has tended to be reserved for "rural, working-class, white male Southerners" (Shirley 2010, p. 37).

While less well-studied than ethnicity or gender, there is also some work which has examined interactions between Southern identity and sexual orientation. Black and Rhorer (1995), for example, conducted interviews with gays and lesbians in Appalachia and found that many of their subjects "had not resolved their sense of conflict over being from the mountains" (pg. 21) and were "reluctant to identify as Appalachian" (p. 26). However, like many of the identities mentioned above, there is still more work to be done on the interaction between Southern identity and sexual orientation. The analysis of the interviews in this dissertation, while designed to focus primarily on regional identity, will touch on the relationship between Southern identities and other social identities as relevant to understanding the ways in which Deer Park residents understand the meaning of southernness and their own identities.

2.4.5 Measuring Identity

The sections above have demonstrated that identity is complex, fluid, and dynamic. As such, it is perhaps not surprising that approaches to measuring identity have varied. This section will therefore attempt to highlight some of the approaches to measuring identity that have been employed by researchers, with a particular emphasis on how identity has been measured and studied within the field of linguistics.

One of the earliest linguistic studies to examine regional identity was Labov (1963). Labov conducted his research on the island of Martha's Vineyard, which had shifted over time from an economy reliant on fishing and whaling to one reliant on tourism. Labov describes this shift as "a threat to [the islanders'] personal independence" (p. 297). Examining rates of centralized /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ in sociolinguistic interviews with native islanders, Labov found that ties to the island were more predictive of use of than geography, occupation, ethnicity, or age alone:

> "It is apparent that the immediate meaning of this phonetic feature is 'Vineyarder.'
> When a man says [rɐɪt] or [hɐʊs], he is unconsciously establishing the fact that he

belongs to the island: that he is one of the natives to whom the island really belongs."
(Labov 1963, p. 305)

As evidence for this claim, Labov presents data illustrating that teenagers who planned to leave the island when they graduated from high school were far less likely to centralize than teenagers who planned to remain on the island after graduation. Reviewing Labov's sample as a whole, in Table 2.1 it is evident that when grouped according to orientation towards the island, there is a clear pattern among Labov's subjects – people with positive attitudes toward the island centralize often and people with negative attitudes toward the island centralize only rarely.

Total Persons	Orientation	Centralization Index for /aɪ/	Centralization Index for /aʊ/
40	Positive	0.63	0.62
19	Neutral	0.32	0.42
6	Negative	0.09	0.08

Table 2.1. Centralization and orientation towards Martha's Vineyard. (Reproduced from Labov 1963, p. 306.)

While Labov's research was groundbreaking in asserting the importance of considering regional identity for understanding sociolinguistic variation, it set an unfortunate precedent for the measurement of identity within the field. For the high schoolers Labov studied, regional identity was assessed via a single question about whether they intended to remain on the island after graduation. For the larger sample, Labov writes that he "[examined] the total interview for each informant" to determine whether their orientation towards the island was positive, neutral, or negative, but provides no examples of the kinds of statements he relied on in making this determination (p. 306).

This approach has influenced later researchers. Some sociolinguists have suggested that patterns of language use may be explained by identity without directly assessing identity, as when Wolfram, Hazen, and Schilling-Estes (1999) write that patterns of weren't leveling on Ocracoke Island are "most likely related to islander identity" (p. 99). Others have drawn conclusions about identity without providing details on exactly how they measured identity (Hazen 2002).

Many researchers working in quantitative sociolinguistics have attempted to measure identity based on responses to a single, closed-response question. Bailey (1991) and Tillery (1997), for example, assess regional identity via a single question which asked subjects to rate Texas as a place to live. Bailey and Tillery find a correlation between these ratings and rates of (ay) monophthongization, leading them to conclude that "monophthongal /aɪ/ reflects a strong identity with the state" (Tillery 1997, p. 437). Similarly, Tillery, Wikle, and Bailey (2000) find a correlation between a single question asking respondents whether they consider themselves to be a Southerner (from the Southern Focus Poll; see Griffin, Evenson, and Thompson 2005 above) and self-reported use of the Southern lexical item "y'all."

Other researchers have drawn on responses to a few of these closed questions in assessing identity. Underwood (1988), for example, created a composite "Index of Texan Identification" to assign identity scores to his Texan subjects based on their responses to questions which asked them to indicate whether they feel closer to other Texans than people from other regions, whether they would be more likely to hire someone from Texas than someone from another state, and whether they would be more likely to vote for a politician born and raised in Texas than a politician from another state. While (ay) monophthongization does not appear to be clearly linked to age, city type (rural, town, or city), education, sex, class, or ethnicity for the speakers in his sample, it is directly related to his speakers' identification scores, with subjects who identify more strongly as Texan monophthongizing (ay) at higher rates.

Hasty (2006) asked subjects where they saw themselves living in five years, where they saw themselves retiring, and to rate their regional dialect use on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 indicating least use and 5 indicating most use of regional dialect). Hasty attempts to classify each of his subjects as either a Southern identifier or non-identifier based on the combined responses to these questions. He finds that for 70 of his 90 subjects, the combined responses to these three questions align allow the speaker to be categorized as either an identifier or non-identifier. However, Hasty does not provide clear guidelines for other researchers to use in combining the results of these questions to assess identity. Furthermore, he writes that for the 20 of his subjects "there was some ambiguity as to their identity, and thus their ratings were not used in the tabulation of the identity results" (p. 22). While Hasty did find some correlations between his subjects' regional identity and their ratings of speech samples, his sample included

few subjects who did not identify with the South, his methodology may be difficult to replicate, and his omission of subjects with "ambiguous" identity from the identity results excludes a large subset of his sample from consideration. In pointing out some of the challenges associated with measuring identity, Hasty suggests that future researchers should "[attempt] . . . to ascertain the true cultural identity of respondents" (p. 66).

Like Hasty, Woods (2009) draws on more than one approach. First, she asked the high school students she studied to indicate where they planned to go to college; the assumption in this case was that students who planned to leave the South to attend college did not identify strongly with the South. Second, she examined her interviews and "[searched] for statements and actions that clearly showed an alliance with South Carolina and the South or, alternatively, a preference for the world outside," assigning her subjects to Southern or non-Southern identified groups based on these statements. While identity as measured by the college questions was significantly correlated with (ay) monophthongization, the latter approach did not yield significant results. Woods concludes that "a better, more comprehensive approach is needed for determining subjects' regional identity" (p. 145).

While the approaches to measuring identity summarized above clearly have some value in explaining sociolinguistic variation, it is not clear how well whether these questions measure the underlying variable of identity. For example, subjects may plan to stay in their regions for a variety of reasons (i.e., jobs, limited financial resources), not all of which are indicative of identification with their region. Most of the methods described above do not involve any direct input from subjects about the importance of their identities, but instead gather data intended to serve as a proxy for identity. Many of these approaches also treat identity as a categorical variable rather than a continuum along which subjects may express stronger or weaker identity.

Llamas et al. (2010) attempt to address some of these concerns by adapting Redinger's (2010) "magnitude continuum" to research on regional identity. Redinger highlights some of the 5-point or 7-point Likert scales used to collect ranking data in much attitude research, including the ambiguous meaning of the scale midpoints, challenges related to determining the best number of points to reflect respondents' degree of sensitivity when making attitude judgments, and improper treatment of Likert scale ratings as interval data for statistical analysis when it is not clear that the intervals between points on the scale are equal. He instead proposes a

"magnitude continuum" consisting of a line with "Disagree" written at one end and "Agree" at the other end (see Figure 2.21 below). Informants indicate their agreement or disagreement with particular statements by drawing a vertical line anywhere along the horizontal continuum.
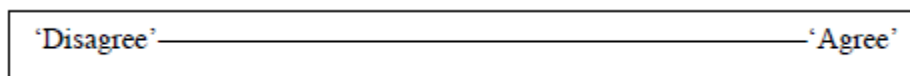
Figure 2.21. The magnitude continuum. (Redinger 2010, p. 106)

While this task is likely to be less familiar to subjects and does not make the meaning of the midpoint less ambiguous, Redinger argues that this method of attitude measurement gives informants "greater freedom of expression," results in finer-grained continuous data for the researcher, removes the difficulty involved in choosing the best number of arbitrary points on the scale, produces interval data which allows for greater flexibility in statistical testing, encourages subjects to use the entire scale rather than avoiding the extreme ends of the scale, and is easier for subjects to understand because there are no numbers on the scale to interpret (while researchers can still convert their data to numerical scores later).

Llamas et al. (2010) then adapt this tool in their research on sound change and national identity at the Scottish-English border. Rather than requiring their subjects to indicate their agreement with attitudinal statements, they are interested in understanding the importance of various national and regional identity labels for their subjects. They therefore replace the "Disagree" and "Agree" of Redinger's continuum with "Most Important" and "Important," and instruct their subjects to rank identity labels along the continuum (see Figure 2.22 below for an example).
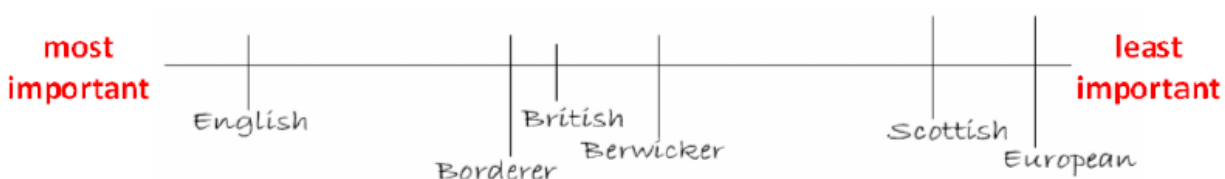
Figure 2.22. Magnitude continuum ranking of "most important" and "least important" national and regional identity labels. (Llamas et al. 2010)

While the approach used by Llamas et al. (2010) has many advantages, it should be borne in mind that none of these quantitative approaches to understanding identity provide any insight

into what these identities mean to subjects themselves. As Thompson (2007) notes, "the South can mean many things for many different individuals and groups" (p. 220). Deaux (2001) makes a strong case for the utility of qualitative methods in identity research:

> "In this approach, the investigator is more willing to let the person herself define the domains in which identity is relevant and the dimensions by which it is characterized. Qualitative methods are generally more successful than strictly quantitative methods in providing a context for identity, allowing the respondent to relate themes of self to the historical and social events in which they developed and are played out. Qualitative assessment of identity has been particularly successful in exploring and highlighting conditions of intersectionality. By turning to the participant's own narrative, the investigator is better able to appreciate the complex ways in which various identities may combine and overlap, as well as gain a sense of the ways in which those combinations may shift over time and place" (Deaux 2001, p. 7)

Similarly, Greene (2010) argues that asking subjects directly about speech permits a deeper understanding of "local ideologies" and "local categories of meaning" – in the case of his research, categories like "Eastern Kentucky accent," "bad grammar," and "hick" (p. 133). The identity study presented §4 of this dissertation therefore takes a mixed methods approach in utilizing both quantitative data, using the magnitude continuum tool described above, and qualitative data, drawn from semi-structured interviews, to examine the importance of regional identity and meaning of regional identity for Deer Park residents.

2.4.5 Summary

The research summarized above has presented several different approaches to defining identity, drawing on definitions that emphasize either simple group membership or more active construction of identity. Several different identity typologies were presented, with particular attention given to the distinction between personal and social identities. This section has also described some of the shortcomings of traditional sociolinguistic approaches to region, and has drawn on regional identity research to argue for the important role of identity in border regions and to illustrate the ways in which Southerners set up many "Souths" in order to associate themselves with features of the South that they find desirable while distancing themselves from the negative stereotypes of southernness. The interaction between Southern identities and other identities, such as ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation, was also discussed. Finally, this

section reviewed common approaches to measuring identity and presented arguments for the benefits of a mixed methods approach to analyzing identity.

2.5 DEER PARK, TEXAS

2.5.1 Demographics

Following Oxley (2009, 2014a, 2014b), the subjects in this dissertation all come from the city of Deer Park, Texas. Deer Park was chosen as a research site based on its status as a suburban city and its location within Texas which, as the research summarized above demonstrates, may be considered Southern according to some criteria but not others. The author's status as a Deer Park native also facilitated the process of finding subjects in the community.

Figure 2.23. Map of Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston, Texas. (City of Deer Park 2009)

In early research in Deer Park, Oxley (2009) found that residents of the city often described their community in terms of its similarities to and differences from two other references points: the nearby cities of Pasadena, Texas, and Houston, Texas (see Figure 2.23 above). These cities serve as interesting points of comparison because they differ from Deer Park in size, ethnic diversity, income, and education (see Table 2.2 below). A review of the 2010 U.S. Census data indicates that there are significant size differences between these cities: while the population of Deer Park has more than doubled since 1970, its population of 32,010 is

still much smaller than Pasadena's 149,043 and Houston's 2,099,451. The demographics of the towns also differ; while Deer Park is 70% White and 26% Hispanic, Pasadena is 33% White and 62% Hispanic. Houston is 26% White, 44% Hispanic, 23% Black, and 6% Asian. The 2007-2011 American Community Survey indicates that the median household income is $75,557 in Deer Park, $46,998 in Pasadena, and $44,124 in Houston, and the percentage of the population with a high school degree or higher is 87% in Deer Park, 69% in Pasadena, and 74% in Houston.

	Deer Park, TX	Pasadena, TX	Houston, TX
Population[†]	32,010	149,043	2,099,451
Ethnic Composition[†]	70% White, 26% Hispanic	33% White, 62% Hispanic	26% White, 44% Hispanic, 23% Black, 6% Asian
Median Household Income[††]	$75,557	$46,998	$44,124
% with High School Degree or Higher[††]	87%	69%	74%

Table 2.2. Population, ethnic composition, median household income, and education for Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston, Texas. ([†] 2010 U.S. Census, [††] 2007-2011 American Community Survey)
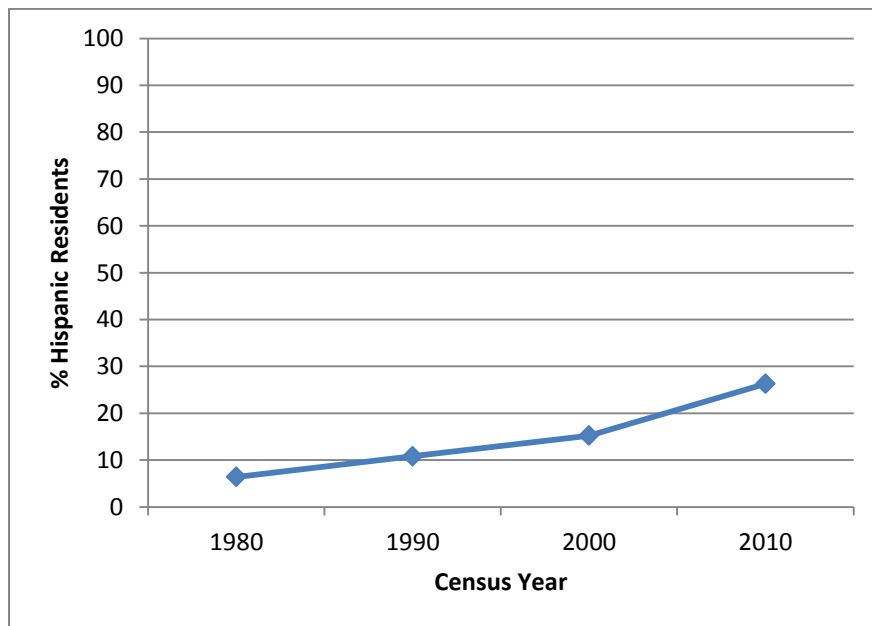
Figure 2.24. Hispanic residents as percentage of Deer Park population over time. (1980 U.S. Census, 1990 U.S. Census, 2000 U.S. Census, 2010 U.S. Census)

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As noted above, Deer Park has grown substantially over the last several decades. The Hispanic population of the city has shown particularly rapid growth, making up only 6.4% of the city's population in 1980 and growing to 26.3% of the city's population by 2010 (see Figure 2.24 below). This growth in the overall population and in the Hispanic population of the city was commented on by many Deer Park residents in both the online perceptual dialectology study and in the follow-up in-person interviews (see below).

2.5.2 Community Perspectives

The contrast between Texas and the South evidenced in many of the studies above was also found in comments from Deer Park subjects in Oxley (2009). Deer Park was described as "not as Southern as the rest of the South" and less agricultural than other parts of the South, with an accent that is "folksy" but not "comically Southern." Reflecting on the Southern accent, one subject explained that "we don't sound twangy like a country music video or anything like that. Here in Deer Park it doesn't seem like they have it as bad" (p. 13).

While some Deer Park residents agreed that they would consider themselves Southerners, others indicated that they would instead consider themselves Texan. Describing this contrast, one subject commented that "Texans are a little more independent, and they think of themselves more as Texans than they do as Americans" (p. 14).

Deer Park residents frequently characterized Deer Park as a small town in comparison to Pasadena and Houston. Beyond literal size, Deer Park was described as having a "small town feel." Speakers were also aware of demographic differences between the cities and of changing demographics in Deer Park, with one subject commenting that "when I first moved here it was definitely distinctly Anglo, but now in this period we have turned a lot Hispanic into Deer Park now. So it's a pretty big change over the eighteen, nineteen years I've lived here" (p. 13).

Oxley (2014a), which draws on the same dataset as this dissertation, also examined Deer Park residents' perceptions of city and state dialect standardness and similarity. Oxley's (2014a) subjects disagreed about the standardness of Texas – while Texas fell near the middle of the state standardness rankings, 8% of subjects believed that Texas was the most standard state in the United States, suggesting that some Texans may exhibit high linguistic security. Although a few subjects noted that they had been chastised or teased for speaking with a Southern accent,

commentary from other subjects suggested that they perceived Texas as more standard than other parts of the South. At the city level, Oxley (2014a) writes that "subject comments related to city standardness primarily followed the logic that cities with high rates of interdialectal contact would create the environment in which a standard variety would be necessary, and that Houston would therefore surpass both Deer Park and Pasadena in terms of standardness" (p. 40).

The similarity data indicated that Deer Park respondents considered Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Florida most similar to Texas in terms of dialect. Subject commentary revealed that diversity and demographic characteristics were factors that many subjects drew on in choosing similar states; in particular, states with large Hispanic populations were often perceived as similar to Texas. Several subjects also chose states as similar to Texas on the basis of being only "partly" Southern or possessing a blend of stereotypically Southern and non-Southern features. The same factors which surfaced above – southernness and ethnic diversity – along with urbanness, were the primary dimensions subjects drew upon in discussing the similarity of the Pasadena and Houston dialects to the Deer Park dialect.

In contrast to Oxley (2014a), this dissertation focuses specifically on the dimension of southernness. However, many of the themes presented above for the dialect standardness and similarity data are also relevant for understanding the ways in which Deer Park residents understand dialect southernness and their own regional identities.

2.5.3 Summary

As a suburban city in Texas which differs substantially from the two nearby cities of Pasadena and Houston, Deer Park is an interesting site for research into perceptual dialectology and regional identity. The changing demographics of the city, including a rapidly growing Hispanic population, suggest that increased ethnic diversity may be particularly salient for Deer Park residents. In fact, previous work in Deer Park suggests that ethnic diversity, along with urbanness, is among the factors which Deer Park subjects comment on most in describing their city and state and the ways in which they differ from other parts of the South. This dissertation further examines the role that these factors play in shaping Deer Park residents' perceptions of dialect southernness and regional identity.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has laid the groundwork for this dissertation by providing an overview of the relevant research that this work builds upon. §2.2 focused on approaches to defining the South, drawing on research from history, geography, sociology, and perceptual dialectology. §2.3 turned to rural, urban, and suburban language and identity. §2.4 examined ways of defining "identity," identity typologies, regional identity, interactions between identities, and identity measurement. Finally, §2.5 provided additional information about Deer Park, the city where the research for this dissertation was conducted. The remaining chapters draw on the concepts and theoretical traditions summarized above, beginning with §3, which describes the first of two studies for this dissertation: the online perceptual dialectology study.

CHAPTER 3: SOUTHERNNESS AND PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the first of two studies included in this dissertation, the online perceptual dialectology survey. At the state level, the goals of this study were to understand which states Deer Park residents consider to be part of the South and which state's dialect they consider to be most Southern. At the city level, this study was also designed to examine Deer Park residents' perceptions of the southernness of the Deer Park dialect as compared to nearby cities and the state of Texas as a whole.

For this study, 90 subjects from Deer Park, Texas, were asked to indicate which states they considered part of the South, to identify smaller subregions within the South, and to choose the one state that they considered most Southern. At a more local level, subjects were asked to compare their city to the nearby cities of Pasadena and Houston, which differ from Deer Park in size, ethnic diversity, median income, and education level. While many of the questions included in the survey for this study focused on gathering more quantitatively-oriented ratings data, the survey also included open-ended questions designed to provoke subjects to reflect on and explain their responses. Qualitative analysis of the responses to these questions was conducted, and the results serve to clarify and provide context for interpreting the quantitative results. Additionally, the demographic data collected in the survey also permitted analysis of some differences across age groups.

This chapter is organized as follows. §3.2 describes the methods for this study, including the subjects (§3.2.1), the survey (§3.2.2), and the quantitative and qualitative analysis (§3.2.3 and §3.2.4, respectively). §3.3 describes the quantitative and qualitative state-level results (§3.3.1 and §3.3.2, respectively). §3.4 describes the quantitative and qualitative city-level results (§3.4.1 and §3.4.2, respectively). Finally, §3.5 recaps the major findings of this study.

3.2 METHODS

3.2.1 Subjects

The subjects for this study were primarily recruited through emails to the author's family, friends, and acquaintances and through postings on social networking sites. Physical copies of the recruitment flyer were also posted in the workplaces of some subjects, leading to additional recruitment within their offices (see Appendix A). Subjects were encouraged to share the link to the attitudinal survey with their family and friends, which allowed the subject pool to grow via the snowball or "friend of a friend" method.

To be eligible to participate in the study, subjects had to be native speakers of English who were at least 18 years and either grew up in Deer Park, Texas, or were currently living in Deer Park. Bilingual and multilingual subjects were eligible to participate provided that English was one of the languages they spoke natively.

The survey remained open for nearly two months, during which time 90 subjects completed the survey, all of whom completed a consent form (Appendix B) and a demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire included questions about subject sex, age, ethnicity, education level, occupation, language background, and residence history. Subjects were also asked whether they had taken any courses in which they had learned about dialects of the United States, with "dialect" defined as "a variety of language that differs from other varieties in linguistic features like words, phrases, and pronunciations."

Based on the demographic questionnaire, 74 of the 90 subjects were Caucasian (C), 8 subjects were Hispanic (H), and 3 subjects were Asian (A). 1 subject described her ethnicity as "mixed" (M), 1 subject as Caucasian and American Indian (CAI), and 1 subject as Caucasian and Hispanic (CH). 2 subjects self-identified as simply "American" (Am). All references to the subjects below will use speaker codes which indicate their ethnicity, gender, and age; for example, speaker HF29 is a Hispanic female who is 29 years old. If more than one subject of the same ethnicity, gender, and age participated in the survey, an additional letter is appended to the speaker code; for example, the first 33 year old Caucasian female to participate in the survey is coded CF33A, the second is coded CF33B, and so on.

Given the importance of age as a social variable in previous production research in Deer Park (Oxley 2009), age was again chosen as a social variable for investigation in this study. Following Oxley (2009), subjects were divided into three age groups intended to represent different life stages. Subject numbers by age group and sex are provided in Table 3.1.

	Youngest Age Group (Age 18-31)	Middle Age Group (Age 32-47)	Oldest Age Group (Age 48-67)	Total
Male	10	5	17	32
Female	27	16	15	58
Total	37	21	32	90

Table 3.1. Subject numbers by age group and sex. (n = 90)

3.2.2 Attitudinal Survey

After completing the consent form and demographic questionnaire, subjects began the survey. The introduction to the survey emphasized that subjects would be asked for their opinions and noted that "there is no right or wrong answer." The survey was divided into 3 main parts focused on dialect similarity, standardness, and southernness. Pages of the survey which asked subjects to reflect on the similarity, standardness, or southernness of states included a map of the United States with state boundaries and two letter state abbreviations (see Appendix C). Each page of the survey ended with an open-ended question which allowed subjects to comment on any of their responses.

The results presented in this dissertation will focus on the questions related to dialect southernness. Subjects were first provided with a list of the 50 states and asked to indicate which states were places where the Southern dialect is spoken. Based on comments from previous research indicating that subjects may consider some states to be "partly Southern," subjects were instructed to include states where "the Southern dialect is spoken in some areas but not all." A follow-up question asked subjects to indicate which of the states they had chosen were only partly Southern. Based on the list of states they had included in the South, subjects were also asked if they could break up the South into smaller dialect regions, and if so, were instructed to provide a name for each subregion in the South and list the states they would include in that subregion. Subjects were asked to identify any linguistic features they associated with the South

and any linguistic features they considered distinctly Texan. As in the sections above, subjects were also asked to choose the one state they considered most Southern in terms of dialect. The final questions related to southernness asked subjects to rate the southernness of Deer Park, Pasadena, Houston, and Texas as a whole on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 labeled "not very Southern," 2 labeled "somewhat not Southern," 3 labeled "neither Southern nor not Southern," 4 labeled "somewhat Southern," and 5 labeled "very Southern."

The final three questions in the survey were open-ended and asked subjects to compare the cities of Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston, describing any dialect differences or other differences they had noticed between the cities.

The entire survey, including the consent form, demographic questionnaire, main survey questions, and optional comment boxes, consisted of 45 questions divided among 9 pages and took most participants about 30 minutes to complete.

3.2.3 Quantitative Analysis

Descriptive statistics generated for the city and state rating data included frequencies of each response choice, mean scores, and standard deviations. Data were also summarized by respondent age group to explore potential differences in responses across age groups. Additionally, the total number of states in the South provided by each respondent was calculated, which allowed for investigation of the maximum, minimum, and average number of states identified as part of the South. A map shading macro for Microsoft Excel (Barbetta 2009) was used to generate maps of the United States shaded according to the mean rating for each state or the percentage of respondents who chose that state. T tests were also conducted to determine whether the ratings of Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston differed significantly from each other. Additional methodological details are presented at the beginning of the results sections below.

3.2.4 Qualitative Analysis

Several of the survey questions were open-ended and asked subjects to explain their responses or provided them with the opportunity to volunteer additional information. These responses were sorted into responses concerning labels for subregions within the South, similarity, standardness, or southernness, with responses concerning more than one of these

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topics included in more than one category. As a first pass at exploring themes within the open-ended responses, the AntConc concordance software (Anthony 2007) was used to examine frequent n-grams within the open-ended question responses. For example, "Deep South" was mentioned 24 times while "East Texas" and "South Texas" were each mentioned by 8 times, indicating that these regions were important to several subjects. Comments related to ethnicity and diversity were common in responses comparing Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston to each other, with "more diverse" mentioned 11 times, "ethnic groups" mentioned 7 times, "Hispanic population" mentioned 13 times, and "melting pot" mentioned 3 times. References to city size and type were also common, such as "small town" (mentioned 7 times), "big city" (mentioned 4 times), and "metropolitan city" (mentioned 4 times). Social class and education were also discussed by several subjects, with "level of education" mentioned 4 times, "middle class" mentioned 4 times, and "working class" mentioned 4 times. Language differences were also clearly of importance, with "Spanish speaking" mentioned 9 times.

These n-grams informed the initial set of themes (i.e., ethnicity and diversity, small town versus big city, social class and income, education) used in grouping responses within each of the categories (subregion labels, similarity, standardness, and southernness) above. Related responses within each category were grouped together, and the set of themes was expanded via content analysis of the responses (Smith 2000) to accommodate additional comments which did not fit neatly into any of the themes above. The most common themes are discussed in results section below, with supporting examples in the form of representative quotes from individual subjects.

3.3 STATE-LEVEL RESULTS

3.3.1 Quantitative Results

Methodology Clarifications

As described in §3.2.2 above, the methodology of this study differs from previous perceptual dialectology work: rather than providing subjects with a blank map and allowing them to draw and label regions in a freestyle fashion, survey respondents were presented with a list of the fifty states in the United States and asked to indicate which states were places where

the Southern dialect is spoken. This question was accompanied by a map of the United States which included state boundaries and two letter state abbreviations, and subjects were free to check as many states as they desired. Given previous research which indicated that subjects may consider some states to be "partly Southern," the directions noted that subjects could include states where the Southern dialect is spoken "in some areas but not all of the state." Subjects were additionally asked whether the South could be broken up into smaller dialect regions, and if so, to label those regions and indicate which states would belong to each subregion. By instructing respondents to focus on the South and regions within the South rather than perceptual regions throughout the United States, this modification of the draw-a-map task encouraged respondents to reflect specifically upon the meaning of southernness and the criteria used in the process of categorizing a particular state or region as Southern.

Number of States in the South

The number of states chosen by each subject as part of the Southern dialect region ranged from a minimum of 4 states to a maximum of 18 states, with an average of 11 states chosen by each respondent. Figure 3.1 provides a histogram of the number of states chosen as part of the South.
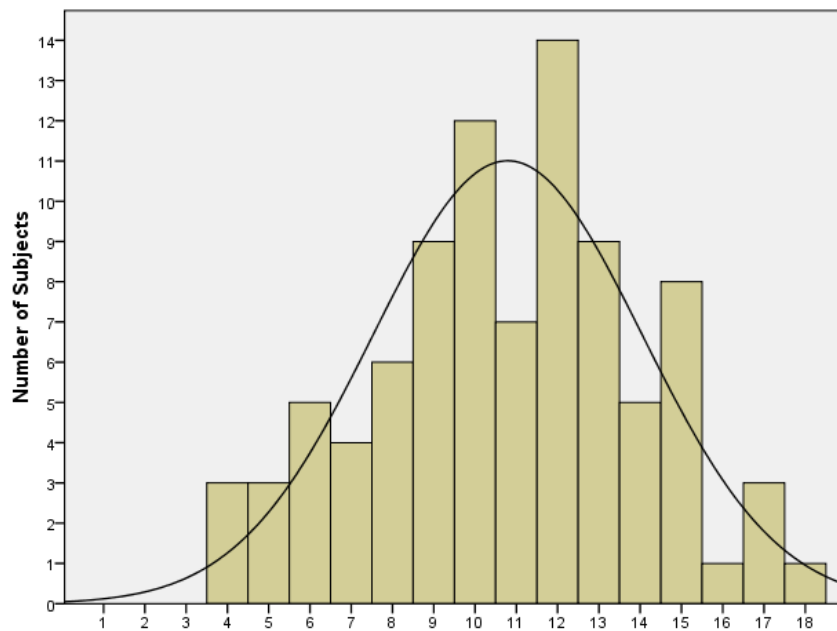
Figure 3.1. Histogram of number of states chosen as part of the South.

3 out of 90 subjects selected only 4 states. Of those subjects, all 3 included Texas and Alabama, 1 subject included Florida and Louisiana, and 2 subjects included Mississippi and Georgia. Only 1 subject selected the maximum of 18 states. A map of the South according to the respondent whose Southern dialect region was largest is provided in Figure 3.2. As seen below, this subject's map of the Southern dialect region extends as far west as New Mexico and as far north as Nebraska.
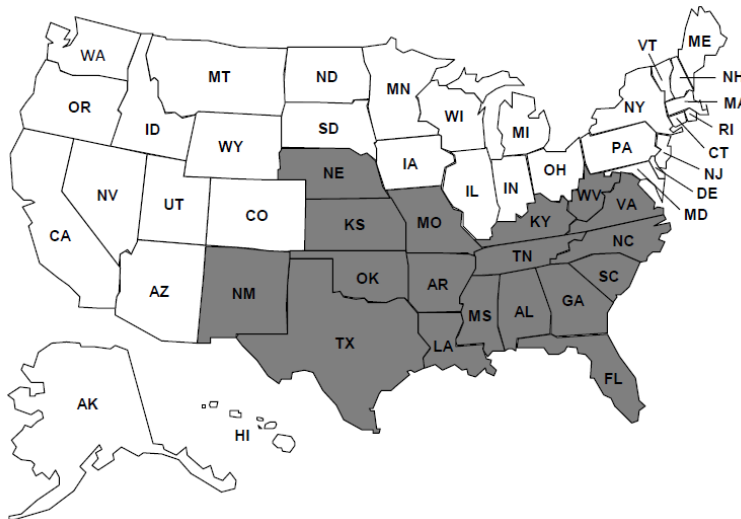
Figure 3.2. Map of the Southern dialect region according to the respondent who chose the largest number of states.

A better picture of the "typical" subject's conceptual Southern dialect region is given by Figure 3.3, which provides the percentage of respondents who included each state in the South. Here we see that over 90% of subjects included Alabama and Georgia in the Southern dialect region, with Texas and Louisiana close behind. Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas were chosen by around 80% of subjects. Kentucky, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and West Virginia demonstrate less consensus at around 40-60% of subjects. Missouri was chosen by around 25% of subjects, and Kansas, New Mexico, and Arizona were chosen by around 10-15% of subjects.
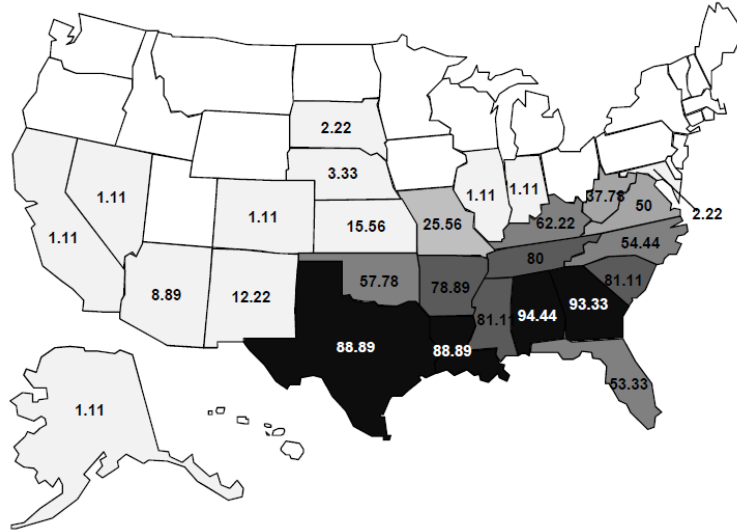
Figure 3.3. Percentage of respondents who included each state in "the South."

Most Southern State

In addition to indicating each of the 50 states that they considered part of the Southern dialect region, subjects were separately asked to choose the one state they considered most Southern. The responses to this question are summarized in Table 3.2.

State	Number / Percentage of Respondents
Alabama	26 / 87 (30%)
Georgia	20 / 87 (23%)
Mississippi	13/ 87 (15%)
Texas	7 / 87 (8%)
Louisiana	3 / 87 (3%)
Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia	1 / 87 (1%)

Table 3.2. Top ranked responses for 1 most Southern state.

Combined with the map in Figure 3.3 above, this data provides a more complex picture of the respondents' understanding of the South. While almost 90% of respondents included Texas and Louisiana in the South, Texas and Louisiana were chosen as the most Southern state by only 8% and 3% of respondents, respectively. This suggests that while Texas and Louisiana do meet the subjects' criteria for "southernness," Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi serve as better prototypes of the Southern dialect region for this sample of Texans.

Partly Southern States

Additional detail is provided by the subjects' responses to a follow-up question which asked them to indicate whether any of the states they had included in their map were places where the Southern dialect was spoken "in some areas but not all of the state." 34 subjects responded that they did not believe any of the states they had included were only partly Southern. Table 3.3 summarizes the responses of the 39 subjects who identified at least one state that was only partly Southern. Florida, Louisiana, and Texas were the most popular choices for partly Southern states, chosen by 33% of the question respondents. Notably, many states included in the South by an overwhelming majority of subjects (i.e., Louisiana, Texas, Georgia) were also chosen as only partly Southern states, suggesting that inclusion of a state in the South does not entirely depend on whether the state is perceived as wholly Southern or only partly Southern.

State	Number / Percentage of Respondents
Florida	13 / 39 (33%)
Louisiana, Texas	12 / 39 (31%)
Virginia	10 / 39 (26%)
Missouri	9 / 39 (23%)
Georgia	8 / 39 (21%)
Kentucky, North Carolina, Oklahoma	7 / 39 (18%)
New Mexico	6 / 39 (15%)
Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee	4 / 39 (10%)
Arkansas, Kansas	3 / 39 (8%)
Arizona, Nebraska, Nevada, South Carolina, West Virginia	2 / 39 (5%)
Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Montana, Wyoming	1 / 39 (3%)

Table 3.3. States where the Southern dialect is spoken in some areas but not all of the state.

Subregions within the South

Previous work in the Deer Park community (Oxley 2009) suggested that while Deer Park subjects readily ascribed characteristics to "the South" as a whole, they also discriminated between different regions within the South. To further explore these more fine-grained perceptual regions, subjects were asked, "Based on the states that you have indicated as part of

The South above, would it be possible for you to break up The South into smaller dialect regions? If so, provide a name for each subregion of The South and list the states that you would include in each subregion." Of the 78 subjects who responded to this question, 28 subjects (36%) reported that they did not think the South could be subdivided into smaller dialect areas and 6 subjects (8%) reported that they weren't sure. The responses from the 44 subjects who did indicate that the South could be broken up into smaller dialect regions varied greatly. While some of the subregions subjects identified were lists of specific states (i.e., Florida as its own region, or the "Deep South" as a small set of states within the South), many subjects also provided more general descriptions of the features that distinguished different parts of the South (geography, dialectal features, etc.) The responses to this question are summarized in Table 3.4 below. As indicated by the data below, while subjects do overwhelmingly include Texas in a larger Southern region, they also single out Texas and the surrounding area as unique within the South: 13 out of 78 subjects (17%) identified Texas as its own dialect region, 7 out of 78 subjects (8%) identified a region consisting of Texas and just 1 other state, and 7 out of 78 subjects (8%) subdivided the state of Texas into smaller subregions.

Subregion Description	Number / Percentage of Respondents
Deep South	17 / 78 (22%)
Louisiana/Cajun	14/ 78 (18%)
Texas	13 / 78 (17%)
Southwest versus Southeast	11 / 78 (14%)
Florida	8 / 78 (10%)
Texas + 1 Other State	7 / 78 (8%)
Subregions within Texas	7 / 78 (8%)
Mountain/Appalachian/Hillbilly	7 / 78 (8%)
"Twang" or "Drawl" Region	7 / 78 (8%)
The Carolinas	7 / 78 (8%)
Middle or Central South	6 / 78 (6%)
Northern Area versus Southern Area	4 / 78 (5%)
Urban versus Rural South	3 / 78 (4%)

Table 3.4. Subregions within the South.

The "Deep South" was the most frequently identified subregion overall, mentioned by 17 out of 78 respondents (22%). 15 of those 17 subjects provided a list of the states that they would include in the "Deep South." The responses of those subjects are summarized in Table 3.5.

State	Number / Percentage of Respondents
Mississippi	15 / 15 (100%)
Georgia	13 / 15 (87%)
Alabama	12 / 15 (80%)
Louisiana	11 / 15 (73%)
South Carolina	8 / 15 (53%)
Florida	6 / 15 (40%)
Arkansas, Tennessee, Texas	4 / 15 (27%)
North Carolina	2 / 15 (13%)
Kentucky, Oklahoma	1 / 15 (7%)

Table 3.5. States included in the Deep South.

Differences Across Age Groups

While the results presented above represent the aggregated responses of all subjects, some differences did emerge between age groups. Subjects from the youngest age group included Florida and Kansas in the South more frequently than subjects in the middle and oldest age group, and Missouri was more frequently included in the South by middle and oldest age group respondents than by youngest age group respondents. Only the oldest age group included Maryland in the South, and older subjects were also more likely to include West Virginia in the South than subjects in the youngest age group.   Compared to the middle and oldest age groups, the youngest age groups also demonstrated less consensus in their choices for the "most Southern" state, with responses spread across 9 states rather than the 6 states chosen in the middle and oldest age groups.

State	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Youngest Age Group (18-31)	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Middle Age Group (32-47)	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Oldest Age Group (48-67)
Florida	23 / 37 (62%)	13 / 21 (62%)	12 / 32 (38%)
Kansas	9 / 37 (24%)	2 / 21 (10%)	3 / 32 (9%)
Maryland	0 / 37 (0%)	0 / 21 (0%)	2 / 32 (6%)
Missouri	7 / 37 (19%)	6 / 21 (29%)	10 / 32 (31%)
West Virginia	12 / 37 (32%)	8 / 21 (38%)	14 / 32 (44%)

Table 3.6. States in the South by age group.

The subregions within the South that subjects identified were also not all identified at uniform rates across age groups – the Deep South was more frequently identified by subjects in the oldest age group than the middle or youngest age group; Texas was more frequently identified by subjects in the youngest group than the middle or oldest age group; and only the youngest age group subdivided the South into urban and rural regions.

Subregion Description	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Youngest Age Group (18-31)	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Middle Age Group (32-47)	Number / Percentage of Respondents in Oldest Age Group (48-67)
Deep South	5 / 37 (14%)	3 / 21 (14%)	9 / 32 (28%)
Texas	8 / 37 (22%)	2 /21 (10%)	3 / 32 (9%)
Urban versus Rural South	3 / 37 (8%)	0 /21 (0%)	0 / 32 (0%)

Table 3.7. Subregions within the South by age group.

3.3.2 Qualitative Results

Reflecting on southernness, a few subjects volunteered general criteria that they considered, such as "a lil more 'southern twang'" (CF34) and "relative income and education" (CF33E). However, most subject comments related to southernness focused on individual states.

Unsurprisingly, the state which subjects commented on most was Texas. CF29B, AmF29, CF57, MF26, CF23B, CF20A, CF58, and CM53C all pointed out that there are many dialects represented within the state of Texas. CF29B noted that in Texas "the dialect varies as you travel both North and West from Deer Park." CF57 broke up Texas into several dialect regions: "'East Texas' has a distinct dialect (twang, hick), Deep South Texas has a distinct dialect (Spanglish), West and North Texas also have a certain dialect." This distinction between eastern and western Texas was echoed by CM53C, who wrote, "The folks from the East Texas Piney Woods have a different dialect then the West Texas Cowboy yet they are in the same state." Several subjects emphasized in their comments that Texas is unique and constitutes its own region; as CF60 described it, Texas is "in a class by itself . . . maybe that's because we were once a nation."

Although 89% of subjects included Texas in "the South," their comments often included qualifications. Texas was described as "more Western than Southern" (CM49), "semi-Southern" (CM20), and "more 'southwest' . . . than 'deep south'" (CF33B). Despite CF52's claim that "Texans speak 'hicky' [*sic*]; like hicks. have drawls," CF33B described Texas as "southern . . . but without the extreme drawl and idiosyncratic vocabulary found in the deep south." CF41 noted that "not everyone speaks with a very southern accent in Texas, but many do." CF53C leaned in the opposite direction, explaining "I don't think of Texas as a particularly southern state." CM29 disagreed outright with characterizations of Texas as Southern, asserting that "Texas is not The South."

A few subjects also noted that "Texas mixes some of the southern dialect with some hispanic [*sic*] dialect" (CM33) and that Texas possesses a "blend of Latino and Southern USA's culture" (CM30A). CM30C suggested that "The further south you get, the more Spanish influences the English." CM53C agreed that Spanish has influenced the English spoken in the region: "Here in Deer Park we have a lot of Spanish speaking people that have another different way of speaking. You pick up on these diferent [*sic*] ways and it becomes apart [*sic*] of the way you speak."

Louisiana was also a source of subject commentary, with several respondents commenting on Cajun influence in the state. CF22B explained that Louisiana, like Texas, "could each be [its] own region, but still a part of the southern dialect. Lousiana [*sic*] has their french [*sic*] and creole history which has significantly impacted their lifestyle, food, etc." Several subjects agreed with CM52A that "the lower 1/2 of Louisiana is different from the other Southern states." One subject, CF60, described the Louisiana dialect as "baby talk."

Several subjects compared Florida to Texas, describing the state as "semi-Southern" (CM20), "unique as far as dialects" (CF57), and possessing a "blend of dialects" (CF20A). CM30A noted that in Florida, "the less coastal areas have more southern dialect," while AF21A speculated that "Southern Florida does not seem to have that much of a Southern dialect with the influences of Cuba."

Like Florida and Texas, Arkansas was characterized as a state where "not everyone speaks with a very southern accent . . . but many do" (CF41). While CM65 suggested that

people in upper Arkansas speak slower than Texans, CF25A described Arkansas as "southern but not quite as slow as a Mississippi dialect."

Although CF62 and CF43 described Tennessee as "country talking," CM22 suggested that Tennessee has a "mix of southern drawl and standard 'midwestern' English." This description of a combination of Southern and Midwestern dialect features was also noted by CF50 and HM29 in their descriptions of Oklahoma. CF20A, on the other hand, believed that "Oklahomians have just about their own language."

CM30C admitted to "relying on time saving stereotypes" in choosing Georgia as the most Southern state. CF41 agreed; although she acknowledged that not everyone in the state spoke with a very Southern accent, she recalled that "the MOST southern accents I have heard were in Savannah, Georgia." CF60 described Georgia as "very genteel but upscale" with "the mystique of the south and the romance of Gone with the Wind." In contrast with Alabama and Mississippi, her impression of Georgia and the Carolinas was that the latter states were "more cosmopolitan" with "a drawl that is more charming than silly sounding."

CF60 additionally asserted that Alabama and Mississippi have "low country expressions" which are infrequent in Georgia and the Carolinas. AmF29 explained her choice of Alabama as the most Southern state, writing that "when i [*sic*] hear someone with a really thick southern accent i [*sic*] would assume first that they are from AL." Reflecting on variations within the Southern dialect, CM53C elaborated, "Mississippi folks talk different then [*sic*] Louisiana Folk and Georgia talks different then [*sic*] Alabama. It is strange and neat that your environment creats [*sic*] your dialect."

3.4 CITY-LEVEL RESULTS

3.4.1 Quantitative Results

As described above in §3.2.2, in addition to noting which states they considered part of the South, subjects were also asked to rate the southernness of the dialects of Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston. To determine whether subject ratings of southernness differed across cities, paired-samples t-tests were run. The results are summarized below.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare ratings of Deer Park dialect southernness to Pasadena dialect southernness. There was no statistically significant difference between Deer Park dialect southernness ratings (M = 4.01, SD = 0.74) and Pasadena dialect southernness ratings (M = 3.93, SD = 0.86), t(89) = 1.47, p > .05 (two-tailed).

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare ratings of Deer Park dialect southernness to Houston dialect southernness. There was a statistically significant difference between Deer Park dialect southernness ratings (M = 4.01, SD = 0.74) and Houston dialect southernness ratings (M = 3.67, SD = 0.87), t(89) = 3.79, p < .0005 (two-tailed). The mean difference between Deer Park and Houston dialect southernness ratings was 0.34 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.16 to 0.53. The eta squared statistic (0.14) indicated a large effect size.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare ratings of Pasadena dialect southernness to Houston dialect southernness. There was a statistically significant difference between Pasadena dialect southernness ratings (M = 3.93, SD = 0.86) and Houston dialect southernness ratings (M = 3.67, SD = 0.87), t(89) = 3.2, p < .005 (two-tailed). The mean difference between Pasadena and Houston dialect southernness ratings was 0.27 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.1 to 0.43. The eta squared statistic (0.1) indicated a moderate effect size.

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare ratings of Deer Park dialect southernness to Texas dialect southernness. There was no statistically significant difference between Deer Park dialect southernness ratings (M = 4.01, SD = 0.74) and Texas dialect southernness ratings (M = 4.19, SD = 0.62), t(89) = -1.97, p > .05 (two-tailed).

These results indicate that while subject ratings of the southernness of Deer Park and Pasadena and Deer Park and Texas as a whole do not differ significantly, there is a significant difference between ratings of the southernness of Deer Park and Houston and the southernness of Pasadena and Houston. Deer Park and Pasadena are both rated as more southern than Houston.

3.4.2 Qualitative Results

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the lack of a statistically significant difference in the

southernness ratings for Deer Park and Pasadena, subject comments on the southernness of Deer Park and Pasadena were mixed. While a few subjects asserted that Pasadena was more Southern or "redneck" than Deer Park, other subjects suggested that the Pasadena dialect was either not as Southern as the Deer Park dialect or a completely distinct variety. CAIF29 noted that "Deer Park speaks mostly southern English. Pasadena has a large Spanish speaking population." Similarly, CF34 explained that "Pasadena has a much larger percentage of Hispanic families in their city compared to Deer Park. Because of this I know that their dialect might not be as 'southern' as ours in Deer Park." This line of reasoning was again echoed by HF34, who commented that there are "more Spanish speaking people in Pasadena, thus more differences in children acquiring southern accents." These responses suggest that for many of the subjects in this study the larger population of Hispanic residents and Spanish speakers in Pasadena disqualifies the city from achieving prototypical "Southern" status.

In comparing Deer Park to Houston, the overwhelming consensus was that the Deer Park dialect is more Southern than the Houston dialect. Subjects noted that immigration from other states and greater diversity in Houston "dilutes" the Southern dialect (HF25), in stark contrast to Deer Park, where the Southern dialect is maintained because Deer Park residents "pride themselves on their lack of change" (AmF29). CF23B distinguished between "diverse" and "Southern" dialects, arguing that "Houston is more diverse, therefore the dialects are certainly more diverse and generally less southern." AF21A similarly juxtaposed notions of "urbanness" and "southernness," commenting that "Deer Park seems more southern like simply because it is not urban like Houston." However, subjects did not completely reject the idea of Houston as a Southern city; while CM22 acknowledged that Houston has "less of a concentration of southern drawl than Deer Park," he nevertheless acknowledged that "the drawl is still strong; people who live here for 10 years or more will pick it up whether they like it or not."

Although there were fewer subject-provided comments on differences in southernness between Pasadena and Houston, the few respondents who commented on this agreed that the dialect spoken in Pasadena is more Southern than the dialect spoken in Houston. CM55B characterized Pasadena as both more Southern and more rural than Houston, and MF26 and CM37 agreed that Pasadena is more redneck than Houston.

3.5 SUMMARY

Several interesting conclusions can be drawn from the data presented above. First, while perceptual maps of the South based on data from Deer Park respondents are in many ways similar to the maps presented in previous work, Texas is included in the South at higher rates of nearly 90%. But by asking about southernness in another way, we see that subjects do perceive a distinction between Texas and the rest of the South – while 68% of respondents chose either Alabama, Georgia, or Mississippi as the one most Southern state, Texas was chosen as the most Southern state by only 8% of respondents. When asked if any of the states they had included in the South were places were the Southern dialect was spoken "in some areas but not all of the state," 31% of respondents indicated that Texas is only partly Southern – nearly the same number of respondents who indicated that Florida is only partly Southern. Thus, while Texas gets to claim membership in the South, southernness is for these subjects a matter of degree, and Texas is in some sense "less Southern" than other states in the South.

Subjects also perceive dialect divisions within the South, as evidenced by their ability to label smaller distinct dialect areas within a larger Southern dialect region. While the most frequently identified subregion is the "Deep South" (primarily Mississippi, Georgia, Alabama, and Louisiana), subjects also perceive Texas as a unique dialect region – 33% of respondents either identified distinct dialect regions within Texas or marked Texas and no more than 1 other adjoining state as a subregion within the South.

Although smaller numbers can make it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about age group differences, there do appear to be some differences in responses across age groups. Unlike Figure 2.11 above (Niedzielski and Preston 1999), differences across age groups in the Deer Park sample don't seem to indicate that the oldest age group is simply working with a more restricted definition of the South than the youngest age group. While the youngest age group does include Florida and Kansas in the South more frequently than the oldest age group, the oldest age group is more likely to include Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia. The subregions within the South identified by respondents also differ across age groups, with twice as many subjects in the oldest age group identifying a "Deep South" region compared to the youngest age group and over twice as many subjects in youngest age group singling out Texas as its own region compared to the oldest age group. This may suggest that, like Llamas' (2006) subjects who

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described their accent as "Middlesbrough" rather than Yorkshire or Teeside, the younger subjects are more inclined to understand their region in local terms rather than representative of a larger region. Subjects in the youngest age group are also more likely to distinguish between urban and rural areas in the South when subdividing the South into smaller subregions.

Qualitative analysis of the city-level data serves to highlight the degree to which the subjects position southernness in opposition to diversity and urbanness. These same dimensions – diversity and urbanness – also featured prominently in subject commentary on dialect standardness and similarity (see Oxley 2014a). This suggests that diversity plays an important role in shaping the attitudes of Deer Park residents towards Deer Park and surrounding communities – a topic which will be returned to in §4 below.

CHAPTER 4: SOUTHERNNESS AND IDENTITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I provide a summary of the identity study which served as a follow-up to the perceptual dialectology study presented in §3 above. §4.2 describes the motivations for this study and the research questions to be explored. §4.3 outlines the methodology used in this study. §4.4, §4.5, and §4.6 describes the quantitative results, qualitative results, and overarching themes in the interviews, respectively. §4.7 summarizes the main findings of this study.

4.2 MOTIVATIONS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The results of the perceptual dialectology study (§3 above) indicate that southernness is a gradient notion for Deer Park residents, that understandings of what constitutes "the South" differ, and that many Deer Park residents perceive Texas as either not Southern, only peripherally Southern, or as a unique subregion within the South. While that study represents an important step in establishing a clearer definition of which states meet these Texans' definitions of "Southern," what subregions within the South are salient to them, and how dialect southernness is understood at the local (city) level, it does not address the ways in which these subjects' ideas about southernness interact with regional identity. If, as Oxley (2009) states, some Texans prefer the identity label "Texan" over "Southern," what distinctions are they making between these labels? What drives the preference for one regional identity label over another?

To better understand regional identity in Deer Park, this exploratory follow-up study centers on the following research questions:

RQ1: Which regional identity labels do these Deer Park residents use to describe themselves?

RQ2: Of these regional identity labels, which labels do subjects rate as most important for describing who they are?

RQ3: How important are the regional identity labels compared to other identity labels for these subjects?

RQ4: Which of these identity labels do Deer Park residents perceive as related to the way that they speak?

RQ5: What are the associations and meanings behind these labels?

To address these questions, this dissertation will use a mixed methods approach, drawing on a combination of quantitative data, gathered through a magnitude continuum task (Redinger 2010, Llamas et al. 2010), and qualitative data, gathered through semi-structured interviews. The next section discusses the methodology of this study in more detail.

4.3 METHODS

4.3.1 Subjects

Nine subjects from Deer Park, Texas, who had previously participated in the online perceptual dialectology survey (§3 above) were re-contacted roughly four years later and asked to participate in a follow-up face-to-face semi-structured interview. Based on their age at the time of the second study, these subjects were roughly distributed across age groups (two subjects in the youngest age group, four subjects in the middle age group, and three subjects in the oldest age group; see Table 4.1 below). To permit easier tracking of subjects across the two studies, subjects were assigned the same speaker codes as in the perceptual dialectology study; thus, the ages indicated by the speaker codes represent the ages of the speakers in the perceptual dialectology study and not the later identity study. For example, subject CM32B, who was 32 years old at time of the original study, was 36 years old by the time he participated in the identity study.

While potential differences between age groups will not be examined in this study, it should be noted that for three subjects (CM30A, HF27, and HF29) the passage of time between the first study and the second study represents a shift from the youngest to the middle age group. That said, none of these subjects appears to have experienced a significant shift in terms of life stage differences; for example, none has changed from single to married, childless to a parent, or experienced any major changes related to school or employment. In the absence of any obvious life stage changes, it is therefore not necessary to assume that the passage of four years' time will have a significant impact on the subjects' attitudes or identity.

Subjects completed a consent form (Appendix D) and a brief demographic form (abbreviated from the one used in the perceptual dialectology study; Appendix B) to collect updated information on their residence history, education, and occupation. Each subject participated in an audio-recorded one-on-one interview; four of these subjects were members of the same family and additionally participated in a group interview with their family members (see §4.3.2).

	Youngest Age Group (Age 18-31)	Middle Age Group (Age 32-47)	Oldest Age Group (Age 48-67)	Total
Male	1	2	1	4
Female	1	2	2	5
Total	3	3	3	9

Table 4.1. Subject numbers by age group and sex. (n = 9)

4.3.2 Interviews

All interviews were conducted by the author and were recorded in a Deer Park household using a Zoom H4n portable flash recorder with a built-in microphone. The interviews ranged from 45 to 116 minutes (72 minutes on average) and consisted of several components. In Parts A through C, the subjects were recorded performing a task which guided them through the generation and ranking of identity labels. In Part D, they were asked to explain how these identities affected their speech. In Part E, they reflected on whether they intended to remain in Texas long-term. Part F required subjects to read and respond to a series of quotes from respondents who had participated in earlier studies. In Part G, they were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments and ask questions about the study, and in Part H a subset of the subjects who were members of one family participated in a group interview.

Part A: Identity Label Generation

In Part A, the subjects were instructed to imagine that they had been asked to participate in a documentary-style television show which focused on the history and people of different regions in North America. They were told that the producers of the show would like for them to

describe themselves for a short profile on the show's website so that viewers could learn about who they are.

In initial pilot testing of this methodology, several testers described themselves in terms related to personal identity (i.e., "friendly," "open-minded," "artistic," "bad speller") rather than the master identity categories of interest to most sociolinguists (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) (Tracy 2002). To guide the subjects towards providing more relevant social identity labels, additional structure was added to the task. First, subjects were told that their descriptions had to fit the prompt, "I am (a/an) _____" or "I am from _____." Second, subjects were given three examples of responses to read over and were told that these were the responses of other people who would be participating in the documentary (see Appendix G). While not representative of all possible types of identity, these examples provided subjects with a model on which to base their responses. It should be noted that although these additions to the task were intended to guide subjects in providing relevant labels, subjects were free to provide any labels that they wished.

The example responses included several regional identity labels at varying levels (city, state, region, etc.), but did not include the specific regional labels most likely to be used by these subjects (i.e., "from Deer Park," "Texan," "Southern") to avoid biasing subjects toward using these particular labels in the initial label generation task. After reading the example responses, subjects generated a similar list of labels to describe themselves and wrote these labels on the sheet with the prompts (Appendix H).

Subjects were then instructed to imagine that the producers of the show had asked them to say more about where they're from. They were given the same prompts as above and were asked to fill in a few more sentences focusing on where they're from. While essentially the same task that they had already completed, this additional prompt was added to encourage subjects to provide more labels related to regional identity. In both cases, subjects were not required to fill all of the blanks on the sheet and had the option to add more blanks if necessary; therefore, not all subjects provided the same number of identity labels.

Part B: Label Ranking

Next the subjects were given a sheet of paper with a 200 millimeter long line printed horizontally in the center of the page. The left end of the line was labeled "least important" and the right end of the line was labeled "most important" (see Appendix I). They were asked to write each word they generated in Part A along this continuum, ranking them according to how important they thought those words were for describing who they are. They were told that they could rank more than one word at the same point on the line if they wished to do so. This task required subjects to rank all of the labels on one continuum, thereby causing them to consider the relative rankings of different identity labels and to occasionally make adjustments to these rankings as new labels were added to the continuum.

After the subjects had ranked all of their own labels, the interviewer provided them additional labels to rank along the same continuum with the subject-generated labels. They were reminded that they could rank words equally if they wished and also informed that if they felt like they would never use a particular word to describe themselves they could rank it on the far left side of the scale as "least important." The words provided by the researcher included: American, Southern, Western, Southwestern, Midwestern, Texan, from Deer Park, Houstonian, urban, rural, suburban, country, hick, redneck, and hillbilly (excluding any of these terms that they had already generated on their own). Subjects were given a different colored pen in which to write the interviewer-provided labels so that the distinction between subject-generated and interviewer-provided labels would be retained.

Part C: Identity Interview

Once they had placed all of these words on the continuum, the researcher asked the subjects a series of questions about their rankings. These questions were primarily focused on the subjects' rankings of regional identity labels and how the rankings of the labels provided by the researcher compared to the labels that they had generated themselves. Subjects were also asked questions that prompted them to reflect on the meanings and associations of the identity labels. The questions prompted subjects to consider which labels were most and least important to defining who they are and to compare and reflect on the differences between labels (i.e., "Southern" versus "Texan"). A few of the questions also forefronted more situational, temporal,

and interactional aspects of identity by asking subjects to consider situations in which certain identities might be more salient, identities which had become more or less important to them over time, and interactions with others related to these identities. Perhaps because of the way that they were worded, these questions were often the most difficult for subjects to answer, but many subjects did provide anecdotes related to times when others had identified them as Texan or Southern (either during Part C or during another part of the interview). All of the interview questions in Part C were deliberately open-ended to allow subjects to describe their identities in their own words and to enable a more complex and nuanced picture of Southern identity to emerge than would be possible given questions with a closed set of response types. A few of these questions were based on the interview guides provided by Witteborn (2005) and Thompson (2007) (see sample questions in Appendix F).

Part D: Identity and Speech

Next, subjects were instructed to circle the words that they believed affected the way that they talk and to explain how they thought each of these identities affected their speech. These instructions were intentionally broad to encourage subjects to discuss any aspects of their speech which related to their identity labels. For comparison with one of the means of quantifying identity used in previous research (Hasty 2006), they were also asked to rate their accent strength on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = my accent is not very strong and 5 = my accent is very strong.

Part E: Local Affiliation

Subjects were asked whether they thought they would stay in Texas for the rest of their lives or whether they thought they would eventually move away. If they intended to stay in Texas, they were asked whether they intended to stay in Deer Park for the rest of their lives. If they intended to move away, they were asked if there was a particular place they thought they might move to and to explain why they did not plan to stay in Deer Park or Texas. These questions were intended to gather responses which would be comparable to the data gathered in previous work on regional identity (i.e., Labov 1963, Hasty 2006, Woods 2009).

Part F: Response to Quotes from Other Subjects

Finally, the subjects were given a list of quotes from respondents who participated in the previous studies (either the interviews from Oxley 2009 or responses to open-ended questions from the perceptual dialectology survey described in §3 above; see Appendix J for complete list of quotes). The subjects were asked to read the quotes aloud and state whether they agreed or disagreed with each quote and why. The purpose of this activity was to gain additional insight into the meaning of southernness for these subjects and to collect feedback from members of the Deer Park community which would assist in the interpretation of the responses received in the perceptual dialectology study. Quotes were chosen which represented common themes around southernness within the responses collected in the perceptual dialectology study and were roughly evenly divided between state or region-level comments and city-level comments. Two of these quotes were taken from one subject who participated in both the perceptual dialectology study and the identity study; the rest of the quotes were taken from subjects who did not participate in the follow-up identity study.

Part G: Wrap Up

At the end of the interview, subjects were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments that they may have had on the topics they had discussed and to ask questions about the study.

Part H: Group Interview

In addition to the nine individual interviews, one multigenerational group interview was conducted with four family members who had already participated in individual interviews. This group included a husband and wife from the oldest age group (CF63 and CM61), their son (CM32B), and his wife (HF29). This interview reiterated some of the questions from Part C, focusing on the differences between labels (i.e., "How is being Texan different from being Southern?") and a subset of the quotes from Part F to try to generate disagreement and discussion.

4.3.3 Quantitative Analysis

Prior to analysis, all of the identity continua were scanned and saved in .png format. The first step in analyzing the data from the ranking task involved converting the points on the continuum where identity labels were located into numerical values or "scores." As noted in §4.3.2 above, the line used in the ranking task was 200 millimeters long. Thus, each label's point on the scale was hand-measured and recorded as a positive integer between 0 (the far left end of the scale) and 200 (the far right end of the scale), representing its location in millimeters along the continuum.

There were a total of five labels which presented measuring difficulties; for example, there were a few cases where subjects did not draw a line connecting their label to the continuum, so it wasn't clear which exact point on the line the label corresponded to; there were also a few cases where subjects wrote several identity labels close together and it was difficult to determine which labels corresponded to which points on the continuum. These problematic cases were resolved by listening to the subjects' recorded descriptions of their rankings as they completed the ranking task. For example, HF27 ranked "married," "mommy," and "Christian" as most important, but the labels were written so closely together that it was difficult to determine which point on the line corresponded to which label (see Figure 4.1 below). In her interview, when the researcher inquired about these labels, she explained that they were equally important and that she hadn't realized initially that she could rank them equally. The numerical values for these three points on the line (198, 197, and 196) were therefore averaged and all three labels were recorded with a score of 197.

After these problematic cases were addressed, the identity labels were grouped into categories of related identity types (i.e., labels related to regional identity, ethnic identity, occupational identity, etc.) and their scores were entered into a spreadsheet to allow for easier comparison across subjects and for the calculation of basic descriptive statistics. These descriptive statistics included the total number of labels provided by each subject, the average number of labels per subject, the total number of subjects who provided each label (excluding the labels provided by the researcher, which were ranked by every subject), and average scores for each identity label and label category. Distances between regional labels of interest (i.e., the

difference between each subject's score for "Texan" and their score for "Southern") were also calculated.
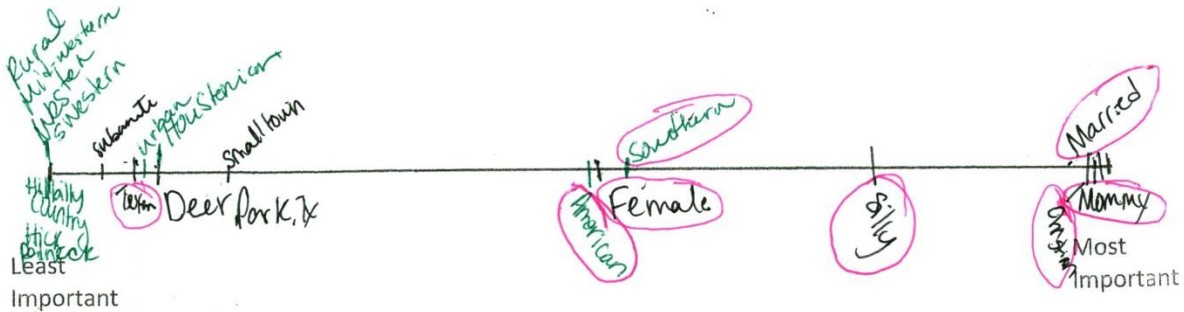
Figure 4.1. Identity label rankings for subject HF27.

In addition to the raw scores and distances between scores, the labels "Southern," "Texan," and "from Deer Park" were examined in terms of subject-internal rankings. First, tables were generated which summarized the rankings of each of these labels within each subject's total set of labels. Labels which were rated equally were treated as one "step" in the ranking scale. For example, in Figure 4.1 above, HF27's scale has 11 steps, with "married," "mommy" and "Christian" ranked equally as the first "step" (based on HF27's clarification that these should be treated equally; see discussion above), "silly" was ranked second, and "Southern" and "female" were ranked third. Thus, "Southern" would have a ranking of 3 out of 11 for this subject.

Second, tables were also generated which summarized the total number of labels that each subject rated higher than "Southern," "Texan," and "from Deer Park." For example, in Figure 4.1 above, HF27 ranks four labels ("silly," "married," "mommy," and "Christian") higher than the label "Southern."

These three approaches to quantifying regional identity *labels* (i.e., scores, rankings relative to other labels, and the total number of higher-ranked labels) were then used to create a table comparing the 9 *subjects* on each measure (see Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 below). By taking several complementary approaches to examining these regional identity labels, it is therefore

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possible to determine which subjects rate a particular identity label (i.e., "Texan") highly across all three measurements. Decisions about which subjects exhibit the strongest identification with a particular label can then be based on more than a single numerical measurement of identity (as in previous work using magnitude continua (Llamas et al. 2010), and can incorporate measures which consider each label's position relative to other labels on the subject's scale.

To isolate and enable easier visual comparison of the "Southern," "Texan," and "from Deer Park" labels across subjects, a figure was created in Adobe Photoshop for each of these three labels which combines all of the subjects' rankings of that label on a single continuum (see Figures 4.4., 4.5, and 4.6 below). Finally, the total number of labels each subject identified as related to their speech and the total number of subjects who chose each label as related to speech were also calculated.

4.3.4 Qualitative Analysis

All of the recordings were orthographically transcribed, producing a single transcription file for each interview. These files were then imported into ATLAS.ti (version 7.5.6) as primary documents for qualitative analysis.

The first step in coding the data was to identify all subject comments on the meanings, associations, and explanations of their rankings of identity labels. Within ATLAS.ti, coding these comments involved selecting the comment or "quotation" and choosing to apply a new code to the quotation. This initial stage of coding consisted of identifying relevant quotations and coding them with the associated identity label and useful metadata, rather than coding at a more abstract or conceptual level. Each coded quotation was assigned a code following the format below:

partofinterview_identitylabel_briefexcerpt_speaker(_group)

For example, a quotation within Part C of the interview in which subject HF27 states that "people in the South are more friendly" would be coded as:

partc_southern_"people in the South are more friendly"_hf27

(Quotations from the group interview additionally have "_grp" appended to the code.)

This approach to coding each quotation was designed to work with the alphabetical sorting of codes within the ATLAS.ti Code Manager to arrange the codes first by the part of the

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interview they were taken from, then by the identity label they related to, and to finally summarize the content of the quotation and indicate which subject provided the quotation. The ability to sort coded segments by the part of the interview they were taken from was necessary to keep comments made during different portions of the interviews separate; this was particularly important for keeping the subjects' spontaneous comments separate from the comments they made in response to quotations taken from other subjects' survey responses. These lengthier code names also made it easy to review the content of coded quotations by scanning through those quotations in the Code Manager without needing to toggle between documents or export results to a report. (See Figure 4.2 below for a screenshot of the Code Manager.)
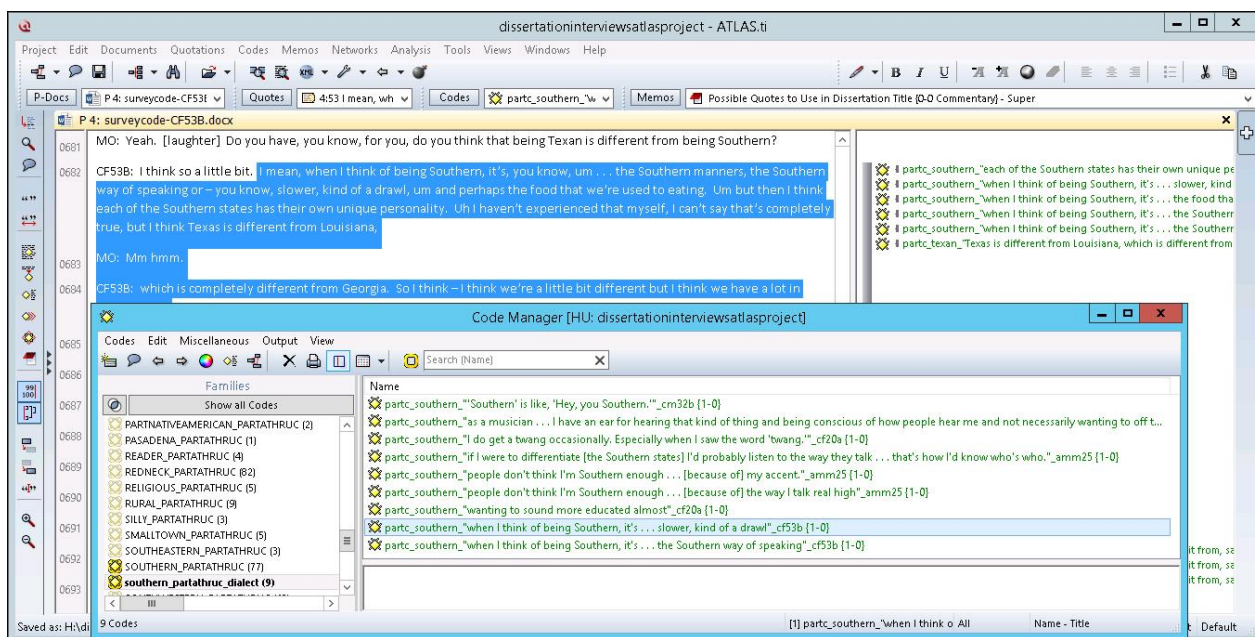
Figure 4.2. Screenshot of ATLAS.ti Code Manager.

In addition to the identity labels subjects provided during the identity label generation task, relevant comments which subjects made about other cities, states, and regions (i.e., "Chicago," "Arizona," "Eastern United States") and comments related to the identity types identified in the quantitative analysis (for example, when CM61 described himself as a "city boy," which relates to the labels "rural"/ "suburban"/"urban") were also coded.

After coding each quotation of interest following the format above, the codes were then sorted into "code families" which grouped together all quotations related to a particular identity label. This made it possible to see how many quotations related to a particular label had been

coded and to review all quotations associated with each identity label. Within the code families, codes from Parts A through C of the interview, which involved the generation and ranking of identity labels and were smaller components of one larger "task," were grouped together for qualitative analysis.

The quotations within each code family were then examined via content analysis (Smith 2000) in order to uncover themes within the quotations related to each identity label. In line with the study's research questions (§4.2 above), the goal of this analysis was to explore the predominant meanings, associations, and stereotypes connected to each label. While some subject commentary related to other types of identity labels will be discussed, this analysis was primarily focused on the regional identity labels.

In addition to the coded quotations above, some quotations with no codes attached ("free quotations") were created in order to mark off interesting segments of the interviews, such as lengthier anecdotes or explanations, example dialect features and imitations of Southerners, revealing wording or language choices, points where subjects seemed to hesitate to describe Texas as "Southern," comments that hinted at linguistic insecurity, and references to regions and regional dialect speakers in pop culture (i.e., *Anchorman*, Paula Deen).

4.4 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

4.4.1 Identity Label Scale: Overall Patterns

In general, subjects tended to make use of the entire length of the label ranking continuum, with some labels at both ends of the scale and some in the middle of the scale. While about half of the subjects distributed labels fairly evenly throughout the scale (for example, CM30A's scale in Figure 4.3 below), the other half of the subjects tended to have clusters of labels at each end of the scale and in the middle of the scale with fewer labels inbetween (for example, HF27's scale in Figure 4.1 above). These clusters of labels did not simply distinguish between subject-generated and researcher-provided labels; subjects tended to include a mix of their own labels and labels provided by the researcher within these clusters.
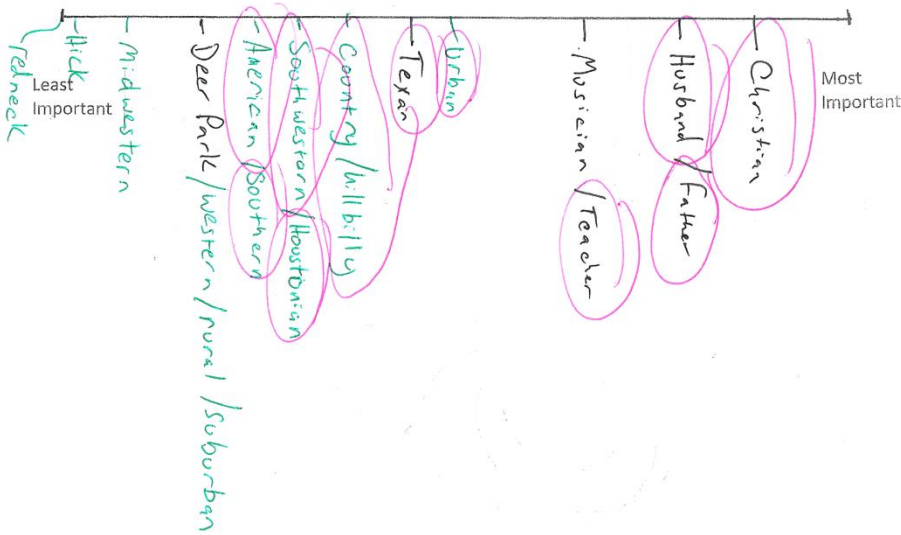
Figure 4.3. Identity label rankings for subject CM30A.

Subjects varied considerably in their scores for the regional identity labels "from Deer Park," "Texan," and "Southern." Scores for the "from Deer Park" label ranged from 15 for subject HF29, who ranked this label lowest, to 139 for CF20A, who ranked this label highest (Figure 4.4 below).
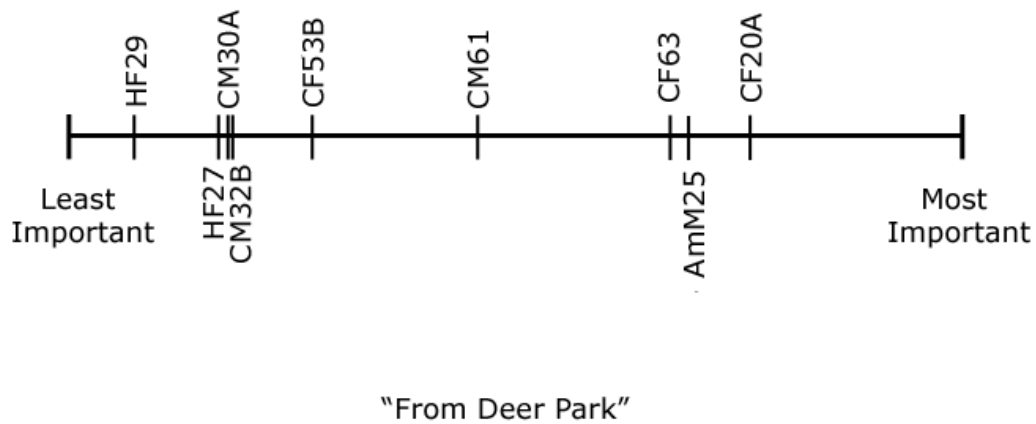
"From Deer Park"

Figure 4.4. Cross-subject comparison of scores for the "from Deer Park" identity label.

Similarly, scores for the "Texan" label ranged from 4 for HF29 to 174 for CF20A (Figure 4.5) and scores for the "Southern" label ranged from 1 for HF29 to 180 for CF20A (Figure 4.6). Thus HF29 emerges as the subject who ranked all three labels lowest, while CF20A ranked all three labels highest. Though less extreme in their rankings, CF53B also tends to rank all three labels on the lower end of the continuum, whereas CF63 tends to rank all three labels highly. The other subjects demonstrate more variation across these labels.
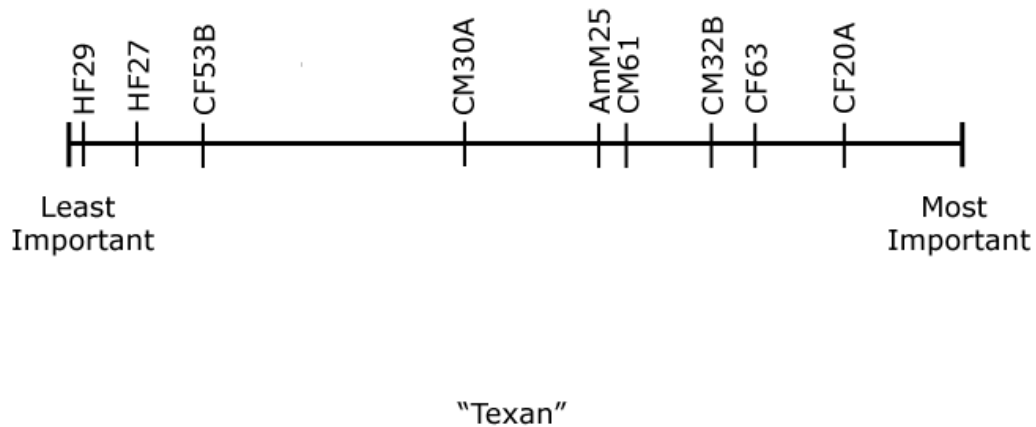
Figure 4.5. Cross-subject comparison of scores for the "Texan" identity label.
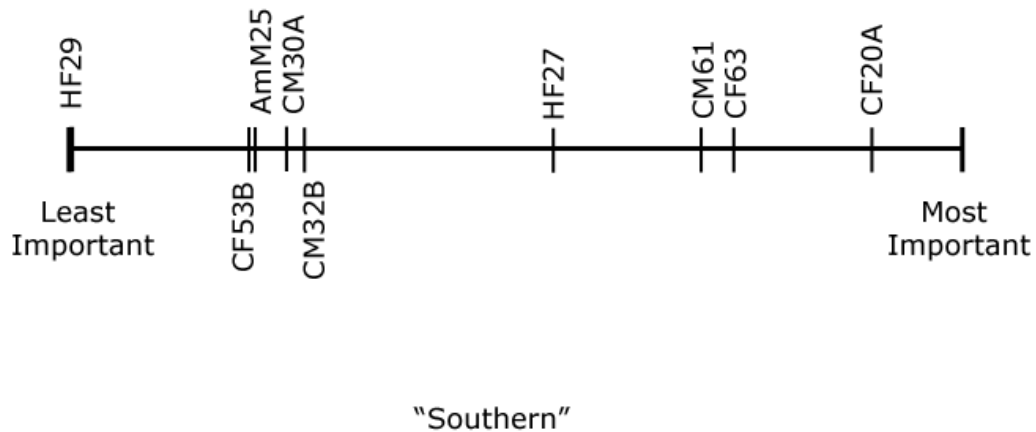
Figure 4.6. Cross-subject comparison of scores for the "Southern" identity label.

One way of understanding the subjects' scores for the labels "from Deer Park," "Texan," and "Southern" would be to determine which of these three labels was ranked highest by each subject. Examined from this perspective, the subjects can be divided into three groups. Two subjects, CM61 and HF27, ranked "Southern" higher than "Texan" or "from Deer Park." Three subjects, CM30A, CM32B, and CF63, ranked "Texan" higher than "Southern" or "from Deer Park." Two subjects, AmM25 and HF29, ranked "from Deer Park" higher than "Texan" or "Southern."

Focusing specifically on the scores for "Texan" and "Southern," the subjects can also be divided into three groups according to the relationship between their scores for these labels. One group of subjects (HF29, CF20A, CF63, CF53B, and CM61) tended to rate "Texan" and "Southern" about the same. Another group of subjects (AmM25, CM32B, and CM30A) rated "Texan" higher than "Southern." Finally, one subject (HF27) rated "Southern" considerably higher than "Texan." Thus, based on the label ranking task, HF29, CF20A, CF63, CF53B, and CM61 do not appear to be treating the labels "Texan" and "Southern" very differently, whereas AmM25, CM32B, CM30A, and HF27 demonstrate a more marked distinction between these labels.

4.4.2 Identity Label Scale: Score-Level Analysis

As noted in §4.3.2 above, subjects first generated their own list of identity labels and ranked those labels along a continuum of "least important" to "most important." They were then instructed to rank an additional set of labels provided by the researcher (see §4.3.2 for the complete list of researcher-provided labels). The total number of labels ranked by each subject ranged from 19 to 26. Of these, the total number of subject-generated labels ranged from 6 to 14. The remainder came from the list of labels provided by the researcher. The number of subject-generated labels that overlapped with the researcher's list ranged from 1 to 3 labels per subject.

Combining all subjects, a total of 53 unique subject-generated labels were provided (where "mom"/"mother"/"mommy," "father"/"dad," and "woman"/"female" are treated as one label). Five of these labels were also on the list of labels provided by the researcher. Specifically, during the label generation task, no one self-identified as American, Western,

Southwestern, Midwestern, country, hick, redneck, or hillbilly. Seven subjects did identify as Texan and eight subjects identified as from Deer Park. However, only three subjects self-identified as Southern, suggesting that many of the subjects more readily identify as Texan than Southern. Only two subjects self-identified as suburban and no subjects self-identified as rural or urban. Only one self-identified as Houstonian.

To determine which types of identity were represented in the labels provided by the subjects, the identity labels were grouped according to the type of identity category they belonged to – for example, identity labels related to region ("from Deer Park," "Texan," "Southern," "Southeast Texas," etc.), religion ("Christian," "not Baptist," "religious"), occupation ("teacher," "machinist," "secretary"), gender ("man," "woman," "female"), and so on. This yielded a set of 15 different identity label types, most of which corresponded to the types discussed elsewhere in the social identity literature. This suggests that the task was successful at encouraging subjects to generate labels related to social identity rather than more individualistic descriptors related to characteristics like personality traits. The complete list of subject-generated labels, grouped by identity type, with the number of subjects who generated each label can be found in Appendix K.

To better understand the importance of different identity labels, average scores for each identity label provided more than once were calculated across speakers (Table 4.2 below). For the purpose of this calculation, labels not provided by the researcher were grouped into label types and averages were calculated for all labels within that type. For example, rather than reporting an average score for each occupation, which for several labels would draw on a small number of speakers, an average occupation score was calculated across all speakers. The exception to this was for labels which belong to the same identity label type (i.e., gender, ethnicity) but where one label might be expected to be marked, stigmatized, or less "normative" and therefore more salient with respect to identity (i.e., "woman," "Hispanic") (Deaux 2001, Thompson and Sloan 2012); in these cases, the label averages (i.e., for "man" and "woman," "Caucasian" and "Hispanic") were calculated separately. This decision was also supported by the scores for these labels in the data, where, for example, the ethnicity labels provided by one of the Hispanic subjects had much higher scores than the ethnicity labels provided by the Caucasian subjects (*c.f.* Thompson 2007).

Label/Label Type	Average Score	N Subjects
Religion (Christian, Not Baptist, Religious)	189	8
Parent (Father, Dad, Mother, Mom, Mommy, Parent)	186	8
Marriage (Husband, Wife, Married)	186	4
Woman (Woman, Female)	159	3
Occupation (Teacher, Educator, Machinist, Retired, Employee of DPISD, Secretary)	156	8
Ethnicity/Descent for Hispanic Subject (Hispanic, Mexican Descent)	141	2
Man	137	2
Hobbies (Cheerleader, Musician, Crocheter, Reader)	132	4
American	131	9
Texan	95	9
Graduate of DPISD	89	2
Southern	85	9
Suburban	83	9
from Deer Park	77	9
Houstonian	63	9
Urban	60	9
Ethnicity/Descent for Caucasian Subjects (Ethnic Melting Pot, Part Native American, Northern Ireland)	50	3
Southwestern	29	9
Rural	28	9
Western	25	9
Country	21	9
Hillbilly	19	9
Hick	17	9
Midwestern	17	9
Redneck	10	9

Table 4.2. Average scores for labels/label types provided more than once, ranked by score; includes labels provided by researcher.

The average scores indicate that these subjects considered the identity labels related to religion and family roles the most important for defining who they are, followed by the labels related to gender (for the female subjects), occupation, ethnicity (for one of the Hispanic subjects), hobbies, and the label "American." "Texan" and "Southern" had average scores near the middle of the scale, followed by "suburban" and "from Deer Park." "Urban" and ethnicity (for the Caucasian subjects) were nearer the "least important" end of the scale, as were "Southwestern," "rural," and "Western." "Country," "hillbilly," "hick," "Midwestern," and

"redneck" all received fairly low average scores. Thus, the regional labels which subjects rated as most important to defining who they are on average were "Texan" and "Southern," which had average scores near the middle of the continuum. It should, however, be noted that individual subjects varied considerably in their scores for these labels (as described in §4.4.1 above).

4.4.3 Identity Label Scale: Relative Rankings

As noted in the discussion of overall patterns above, while some subjects tended to distribute labels fairly evenly throughout the scale, other subjects tended to create clumps of labels. Subjects also varied in how much they made use of the option to assign the same score to more than one label. This makes identification of the subjects who identify most strongly with a particular label challenging; does a score of 180 for a label mean the same thing for a subject whose labels were evenly distributed throughout the scale as it does for someone who created only a few clusters of labels? What if the subject ranked only one label higher than 180, but had several labels with a score of 180?

One way to avoid the problems introduced by relying solely on the identity label scores would be to also examine labels in terms of subject-internal rankings. This could be done in a variety of ways. As described in §4.3.3 above, one approach would be to examine the rankings of labels as "steps" on each subject's scale, with labels which were assigned equal scores treated as a single step. Another approach would be to calculate the number of labels the subject ranked higher than some label of interest. Each of these three approaches would prioritize different aspects of the subject's label scores or rankings: the point on the scale to which a label was assigned, the relative ranking of the label compared to the subject's entire set of labels, and the degree to which other labels were considered more important to the subject than the label of interest. By comparing subjects across all three approaches to quantifying regional identity, it is therefore possible to get a clearer sense of which subjects identify most strongly with a particular label than would be evident based on one approach alone. The results presented below will therefore draw on all three approaches.

To facilitate this three-way comparison, tables were created ranking the subjects across all three approaches for each of the labels "Texan," "Southern," and "from Deer Park." Table

4.3 below presents this comparison for the label "Texan," Table 4.4 presents this comparison for the label "Southern," and Table 4.5 presents this comparison for the label "from Deer Park."

Identity Label Score (Highest to Lowest)	Identity Label Ranking (Highest to Lowest)	Number of Higher-Ranked Labels (Smallest to Largest)
CF20A	CM32B	CM32B
CF63	CF20A/AmM25	AmM25/CF20A/CF63
CM32B	CM30A/CF63	CM30A
CM61	CM61	CM61
AmM25	HF27	HF27
CM30A	HF29	HF29
CF53B	CF53B	CF53B
HF27		
HF29		

Table 4.3. Subject rankings for the label "Texan" based on identity label scores, identity label rankings, and the total number of higher-ranked labels.

Based on the subject rankings above, three subjects appear near the top of the rankings for Texan identity across all three approaches: CF20A, CF63, and CM32B. AmM25 also appears near the top of the subject rankings for two out of three approaches.

Identity Label Score (Highest to Lowest)	Identity Label Ranking (Highest to Lowest)	Number of Higher-Ranked Labels (Smallest to Largest)
CF20A	CF20A/HF27	CF20A
CF63	CM61/CF63	HF27
CM61	AmM25/CM30A	CF63
HF27	CM32B	CM61/AmM25
CM32B	HF29/CF53B	CM30A
CM30A		CM32B
AmM25		HF29
CF53B		CF53B
HF29		

Table 4.4. Subject rankings for the label "Southern" based on identity label scores, identity label rankings, and the total number of higher-ranked labels.

Based on the subject rankings above, two subjects appear near the top of the rankings for Southern identity across all three approaches: CF20A and CF63 (both of whom were also highly

ranked for Texan identity). CM61 and HF27, who did not appear near the top of the rankings for Texan identity, appear near the top of the subject rankings for two out of three approaches.

Identity Label Score (Highest to Lowest)	Identity Label Ranking (Highest to Lowest)	Number of Higher-Ranked Labels (Smallest to Largest)
CF20A	AmM25	AmM25
AmM25	HF27	CF63
CF63	CF20A/CF63	HF27
CM61	CM61	CF20A
CF53B	CM30A	CM61
CM32B	CF53B	CM30A/HF29/CF53B
CM30A	HF29	CM32B
HF27	CM32B	
HF29		

Table 4.5. Subject rankings for the label "from Deer Park" based on identity label scores, identity label rankings, and the total number of higher-ranked labels.

Based on the subject rankings above, three subjects appear near the top of the rankings for Deer Park identity across all three approaches: CF20A and CF63 (both of whom were also ranked highly for Texan and Southern identity) and AmM25 (who was also ranked highly for Texan identity, but not Southern identity). HF27 again appears near the top of the rankings for two out of three approaches.

Comparing subject rankings across all three tables, CF20A and CF63 come out on top for all three levels of regional identity (city, state, and region). AmM25 and HF27 are ranked highly for both Deer Park identity and Texan identity, but not Southern identity. CM61 is ranked highly for Southern identity only, and CM32B is ranked highly for Texan identity only.

In addition to examining the relative rankings of the regional identity label, it is also worth investigating how the rankings of these labels compare to labels related to other types of identity. As Table 4.2 demonstrates, many of the identities that would likely be categorized as master identities by Tracy (2002) (such as ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation) tend to be ranked fairly highly. However, regional identity and national identity, which Tracy also consider to be master identities, show a great deal of variation across subjects. Identity labels related to interactional identities also tended to be ranked fairly highly, with labels related to family relationships near the top of the scale and other interactional identity labels closer to the center of

the scale. Due to the design of the identity label generation task used in this study, identity labels which would be classified by Tracy (2002) as related to personal identity were rare and relational identity labels were not generated; therefore, there is insufficient data to consider patterns for these identity label types.

In general, when subjects did not rank the regional identity labels "Southern," "Texan," and "from Deer Park" highly, those labels did not tend to cluster with the other master or interactional identity labels they had generated. When subjects did rank the regional identity labels highly, those labels still tended to have somewhat lower scores than the other master identity labels they had ranked. However, these subjects did often rank the regional identity labels higher than labels related to interactional identities, and occasionally ranked them higher than master identity labels. The exceptions to this were interactional identity labels related to family relationships (i.e., "parent," "uncle"), which were highly ranked by all subjects. This suggests that subjects who attach more importance to regional identity may consider their regional identity to be as important as their interactional identities and nearly as important as their master identities. Subjects who do not attach much importance to their regional identities, on the other hand, may not understand their regional identities as master identities. More research involving a broader set of identity labels is needed to investigate how regional identity rankings compare to the rankings of labels across a variety of identity types.

4.4.4 Comparing Identity Label Rankings to Other Indicators of Identity

A comparison of the identity results to the subjects' self-reported accent strength ratings, which were reported on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 was described as "my accent is not very strong" and 5 was described as "my accent is very strong," demonstrates that self-reported accent strength does not correspond neatly to regional identity for these subjects. Table 4.6 below provides the accent strength ratings for each subject, ranked from highest (strongest accent) to lowest (weakest accent). CM30A is omitted because he refused to answer the question on the grounds that it was too subjective. Some subjects gave two numbers in their responses, i.e., "either a 3 or a 4"; in this case, the average (3.5) is reported.

Subject(s)	Accent Strength Rating
CM32B	5
CF63	4
CM61	3.5
AmM25, HF27	3
HF29, CF20A, CF53B	2.5

Table 4.6. Self-reported accent strength ratings. 1 = "my accent is not very strong"; 5 = "my accent is very strong."

Interestingly, none of the subjects rate their accent lower than a 2.5, which is the midpoint on the scale. Looking at the higher end of the accent strength ratings, CF63, who ranked highly for Deer Park, Texan, and Southern identity does also emerge near the higher end for the accent strength scores. However, CF20A, who also ranked highly for all three levels of regional identity, falls at the very bottom of the accent ratings. AmM25 and HF27, who ranked highly for both Deer Park and Texan identity, also report fairly low accent strength. CM32B, who ranked highly for Texan identity only, is the only subject to rate his accent a 5. CM61, on the other hand, rates his accent a more conservative 3.5, despite ranking highly for Southern identity. While it is difficult to draw sweeping conclusions from a sample of nine subjects, comparing identity rankings and self-reported accent strength scores for this sample of subjects suggests that there is not a clear relationship between identity ranking and self-reported accent strength.

Turning to local affiliation, which was assessed based on subjects' plans to remain in Texas the rest of their lives or move away (see §4.3.2 above), the sample was fairly evenly split between subjects who intended to remain in Texas for the rest of their lives (five subjects) and subjects who planned to move away (four subjects). CF63, who ranked highly for Deer Park, Texan, and Southern identity, does report that she intends to remain in Texas for the rest of her life. Similarly, AmM25, who ranked highly for Deer Park and Texan identity, CM32B, who ranked highly for Texan identity, and CM61, who ranked highly for Southern identity, all report that they plan to remain in Texas. However, CF20A, who ranked highly on all three levels of regional identity, and HF27, who ranked highly for Deer Park and Texan identity, both report that they intend to move away. Conversely, HF29, who ranked near the bottom for all three levels of regional identity, reports that she intends to remain in Texas for the rest of her life.

As the summary of the responses to the accent strength and local affiliation questions above suggests, it is difficult to assess regional identity based on answers to these questions alone. While some subjects behave as predicted on these questions, others don't exhibit a clear correspondence between their answers to these questions and their regional identity label rankings. Responses to the accent strength question may be complicated in cases where subjects perceive their dialect as highly stigmatized. This may be particularly true for women, who have been characterized in the literature as "more status-conscious than men" and particularly likely to over-report their use of standard dialect features (Trudgill 1972, p. 182). For example, CF20A, who ranked highly on all three levels of regional identity, reported one of the lowest accent strength ratings. One possible explanation for this is the fact that CF20A was one of the subjects who throughout her interview demonstrated strong alignment with prescriptivist beliefs about speaking "correct" English (see §4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect,* and §4.6.9 below) and claimed to have "worked on" her dialect. Similarly, subject responses to the local affiliation question may have been based on many factors other than regional identity; for example, subjects often considered the locations of family members and desirable characteristics of other cities (such as being near the ocean) in deciding whether they would ever move away. While some of these factors (such as family in the area) would likely be correlated with the regional identity rankings, none of the subject responses to this question seemed to have much to do with affinity for their region. However, given the small sample size in this study, more work with a larger set of subjects is needed to determine whether these types of questions can reliably serve as indicators of regional identity.

4.4.5 Linking Identity Labels to Speech

As described in §4.3.2, in Part D of the interview subjects were asked to circle any of the identity labels that they believed affected the way that they talk. The number of subjects who chose each label as related to their speech is provided in Table 4.7 below.

The most frequently chosen label for this task was "Texan," which was circled by seven out of nine respondents, followed by "Southern," which was circled by six out of nine respondents. "American" was chosen by five subjects, "urban" and "Christian" were chosen by three subjects, and "from Deer Park," "teacher," and "Houstonian" were chosen by two subjects

each. All other labels were chosen by one subject or no subjects as labels that affect the way that they talk.

Identity Label	N Subjects
Texan	7
Southern	6
American	5
Urban, Christian	3
From Deer Park, Teacher, Houstonian	2
Country, Hick, Hillbilly, Southwestern, Suburban, Father/Dad, Mother/Mom/Mommy, Parent, Husband, Married, Woman/Female, Education, Hispanic, Mexican Descent, Silly, Adult, Gay, Large Human	1

Table 4.7. Number of subjects who chose each identity label as one which affects the way that they talk.

While perhaps not surprising that some of the regional labels were chosen as related to speech, both because of subject awareness of dialectal differences and the focus on regional labels in the interviews, it is interesting that some of the labels related to the social categories traditionally studied within sociolinguistics (for example, "from poverty," which relates to social class, and "age 67") were not chosen by the subjects who provided those labels as ones that affect their speech. Similarly, while five subjects provided a label related to gender in the label generation task, only one subject indicated that that label affected the way she speaks.

4.5 QUALITATIVE RESULTS

4.5.1 The Label "Southern"

Nine main themes were identified related to the label "Southern." The first theme relates to subjects' self-description as Southern. The second theme relates to description or recognition of the subjects as Southern by others. The third theme focuses on "Southern" as a more general regional identity label than "Texan" or "from Deer Park." The fourth theme relates to the Southeastern United States. The fifth theme relates to Texas as a Southern state. The sixth theme centers on unique states within the South. The seventh theme was related to the Southern

dialect. The eighth theme focused on Southern food. Finally, the ninth theme related to perceptions of the South as racist or prejudiced.

Self-Description as Southern

In addition to ranking the importance of the label "Southern" to defining their identity, a few subjects specifically mentioned in their interviews that they would refer to themselves as Southern. For example, CF20A, who rated both "Southern" and "Texan" highly with "Southern" only slightly higher than "Texan," stated that "I would generally classify myself more as a Southerner than just a Texan." HF27, who rated "Southern" substantially higher than "Texan," highlighted the importance of context and audience in explaining that "if I was talking about like where I'm from [with] somebody that lived elsewhere out of the country, like you would say, 'Oh, I'm from the South.'" AmM25, who generally preferred the label "Texan" over "Southern," also noted that there were contexts in which he would describe himself as "Southern," joking that "when it's convenient in an argument I will throw around 'Southern.'"

Description or Recognition of Subjects as Southern by Others

Even more common than subject comments about referring to themselves as Southern were comments about whether they believed others would describe them or recognize them as Southern. CF63 believed that "people would describe me probably as Southern" and acknowledged that when traveling, people who heard her talk could guess that she was from the South. Despite ranking the label "Southern" highly, CF20A described herself as "conscious of how people hear me" and explained that she didn't want to be identified as a Southerner "off the bat" (see *The Southern Dialect* below). AmM25, who discusses being perceived as "not Southern enough" (see *The Southern Dialect* below), hesitates when asked whether he thinks people would be able to identify him as a Southerner, answering that "I'd like to think so, but . . . I don't know."

The responses of these subjects suggest varying attitudes towards being recognized as Southern. CF63, who matter-of-factly acknowledges that she is recognizably Southern, doesn't seem to react positively or negatively to being identified as Southern. CF20A is more concerned about how she is perceived and the stigma attached to the Southern dialect. Finally, AmM25 is

unsure whether he would be identified as a Southerner, but his statement that he'd like to believe that he could be recognized as Southern suggests that he may be aware of the covert prestige attached to the Southern dialect. Despite their differing attitudes towards being identified as Southern, all of these subjects' comments speak to the importance of being perceived as Southern and suggest that "in some cases, Southern identity is imposed on an individual by others" (Thompson 2007, p. 64).

"Southern" as a General Regional Identity Label

A few subjects discussed the generality of "Southern" as a regional label. CM30A claimed that, from the perspective of Northerners, "if it's not Florida or California, it's general South." AmM25 and CF20A both described "Southern" as more general than "Texan," but responded to this in different ways. AmM25 explained that he ranked "from Deer Park" and "Texan" substantially higher than "Southern" because "'Southern's' more generalized" and he didn't want to be "generalized into" other states he wasn't as familiar with. On the other hand, CF20A attached higher importance to the label "Southern":

> Meghan Oxley (interviewer/author; abbreviated "MO" hereafter): Um and so pretty close to "American" you had "the South." And is "Texas" equal with that? "Texan" equal? Or was it
> CF20A: Um . . . no. "Texan" is actually a little bit lower
> MO: Okay.
> CF20A: than "the South." I don't necessarily always specifically identify myself as a Texan I guess. Um I just more generally am kind of Southern-raised. Um not too much about me I guess is just necessarily "oh you're Texan," you know. [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CF20A: So um yeah "the South" is kind of um I guess it's a more general area than Texas
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: and so I would generally classify myself more as a Southerner than just a Texan.

Thus, while CF20A rated both "Southern" and "Texan" highly and assigned similar scores to both labels, she preferred to align herself with the more general label "Southern." AmM25, in contrast, prefers the more specific label "Texan," which better reflects his experience than the broader label "Southern."

The Southeastern United States

One of the most popular themes in the interviews was that the interviewees thought of "the South" as primarily referring to the Southeastern United States, particularly Georgia and Alabama (*c.f.* Bakos 2013, Cramer 2013). HF27 explained that "when I think of 'Southern,' I think like Louisiana and Alabama, Georgia." Reflecting on whether her image of the South differed from her image of Texas, HF29 acknowledged that "I've never been to like Alabama or Georgia or anything [that] would be considered Southern I guess. Tennessee." Similarly, CF63 stated that "when I think of 'Southern,' I think of . . . Georgia." Recalling visits to see a relative in Savannah, CF63 emphasized plantation images, describing the "beautiful white Southern houses" and noting that "I always think of *Gone with the Wind* type people."

CF20A included Texas in her list of Southern states, but also emphasized the Southeast, noting that "when I just say 'Southern' I think. . . really more Eastern almost – Southeastern":

> MO: What about um "Southern" and "Southwestern"? How do you think being "Southern" is different from being "Southwestern"?
> CF20A: Um when I just say "Southern" I think of Texas and um Georgia
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: and the Carolinas. Um really more Eastern almost – Southeastern. Um when I think of Southwest I think of Arizona and New Mexico and being more desert areas and - and the other South I guess just Southern. I just think of Paula Deen. [laughter]
> MO: Yeah. [laughter]
> CF20A: [laughter] From Savannah. [imitates Savannah accent]

CF20A's description sets up the South, which for her refers primarily to the Southeast, in contrast to the desert areas of the Southwest. She also offers Paula Deen, the Savannah-based celebrity chef, as an icon of the South. Deen, who rose to fame in the early 2000s through her glaringly Southern Food Network show *Paula's Home Cooking*, was the subject of a widely publicized 2013 lawsuit in which she was sued for racial discrimination. Citing Deen as a symbol of the South thus also invokes implicit associations of the South with racism (see *The South as Racist/Prejudiced* below). By performing an exaggerated Southern accent in her description of Deen as "from Savannah," CF20A both imitates Deen's accent and implies that the Southeast may represent a more extreme version of southernness compared to Texas.

Texas as Southern

A few subjects did note that they associate the South with Texas. As noted above, CF20A included Texas in the list of states that came to mind when she heard the label "Southern." CM32B described his image of the classic Southerner and the classic Texan as "the same":

> CM32B: Well the South, you know, I mean if you look across the South of where we're at, there's – uh the places um when you say "Southern,"
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: I – I think of Texas. I think of, you know, a cowboy. I do. If you say "Texan," I - same thing. Even though I've lived here my whole life and I rarely see people with pistols on their hips.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: Cowboy hats. Just doesn't happen. But that's what you think about.

For CM32B, then, the Texan stereotype of cowboys "with pistols on their hips" applies equally well for Southerners. While he acknowledged that he hasn't actually found this image to be representative of Texans, CM32B also admitted that "that's what you think about."

Finally, when asked by the interviewer whether he could think of a time when he'd described himself as Southern, CM61 initially hesitated, then stated that if you're Texan, "you're Southern thataway":

> MO: What about um "Southern"? Can you think of a time where you might've described yourself as "Southern" or somebody else did?
> CM61: Nah. I can't – I never really considered myself . . . well, just, you know, Texan, you know, you're S- you're Southern thataway. But other than that, nah.
> MO: So you feel like when you say you're Texan, that already kinda implies that you're Southern?
> CM61: Yeah.

CM61 seems to begin to say that he doesn't consider himself Southern, but then shifts midsentence to assert that as a Texan he is also Southern. When asked whether he meant that being a Texan implies that he is also a Southerner, CM61 agrees that it does. This response suggests that while CM61 primarily thinks of himself as a Texan, he also perceives himself as Southern by virtue of being Texan.

Unique States Within the South

A few subjects highlighted differences among the Southern states in their interviews. AmM25 explained that to differentiate between the Southern states, he could "listen to the way they talk . . . that's how I'd know who's who." CF63 commented on a sentiment shared by several subjects when she explained that "I think of Texas as more of a . . . totally different entity than just the Southern states" (see *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region* below). CF53B additionally argued that "each of the Southern states has their own unique personality":

> MO: Do you think that being Texan is different from being Southern?
> CF53B: I think so a little bit. I mean, when I think of being Southern, it's, you know, um . . . the Southern manners, the Southern way of speaking or – you know, slower, kind of a drawl, um and perhaps the food that we're used to eating. Um but then I think each of the Southern states has their own unique personality. Uh I haven't experienced that myself, I can't say that's completely true, but I think Texas is different from Louisiana,
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: which is completely different from Georgia. So I think – I think we're a little bit different but I think we have a lot in common too.

In the excerpt above, CF53B draws on several cultural and linguistic factors to establish the ways in which Southerners "have a lot in common," but also volunteers that the states within the South differ from each other. As an example, she notes that "Texas is different from Louisiana, which is completely different from Georgia" – contrasting Texas with a neighboring state which is still perceived as quite different from Texas, as well as Georgia, which for many subjects was particularly emblematic of the South (see *The Southeastern United States* above). The differences between these three states therefore represent the wide diversity of cultures found within the region which is often monolithically referred to as "the South."

The Southern Dialect

When questioned about the label "Southern," several subjects discussed the Southern accent or dialect. For example, in describing how being Texan is different from being Southern, CF53B explains that "when I think of being Southern, it's. . . the Southern manners, the Southern way of speaking or – you know, slower, kind of a drawl . . . and perhaps the food that we're used to eating." This suggests that the Southern "drawl," like manners and food, acts as one litmus test for southernness. As noted above, AmM25 stated that, "if I were to differentiate [between

the Southern states] I'd probably listen to the way they talk . . . that's how I'd know who's who."
When asked to explain what makes her a Southerner, CF20A responds that "I do get a twang
occasionally. Especially when I say the word 'twang.'"

A less overt reference to Southern language occurs in the interview with CM32B. When
the interviewer asks CM32B about differences between being Southern and being Southwestern,
he describes "Southwestern" as a term used for a location or a direction, in contrast to
"Southern," which conjures up the "hillbilly" image of "overalls and a jug":

> MO: What about the difference between "Southern" and being "Southwestern"? We
> kinda – we kinda talked about that some, but how do you think those two are different?
> CM32B: Southern is – is – Southwestern is just like a part – place where you live.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: Mmkay. I'm Southwest. Southwest from here. You go southwest. I – I take
> southwest to get to somewhere.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: Southern is like, "Hey, you Southern."
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: You know what I'm sayin'? It goes with that – that hillbilly kinda thing.
> MO: Yeah.
> CM32B: Yeah. Overalls and a jug.

Interestingly, before delving into the details of the hillbilly stereotype, CM32B begins by
stating that "Southern is like, 'Hey, you Southern.'" In addition to suggesting that, unlike
Southwesterners, Southerners are unambiguously and noticeably Southern, CM32B's omission
of the copula ("You Southern" rather than "You are Southern"), a dialect feature associated with
Southern U.S. English and African American English, links the label "Southern" to the Southern
dialect and to the stigma surrounding speakers of that dialect.

Another reference to the stigmatized status of the Southern dialect occurs in CF20A's
interview. When asked whether she has any anecdotes about what it means to be from the South,
CF20A explains that she has "focused on the way [she speaks]" since moving to Waco for
college:

> CF20A: Um yeah just going away – I don't know that I have a specific anecdote but I
> mean I do recall especially linguistically meeting people who just spoke differently than
> me. Um I have um focused on the way that I speak since uh moving away to Waco. Um
> and um actually one of my [laughter] what always comes to mind is um a quote from
> *Anchorman* where she's been working really hard on her non-regional dialect.
> MO: Uh huh. [laughter]

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CF20A: [laughter] So uh and as a – as a musician, you know, I have an ear for hearing that kind of thing and – and being conscious of how people hear me um and not necessarily wanting to off the bat be identified as a Southerner.
MO: Mm hmm.
CF20A: Um because that comes with some stigma sometimes. Um . . . um you know, wanting to sound more educated
MO: Mm hmm.
CF20A: almost, you know. Like the whole um hick thing and – and things like that, you know. Lots of times they're associated with not being educated.

Here CF20A compares herself to the character Veronica Corningstone in the 2004 comedy film *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*. At one point in the film, Corningstone, a woman from North Carolina attempting to establish herself in the male-dominated news industry, describes her situation in a voiceover: "This is definitely a man's world. But while they're laughing and grab-assing, I'm chasing down leads and practicing my non-regional diction." Much like Corningstone, CF20A is "conscious of how people hear [her]" and admits that she doesn't necessarily want to be identified as Southern "off the bat." She also explicitly associates sounding Southern with the stigma of sounding uneducated.

Another interesting interaction around the symbolic status of the Southern dialect occurs when AmM25 suggests that he will occasionally describe himself as "redneck" when "people don't think [he's] Southern enough":

AmM25: And then . . . I like to throw around "redneck" when people don't think I'm Southern enough I guess.
MO: People don't think you're Southern enough?
AmM25: Yeah, enough, or [laughter]
MO: Does that happen a lot?
AmM25: Well apparently, I guess.
MO: Why do you think that is?
AmM25: Uh I guess my accent. The way I talk real high too.

While AmM25 doesn't elaborate further on this point, there are a number of possible explanations for why he may not be considered "Southern enough." First, as AmM25's response to the interviewer's question "Why do you think that is?" suggests, his accent may not be perceived as "Southern enough." This could indicate that without enough clear Southern markers in his speech, AmM25 is not evaluated as authentically Southern by other members of the Deer Park community.

Another possible interpretation is hinted at by AmM25's comment that he "talks real high." Later in his interview, AmM25 explains that "a lot of people would refer to my high pitch as part of being gay" and that there was "a lot of conflict about [my sexual orientation] growing up." He also notes that "when I do refer to myself as redneck, that shocks people sometimes." Previous research has argued that the label "Southern" is stereotypically associated with White, straight males (Catsam 2008, Griffin et al. 2005, Reed and Black 1982, Thompson and Sloan 2012, Watts 2008). For AmM25, who is neither White nor straight, high pitch may be interpreted as evidence that he's "not Southern enough." By aligning himself with the label "redneck," a term which is typically associated with masculine, Southern White males (Shirley 2010), AmM25 is able to assert Southern identity despite perceived conflicts between his ethnic identity, sexual identity, and stereotypical notions of "southernness." In contrast to CF20A, who attempted to downplay her southernness by avoiding speaking with a Southern accent, AmM25 actively works to promote a Southern identity by describing himself as "redneck."

Southern Food

Another common theme in discussions of southernness was that of Southern food. As mentioned above, CF53B explained that "when I think of being Southern, it's. . . the Southern manners, the Southern way of speaking or – you know, slower, kind of a drawl . . . and perhaps the food that we're used to eating." Comparing the meaning of "Southern" and "Southwestern," she explained that "I think of 'Southern' as more . . . sittin' on the veranda with . . . your sweet tea."

CF20A also discussed sweet tea, as well as Dr. Pepper, which she referred to as "the nectar of life," explaining that "if I could do anything that I wanted all the time, I would drink Dr. Pepper and sweet tea every day." In a story about using the word "coke" to refer to all carbonated sugary beverages, she also described her dismay at discovering that the soda Dr. Pepper wasn't available everywhere:

> CF20A: And uh you know, uh I used to call everything "coke." Any sort of soda was "coke." You know, "I wanna coke." And people say, "Well, which one?" [laughter]
> MO: Yeah.
> CF20A: And I'll say "Dr. Pepper." [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]

CF20A: because I'm from the South. Oh – oh that was a big one. Discovering that Dr. Pepper isn't everywhere.
MO: Oh yeah.
CF20A: That was a huge conflict for me. [laughter]

CF20A's claim that she'll order Dr. Pepper "because [she's] from the South" indicates that she does consider herself a Southerner. Her insistence on drinking Dr. Pepper, a drink which originated in Waco, Texas, demonstrates her attachment to Southern products. Although perhaps a bit exaggerated for humor, her statement that her discovery that Dr. Pepper's availability was limited was "a big one" and "a huge conflict" also suggests that she places a high value on Southern (and in this case, Texan) cultural symbols. In this respect, she differs from other subjects like CM30A, who insists that while he has learned to appreciate some aspects of Southern culture, "grits [are] disgusting."

The South as Racist/Prejudiced

Another theme which surfaced in a few interviews was that the label "Southern" was associated with racism or prejudice. CM30A indirectly referenced the racist connotations of "Southern" early in his interview when he noted that "any time I hear the word 'the South,' I always think of the follow up phrase being 'will rise again.'" The phrase "the South will rise again" has historically been associated with Confederate sympathizers, often accompanies images of the Confederate flag, and typically signifies strong Southern identity and nostalgia for the "Old South." Like the Confederate flag, the phrase is contentious, with some Southerners claiming that it simply indicates pride in their heritage and alignment with Southern values while others contend that it represents a history of slavery and racism. For CM30A, who attributes his automatic connection between "the South" and "will rise again" to his "redneck family" (who he describes as prejudiced elsewhere in his interview), the phrase is most likely associated with racism rather than regional pride.

HF29 more explicitly describes the South as racist at several points in the group interview. For example, at one point the group is discussing whether there is a difference between being Southwestern and being Southern, and the interviewer attempts to summarize the discussion so far:

MO: So you don't think that there's like a cultural stereotype of what it is to be Southwestern the way there is
HF29: Mm.
MO: for Southern?
CM32B: I don't think it seemed as . . . nothing bad. Like if someone says, "Oh, he's Southern," they might would think
HF29: Oh.
CM32B: I personally don't. But [other people do.]
HF29: But they might think a little bit of racism or
CM32B: Yeah.
HF29: old school thinkin'.

While CM32B is initially vague about what kinds of "bad" associations people might have with the word "Southern," he agrees with HF29 when she suggests that the label might suggest "racism or old school thinkin.'" A similar discussion occurs elsewhere in the interview when the group is discussing the difference between being Texan and being Southern:

HF29: I think that Texans are – are – what I imagine a Southern person would be, a little bit more not as accepting of people, or like um a little bit more racist maybe, where Texans are more inviting and more hospitable and friendlier to people I guess.
CM32B: So for you
CF63: [Mm hmm.]
CM32B: it's the word.
HF29: Yes. For me it's the word.
MO: So "Southern" has kind of a bad connotation
HF29: I do.
MO: for you?
HF29: For me it does.
CF63: Mm hmm. Hmm.
MO: What do you guys think about that?
CF63: I guess in some ways it probably does when you think about it. Yeah.
CM61: Yeah. From the old days.
CF63: Like - makes you think of slave owners and
HF29: Yeah. Racist people
CF63: Yeah.

In reflecting on how she "imagines" Texans and Southerners would be, HF29 states that a Southerner would be "not as accepting of people" and "a bit more racist." When the interviewer asks the other participants in the group interview what they think, CF63 and CM61 both agree with HF29's statement. CM61 associates Southerners with "the old days," most likely a reference to the Antebellum South. CF63 concurs, suggesting that the label "Southern" "makes

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you think of slave owners." Thus, although Texas was part of the Confederacy, it is the label "Southern" and not the label "Texan" which carries the baggage of historical (and current) racism in the South.

4.5.2 The Label "Texan"

Thirteen main themes were identified related to the label "Texan." The first theme pulls together comments which describe "Texan" as simply indicating that one is from Texas. The second theme relates to subjects' self-description as Texan. The third theme relates to description or recognition of the subjects as Texan by others. The fourth theme combines subject comments related to the difficulty of locating Texan within a region. The fifth theme is that Texas is a large state. The sixth theme highlights different areas within the state of Texas. The seventh theme focuses on Texan pride. The eighth theme groups generic positive comments that subjects made about Texas, for example, that being Texan is "cool." The ninth theme is that Texas is associated with the oil industry. The tenth theme centers on cowboy stereotypes associated with Texas. The eleventh theme addresses Texan fashion. The twelfth theme is that Texas is diverse. Finally, the thirteenth theme combines comments about Hispanic influence in Texas.

Being From Texas

Just as many of Thompson's (2007) interviewees explained that they self-identified as Southern on the basis of birth and longtime residence in the South, when asked to explain what it means to be Texan, several Deer Park subjects began by stating that it simply refers to being from Texas, for example: "I live in Texas" (CF63), "just being from Texas" (HF29), "you were born in Texas" (CM61), "I grew up here in Texas" (CM61), "it's just a place that I got to live" (CM61), and "I've lived here my whole life" (CM61). CF63 set up similar criteria for what it means to be Texan, explaining that "it used to be that . . . you were born in Texas and you live in Texas your whole life and nobody else lives here except Texans" but also suggested that native Texans and lifelong residents might now be less common, pointing out that "people . . . from all over the world are here . . . and it's not as distinctive."

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In contrast to the straightforward definitions of "Texan" as an ascribed identity presented above, two subjects' answers suggested an element of voluntary association and identification in what it means to be Texan. AmM25 said that, "growing up here, if you claim that, then you're a Texan to me." While superficially similar to the comments from other subjects, the phrase "if you claim that" suggests that Texanness is something individuals can either claim or not claim, introducing regional identity as a choice rather than an inevitable consequence of residence. CM30A was similarly expansive in describing what it means to be Texan, asserting that "if you truly call Texas home, that's good enough for me."

Self-Description as Texan

Several subjects noted that they would describe themselves as Texan or from Texas. CF63 said that "I tell people I was born here. And I'm not from somewhere else." In discussing the identity labels he would apply to himself, AmM25 explained that "I would pick 'Texan' over 'Southern.'" As noted above (*Being from Texas*), AmM25 also emphasized the importance of "claiming" Texan identity. Telling the story of a stranger who accused him of being Midwestern (see §4.6.6 below), CM30A noted that he responded by saying, "I'm from Southeast Texas." HF27 joked that when spending time with her brother-in-law's girlfriend, who is from England, "there's a lot of like, 'Oh yeah we're . . . pretty Texan.'"

CF20A, on the other hand, expressed mixed feelings about identifying as Texan. While she stated that "if I was meeting someone outside of Texas I would tell them that I'm a Texan," when asked about her decision to rank the "Southern" label slightly higher than the "Texan" label, she said, "I don't necessarily always specifically identify myself as a Texan I guess . . . I just more generally am kind of Southern-raised." Thus, while CF20A ranks both the "Texan" and "Southern" labels highly, she indicates some preference for using the label "Southern" (see *"Southern" as a General Regional Identity Label* above).

Description or Recognition of Subjects as Texan by Others

In addition to the ways in which they refer to themselves, many subjects' discussions of the meaning of "Texan" revolved around how other people would describe or identify them. CM32B pointed out more than once that he'd prefer to be called "Texan" rather than some of the

other labels he had ranked, noting that "being called a Texan is better than being called a man" and "I would prefer someone refer to me as a Texan than a Deer Parkian . . . because 'Texan' sounds cooler." These comments suggest that for CM32B, "Texan" carries a positive connotation not associated with the labels "man" and "Deer Parkian" (see *Generic Positive Comments About Texas* below).

When discussing whether she could be identified as Texan when traveling, CF63 speculated that "I think people assume I'm from Texas." Similarly, HF27 described traveling to Boston and being introduced to friends' acquaintances, who referred to her as "one of your Texan friends." AmM25, on the other hand, was less certain that he would be identified as Texan, stating that "I'd like to think so, but I don't know." As discussed above for the label "Southern," AmM25's comment that "he'd like to think" people recognize him as Texan suggests that he has positive associations for the label, however, he isn't certain that others would be likely to identify him as Texan (possibly for linguistic and demographic reasons; see §4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect* above). CF20A was even more doubtful, explaining that "not too much about me is . . . 'Oh, you're Texan,' you know." This suggests that while CF20A does rank "Texan" as important to her identity, she may not believe that she represents the prototypical Texan, and she believes that others would be unlikely to remark on her Texanness.

Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the focus of the interviews on regional identity, the most frequent theme regarding Texas centered on the ways in which Texas did or did not belong to a larger cultural or linguistic region, most commonly the South. As suggested above (*Texas as Southern*), some subjects did consider Texas to be a Southern state. For example, while ranking the identity labels she had generated, CF20A commented, "I am from the South, for sure." However, these discussions of Texas as Southern almost always included hesitations or qualifications. For example, CF20A admitted that "when I talk to other Southerners, sometimes . . . the Texan pride bubbles up a little bit" (see *Texan Pride* below). By using the phrase "other Southerners," CF20A implies that she is a Southerner herself. However, she goes on to explain the many ways in which she takes pride in Texan history, singling out the accomplishments of Texas over the history of the South more generally. At another point in her interview, CF20A

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claims that "we're a little more independent here, definitely . . . from the rest of the country and the rest of the South." Again, by referring to "the rest of the South," CF20A seems to suggest that Texas is Southern, but she simultaneously emphasizes the ways in which Texas differs from the South.

CM61 also expressed mixed feelings about whether Texas was Southern or not. As discussed above (*Texas as Southern*), he seemed to consider himself Southern by way of being Texan, as demonstrated by the following exchange:

> MO: What about um "Southern"? Can you think of a time where you might've described yourself as "Southern" or somebody else did?
> CM61: Nah. I can't – I never really considered myself . . . well, just, you know, Texan, you know, you're S- you're Southern thataway. But other than that, nah.
> MO: So you feel like when you say you're Texan, that already kinda implies that you're Southern?
> CM61: Yeah.

However, even in suggesting that "you're Southern thataway," he seems to display some hesitation. When asked if he has described himself as "Southern," he begins to say "I never really considered myself . . ." before acknowledging that Texans are also Southerners. His addition of "other than that, nah" also implies that there are few other reasons why he might consider himself Southern. Elsewhere in his interview, CM61 displays similarly conflicting opinions, for example, when the interviewer asks about his rankings of the labels "Texan" and "Southern":

> MO: You also have . . . "Texan" here, and I'm tryin' to see . . . you ranked being Te- Southern as more important than being Texan. Just a little bit more.
> CM61: Yeah, there's – well, like I say, I've lived in Texas my whole life, and Texas is a Southern – sort of a Southern state.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM61: And I feel like – well, I didn't mean to put one ahead of the other. They were both about the same to me. Uh I grew – I grew up here in Texas and – and I've grown up here in sort of the Gulf Coast area. And uh and to me it's just a place that I – that I got to live.
> MO: Mm. Do you feel like there are any differences between being Southern and being Texan?
> CM61: Mm. I never thought of it that way.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM61: I just, you know, I – bein' a Texan, you're a Texan.
> MO: Yeah.

CM61: You know. And uh and you're part of the S- sort of the South, or the Old South, as they called it. And uh but to me they're both the same.

On the one hand, CM61 asserts that Texas and the South are "both the same." On the other hand, he twice corrects himself, describing Texas as "sort of a Southern state" and "sort of the South" rather than unequivocally Southern. This insistence on describing Texas as "sort of Southern" is a sign that CM61 may not find "Southern" alone to be an appropriate descriptor for Texas.

Like CF20A and CM61, HF27 and HF29 both assert that Texas is Southern while also providing examples of how Texas differs from the South. Compare their responses to the interviewer's question about whether being Texan is different from being Southern:

HF29: Mm . . . not really. I think that Texas is so big
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: that it's – it's Southern. But I've never – I've never been to like Alabama or Georgia or anything that's - would be considered Southern I guess. Tennessee. I don't know.

HF27: Hmm. [We're] . . . well like I don't know that I'd necessarily consider – yeah. W- d- well Texas is a Southern state that is um borders Mexico. Now like while Ariz- I don't know, I consider like Ari- that's more West [laughter]
MO: Mm hmm.
HF27: to me than Southern, so like yeah. So yeah, w- we're – none of the - when I think Southern, I think like Louisiana and
MO: Mm hmm.
HF27: Alabama, Georgia, you know. [laughter] And yeah so I would say that we're – in my mind we're the only ones [laughter] that border
MO: That are part of the South?
HF27: The – yeah, that are part of the South, yeah. What I consider the South.

Both HF29 and HF27 assert that Texas is Southern. Yet they also hesitate to simply categorize Texas as Southern and leave it at that. HF29 finds it important to note that she hasn't visited the Southeastern states "or anything that would be considered Southern" (see *The Southeastern United States* above). Like CM61, HF27 seems to begin to deny that Texas is Southern, saying, "I don't know that I'd necessarily consider . . ." before trailing off. While she eventually describes Texas as "a Southern state that borders Mexico," the list of states she immediately thinks of as Southern does not include Texas. CF63's response also echoes that of HF27 and HF29:

MO: Um so I also see you ranked um "from Texas" higher than "Southern." Can you tell me a little bit more about why that might be a little bit more – you know, define you more than being from the South?
CF63: I don't know. I . . . interesting question. [laughter]
MO: [laughter]
CF63: When I think of Southern I think of . . . Georgia and I – I don't – I don't think of – I mean, Texas is most definitely Southern, [laughter]
MO: Mm hmm.
CF63: but uh . . . I don't know. It's really close.

While CF63 says that "from Texas" and "Southern" are "really close" and "Texas is most definitely Southern," she also volunteers that the label "Southern" makes her think of Georgia, and begins to say "I don't think of . . ." before switching gears and asserting that Texas is Southern. Later in her interview, CF63 more directly states that the two labels differ:

MO: Um what about "Southern" in terms of kind of the kinds of things that make you a Southerner, do you think that's different from "Texan"?
CF63: I - I see "Southern" as different from "Texan." I don't know – uh, you know, I don't have any . . . reason for that, but I don't – even though Texas is a Stouther-Southern state, I think of Texas as more of a . . . totally different entity [laughter]
MO: Yeah.
CF63: than just the Southern states.

Again CF63 says that "Texas is a Southern state," but here she more clearly articulates that Texas is "a totally different entity than just the Southern states." She also goes on to state that "the Texas accent is a little different than just Southern."

This tension between describing Texas as Southern and forefronting the ways in which Texas differs from the South is present to some degree in the responses of almost every interviewee. While some subjects primarily demonstrated this tension through contradictions and hesitations, others more directly challenged the idea that Texas is Southern. For example, CF53B described Texas as "on the edge" of Southern and Southwestern, characterizing the former as "sittin' on the veranda with your . . . sweet tea" and the latter as "rugged and outdoorsy." When asked about his decision to rank the identity label "Texan" higher than "Southern," CM30A explained that "'Southern' doesn't really properly define 'Texan'" and argued that "Texas has a culture that's rather unique . . . compared to just general Southern culture or Western culture or even Southwestern culture, but I'd say that's getting a little closer."

Like CF53B, he also evoked the idea that Texas acts as a border or transition zone between regions:

> CM30A: I'd say it's more of . . . a buffer
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: uh, you know, or an airlock [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: um that s- related to both being part of the South and . . . related to not being part of the South. It's not autonomous from either,
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: you know. I think that the Ship Channel being one of the central hubs of the, you know, the entire Texas region . . . is real – a really great functioning metaphor for what Texas is.
> MO: Hmm. That's interesting. Do you think Texas is part of the Southwest?
> CM30A: Um again it would be kind of a buffer, you know. It's – Texas is the transition from Louisiana to Arizona, you know.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: It – it really is a full spectrum in-between.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: But culinary-wise, I'd say it's . . . you know, has a lot . . . in s- you know, a lot similar with Southwest, a lot in common.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: But then again there's also a lot of, you know, Southern influence.

CM30A's description of Texas as both Southern and non-Southern reflects the opposing claims made by other subjects. He is also quick to point out that Texas is "not autonomous" from the surrounding regions, and when asked whether Texas would be better considered part of the Southwest, depicts Texas as "a full spectrum in-between" Louisiana and Arizona. As an example of how Texas is influenced by these regions, he notes that Texas cooking is influenced by both the Southwest and the South.

CM30A continues to use Louisiana as a symbol of the South and Arizona as a symbol of the Southwest, arguing that from an outside perspective, "the Southwestern side will see more of the Southern influence in Texas and the Southern side will have more of the Southwestern":

> CM30A: Yeah. Uh . . . Louisiana will tell us that we have more Mexican culture, and Arizona will tell us we have less,
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: you know. Louisiana wil- and it's - maybe it's because I just ate but it's all about the food right now in this conversation,
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: you know. Arizona will see, you know, more of . . . grits and hash, and Louisiana will see more tacos

MO: Hmm.
CM30A: in what it is to be Texan. And culturally, uh they'll see more of, you know, to them Texan has a lot more of the Tejano influence
MO: Mm hmm.
CM30A: and again if you're asking from the Western side, it's going to have a lot more of the hillbilly/redneck influence.

The examples CM30A provides above highlight the ways in which Texas doesn't seem to "fit in" with either the South or the Southwest – Texas is too influenced by Mexican or Tejano culture to be Southern, but too hillbilly or redneck to be Southwestern. This mix of influences is even reflected in Texan cuisine, which combines the more Southern "grits and hash" with Mexican food like tacos. Like many other subjects, CM30A sees cuisine as an important factor in marking Texas as Southern (see *Southern Food* above), but at the same time his inclusion of tacos as standard Texan fare problematizes the notion that Texas could be portrayed as solely Southern. He reiterates this point later in his interview:

CM30A: Again I think Texan has a lot of Southern in it,
MO: Mm hmm.
CM30A: but it's kind of paradoxical, cause the South is so much larger than Texas, but Texan is so much larger than Southern,
MO: Hmm.
CM30A: you know, that . . . it's . . . again there is definitely an influence, but it's not the only influence nor is it the main influence, you know.
MO: Is there something else that you think is the main influence? Or do you think it's just kind of a mix of a lot of different stuff?
CM30A: I'd say it's – it's a good solid balance of . . . Southern culture, Western culture . . . um . . . Mexican culture.

Given the many descriptions of Texas as both Southern and non-Southern presented above, it seems appropriate that CM30A describes Texas as "paradoxical." CM30A also discounts the idea that Southern culture is the "main influence" in Texas, asserting that Texan culture represents a "balance" of Southern, Western, and Mexican influences. The position of Texas as a transition zone between regions and the varied influences which contribute to Texan culture may create the conditions which lead to the different patterns regarding Texan and Southern identity seen above in the label ranking task (§4.4.1, §4.4.3). The multiple definitions of what it means to be Texan may allow some subjects to vacillate between identifying as Southern and as Texan, suggesting that regional identity in border regions may be more open to

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"negotiation and contestation" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, p. 606), and less static than Tracy (2002) suggests. Additionally, while some subjects perceive Southern culture as the "main influence" in Texas, others may agree with CM30A that Texas represents a unique culture which is distinct from the South. These competing definitions of what it means to be Texan may be one factor which influences subjects' choices to identify as Texan or Southern (see §4.6.4 below).

Texas as a Big State

Many subjects noted that one of the defining features of Texas is its size. HF27 and HF29 repeatedly described Texas as "big" and "huge," and HF29 suggested that this size and the great amount of land in Texas results in "a lot of rural communities for a big state." CF20A noted that many famous musicians are from Texas, but added that "that's mainly just because it's such a big state that there's such a large pool to choose from." She also invoked the aphorism that "everything's bigger in Texas," citing as evidence that "when you leave Texas the roads get smaller." CM30A linked the size of Texas to his difficulty categorizing Texas as belonging to any particular region, arguing that, "being so big, it's hard to define what Texas is." He also relayed a story of visiting Turkey and encountering confusion about whether Texas was a country or a state:

> CM30A: I remember whenever I was in Turkey me and my friend [name removed] we uh ran into a couple girls that were taking an English class and everyone – you know, it – it was an, you know, adult English class and everyone their goal was to um come to either go to either w- make it to Western Europe or, you know, make it to the United States, for various reasons.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: I remember they uh asked us where, you know, where we were from and [CM30A's friend – name removed] had told them, "I'm from Gloucester, Virginia." I told 'em, "I'm from Texas." And they got a little confused at first because just looking at a map with . . . there was a little confusion as to whether or not Texas was part of the United States.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: They thought i- Texas was a small country between Mexico and the United States.
> MO: Oh.
> CM30A: And that's – you know, small point of pride there.

CM30A states that the Turkish students "thought Texas was a small country between

Mexico and the United States," likely due to the size of the state. He also links the size of the state to his pride in being from Texas, a topic discussed further below (see *Texan Pride*).

Areas Within Texas

A few subjects discussed different areas within the state of Texas. As mentioned previously, CM30A responded to a stranger's suggestion that he was Midwestern and not Southern by saying, "I'm from Southeast Texas" (see also *Identity Labels Assigned by Others* below). CM30A emphasized that he is not only from Texas, but from Southeast Texas, suggesting that this area of Texas may be especially similar to the South. Considering whether Texas should be described as Southern or Southwestern, he proposed that "it'd be easier to define different regions of Texas."

CF20A also highlighted a region within Texas, noting that "places like Galveston almost make . . . the Gulf Coast area specifically Texan to me." While it's not entirely clear what she means by "specifically Texan," two possibilities are that she believes certain regions within Texas are more distinct than other regions or that they are better representatives of Texas than other regions.

AmM25, HF27, and HF29 also pointed out that the cities of Texas differ from each other. For example, AmM25 described his image of Austinites as "hipsters," Dallas residents as "jeans, dress shirt, and cowboy boots," and Houstonians as "a pretty good blend so really no telling." When HF27 was asked whether being from Deer Park is different from being Texan, she argued that Deer Park, Houston, and Galveston all have "a different vibe":

> MO: Do you think that being from Deer Park is really different from being Texan, or do you think those are about the same?
> HF27: Mm no. I think it's – I – I would think it was different, yeah. Because I mean Texas is so huge and, I mean, you go somewhere from like – there's – it's – I mean, well there's such a difference e- among like all the cities. I mean,
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: there's a difference between Deer Park and Houston. I mean even from like Houston to Galveston that's like a different vibe. [laughter] And then Austin seems – so yeah.

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For HF27, the differences between the cities in Texas were linked to the size of the state (see *Texas as a Big State* above). HF29 also linked this variation to the size of the state and provided additional information about how the cities of Texas might differ from each other:

> HF29: Like there's so many different um cultures and communities. It's huge. I mean you could really have like a rural lifestyle with all the country that we have, the land, um but you could also be from a big city like Houston and live more like in the Fifth Ward with poverty in – in more urban area.

Beyond just suggesting that these areas in Texas have "a different vibe," HF29 asserted that they represented "different cultures and communities." She also highlighted the contrast between rural and urban areas within the state (see §4.6.7 below) and differences related to social class, citing Houston's Fifth Ward, a historically African American and working class district, as an example of urban poverty.

Texan Pride

In describing the identity label "Texan," many subjects discussed Texan pride. As discussed above (*Texas as a Big State*), when students in Turkey mistook Texas for a small country, CM30A described that misunderstanding as a "small point of pride." Asked whether there was any difference between being Southern and being Texan, HF27 noted that "people from Texas are really proud" and CM61 said that "there's a self-pride of Texas." CF20A also found that pride to be particularly evident in interactions with non-Texans:

> MO: Do you – like are there different kind of things that you think would make you a Texan, or do you think it's kinda the same stuff [that makes you Southern]?
> CF20A: I mean, I guess it's the same, really. I mean there's supposed to be things, you know, "those Texans." I – and I mean I, you know, when I talk with other Southerners, sometimes, you know, the - the Texan pride bubbles up a little bit
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: and you know, "oh, well we were the original
> MO: [laughter]
> CF20A: state to secede" and, you know, we have the oldest, um, some of the oldest colleges from the South.

In the excerpt above, CF20A initially suggests that Southerners and Texans are the same, but goes on to invoke stereotypes of how Texans behave by referring to "those Texans." In interacting with "other Southerners" (see *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region* above), she

admits that her Texan pride "bubbles up a little bit." She links this pride to Texan history, reporting that "we were the original state to secede" (possibly a reference to independence from Mexico rather than secession from the Union – six Southern states seceded before Texas in the lead up to the Civil War) and "we have . . . some of the oldest colleges from the South."

CM32B also describes being proud to be a Texan at several points in his interview. When the interviewer notes that he has ranked the identity label "Texan" highly and asks him to explain why that label is so important to him, he responds that "it kinda goes with . . . where we live. Just bein' proud of where you're from." He returns to this idea when the interviewer asks whether any of his identities have changed in importance over time:

> MO: Do you think any of them have become more or less important to you over time?
> CM32B: Yeah, you know. You know, bein' a Texan wasn't important to me when I was a kid. It wasn't important um . . . when I was a teenager. Um as you get older and you have more responsibilities, you start taking pride for where you're at.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM32B: And I – I think – I think that is – cause we have a history. It's not a good one. You know, nobody's is, but. It is what it is. But you move forward and
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: you know.
> MO: Yeah.
> CM32B: I guess um I'm – I'm proud of where I'm from.

Here CM32B argues that being Texan is something that wasn't particularly important to him as a kid or teenager, but that it has become important to him as he has aged. He links this increase in Texan pride having "more responsibilities," and, like CF20A, suggests a connection to Texan history. While he admits that that history is "not a good one," he also downplays the negative aspects of Texan history by saying that "nobody's is" and "it is what it is" (an approach which is reminiscent of the "techniques of minimization" used by Whites to describe the history of the South summarized in Thompson 2007). By stating that "you move forward," he is perhaps suggesting that the ability to overcome those difficult aspects of Texan history is part of what makes him proud to be Texan.

Generic Positive Comments About Texas

A few subjects commented positively on being from Texas. CF63, for example, said, "I think it's cool to be from Texas." During the process of rating his identity labels according to

their importance, CM32B commented that "being called a Texan's better than being called a man," suggesting that, particularly when being labeled by someone else, he'd prefer to be called out for his home state than for his gender.

Another way that subjects provided positive characterizations of Texas was to compare Texas favorably with other areas. For example, CM61claimed that "bein' Texan's a little better than being a Southerner" (which also suggests that he may not view Texas as part of the South – see *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region* above). CM32B made several similar comments throughout his interview, for example:

> CM32B: I don't know. "Texan" just sounds cooler than "Southern."
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: You know. Just like, "Oh yeah, I'm a Texan." That's pretty cool.
>
> MO: What about "Midwestern" versus "Texan"? Is it kind of the same [as the difference between 'Midwestern' and 'Southern']?
> CM32B: No. No. Being - bein' Texan's just better.

For CM32B, being Texan is better than being Southern or Midwestern, in part because "'Texan' just sounds cooler." He makes similar comments about the difference between being from Deer Park and being from Texas, for example, when vocalizing his thought process as he ranks the identity labels early in his interview:

> CM32B: Um bein' from Deer Park. Uh that's not that important. I like where I'm from so I'll put it uh right here. Bein' from Texas, that's awesome.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: I like bein' from Texas.

CM32B states that being from Deer Park is "not important," although he does acknowledge that "I like where I'm from." On the other hand, he's much more enthusiastic about being from Texas, which he describes as "awesome." Later in the interview, the interviewer attempted to probe this difference further:

> MO: What about being from Deer Park versus being just Texan? Do you think that there's a big difference
> CM32B: I d- I would prefer –
> MO: between Deer Park and the rest?
> CM32B: I would prefer someone refer to me as a - a Texan
> MO: Yeah?
> CM32B: than a Deer Parkian. Just because "Texan" sounds cooler.
> MO: [laughter]

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CM32B: It has no difference, you know. Deer Park is – is a good place in Texas. It's an important place in Texas. And I'm very proud of where I'm from. But uh it just sounds cooler to be from Texas.
MO: Hmm.
CM32B: Like, "I'm from Texas, son."
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: You know what I'm sayin'?

Here again CM32B considers the importance of how others describe him in weighing his preferred regional identity labels, noting that "I would prefer someone refer to me as a Texan" (see also *Description or Recognition of Subjects as Texan by Others* above). While he believes that Deer Park is "a good place in Texas" and "an important place in Texas" (likely due to its proximity to the site of the Battle of the San Jacinto, the final battle of the Texas Revolution), he also thinks that "it sounds cooler to be from Texas." He also suggests that he would proudly assert his Texan identity: "I'm from Texas, son." His rankings of the two identity labels reflect his attitudes – while his score of a 37 for "from Deer Park" patterned with the subjects who found this identity least important, his score of 144 for "Texan" was the second highest in the sample. Thus, for several of the subjects, identifying as Texan was qualitatively quite different from identifying as Southern or from Deer Park (see also §4.6.4 below).

The Texan Oil Industry

In discussing features that define Texas, a few subjects mentioned the Texan oil industry. CF53B explained that "the oil industry maybe sets us apart a little bit from, say, Florida or Mississippi or Georgia." When asked whether his image of a Southerner differed from his image of a Texan, CM61 noted that "we had the oil industry here . . . and a lot of labor work through Texas." Reflecting on stereotypes of Texans, CM30A admitted that "I think of the Texan oil mogul from *The Simpsons*." The character he references, named Richard O'Hara or "The Rich Texan," combines many Texan stereotypes: he wears a bolo tie and cowboy hat, carries guns, belongs to the Republican Party, and earns his wealth by drilling for oil. Thus, both the labor workers associated with the oil industry and wealth oil moguls endure as images of what it means to be Texan.

Texas Cowboy Stereotypes

Many subjects mentioned the rodeo, the cattle industry, and the cowboy image in discussing what it means to be Texan, particularly what it means to outsiders. CF20A described Texas as "a little more Western" and "a little more country" than the South, citing the Houston rodeo as "part of this area's heritage." Discussing stereotypical images of Southerners, subjects mentioned the land (HF29), guns (CM32B), horses (CF53B, CF63, CM32B, HF29), and cattle (CF53B, CM32B). However, subjects were quick to dismiss many of these images as inaccurate; for example, CF63 mentioned "ridin' a horse" as a typical Texan image, but quickly added "which nobody around here ever does." HF29 made similar comments when asked to explain what she meant by "generalizations" about Texans:

> MO: So what kind of generalizations?
> HF29: Um [maybe] like the accent. Like we have an accent. Um we ride horses. Hat – the hat.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: Stuff like that. But it's like if you're in Houston you're not gonna be ridin' around on a horse, you know,
> MO: Yeah.
> HF29: even in a suburban town it's like that's not gonna work.

Although she's aware that outsiders believe Texans ride horses, HF29 emphasizes that "if you're in Houston you're not gonna be ridin' around on a horse," and that even in the less populated suburbs this would be unlikely. CM32B similarly introduces a stereotypical image of Texans and dismisses it, although he admits that he is also influenced by this stereotype: "I think of, you know, a cowboy. I do . . . Even though I've lived here my whole life and I rarely see people with pistols on their hips. Cowboy hats. Just doesn't happen. But that's what you think about." Thus, for CM32B, the image of Texans as gun-slinging cowboys is salient and influences his perception of Texans even as he admits that he has little experience to suggest that the stereotype is accurate and he rarely sees Texans wearing cowboy hats. This additional theme related to what it means to be Texan, *Texan Fashion*, is discussed further in the next section.

Texan Fashion

In describing their images of a typical Texan, many subjects described Texan fashion, specifically big belt buckles (CF20A), cowboy boots (CF20A, CF53B, CF63, CM32B), and

cowboy hats (CF20A, CF63, CM32B, HF29). On the one hand, some subjects seemed to promote these images; for example, CF53B described attending the Special Olympics with her family and wearing "Team Texas" pins in the shape of a cowboy boot. Considering his image of a typical Texan, CM32B proposed that "maybe it's [a cowboy] cause I teach first grade and when we talk about Texas they make 'em do hats and boots." In both of these cases, Texans are to some degree continuing the tradition of associating Texas with cowboy hats and boots.

On the other hand, these icons of what it means to be and look Texan are associated with the stereotypes of non-Texans, for example, when CM32B describes the reactions of strangers to finding out that he is from Texas:

> CM32B: when I say where I'm from, they're always like, "Oh, do you gotta horse in your back yard?
> MO: Yeah.
> CM32B: Do you have cattle?" There's that assumption that I wear boots.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: And hats. Which I don't. Because they don't fit.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: But
> MO: You think they w- that you would if they did fit?
> CM32B: No.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: I probably wouldn't. They look uncomfortable.

Here CM32B suggests that naming his home state does more than simply identify where he's from; it entails a whole set of associated stereotypes, or "assumptions." And while he initially jokes that he doesn't wear boots or hats "because they don't fit," he admits that even if they did he wouldn't wear them – because "they look uncomfortable," and perhaps also as a way of asserting that not all stereotypes about Texas accurately reflect reality.

Diversity in Texas

A few subjects made general references to the cultural and ethnic diversity of Texas. As noted above (*Being from Texas*), CF63 described a shift over time in Texas, where what she once perceived as a state populated by native Texans had changed such that "people from all over the world are here." When asked whether he perceived being Texan and being Southern as different, CM30A also described Texas as a blend of many cultures (see *Difficulty Locating Texas Within*

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a Region above), but argued that "being so diverse, there's been a lot of internal culture developed."

HF29 mentioned the diversity of Texas at several points in her interviews, explaining that the cities of Texas represent "different cultures and communities" (see *Areas Within Texas*). During the group interview, when asked whether Deer Park was different from other parts of the state, HF29 responded that "there's places in the state where there might be . . . more diversity, and Deer Park is not as diverse." Similarly, in her individual interview, when the interviewer notes that she has ranked the identity label "Texan" higher than "Southern," HF29 explicitly links this decision to the diversity of Texas:

> MO: You put "Texan" a little bit higher.
> HF29: Mm. A little bit different, yeah. Yes, because Texas has a huge Hispanic community, and so it
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: mus- does- to me it doesn't necessarily mean that you're – y- that you would be White
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: if you were Texan.

For HF29, the label "Texan" differs from the label "Southern" in that "it doesn't necessarily mean that you would be White." The implication, then, is that "Southern" is a label reserved for White people. For HF29, who ranks the identity label "Mexican descent" highly, describing herself as "Southern" would be at odds with her ethnic identity. "Texan," on the other hand, doesn't have these same implications because of the "huge Hispanic community" in the state – a topic discussed further below.

Hispanic Influence in Texas

While many of the interviewees discussed the diversity of Texas in more general terms, HF29 was not the only subject who specifically mentioned the "huge Hispanic community" in Texas. CM30A rejected the idea that one could assign Texas to a single region, arguing instead that it is "a good solid balance of Southern culture, Western culture . . . Mexican culture" (see *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a* Region above). Similarly, in considering how residents of other states would perceive Texas, he postulated that "Louisiana will tell us that we have more

Mexican culture [than the South], and Arizona will tell us we have less [than the Southwest]." He also suggested that to Louisianans, "Texas has a lot more of the Tejano influence."

When asked whether she thought being Texan was different from being Southern, CF20A also discussion the Hispanic population in the state:

> CF20A: I mean, I think we're a little more independent here,
> MO: Mm.
> CF20A: definitely, also, um from the rest of the country and the rest of the South. Um . . . and um . . . we're a lot more Hispanic in Texas I feel like. Um although places like New Mexico and things like that, Arizona,
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: have plenty of Hispanic population as well. But um I think that makes Texas uh different from the other states for sure.

In addition to being "more independent," CF20A believes that Texas is "a lot more Hispanic" than the rest of the South. Although she acknowledges that New Mexico and Arizona likely also have a large Hispanic population, in the perceptual dialectology study (§3), these states were only included in the South by about 12% and 8% of respondents, respectively. Texas, on the other hand, was included in the South by nearly 90% of respondents. Thus, while New Mexico and Arizona may have comparable demographics, they are also rarely considered to be part of the South, while Texas may more be in a more unique position as a state which is both Southern and home to a sizeable Hispanic population.

4.5.3 The Label "From Deer Park"

Eight main themes were identified related to the label "from Deer Park." The first theme is that Deer Park is a small town. The second theme centers on the idea that "everyone knows everyone" in Deer Park. The third theme is that Deer Park is a suburban town. The fourth theme focuses on schools and education in Deer Park. The fifth theme combines comments related to jobs in Deer Park. The sixth theme groups together comments which suggest that the people in Deer Park are all the same. The seventh theme relates to the lack of diversity in Deer Park. Finally, the eighth theme is that Deer Park is undergoing change.

Deer Park as a Small Town

Many subjects described Deer Park as small (AmM25, CF53B, CF63, HF27, HF29), little

(AmM25, HF27, HF29), or "little bitty" (HF27, HF29). CF53B described Deer Park as having "that small town atmosphere," and HF29 said that "I could compare [Deer Park] to a little town, like Athens, Texas, and I've been there, and I could say, 'Yeah, they're pretty similar.'" For HF29, then, Deer Park is similar to another small Texan town, Athens, despite being more than two and a half times as large (populations of 32,010 and 12,710 as of the 2010 U.S. Census, respectively).

HF27 included "from a small town" in the list of identity labels she generated in Part A of her interview, and when asked about her decision to rank "from a small town" higher than "suburban" in importance, explained that "if I was talking to people that didn't live in Texas . . . I think I'd be more likely to be like, "'Well, I'm from Deer Park, it's a really small town.' And then I might say . . . 'Oh it's . . . a suburb of Houston.'" She went on to reiterate that "if I was to give more information, I would say it's more of a small town." This emphasis on describing Deer Park as a small town rather than as a suburb of Houston suggests that the connotations of "small town" and "suburb" may differ, and that HF27 believes "small town" is a more appropriate way of introducing Deer Park to outsiders. HF27 also sees being from a small town as an important factor which has shaped who she is as a person:

> HF27: I wouldn't say that like I'm a – I'm a "small town girl," [laughter] but
> MO: Yeah.
> HF27: you know, but because I'm from a small town, I think that probably has some bearing on the way that I am, the way I interact with people.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: Um I would think. I don't know for sure though. [laughter] But, you know, I w- I would think that it would. When I hear it I think, "Yeah, that maybe has some effect
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: on like how I am."

This excerpt demonstrates that for HF27, "small town" is not simply a way of describing her locale, but an important factor in her identity - a place identity that influences her behavior, her sense of self, and her social interactions (Hummon 1986).

"Everyone Knows Everyone" in Deer Park

Related to the theme that Deer Park is a small town was another theme, that "everybody knows everybody" (HF27) in Deer Park. Comparing Deer Park to Houston, HF29 noted that

"Deer Park is a very small town . . . We only have one high school. There's a lot of students in it, but it's still like very small and a lot of people know each other." Similarly, AmM25 described Deer Park as "a lot smaller [than Houston]" and added that "the community's pretty tight, too." CF53B compared Deer Park to the fictional town of Mayberry from *The Andy Griffith Show:*

> MO: Do you think that being from Deer Park is different from being Houstonian?
> CF53B: Yes, I think it is.
> MO: In what way?
> CF53B: Well Deer Park tends to be a little more like Mayberry. Even though we're much bigger, it still has that small town atmosphere where everybody knows everybody or if they don't know you, they know somebody related to you.
> MO: [laughter]
> CF53B: And I used to laugh and say you could sneeze at one end and they'd say, "Gesundheit!" at the other. Um because [laughter],
> MO: [laughter]
> CF53B: you know, word travels fast.

Just as HF29 compares Deer Park to Athens, Texas (*Deer Park as a Small Town*), CF53B compares Deer Park to the fictional town of Mayberry (with a population of 5,360 according to a sign displayed in the last episode of *The Andy Griffith Show*). Here the difference in size is even more stark, with Deer Park almost six times as large as Mayberry, but CF53B asserts that "even though we're much bigger, [Deer Park] still has that small town atmosphere where everybody knows everybody or if they don't know you, they know somebody related to you."

CF53B is not the only subject who seems to focus on the "atmosphere" or "feel" of Deer Park; most subjects describe the city in ways which suggest a small town atmosphere even if the population is large for a "small town." For subjects like HF27 who identify with being from a small town (*Deer Park as a Small Town*), emphasizing the small town characteristics of Deer Park, such as its dense social networks, may be a way to align their identity with their locale even as the population of Deer Park continues to climb upwards.

Deer Park as Suburban

Many subjects agreed with HF29 who described Deer Park as "very much a suburban community," particularly when compared with Houston. Considering the differences between

being from Deer Park and being Houstonian, CM30A explained that he has "grown a tolerance for suburbanism":

> MO: What about – how do you think being from Deer Park is different from being Houstonian?
> CM30A: Being from Deer Park I've grown a tolerance for . . . um suburbanism.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: You know. I kind of look at it like it's the briar patch for me.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: You know, Br'er Rabbit can tolerate being in the briar patch more than anyone else because that's where he's from.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: Um [laughter] so there's a - definitely a – a personal influence.

In the excerpt above, CM30A compares his situation to that of the Southern folklore character Br'er Rabbit, who escapes a trap set by Br'er Fox by tricking the fox into throwing him in the briar patch. Unlike other animals, Br'er Rabbit is at home in the briar patch, and as a result he escapes from the fox. CM30A's comparison suggests that while others might not be "at home" in suburban Deer Park, he has grown accustomed to it. But by describing himself as "tolerating" suburbanism, he also hints that he is not overly fond of the suburbs.

Answering the same question, CF20A also described Deer Park as suburban:

> CF20A: Um . . . being from Deer Park is definitely more suburban than the urban Houstonian. Um . . . when I think of "Houstonian" I think of like the metro area for sure and um commuting and um . . . museums and [laughter]
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: more um . . . socialite areas or something, I don't know. Um and Deer Park is really just more middle class, suburban, um average people. Not that average people don't live in Houston, but. [laughter]

While CM30A painted suburbanism as something to be tolerated, CF20A's description is more neutral. She suggests that "middle class, suburban" families are "average people," in contrast to the "socialites" in Houston. This difference in attitudes towards suburbanism is also reflected in the identity label rankings of CM30A and CF20A. CF20A chose "suburban" as a label to describe herself before the label was provided by the researcher, and ranked it highly on her identity label ranking scale. CM30A, on the other hand, did not generate the label himself,

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and when it was provided by the researcher, gave it a fairly low score – higher than only "hick" and "redneck."

Schools and Education in Deer Park

One of the most common themes around the label "from Deer Park" was that of schools and education. For example, when asked whether there was anything different about Deer Park compared to the rest of Texas, HF27 discussed the number of schools in Deer Park:

> HF27: I don't know that I've ever known any other cities that are as small as Deer Park that have as many schools as Deer Park does.
> MO: Yeah.
> HF27: That's kind of
> MO: [A very] Deer Park kind of thing.
> HF27: Yeah. There's a lot of schools. But there's a lot of people in a little bitty city. [laughter]
> MO: Yeah.
> HF27: It's - but you go, you know, to another like small um city and there's not – I mean, yeah, there's like one high school and
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: like, you know, d- well there is one high school here, but [laughter] like it's not nearly as – as big. Well there's two campuses. [laughter]
> MO: [There's] two high school campuses, and I guess there's a whole bunch of elementary schools, and
> HF27: And – yeah. Quite a few junior high. There's like three? Maybe four junior high. I don't know.

From HF27's perspective, part of what makes the number of schools in Deer Park unusual is that Deer Park is a small town. The schools in Deer Park Independent School District (DPISD) include seven elementary schools, four junior highs, and one high school (divided into two campuses). HF27's comments again highlight the paradox in the way that the Deer Park interviewees discussed their city; while Deer Park is virtually always referred to as a "small town" (see *Deer Park as a Small Town* above), as HF27 notes, "there's a lot of people in a little bitty city." HF29 echoed HF27's comments, noting that, "We only have one high school. There's a lot of students in it, but it's still like very small and a lot of people know each other." Thus, while Deer Park High School ranks among the top 100 largest high schools in the nation with nearly 4,000 students (U.S. Department of Education), having all high school students in

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one school makes the campus feel small and like all the students know each other (see *Everyone Knows Everyone" in Deer Park* above).

CF53B also discussed Deer Park's schools in explaining how Deer Park is different from Houston:

CF53B: being in a small town where everybody goes to the same school district and it's a small sch- smallish
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: school district um, you know, life around – life in Deer Park kinda revolves around church and school.
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: So I don't think that's necessarily the case in Houston proper.

Like HF27 and HF29, CF53B describes DPISD as "small," though she modifies this to "smallish," perhaps in recognition of the many schools and students within DPISD. Beyond discussing the size of Deer Park's school, she also hints that the school is particularly important to the Deer Park community, claiming that "life in Deer Park kinda revolves around church and school."

CM61 also discussed Deer Park's schools, noting that one factor which led his family to move to Deer Park was the "good school district" (Hummon 1986). Reflecting on how Deer Park differed from the rest of Texas, he explained:

CM61: you had a chance to get a better education.
MO: Mm.
CM61: Uh I'll put it thataway. They had – well, when I grew up – was growing up, Deer Park School System, all the teachers had to have Master's degrees or are working on a Master's. They gave 'em
MO: Mm hmm.
CM61: so much time to get it after they hired 'em. And some of 'em already had it. And I remember that the . . . the, you know, put uh more emphasis on the -
MO: Mm hmm.
CM61: you getting an education while you were there.

For CM61, then, beyond the size of its district or individual schools, Deer Park also differed from other cities in the quality of education offered through its public school system and in the emphasis the community placed on getting a good education. While he doesn't criticize the current state of Deer Park schools directly, throughout his interview CM61 described how

Deer Park schools "used to be" when he was growing up, suggesting that he may believe the Deer Park school system has changed.

Jobs in Deer Park

Several subjects discussed typical occupations in Deer Park, particularly jobs in the schools or industrial work along the Houston Ship Channel. CF20A explained that "it's easy to get into [teaching] in the Deer Park area when you've grown up here. It's very political." CM61 noted that "everybody seems to work at the chemical plants around here" and "not too many people work downtown." For CM30A, what distinguished Deer Park from Houston (and the rest of the country) was the prevalence of "industrialized labor culture" and shift work:

> CM30A: But there's – well there's also a lot of . . . industrialized labor culture. It's a different type of blue collar.
> MO: In Deer Park?
> CM30A: In Deer Park. Um which now the same can be said also – it can be – it can be clumped together a lot with LaPorte because of the industrial expansion, you know, eastern industrial expansion. Um like I said, it's a different type of blue collar.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: And of course that's gonna af- that's gonna affect . . . the culture. Um you have a . . . you know, you've got a – a, you know, a culture that . . . shift work i- is a – a – a common reality, you know, where people working overnights is neither shady [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: nor, you know, looked down upon.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: You know, that's – that is something that is definitely unique to this area. Um I'd say it's just as much – just as prevalent uh well, no, I'm sorry. I wouldn't say it's just as prevalent in the Houston area. But it's as well – it's well known as you leave from Deer Park. But this really is the – Deer Park and Eastern Pasadena, that really is where it began.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: You know. And that's – that is definitely something unique to the rest of the nation, really.

According to CM30A, Deer Park is unique in that it has an "industrialized labor culture" where "it's a different type of blue collar." Unlike other parts of the country, he describes Deer Park as a place where "working overnights is neither shady nor . . . looked down upon." He also believes that Deer Park and Eastern Pasadena is "where [shift work] began." From CM30A's

perspective, this emphasis on industrial, blue collar, and shift work is therefore something that affects the culture of Deer Park.

Sameness in Deer Park

In explaining what it means to be from Deer Park, a few subjects described the city as a community that encourages sameness or uniformity (Hummon 1986). HF27 characterized Deer Park as a city where there is "a weird majority culture":

> MO: What about the difference between being "from Deer Park" and "f- Houstonian"?
> HF27: Mm yeah there's - there's like a weird majur- majority, like . . . I don't know, culture in Deer Park, [laughter] where there's a lot of the same type of people. But like if you go into Houston i- you would not run into as many of the same [laughter] p-
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: it's - it's a lot more diverse in Houston than in Deer Park. It's – it's very, you know, similar – similar jobs, similar family, sim- I mean, maybe not when you get to know the people, [laughter]
> MO: Yeah.
> HF27: but like just by, you know, by looking, it's the same type of family setup. I mean, almost all the houses look the same
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: uh, you know, and it's um – yeah, yeah. I mean, like yeah, down to like yard decorations and
> MO: [laughter]
> HF27: [laughter], you - you know? Um
> MO: Is there still that one lady who dresses up her goose?
> HF27: Yeah. There's actually
> MO: [whispers] That's awesome.
> HF27: another one too.
> MO: [laughter]
> HF27: Li- there's like another one that like - a copycat.

In summarizing the differences between Deer Park and Houston, HF27 describes Deer Park as a city "where there's a lot of the same type of people" with "similar jobs," "the same type of family setup," and houses that are identical "down to . . . yard decorations." By listing each of these ways in which Deer Park residents are the same, HF27 emphasizes the predominant "sameness" in the city. Even when the interviewer makes a reference to an eccentric Deer Park resident who dresses the goose statue on her front lawn in seasonal dresses, HF27 points out that this behavior is not unique - there is at least one more Deer Park resident with the same hobby.

This theme of "sameness" also came up during the group interview, again during a discussion of how Deer Park differs from Houston. Several subjects stated that Houston is more diverse than Deer Park, at which point CM32B temporarily took on the role of interviewer:

CM32B: Do you think it'd be different with uh language-wise?
MO: [laughter]
HF29: Yes.
CM32B: With the way people sound?
HF29: Yes.
CM32B: Why do you suppose that is?
HF29: Because when you live in a suburban community
CM32B: Mm hmm.
HF29: it's usually – I don't know, it - Deer Park community – it's usually like that – they live together, they talk the same.
CF63: Mm hmm.
HF29: But when you live in an urban community, like a big city, there's people like, you don't know where they're coming from,
CF63: Mm hmm.
HF29: you know. That's – they have all kinds of different languages and
CF63: That's true.
HF29: sounds.

When CM32B asked whether this difference in the diversity of Houston and Deer Park is reflected in the language of the two cities, HF29 asserted that in suburban communities like Deer Park "they live together, they talk the same." On the other hand, she noted that in urban areas like Houston people have "all kinds of different languages and sounds." HF29's comments thus link the dialects of Deer Park and Houston to city type (suburban versus urban) and city diversity (see §4.6.7 and §4.6.8 for more discussion of how these themes are expressed throughout the interviews).

Lack of Diversity in Deer Park

As noted above (*Sameness in Deer Park*), several subjects characterized Deer Park as a city in which homogeneity predominates. A few subjects specifically linked this to ethnic or racial diversity, noting that Deer Park was not very diverse, particularly compared to Houston. For example, comparing the two cities, HF29 pointed out that Deer Park has "a lot more White people":

HF29: Houston is - to me is more urban and it's, you know, it's a bigger city and so they would be more accepting of the diversity, where Deer Park is a very small town.
MO: Hmm.
HF29: Very small. We only have one high school. There's a lot of students in it, but it's still like very small and a lot of people know each other. And it's very much a suburban community. Um and it is a lot more White people.

In the excerpt above, HF29 states that "Houston is more urban and . . . a bigger city and so they would be more accepting of the diversity." The "so" in her statement sets up an implicational relationship, suggesting that the city type (urban) and size of Houston results in acceptance of diversity. The converse assumption, then, is that as a small, suburban community, Deer Park is not accepting.

CF63 also noted the lack of diversity in Deer Park during her interview:

MO: What about Houstonians? Are there - do you think you've got like a different image of Houstonians versus people from Deer Park?
CF63: Oh definitely. Uh Houston is so diverse now.
MO: Mm hmm.
CF63: So diverse. We go to like the medical center and there are people from every country in the world,
MO: Yeah.
CF63: I'm sure. It's just uh far, far more diverse than Deer Park.
MO: Hmm.
CF63: Uh Deer Park is not very diverse.

CF63 repeatedly described Houston as diverse, and emphasized that Houston is "far, far more diverse than Deer Park." She linked this diversity to the nationalities of Houston residents, stating that in Houston "there are people from every country in the world." During the group interview, when asked whether Deer Park differs from other parts of the state, she also discussed the smaller African American population in Deer Park:

CF63: There – there're fewer Blacks
HF29: Mm hmm.
CF63: than there are in other pla- parts of Texas
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: Mm hmm.
CF63: in Deer Park. And I think that's because of the way it started many, many years ago when we had segregation. They didn't live here. Cause they weren't allowed to.

Here CF63 links the lack of diversity in Deer Park to the history of segregation in the town. She raises this point later in the group interview again, explaining that "When Deer Park first started . . . Blacks were not even allowed. The schools were completely segregated." CF63 also echoes HF29's comments above about acceptance:

> CF63: I think what has happened, though, is that uh as far as the Blacks, I – I don't – we have quite a few Hispanics here now, right?
> HF29: Mm hmm. Mm hmm.
> CF63: And - but with the Blacks, it's like they don't – they don't live here.
> HF29: Mm hmm.
> CF63: You know, why should they? [laughter] When they can be accepted better s- other places.
> HF29: Mm hmm.
> CF63: That's how they feel. Whether that's really true, I don't know.

According to CF63, most African Americans choose not to live in Deer Park because "they can be accepted better other places." Interestingly, after claiming that "that's how they feel," she qualifies her statement by adding, "Whether that's really true, I don't know." This may suggest that although she has acknowledged that there are few Black residents in Deer Park, she is still somewhat uncomfortable characterizing her home town as not accepting of diversity.

While most of the comments above come from the subjects' general descriptions of the Deer Park community, one subject directly linked the lack of diversity in Deer Park to her own identity. Although HF29 had lived in Deer Park for 18 years and had never lived in Houston, she ranked "Houstonian" higher than "from Deer Park" in importance on her identity label scale. When asked about this, she tied her rankings to the diversity of the cities:

> MO: And then when you put "Houstonian," you seemed like you like "Houstonian" a little bit better than like "Deer Park"
> HF29: [laughter]
> MO: and "Texan."
> HF29: I did.
> MO: Can you tell me why?
> HF29: I did. Because it - it's – because it's – it – to me it's more urban in – in that sense it would seem like um where Deer Park is a lot more White
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: and they kinda have the same feeling as some, I guess I don't know if I should say like Republican Texans.
> MO: [laughter]
> HF29: But um to me it's like a bigger city, like i- i- it would be more accepting of all diversity.

MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: All of it. Where Deer Park . . . Texas, I mean, at some point I guess, but Deer Park is definitely not super accepting or like
MO: Yeah.
HF29: they're still pretty split.
MO: Hmm.
HF29: I think.

By describing Houston as urban unlike Deer Park which is "a lot more White," HF29 sets up urbanness in contrast to Whiteness, and on that basis, she identifies more strongly with Houston. She also suggests that the Deer Park community may be more Republican than Houston, and that as a big city Houston "would be more accepting of all diversity." Thus, HF29 directly links bigger cities and urban areas with diversity and acceptance. Deer Park, on the other hand, is "not super accepting" and "pretty split." In this case, rather than identifying with the city where she has lived for more than half of her life, HF29 identifies with the nearby city of Houston as a way of aligning herself with what she perceives as the urban values of diversity and acceptance.

Change in Deer Park

Several subjects described Deer Park as a city undergoing change. Some subjects, like CF20A, focused on the growth of the city in general:

> CF20A: I mean [Deer Park is] growing. I mean there's a lot of places in Texas that are growing pretty quickly, but I think Deer Park is growing a lot. I mean, it was pretty stagnant for a while I – I felt like. And in the past couple of years I feel like, you know, "Oo we've got a Starbucks on Center Street." And uh [laughter]
> MO: Yeah. [laughter]
> CF20A: "Oo we've been getting all these places. We've got a Schlotzsky's now coming in down the road"
> [further discussion of location of Schlotzsky's]
> CF20A: So it's like, "Oo [laughter] going up in the world." [laughter]

In the excerpt above, CF20A explains that in the past she perceived Deer Park as "stagnant," but now she believes Deer Park is growing. As examples of Deer Park's growth, she cites the Starbucks that opened on the city's main drag and the new deli (Schlotzsky's) being opened in the area. As these chain establishments are opened in Deer Park, CF20A feels like Deer Park is "going up in the world."

Other subjects, like HF29, focused on the growing number of Hispanic residents in Deer Park when discussing changes in the city, as in the following excerpt from the group interview:

> MO: Is there anything about Deer Park that's different from other parts of the state?
> HF29: Yeah. I think that there's places in the state where there might be – there might be more diversity
> CF63: Mm hmm.
> HF29: and Deer Park is not as diverse. It's becoming more diverse but not
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: M- more diverse how?
> HF29: Like I think Deer Park is prominently White.
> HF29: I think that there's a lot of White
> CF63: Mm hmm.
> HF29: people here. Where
> CM32B: What's the ei- the other diversity that's coming in?
> HF29: Hispanic.

Here CM32B again takes on the role of interviewer, questioning his wife, HF29, about what she means by Deer Park "becoming more diverse." While not directly commented upon by CM32B, his question to HF29 highlights the ambiguity inherent in many of the subjects' comments about "diversity." In most cases, while subjects commented on "diversity" generally, within the local context of Deer Park, "diversity" more narrowly referred to the city's Hispanic population. In other words, by describing Deer Park as "becoming more diverse," HF29 (and other subjects) typically only meant that Deer Park is becoming more Hispanic. Thus, descriptions of Deer Park as "changing" and "becoming diverse" take on a more specific meaning within the Deer Park community.

4.6 OVERARCHING THEMES IN THE INTERVIEWS

4.6.1 Introduction

While §4.5 above focused on the results of the qualitative analysis of the regional identity labels "Southern," "Texan," and "from Deer Park" as they were discussed by subjects in the label generation and ranking portions of the interviews (Parts A through C), there were several overarching themes which also occurred in other portions of the interview or were mentioned by subjects in discussions of more than one identity label. Although some of these themes overlap with the themes identified in the qualitative analysis of the regional identity labels, the sections

below introduce additional data and serve to highlight the importance of these themes as some of the primary topics which recurred throughout the interviews. The overarching themes discussed below include variation within Texas (§4.6.2), other states as points of contrast (§4.6.3), identifying with a region (§4.6.4), identity label importance (§4.6.5), identity labels assigned by others (§4.6.6), urbanness (§4.6.7), diversity (§4.6.8), and linking identity labels to speech (§4.6.9).

4.6.2 Variation Within Texas

In addition to the comments about areas within Texas that subjects made as they explained what it means to be Texan during the label ranking task (see §4.5.2, *Areas within Texas* above), several subjects discussed variation within Texas during other portions of the interview, particularly Part F, in which they responded to quotes taken from the survey responses of other subjects. One of these quotes in particular (#2 in Appendix J) echoed the results of Cukor-Avila et al.'s (2012) perceptual dialectology study and led to a great deal of discussion about dialectal variation within Texas:

> "Texas would be a region all by itself. We speak several dialects. 'East Texas' has a distinct dialect (twang, hick), Deep South Texas has a distinct dialect (Spanglish), West and North Texas also have a certain dialect."

Some subjects responded to this quote with doubt, like CM61, who argued that people from Dallas "seem to talk just like us." AmM25 also commented that "West and North [Texas] I assume would be the same as East Texas." CF63 believed that "if you're in another state, people recognize your Texas accent most of the time" but that they would be unable to determine the particular region within the state that a speaker hailed from. While she acknowledged that "there are definitely differences in different parts of the state," she also asserted that "you [couldn't] pick out somebody from West Texas if you heard several people talking." However, elsewhere in her interview, she suggested that while she doesn't perceive any dialect difference in Dallas, "West Texas seems more Southwestern" and "West Texas people sound a little differently than they do here"; she speculated that this might be because West Texas is more rural and less populated than East Texas (see §4.6.7 below).

A few subjects refuted the idea that Spanglish is primarily located in Southern Texas, such as CF53B, who stated that "while the influence of Hispanics in Texas [is] probably stronger

the more south and west you go . . . the entire state probably has an influence." HF27 commented that "there's probably a good deal of Spanglish goin' on in like Marfa and that area." By suggesting that Spanglish is also spoken in Marfa, a West Texas city roughly an hour from the Mexican border, HF27 rejects the idea that Spanglish is purely a South Texas phenomenon.

Other subjects agreed more wholeheartedly with the quote, like CF20A, who noted that "there definitely is a Spanglish dialect in the Deep South Texas" and echoed most of these regions in her response despite admitting that her experience with different regions in Texas was limited:

> CF20A: It's such a huge state that um I'm sure there are ways that people speak in the East Texas areas that are different from West Texas. I mean, East Texas I guess has kind of more of the Louisiana influence. And then West Texas has more of the Southwestern
> MO: Hmm.
> CF20A: um and then being so close to the border in West Texas.

Similarly, HF27 agreed that "the closer you get to Louisiana," you would probably have a different accent, adding that in West Texas, "you'd run into a little more twang." CF53B made many of the same arguments, pointing out that "the further east you go the closer we get to Louisiana" and that compared to Houston, Northeast Texas "gets to be more like Arkansas," which is "more different from West Texas than we are."

Responding to another quote, which stated that "Texas is more Western than Southern" (#4 in Appendix J), CF53B points out a variety of differences between East and West Texas:

> CF53B: Probably east of Austin – I mean west of Austin you can say that. East of Austin maybe not so much.
> MO: So you think maybe there's a divide?
> CF53B: I think there is, yes.
> MO: Hmm.
> CF53B: I think there is a divide. Well it makes sense. Our geography is so different.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: And, you know, the – the industries are different, you know, so. I – I think it's different.

The excerpt from CF53B above suggests that the Texan capital Austin may serve as a border between the state's Eastern and Western regions. Interestingly, Austin is quite close to the 98th meridian, which Ely (2011) describes as the eastern edge of the "shatterbelt zone" in Texas where "America's Old South Collides with the Old West" (p. 11). Like Ely, CF53B cites geographical and industrial differences in the two halves of the state. For some Deer Park

residents, then, it seems that Eastern and Western Texas represent very different cultural and linguistic entities.

4.6.3 Other States as Points of Contrast

Just as Bakos (2013) and Cramer (2013) found that their subjects contrasted their home states with other Southern states, throughout the interviews, Deer Park subjects set up other states as points of contrast with Texas. In some cases, subjects contrasted Texas with the Southeastern or "Deep South" states, as when CM30A compared Texas to Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, which he believed "could all just be one mega state" (see also §4.5.1, *The Southeastern United States* above). AmM25 stated that "I'm more scared of Alabama [and Mississippi] than anything" and that "Arkansas I just don't care for." Explaining his preference for identifying as Texan over identifying as Southern, he claimed that "Arkansas is famous for its incest" and that this behavior wasn't something he wanted to be "generalized into." This suggests that for AmM25, the label "Southern" entails a set of negative stereotypes about the South that aren't necessarily attached to the label "Texan" (see also §4.6.4 below).

Some subjects also contrasted Texas with Southwestern states, such as CM61, who when asked whether he would consider Texas Western compared Texas to Arizona:

CM61: Texas is, to me, is just a different state than most other states.
MO: Hmm.
CM61: When . . . Arizona, most of Arizona is dry and desert, we don't have that.
MO: Mm hmm.
CM61: You got the Grand Canyons, the water comes through from the Colorado, and things like that.

By providing Arizona as an example of a Western state and describing the ways in which Arizona is environmentally and geographically different from Texas, CM61 refutes the idea that Texas is Western. He also echoes the Texan exceptionalism expressed by other subjects: that Texas is "just a different state than most other states."

CM30A also contrasted Texas with Arizona as a way of establishing that Texas does not fit the standard definition of a Southwestern state, while simultaneously contrasting Texas with Louisiana to demonstrate that Texas does not fit the standard definition of a Southern state (see §4.5.2, *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region* above). As he worded it, "Louisiana will tell

us that we have more Mexican culture, and Arizona will tell us we have less . . . . Arizona will see . . . grits and hash, and Louisiana will see more tacos."

Comparisons of Texas to Louisiana were by far the most common, in part because one of the quoted survey responses presented to subjects in Part F of the interview specifically mentioned these two states. The quote in question (#1 in Appendix J) reads:

> "I think Louisiana and Texas are significantly different within the 'southern' states. They could each be their own region, but still a part of the southern dialect. Texas is more standard than the rest of the states, but I think parts still very much have a southern twang."

Most subjects expressed some degree of agreement with this quote. HF29 noted that "I do like that they said that Texas and Louisiana are different." Some subjects, like CF53B, CM30A, and HF29, pointed out that Louisiana is unique because of its French, Creole, or Cajun influences. HF27, who has family from Louisiana, noted that "they're just very different" and agreed that Texas and Louisiana should be singled out, explaining that "you kinda think Texas, Louisiana, and then everything else is all together." Several subjects agreed with AmM25, who asserted that Texas and Louisiana "are significantly different as far as the way they talk." Beyond simply observing that Louisiana "has a totally different sound," AmM25 also described Louisiana speech as "very strange" and "very Louisiana." Recalling his experiences with coworkers who'd transferred to Texas from Louisiana, CM61 described them as having both different behavior and "totally different" language:

> CM61: They sent a lot of um transferred a lot of Louisiana people
> MO: Hmm.
> CM61: down. And so by the time I went to work there, it w- the saying was, from all the foremen, we did it this way in Louisiana, this is the way we're gonna do it here.
> MO: Mm.
> CM61: And - and a lot of the maintenance men would laugh at 'em for sayin' that. And I uh said, "You mean you don't wanna come out of the Dark Ages? You want"
> MO: [laughter]
> CM61: [laughter] And you know, I'll say they had their little twerps between each other.
> MO: Yeah.
> CM61: But uh and they uh their language is totally different cause of -
> MO: Yeah.
> CM61: cause of the men that were workin' in there, when they'd – they'd ask you for – they - they had a certain term for coffee and I can't remember
> MO: Hmm.
> CM61: what it was, but I guarantee you could stick that spoon in that coffee

MO: Mm hmm.
CM61: and that spoon would almost stand straight up.

CM61's story highlights the friendly opposition between the Texans and Louisianans, which led the Texans to describe the Louisianans as still living in "the Dark Ages." The differences between the two groups are exemplified by the language of the Louisianans, who according to CM61 used a different term for coffee. Even the coffee itself is unusual from a Texan perspective, with the Louisianans drinking coffee that CM61 described as "hard" and "thick." All of these characteristics combined – different approaches to doing their work, a different dialect, and different food – illustrate what CM61 perceives as a wide linguistic and cultural gap between Texas and Louisiana.

Several subjects framed this linguistic gap as one related to standardness. While subjects did not all agree that the Texan dialect was more standard than the rest of the South, most asserted that the Texan dialect was at least more standard than the dialect of Louisiana. HF27 said that the Texan accent was "definitely more standard than like Louisiana . . . you've got all kinds of crazy talk there." CF53B also described Texas as more standard than Louisiana:

CF53B: I think [Texas is] probably more standard than Louisiana. [laughter]
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: Especially the southern part of Louisiana. But yeah, they're – they're different.
MO: So you think they're different from the rest of the South?
CF53B: I think it's the French influence, yeah, definitely.
MO: And then – and did you agree with the part about Texas being more standard than the rest of the South?
CF53B: Not necessarily.
MO: Okay.
CF53B: Because I haven't – well my experience of the rest of the South is limited
MO: Mm hmm
CF53B: So, you know, I . . . it's more standard than Louisiana is.

While CF53B admits that she doesn't have much experience with most of the South, she asserts more than once that Texas is more standard than Louisiana and suggests that the southern part of Louisiana is particularly non-standard. Considering whether people in Deer Park speak with twangy accents, CM32B also suggests that the Louisiana dialect is particularly Southern:

CM32B: Uh when people talk, every once in a while I'll be like, "Oh, man that guy's – that guy's Southern."
MO: Mm hmm.

CM32B: "That guy down South, know what I'm sayin'?"
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: But, you know, it's usually someone from Louisiana or something.

In the excerpt above, CM32B jokes that while he does occasionally hear people who sound markedly Southern, those speakers usually turn out to be from Louisiana. This comment indicates that for CM32B, Deer Park's speech is less Southern than that of Louisiana. He follows this joke by referring to Louisianans as "filthy people." While CM32B is quick to clarify that he is joking, based on the comments other subjects made about Louisiana, his choice of states to compare negatively to Texas does not appear to be random. Reviewing the responses above, it seems that one tactic that these Texan subjects use to alleviate their own linguistic insecurity is to designate Louisiana as a more nonstandard reference point. By comparison to Louisiana, then, the Texan dialect is more standard and therefore not so bad.

4.6.4 Identifying with a Region

As suggested by the discussions of the identity labels "Southern" and "Texan" above, many of the interviewees disagreed about what cultural or linguistic region Texas belonged to or hesitated to classify Texas as part of a region. Some subjects seemed to simply consider Texas to be Southern, like CF20A, who said, "I am from the South, for sure," or HF27, who responded to a quote which asserted that Texas is Western (#4 in Appendix J) by saying, "I just think of Texas as Southern . . . I would never say Texas is Western." AmM25's response to this quote was similar:

AmM25: "Texas is more Western than Southern." I disagree.
MO: Okay. So why do you
AmM25: I don't –
MO: disagree?
AmM25: I don't think – I think Western would be for - far more Western than it is now than it was
MO: Mm hmm.
AmM25: a long time ago. So I think we should stop saying Western
MO: [laughter]
AmM25: and say Southern cause it's more – it's correct.

From AmM25's perspective, Texas may have once been part of the West, but describing Texas as Western now is "incorrect," so Texans should instead refer to the state as Southern.

While his quote and the others above seem to suggest that these Texans consider Texas to be Southern, as noted above (§4.5.2, *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region*), the situation is actually more complicated. Many subjects hesitated to describe Texas as Southern, and some highlighted the ways in which Texas differs from the South. For example, HF29 claimed that "Texas has a different history than . . . the other [Southern] states. Especially with the slavery." Some subjects also discussed the ways in which Texas is demographically different from the South or Southwest (see §4.6.8 below) or characterized the Texan accent as different from the Southern accent (see §4.6.9 below).

Even HF27 and AmM25 pointed out that while Texas might be Southern, they wouldn't consider it part of the "Deep South." Asked whether she would call Texas part of the Southwest or Deep South, HF27 responded that "I wouldn't, but I know other people do." While he emphasized that he wouldn't consider Texas part of the Southwest, AmM25 also asserted that "I can't say all of Texas is Deep South. It's not."

As HF27 and AmM25's comments suggest, just as subjects disagreed about whether Texas is Southern, they also disagreed about whether Texas was Southwestern. CF63 explained that "I just don't think of myself as Southwestern" but concluded that "I guess I really am." She also suggested that Texas is Western during the group interview:

> MO: Um what about this – somebody said "Texas is more Western than Southern." Did any of you agree with that one?
> CF63: I kinda do.
> MO: Yeah?
> CF63: Mighta been me that said it. [laughter]
> MO: In – in what way do you think Texas is more Western?
> CF63: I don't know, I just see Texas as more – I don't know. I never think of myself as like being from the Deep South or whatever.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF63: It – it just is a different lifestyle. I - as far as the language . . . I don't know. Do we not have as much of a drawl? Or . . . I don't know.

Like HF27 and AmM25 above, CF63 does not believe that Texas is part of the Deep South. As evidence of this, she argues that Texas has "a different lifestyle" from that of the Deep South, and she also indicates that Texas may not have "as much of a drawl" as the Deep South (though her intonation suggest that she may not be certain). It seems, then, that one way

for CF63 to resolve the conflict she feels about labeling Texas as Southern is to instead associate Texas with the Southwest or West.

This approach differs from that of HF27 and AmM25, who reject the idea that Texas is part of the Deep South, but also do not accept that Texas is Southwestern. CF53B was similarly hesitant to consider Texas part of the Southwest, as evidenced by her discussion of the label "Southwestern" during the label ranking task:

> MO: What about Southwestern?
> CF53B: No, not too much. Although it's on the borderline. Borderline, but
> MO: So not quite as low as Western but
> CF53B: Yeah.
> MO: still probably not something you'd pick.
> CF53B: I don't – whenever I think of describing me, I wouldn't think of saying, "Oh I'm from the Southwest."
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: Or "I'm Southwestern." I'd have to be further – closer to New Mexico. [laughter]

For CF53B, Texas is not Western enough to be considered Southwestern, and would have to be "closer to New Mexico" for that label to apply. While she notes that Texas is "on the borderline," she ultimately sides with HF27 and AmM25 in concluding that Texas is not Southwestern.

As the excerpts above demonstrate, these subjects did not always consider Texas to be part of the South, and few considered Texas to be part of the Southwest. While a couple of the subjects who participated in the perceptual dialectology survey (§3) described Texas as Midwestern or as a mix of the Midwest and the South, none of the subjects who participated in the follow up identity interviews considered Texas to be part of the Midwest.

Some subjects responded to this difficulty in categorizing Texas by declining to assign Texas to a region, either by describing Texas as a unique combination of the features of other regions or as region unto itself. For CM30A, Texas was best explained as an "airlock" or "buffer" between the South and Southwest, "the transition from Louisiana to Arizona," and "a good solid balance of . . . Southern culture, Western culture . . . Mexican culture," in addition to the "internal culture" that has developed (§4.5.2, *Difficulty Locating Texas Within a Region*). From his perspective, it was "the result of that blend [that] makes it hard . . . to pin down what it is to be Texan." CM61 argued that "bein' a Texan, you're a Texan" and that Texas "is just a

different state than most other states." CF63 responded similarly to a quote which claimed that Texas is Western (#4 in Appendix J):

> CF63: Um "Texas is more Western than Southern." I've heard that before. I don't know. I guess it's just never seemed very important to me,
> MO: Yeah. [laughter]
> CF63: whether we're Western or Southern. We're just Texan. [laughter]

This excerpt clearly illustrates the way that subjects shrugged off attempts to classify Texas as Southern, Southwestern, or Western. Rather than attempt to resolve the discrepancies they perceived between their images of Texan and these regions, subjects like CF63 emphasized a more local identity, describing themselves as "just Texan."

This preference for asserting a more local identity may be rooted in the subjects' understandings of larger regional identity labels. Many of the interviewees struggled to articulate a clear image or stereotype of what it means to be Western or Southwestern. For example, when asked whether she had different stereotypes of the West and Southwest, CF20A answered in the affirmative, but then admitted to a lack of clarity about what it means to be Southwestern:

> MO: Do you kinda associate different – like different traits or different kinda stereotypes of the Southwest
> CF20A: Absolutely.
> MO: versus the West?
> CF20A: Yeah. Mm hmm. Um although I guess I'm not really even sure how I would stereotype the Southwest . . . necessarily. I don't know that I've ever met [laughter] really
> MO: Yeah.
> CF20A: anyone from the Southwest or what kind of conceptions I would have of [laughter] people who live in the Southwest.
> CF20A: That's a mystery to me, I guess.

Although CF20A's answer of "absolutely" implies that the regions "Southwest" and "West" have very different meanings for her, in considering her response, she acknowledges that "I'm not really even sure how I would stereotype the Southwest." Having never met someone from the Southwest, the Southwest remains "a mystery." During the group interview, HF29 expressed a similar sentiment in response to the quote from another subject which suggested that Texas is Western (#4 in Appendix J):

MO: What about other folks? Do you think Texas is more Western? Or S- more Western than Southern?
CM32B: I don't – I don't – I don't think so. Um . . . I don't know. I do not know.
HF29: I think I had said that I didn't really know wh- what that meant, like, being Western. Like I don't u- I'm not sure I know what it - it means to be Western.

Just as CF20A was had no "conceptions" of Southwesterners, HF29 was unsure "what it means to be Western." A similar pattern was present in the interviewees' discussions of what it means to be Midwestern. When asked how a Midwesterner might differ from a Texan, AmM25 responded that "I'm not even sure what a Midwestern [*sic*] is, to be honest," and CF63 said, "They're just people. Americans . . . I don't know enough of 'em to know if they're really different." CM32B described the Southwest as just "a location" rather than "an image," (§4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect*), and made similar comments about the Midwest:

MO: Um what about the difference between "Midwestern" and "Southern"?
CM32B: Same thing. Midwestern, location.
MO: Hmm.
CM32B: Southern, yeah.
MO: So you don't have like an image for like what it means to be Midwestern?
CM32B: I really don't. I don't.
MO: Hmm.
CM32B: No image is poppin' up. I'm tryin'. I'm lookin' for somethin'. I don't really have an image.

For CM32B, the Midwest and Southwest were areas without an "image." CM30A expressed a similar point of view when he described the Southwest and Midwest as areas that are "bland" and lacking "cultural saturation":

CM30A: Uh . . . but yeah, I would say it's more of a . . . . cultural saturation that um . . . would distinguish us both, you know, from being Southern and Southwestern. And I think one of the reasons I don't like the phrase – or the word – or the term "Midwestern"
MO: Mm hmm.
CM30A: is because there's such a blandness involved.
MO: [laughter]
CM30A: You know? Um . . . I actually came upon a theory once.
MO: Yeah?
CM30A: And it is saltwater. Between the South, the West, and the Eastern United States, there's strong culture involved. You know, all a- all along, and not just the actual coastal areas. But, you know, still just geographically, the further inland you get, it seems like a bit more – the more bland people are culturally.

According to CM30A, the defining characteristic of American regions with "strong culture" is proximity to saltwater. Inland areas, as a consequence, are culturally "bland." With the possible exception of the West, the two areas CM30A describes as influenced by saltwater (the Southern and Eastern United States) are areas which tend to be perceived as non-standard in terms of dialect. It is also interesting that even here, CM30A discusses the South, the East, and the West, making no explicit mention of the North (though "the East" in this case may refer to the Northeast). While the questions in the interview guide (which were influenced by the responses to the perceptual dialectology study above; see §3) did not directly ask subjects about the North or Northeast, is still worth mentioning that these Texan subjects typically discussed their state's relationship to the South, the West, and the Southeast, and only very rarely mentioned the North or Northeast. Even state-internally (§4.6.2), subjects primarily discussed distinctions between Eastern and Western Texas, and comments about Northern parts of the state were uncommon. In contrast to the Southerners studied by other researchers who hail from areas within a more traditional "South" (Alderman and Good 1997, Ayers 1996, Thompson 2007), it seems that Texans may more frequently tend to define their regional identity in East-West rather than North-South terms.

The comments above suggest that CM30A, CM32B, CF20A, HF29 and AmM25 do not have a clearly defined stereotype of Southwesterners, Westerners, and Midwesterners, especially as compared to their stereotypes of the South. This is perhaps not surprising considering the salience of particular regions as demonstrated by previous work in perceptual dialectology. Preston (1986), for example, reports that 94% of his respondents from Hawaii, Southern Indiana, Western New York, Southeastern Michigan, and New York City identified a Southern dialect region in draw-a-map tasks. By comparison, the Midwest was identified by only 55% of respondents, the West was identified by only 35% of respondents, and the Southwest was identified by only 10% of respondents. The identification rates for the Midwest and the West were even lower for the Southern Indiana respondents, the most Southern respondents in Preston's study, at 34% and 23%, respectively (the Southwest was identified at slightly higher rates by these subjects, but was still only identified by 23% of the Southern Indiana respondents). If, as Preston suggests, the salience of regions is linked to their degree of stigma or perceived distance from "standard" English, then it is not unexpected that the Deer Park residents in this

study possess clear (and often negative) stereotypes of Southerners while struggling to describe a typical Midwesterner, Southwesterner, or Westerner.

This lack of stereotypes about the Midwest, Southwest, and West contrasts sharply with the interviewees' clear stereotypes of the South. While a couple of subjects noted that they associated the label "Southern" with manners, hospitality, or friendliness, they much more frequently associated the South with negative stereotypes. As discussed above, (§4.5.1, *The South as Racist/Prejudiced*), the South was associated with the Confederacy, slavery, and racism. AmM25 preferred not to identify as Southern because of the stereotype that Southerners engage in incest (§4.6.3), and CF20A was uncomfortable being identified as a Southerner "off the bat" because of the assumption that Southerners are uneducated (§4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect*). Considering whether the label "Texan" differs from the label "Southern," CM32B directly addressed the negative connotations of the label "Southern":

> MO: How do you think being Texan is different than being Southern?
> CM32B: I really don't. [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CM32B: I really don't. Uh I guess uh it's just uh it's just the sound of it.
> MO: Yeah.
> CM32B: Yeah.
> MO: Are there – like are there
> CM32B: Maybe a negative – negative connotation to it.

From CM32B's perspective, being Texan and being Southern aren't actually all that different, but the label "Southern" has "a negative connotation." He goes on to say that being called Southern is "kinda like bein' called a hillbilly" – a term which is most often used as a slur for poor, rural Southerners. This negative connotation does not apply to the label "Texan," which CM32B repeatedly describes as preferable to the labels "Southwestern" and "from Deer Park," explaining that "it just sounds cooler to be from Texas." Similarly, CM61 argued that "bein' Texan's a little better than being a Southerner" (see §4.5.2, *Generic Positive Comments About Texas* above). Discussing the ways in which Texas exists as a state which is positioned between the South and the Southwest and which blends Southern, Southwestern, and Mexican culture, CM30A explained that he prefers to identify with Texas because it has "a broad scope on what it means":

CM30A: That's one of the things that – why I like to be able to identify with Texas more than I like to be able to identify with Houston or the South or Southwest, because it does have such a broad scope on what it means.
MO: Hmm. So you'd prefer not to be like – you feel less pigeonholed maybe? If you identify with Texas?
CM30A: I'd say that's a really great way of puttin' it.
MO: Hmm. Interesting.
CM30A: Sadly, outside of Texas that's not quite understood.

In the excerpt above, CM30A indicates that he prefers to identify as Texan over identifying as Houstonian, Southern, or Southwestern because the label "Texan" has a broader meaning. When the interviewer attempts to check her understanding by asking if he feels less pigeonholed by the label "Texan," he agrees that "that's a really great way of puttin' it." However, he also suggests that non-Texans may not fully grasp the scope of the label "Texan" when he adds that "outside of Texas that's not quite understood." This speaks to Kroskrity's (1999) point about limits on the "communicative freedom" of identity and "constraints imposed on the process of identity-making" (p. 113) – while CM30A may prefer to identify as Texan, he may encounter other individuals who do not interpret that label as he does or who instead identify him as Southern, Southwestern, or even Midwestern (see §4.6.6 below). Thus, just as "symbols are defined in large part based on how they are interpreted by those viewing them rather than how they are intended (or authored) by those displaying them" (Leib 1993, p. 237), identities are also subject to interpretation.

Based on this excerpt and the others presented above, it seems that just as Thompson (2007) argues that Southerners are able to build positive associations with Southern identity by rejecting the negative stereotypes assigned by outsiders, so too do Texans reject stereotypes assigned by non-Texans – such as those related to Texan styles of dress (§4.5.2, *Texan Fashion*) and cowboys (§4.5.2, *Texas Cowboy Stereotypes*). They also distance themselves from negative Southern stereotypes by tempering their alignment with Southern identity, at times abandoning it entirely in favor of Texan identity, which allows them to avoid both the negative stereotypes of the South and the "bland" stereotypes of the West, Southwest, and Midwest.

4.6.5 Identity Label Importance

Throughout the interviews, many of the interviewees commented on the factors that have influenced the importance of their various identities. CM61, who has lived in Deer Park for most of his life, still ranked Pasadena, where he grew up, as more important than Deer Park, explaining that the city where you grow up is important to "your development" and as the place where "you learn your lessons." CM32B discussed "[getting] older and [having] more responsibilities" as factors which increased the importance of being Texan for him. CF53B, on the other hand, believed that her identification with Texas "started to wane when I starting becoming more politically aware."

Several subjects discussed the importance of discrimination or negative experiences in shaping their identities. CF20A discussed this somewhat indirectly, commenting that her identity as a woman was important because "I'm physically a woman. It's hard to escape that one . . . and that's just another thing I deal with every day is just being a woman and everything that comes with it." By describing being a woman as something that's "hard to escape" and that she has to "deal with," CF20A hinted at the negative experiences which may accompany life as a woman. CF53B more directly discussed the feelings of injustice that she experienced growing up:

> CF53B: I mean, when – when – growing up, being relegated to certain roles and limited um because I was female.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: Um sometimes I still have a hard time with that. Yeah um I was – had to live under a different set of rules than my brother
> MO: Yeah.
> CF53B: because – and so he got to do a lot more things than I did because he was a boy.
> MO: Like what?
> CF53B: Drive a car, own a car. Um . . . mm given freedoms that I wasn't allowed to have. Date. [laughter]
> MO: You weren't allowed to date?
> CF53B: Uh uh. No I was gro- brought up in a very strict household.
> MO: Yeah.
> CF53B: And I wanted to go away to school, but I – I wanted to go away to band camp in high school and my father wouldn't let me but he let my brother.
> MO: [clicks tongue] [laughter] That's hard.
> CF53B: So that puts – you know, uh instills in you um a sense of injustice.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: And so – I don't like injustice.

CF53B went on to explain that her father refused to support her attendance of more than two years of college "because I'd be getting married and I wouldn't be working anyway," and that she found this to be "a hard pill to swallow." For CF53B, being denied experiences which her brother was allowed raised her awareness of the injustice associated with being a woman, which in turn led her to identify more strongly with her gender. Such conservative attitudes towards women are also a hallmark of the South, where traditional attitudes have held that women should not have jobs outside the home (Hurlbert 1989).

While CF20A and CF53B discussed the effect of discrimination on their gender identity, HF27 discussed the importance of negative attitudes towards Christianity in shaping her religious identity:

> HF27: But I do think that like sometimes um when – when a person does describe themself as Christian, like you run into – like I've run into people who automatically are like, "[makes disgusted sound]."
> MO: Yeah. [laughter]
> HF27: [laughter] You know, like you get that [laughter] a lot.

HF27 went on to explain that "there's a very bad stereotype out there of [Christianity] and . . . those beliefs that come with that are not necessarily mine." Unfortunately, while the stereotype of Christianity that she referred to isn't reflective of her own beliefs, as she put it, "there's always people who . . . yuck stuff up." She also linked these negative stereotypes to the importance of her religious identity:

> MO: Do you think that affects kinda where it falls on the scale?
> HF27: Yeah definitely because I mean – I don't know, when you believe in something, you want people to um try to understand why – why you would believe that.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF27: And um, you know, you – you don't – e- especially if their um I don't know, their – their basis is – i- i- like they're just so turned off from other people who [laughter]
> MO: Yeah.
> HF27: you know, put it out there, you want to show them, "Hey, that's not how everybody is," you know.

In addition to the impact of negative experiences on identity importance, several subjects discussed travel as having influenced the importance of their identities. HF29, for example, explained that traveling to Mexico led her to reconsider her self-perception as Mexican:

HF29: When I was younger and I was like a teenager, fifteen maybe, I went with my grandmother to visit Mexico.
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: And so we were in Mexico and I had always considered myself to be, you know, pretty Mexican [laughter]
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: but when you're there and you realize, "No, I'm not Mexican" [laughter]
MO: Yeah. [laughter]
HF29: [laughter] at all. Um they – you know, they all – they – it was different, like they were Mexican and I was American. And they – the other teenagers that were my age were really like, "Well what's it like over there?" They wanna know all about it. And I mean they did – they did consider mys- they did consider me different. Even just going into the little shops it was always like different. Um so that's uh one story I guess, when I was younger,
MO: Hmm.
HF29: visiting Mexico, being uh from America.

As she explains above, prior to traveling to Mexico, HF29 thought of herself as "pretty Mexican." Upon actually visiting Mexico, however, she realized that Mexican teenagers did not see her as Mexican (see also §4.6.6 below). As a result, she came to identify more strongly as American.

Several subjects also discussed the impact of travel on their regional identities. CF53B explained that regional identity had become less important to her over time because travel had taught her that "there are lots of good places to live, not just the one I'm used to":

CF53B: once I was married and we started traveling to Europe and Asia and s- you know,
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: the – Scandinavia, Middle East, and, you know, around the United States, it opened up my world a little bit more than before and so I saw that there are other ways of living that are uh . . . not to be dismissed because it's different from the way I was brought up.
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: And I've talked to other people who haven't traveled as much and, you know, they could never conceive of living anywhere else, whereas I'm – I think, "Wouldn't it be cool to live in Europe for a year or two?" or, you know, we visited like I said New York or New Jersey.
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: We were in New Jersey and, you know, I realized that - that some places um don't deserve the bad rap the media has given them and it - it's worth a second look.

For CF53B, extensive travel served as a reminder that negative regional stereotypes can be misleading and that "just because it's a different way of living, a different area of the world, doesn't mean that it's not as good as where I live and the way I live." In contrast to some of the subjects who identified more strongly with their region, CF53B concluded that "it's much more liberating to not limit yourself to be defined by where you live."

CF20A also believed that travel had influenced the importance of several of her identities, including "Southern," "Texan," and "Houstonian":

> CF20A: I mean since leaving Deer Park for a short while [laughter] um or maybe the first time I visited any area, you know, north of Tennessee or [laughter], um "the South" and um "Texan" have probably moved a little lower. Uh and I actually think um "Houstonian" and "the Houston area" have moved up a little bit um after meeting people from the Dallas area, honestly. [laughter] Uh, you know, a little more proud and a little more um I've thought a lot more about, you know, what it means to have come from this area of Texas and growing up here.

In contrast to CF53B, who found that travel led her to identify less with her city, state, and region, CF20A found that visiting Northern states caused her to identify less with the South, but visiting Dallas caused her to identify more strongly with Houston. For CM30, on the other hand, spending time outside of Deer Park seemed to have the opposite effect. He explained that joining the navy and "getting away" allowed him to identify more strongly with the South and the labels "country" and "hillbilly," which he described as an "aesthetic" and "culture" he "[didn't] have a chance to appreciate" when it was "forced down his throat":

> CM30A: so it's really easy to feel a bunch of dismay and aggression towards um . . . Southern culture in general because so much of it's forced down your throat and then we also tie it down to the fact that – or we – you know, I'll – I – at least I did, would tie it to the redneck, prejudiced subculture here in Deer Park, because . . . not all Southern people are rednecks, but all rednecks are Southern.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: You know, um it's – at least that's what I, you know, from what I saw down – you know, whenever I l- you know, growing up, that every prejudiced redneck I ever saw also identified greatly with being Southern. And so I despised what was Southern. The same reason whenever I was younger I hated The Cure, because I hated fans of The Cure. [laughter]
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: [laughter] You know, uh I didn't like Southern because I hated people that were so fond of being Southern.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: You know, and the most vocal.

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In comparing Southerners to fans of the band The Cure, CM30A implies that Southerners display a particularly intense fanaticism about their region. He also again makes the point that the label "Southern" carries a negative connotation for many, one which dredges up images of prejudiced, redneck, and "vocal" Southerners (for more on perceptions of the South as racist and the impacts of this perception on Southern identity see §4.5.1, *The South as Racist/Prejudiced*, and §4.6.4 above).

Interestingly, in discussing the rankings of their identity labels, a few subjects noted labels that they didn't believe accurately described them but that they still identified with at some level. AmM25, for example, ranked "suburban" higher than "urban" or "rural," which is not unusual given his residence in a suburban community. But despite acknowledging that Deer Park is suburban and ranking "rural" at the extreme left end of his scale, AmM25 did rank "urban" a bit higher than "suburban," explaining that "I wanna say that I'm urban, but I'm not" and "I like the idea of being urban, but it's just not me." Similarly, CF53B seemed to factor in her affinity for rural areas in ranking the identity label "rural," noting that "I've visited rural areas" and "I could enjoy [them]."

CF53B also considered the identities of her family members and their influence on her in ranking the label "Midwestern." While she stated that she wouldn't described herself as Midwestern, she also pointed out that "I have Midwestern influences because I married into a Midwestern family":

> CF53B: Um, you know, having been a part of my in-laws' family for the last thirty seven years and they're from Illinois
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF53B: um, you know, some of the things that I've experienced through them probably would make me feel more Midwestern than Western.
> MO: Mm hmm. Hmm. So kind of Midwestern by association?
> CF53B: Exactly.

While AmM25's ranking of the label "urban" and CF53B's rankings of the labels "rural" and "Midwestern" were still quite low, they chose not to reject these labels outright. This suggests that in addition to considering the ways they would describe themselves, subjects may also factor their preferences and the identities of other individuals in their social networks into their identity label rankings.

4.6.6 Identity Labels Assigned by Others

In their "partialness principle," Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) point out that "any given construction of identity may be . . . in part an outcome of others' perceptions and representations." (p. 606). As discussed above for the labels "Texan" (§4.5.2, *Description or Recognition of Subjects as Texan by Others*) and "Southern" (§4.5.1, *Description or Recognition of Subjects as Southern by Others*), many of the interviewees commented on how they believed others would describe or identify them. Two of the subjects, CM30A and CM32B, shared stories of times when they were misidentified as from another region. In CM30A's case, he was "accused of being Midwestern" by a man from Louisiana:

> CM30A: Um . . . had a guy from Louisiana once tell me I was Midwestern because I was from Texas.
> MO: [laughter] Did he expand on that?
> CM30A: I was sweeping and he wouldn't move his feet so I just swept over his feet and he went off.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: Um because it's bad luck [. . .] it's a, you know, Southern superstition
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: that sweepin' someone's feet's bad luck.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: And uh I told him that was one of the most asinine things I'd ever heard
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: and . . . he said you have to be Southern to appreciate it [. . .] and . . . coming from the I-10 area, that's, you know, I grew up further South than he did.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: You know, he - he grew up in Monroe, Louisiana. Like that's I-20, man.

In CM30A's anecdote, his lack of familiarity with a Southern superstition is taken as evidence that as a Texan he is not truly Southern. CM30A balks at this, countering that geographically, the Louisianan questioning his southernness is less Southern than he is. While he later goes on to say that "didn't care" about his southernness being questioned, he is less open to being described as Midwestern, asking "how could you possibly actually consider Texas part of the Midwest?"

CM32B also told a story of being misidentified as non-Texan. In CM32B's case, a woman from New York mistakenly believed that he was from her home state:

> CM32B: when I bought my wife's engagement ring, [laughter] um the lady from the jewelry store was from New York.

MO: Mm hmm.
CM32B: And she goes, "Are you from New York?" And I was like – I was like, "No."
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: And she was like, "You sound like you're from New York."
MO: What?
CM32B: And I was like, "I don't – I don't know [laughter] how or why."
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: Uh but yeah, that's the only time anybody's ever – and that's a huge mistake.
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: Cause there's no way.
MO: [laughter]
CM32B: There's no way I sound that way.

Throughout his story, CM32B remains indignant, insisting that for someone to describe him as from New York would be "a huge mistake" and that "there's no way I sound that way." He goes on to add that, "I was a little offended by it" – suggesting that he's unhappy to be associated with another state, perhaps specifically with New York. These anecdotes from CM30A and CM32B, in which both men are displeased with being labeled as from another region, suggest that they may be tapping into the covert prestige associated with being from Texas.

This more positive perception of Texas is also reflected in the ways that subjects experienced the reactions of others who correctly identified them as Texan. While CF53B told one story of encountering "judgmental" people in Finland who assumed that all Texans voted for George W. Bush, CF63, CM32B, CM61, and CF53B all reported more positive, or at least neutral, experiences when recognized as Texan. Most subjects highlighted their accents as betraying their Texan origins. CF63, for example, explained that having a Texan accent "draws attention when you're out," leading people to ask, "You from Texas?" CM61, on the other hand, had been identified as Texan based on other characteristics:

CM61: sometimes when we go out of state and we go to [. . .] meetings, and uh things like that, I always – there's always somebody that comes up and says, "You've gotta be from Texas."
MO: Yeah. [laughter]
CM61: And uh
MO: They know right away? [laughter]
CM61: Yeah, yeah.
MO: [laughter]
CM61: And I said, "I don't know what you mean by that." He says, "Well," he says, "You know, you're tall, you're above average"

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MO: Hmm.
CM61: "in size."
MO: Yeah.
CM61: He says, "You just look like a Texan."
MO: [laughter]
CM61: "The way you walk." And I said, "Well," [shrugs]
MO: [laughter]
CM61: You know, I – I never noticed me walking any - any different from anybody else

In CM61's case, rather than remaking on his dialect, his size and his walk were the features which marked him as Texan to an outsider. For CF53B, wearing Texas shirts and pins to the Special Olympics led her family to be instantly recognized as Texan while in New Jersey:

CF53B: people from other states would see our Texas shirts and come running to us, "Oh we wanna meet people from Texas"
MO: [laughter]
CF53B: and they would always want to know what it's like to live in Texas and could - could we would trade pins. And so I would get pins from other states
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: and give away my Texas pins.
MO: [laughter]
CF53B: So it was a lot of fun. But um a lot of the people in New Jersey are very curious
MO: Mm hmm.
CF53B: about what it's like to be from Texas. And so we, you know, we would um um tell 'em what it's like and – and we were equally curious about New Jersey. And – and they would – they would um they liked to hear us talk.
MO: [laughter]
CF53B: Whereas I was enjoying their accent. But um you know just – they just loved to talk.
MO: Yeah.
CF53B: And uh we enjoyed it too. But people would come running up, "Oh, you're from Texas?" you know. People would stop us in restaurants
MO: [laughter]
CF53B: and wanna talk to us because we were from Texas.

According to CF53B, this attention from strangers who wanted to meet people from Texas was something that her family enjoyed and was "kinda fun." As CF53B's story illustrates, many of the interviewees' experiences reported above with being recognized as Texan stand in sharp contrast with their understandings of how others perceive Southern culture and the Southern dialect. These less negatives attitudes towards Texanness may provide one explanation

for why some subjects prefer to identify as Texan over identifying as Southern (see §4.6.4 above).

When asked if they had any stories about times when someone had described them as Texan, some subjects admitted that they were not sure whether strangers would be able to identify them as Texan. HF29 was particularly doubtful when asked if she believed people could identify where she was from:

> HF29: I don't think so. Like I don't think if I went to, I don't know, London, I've never been there, but I don't think that they would be like, "Oh, you must be from Texas."
> MO: Mm hmm. What about within the States? Do you think people would recognize that you were from Texas?
> HF29: I don't think so either.
> MO: Hmm.
> HF29: I don't know. I don't – I don't know if I just went to like New York people would be like, "Oh, you're from Texas?"

From HF29's perspective, it is unlikely that if she were to travel outside her home state she would meet people who could peg her as Texan. It is also worth reiterating that of all the subjects, HF29 ranked the identity label "Texan" lowest (see §4.4.3 above). This potential relationship between a subject's self-perception as regionally unidentifiable and weaker regional identity is one which should be explored further in future work. In general, commentary from many of the subjects which centered on how others would identify them also points to the important role of how we believe we are perceived by others in shaping our identity.

4.6.7 Urbanness

For interviewees of all ages, southernness was frequently linked to the urbanness or ruralness of a particular city, state, or region. One assumption articulated by a few subjects was that areas which are more rural are also more Southern, and conversely, that urban areas tend to be less Southern, particularly in terms of dialect (Bakos 2013, Cramer 2013). CF63, for example, believed that "you would find more . . . Southern speech" in West Texas "the towns are really far apart and there are not a lot of urban areas." On the other hand, she believed that "here [in East Texas] . . . we're so close to urban areas and there are so many people from everywhere . . . most of us still speak Southern, but it's not as pronounced." In this way, she contrasts East

Texas, which she characterizes as "much more urban," with West Texas, which she describes as both more Southern and more Texan in terms of accent.

Similarly, AmM25 distinguished between urban areas of Texas and more rural areas, claiming that parts of Texas could be considered the Deep South, and that you'll find those areas "the further away you go to the city." He characterized these areas as having "more of a twang" compared to "the main cities," which he attributed to their residents being "exposed to a lot less people than we are." He described urban areas, on the other hand, as "[taking] on an urban outlook as opposed to Southern" and "losing a lot" of their Southern twang.

As hinted at by AmM25's comments above, this contrast between Southern areas and urban areas also has ramifications for standardness – if Southern dialects are considered non-standard, then urban areas, which are understood as less Southern, may also be more standard (Luhman 1990). AmM25 described the "main cities" in Texas as "generalized" and "more standard" than other parts of the state, and CF20A referred to the "urban centers" of Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio as more standard. CF20A also argued that as someone who considers herself more urban or suburban than rural, she exhibits "a slightly more educated style of speech"; however, she does rank the label "suburban" a bit higher "than "urban," and her in-between status as a suburbanite is perhaps reflected in her comment that "that little hick sneaks into [my speech] a little bit."

This contrast between southernness and urbanness was for many subjects rooted in the assumption that urban areas are more diverse (see also §4.6.8 below). HF29 said that urban areas are less Southern "because there's more diversity" and ranked the label "Houstonian" higher than "from Deer Park" on her identity scale because "it's more urban . . . where Deer Park is a lot more White." While Deer Park was described as "White" (HF29) with "a suburban culture" (CF20A), Houston was characterized as having "people from all over the world . . . from other parts of the United States and . . . Asian countries and everywhere" (CF63) and "a more urban sound" (HF29). According to CF63, "Deer Park would seem more Southern because of that." All four participants in the group interview (HF29, CM32B, CF63, and CM61) agreed that urban areas are less Southern because of their diversity.

While the overwhelming consensus was that urbanness and southernness are contradictory, a couple of subjects hesitated to subscribe completely to this idea. CF53B did

state that urban areas are "less Southern in that they do have more diversity" and that the diversity of Houston "[is] going to alter the [Southern] mindset," she also noted that that "doesn't mean it's doing away with it completely." This suggests that it may in fact be possible for urbanness and southernness to coexist.

CM30A was the most vocal in his opposition to the idea that southernness and urbanness are necessarily at odds with one another, as evidenced by his response to a quote from the perceptual dialectology study which claimed that "Deer Park seems more Southern like simply because it is not urban like Houston" (#9 in Appendix J):

> MO: How do you feel about that "because"? Like do you think that areas that are urban are less Southern?
> CM30A: Again I don't like that because that's trying to prove a correlation equals causation. Um . . . because there are plenty of urban areas outside of Texas that are incredibly Southern.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: Um . . . Houston being urban doesn't make it less Southern. Um Houston – back to the previous statement, [that if] Houston being more diverse I would say makes it less Southern. Uh you add more ingredients you're gonna have less prevalence of every o- you know. But the fact that it's urban is not the cause.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM30A: Cause again you have plenty of Southern, urban areas.

As demonstrated by the excerpt above, CM30A differed from many of the other interviewees in distinguishing between urbanness and diversity, explaining that "the fact that Houston is urban is not the cause" of its decreased southernness compared to Deer Park and that there are "plenty of Southern, urban areas." In his opinion, it's more accurate to describe Houston as less Southern because Houston is more diverse than Deer Park – not simply because it is urban. This relationship between southernness and diversity is discussed in more detail in the next section.

4.6.8 Diversity

Throughout the interviews, diversity was a frequent topic of conversation. Deer Park was often described in terms of its lack of diversity, such as when HF29 characterized Deer Park as "a lot more White" than Houston and CF63 noted that "Blacks . . . don't live here" (see §4.5.3, *Lack of Diversity in Deer Park*). Similarly, CF53B recalled that when she was growing up,

"Although we had Hispanics here . . . the number was much more heavy on the Anglo side," and that there were no Black students in her class until high school. CM30A explained that he is frequently asked where he is from, not on the basis of his accent, but because of his "multicultural experience" – suggesting that this experience with other cultures is not the norm in Deer Park. AmM25 noted that "after [Hurricane] Katrina a lot more Black people are here now too" and that this "surprised" him because "Deer Park is very White":

> AmM25: [laughter] Because, you know, in high school there was like four.
> MO: Yeah. It's ridiculously
> AmM25: Four in the entire high school.
> MO: Yeah.
> AmM25: So it's like . . . I felt bad for them. I thought I had – had bar- or bad
> MO: Yeah.
> AmM25: or whatever, no. They probably had it a lot worse than I did. But um, yeah, it's definitely changing.
> MO: Do you think that's been a pretty drastic change or
> AmM25: I think so. I mean, four to like, even, like, in the tens, for more Black people, that would be . . . I don't know, pretty devastating to some people. Uh . . . Hispanic, I don't think the Hispanic population would affect anything, cause you know the Deepwater area, it's very Hispanic so.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> AmM25: I think more people were used to the idea, as opposed to starting to overwhelm everything.
> MO: Hmm.
> AmM25: I don't think it's overwhelming but I think - I get why someone - people would say it's overwhelming, but.

AmM25 asserts that for the Black population of Deer Park to grow to "even . . . the tens" is something that "would be . . . pretty devastating to some people." He also suggests that while the Deer Park area has historically had a large Hispanic population, an influx of African Americans to the city could feel "overwhelming" for some Deer Park residents. This negative characterization of the demographic changes in the area following Hurricane Katrina as "devastating" and "overwhelming" emphasizes the high level of unfamiliarity and discomfort with diversity in Deer Park.

However, as suggested by the excerpt from AmM25's interview above, although many of the interviewees mentioned the lack of diversity in Deer Park, they also pointed out that there is a significant and growing Hispanic population in the city (see also §4.5.3, *Change in Deer Park*). CF63, for example, stated that "there are very few Blacks" in Deer Park, but added that "there

are quite a few Hispanics" and "there were always . . . Hispanics here in this area." HF29 also

pointed out that "even in the last . . . ten years [the Hispanic population] has gone up."

Several interviewees brought up the demographics of Deer Park Independent School

District (DPISD) as evidence that the Hispanic population in the city has grown, but cited

different numbers; CF20A reported that DPISD is 31% Hispanic, CF53B and HF29 reported that

DPISD is 51% Hispanic, and CM32B reported that DPISD is 55% Hispanic. HF29, who teaches

for DPISD, focused on the positive aspects of this change in describing her reaction to a recent

presentation on the district's demographics at convocation:

> HF29: You know, and to me I'm excited cause it's like "Yay!"
> MO: Yeah.
> HF29: "Deer – little Deer Park's getting more Hispanic!" Like I love that.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: I think it's great because I want my kids to grow up in a Hispanic community
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: and it just means that I don't have to move too far away from my family to do so.

For HF29, having more Hispanic families in Deer Park is cause for excitement and means

that her children will be able to "grow up in a Hispanic community." This excitement was not

necessarily shared by other members of the Deer Park community. Asked whether she thought

this represented a drastic change from her childhood, when she believed DPISD was only "one

percent, two percent ethnically diverse," CF20A expressed the opinion that there has been

increased attention to the demographics of DPISD in recent years:

> CF20A: I'm sure it was gradual to some degree, but um I think there was kind of more of
> a sudden notice of it or attention to it uh fairly recently. Maybe in the past . . . I don't
> know. Maybe more than five years, but less than ten, for sure.
> MO: Was there – do you think there was like a particular thing that led people to start
> paying more attention to that? Or
> CF20A: Um . . . I mean I think it starts mostly in the schools, when we notice that um
> some kids just g- don't know English at all.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: Um I have several students that um you know are ESL or bilingual um and I
> have a couple who have to have the – their friend next to them translate everything that
> I'm saying [laughter] to them.

From CF20A's perspective, many Deer Park residents have become more aware of the

growing Hispanic population in the city as there have been more students in DPISD classrooms

who "don't know English at all." This suggests that the changing demographics of the community may present an instructional challenge, particularly for teachers who aren't trained specifically in ESL instruction. This less enthusiastic response is also reflected in the reactions of other teachers who attended convocation with HF29. CM32B, HF29's husband, relayed his wife's story about the event:

> CM32B: what was really interesting [. . .] is like when they [presented the demographic data], she said half the teachers went, "[imitates loud gasp]" like it was a horrible thing.
> MO: Oh my god. [And how]
> CM32B: And her and her – her dual language partner teacher were like, "What was – what was that gasp?"

This response from the teachers at the ceremony – gasping, in CM32B's words, "like it was a horrible thing" that a large percentage of DPISD's students are Hispanic, provides insight into the tension within the community. Just as AmM25 described the influx of African Americans to the Houston area as something that many Deer Park residents would find "overwhelming" and "devastating," the gasps of the DPISD teachers suggest dismay – or, as CM32B later suggests in the group interview, fear:

> HF29: there's still places in Deer Park that - where they don't want – or even people that are running, you know, that they don't want to accept Spanish
> CM32B: Change.
> HF29: and change and
> CM32B: A lot of that is fear.
> HF29: Mm hmm. Right.
> CM32B: Like you were talking about your GT [gifted and talented] teacher
> HF29: Right.
> CM32B: who said that – that – you know, maybe put off a little bit that he has to learn Spanish. Well that's a fear. I'm no longer the majority, now I'm gonna b- I have to compete with the majority to keep w- my job.
> HF29: That's interesting.
> CM32B: There's
> MO: Hmm.
> CM32B: There's – there's fear in that. Like for me, if – if I'll actually - wanting to go into special education for my district, I have to learn Spanish.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM32B: It's no longer an option for me just to have a special education – if I do,
> CF63: Wow.
> CM32B: then I have to move to a – a – a - a better school in the sense of the area. So I have to go to a wealthier area where it's predominantly White

CM32B argues that within his district, learning Spanish is now becoming a necessary prerequisite for many teaching positions. As a result, the monolingual English speakers at DPISD schools may feel threatened and worry that they will be unable to keep their jobs if they do not learn to speak Spanish. He later reiterates that "if I wanna teach special education, I'm gonna have to go to a White community . . . I can't be where I'm at." In this way, the growing number of Spanish-speaking students at DPISD raises a fear for some teachers that they will be pushed out of their districts.

These fears and negative attitudes extend beyond the school district. Both CM30A and CM32B commented on the variety known as "Spanglish" in their interviews. CM30A explained that "I hate 'Spanglish.' I also hate 'Spinglish' . . . it's usually attached to some other derogatory phrases." This negative association was also hinted at by CM32B, who vehemently denied that the Deer Park community uses Spanglish, saying, "As someone who's married to a Hispanic woman, I don't think that happens very much . . . I don't agree with that. I don't think we're Spanglish." In describing her decision to rank the identity label "Mexican descent" considerably higher than the label "Hispanic," HF29, CM32B's wife, also seemed to consider these attitudes:

> HF29: "Hispanic" can – I mean it just means from Sp- Spanish-speaking
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: uh people. Um I don't wanna – I don't – I think sometimes it has like a negative connotation, so I don't want it
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: to be like – I really don't wanna be known as "Hispanic," just like any – cause it could be anywhere. It could be Puerto Rico, Cuba, it c- anywhere. So I – I w- I would rather people know that I – my parents are from Mexico.
> MO: And can you tell me more about what you mean by it having a – a negative – did you say connotation?
> HF29: I think sometimes is we'll – around here in Southern Texas I guess
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: you know, we're pretty divided because of all the stuff that's going on with immigration.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> HF29: And so I feel like sometimes people can use that a- as a d- derogatory term
> MO: Hmm.
> HF29: more than anything. Um or just to kind of generalize people wouldn't – some people don't even – just because of how they look, not really because they actually speak Spanish.

While HF29's reasons for not identifying as strongly as Hispanic as she identified as being of Mexican descent were partly linked to the fact that her parents are specifically from Mexico, she also factored the "negative connotation" of word "Hispanic" into her rankings. According to HF29, this negative connotation stems at least partly from the conflict in Texas regarding immigration, and in HF29's eyes, leads people to use "Hispanic" as a "derogatory term" and a way to "generalize people."

It is also worth noting that HF29 ranks both of these labels – "Hispanic" and "Mexican descent" – higher than the ethnicity and ancestry-related labels provided by the two other subjects who provided labels in this category, both of whom were White. While CF63 and CF20A both ranked the labels "Southern" and "Texan" quite highly, they perceived their ethnicity as less important in shaping their identities. Thompson (2007) argued that "Because [White Southerners] seldom really think about their racial identity, their regional identity takes on more prominence. Conversely, African Americans, who place much more emphasis and importance on their racial identity – a consequence in large part to the emphasis the larger culture places on being black - do not see their regional identity as more important than their race" (p. 173). While the set of subjects in this study is too small to draw any definite conclusions, HF29's focus on the importance of her ethnic identity and lack of investment in her regional identity mirrors Thompson's findings for her African American subjects, and may likewise be linked to the "emphasis" her community places on her ethnicity – in this case, being Mexican American in a community where Whites are, as CM32B describes it, afraid to "no longer be the majority."

Beyond discussing the demographics of Deer Park, many of the interviewees also drew on diversity in describing the South and what it means to be Southern. As discussed above (§4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect*), AmM25 reported that he was often considered "not Southern enough." One possible explanation for this is that he does not match up with the stereotypical image of a Southerner as a White, straight male (Catsam 2008, Griffin et al. 2005, Reed and Black 1982, Thompson and Sloan 2012, Watts 2008). While this association of southernness with whiteness is only hinted at in AmM25's interview, HF29 comments on this much more overtly at several points in her interview (see also §4.5.2, *Diversity in Texas*), noting more than once that she associates the label "Southern" with "White people." Responding to quotes from

subjects in the perceptual dialectology study which suggested that Pasadena and Deer Park are more Southern than Houston (#7 and #9 in Appendix J), HF29 agreed:

> HF29: "Pasadena has much more a Southern and . . . redneck dialect than Houston."
> Yeah I think there's places in Pasadena – but again I'm thinking of Southern as like
> White people.
> MO: Yeah.
> HF29: So I think so. Cause Houston to me would be more diverse. So I agree.
>
> HF29: "Deer Park seems more Southern like simply because it is not urban like
> Houston." Yes, I do agree.
> MO: So
> HF29: Again because I think "Southern" is like White people.
> MO: And – and so if s- an area is urban do you think that makes it less Southern?
> HF29: Because there's more diversity.
> MO: Okay.
> HF29: So to me that means less White people.

In responding to the second quote above, HF29's reasoning seems to follow several steps: first, she accepts that Houston is urban (see also §4.6.7 above); second, she asserts that urban areas are more diverse; and finally, she suggests that areas which are diverse are less Southern. This move of setting up diversity in contrast to southernness is not unique to HF29; many of the subjects' responses seem to suggest that diversity and southernness are mutually exclusive. CF53B, for example, noted that Houston is "less Southern [than Deer Park] in that they do have more diversity." CM61 suggested that increased diversity might entail decreased southernness because "you get more different languages into the community." CF63 echoed the reasoning of HF29 and CM61, claiming that areas that are urban are less Southern because "there're people from all over the world. From everywhere." This idea that diversity competes with southernness was also expressed by AmM25, who stated that "there's a lot more influencing Houston as opposed to Deer Park" and that "once you get more diverse then you start to blend into the diversity as opposed to . . . trying to stay Southern."

Taken together, these quotes seem to imply that southernness cannot be maintained in an area which is diverse. The reasoning for this, according to AmM25, is that in an environment of diversity people may be unlikely to "try to stay Southern." This idea that diversity creates a hostile environment for southernness (or vice versa; see §4.5.1, *The South as Racist/Prejudiced* above) also underlies the comments of CM30A and CF53B. CM30A, for example, argued that

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diversity makes an area less Southern because if you "add more ingredients, then the individual ingredients will eventually be toned down." CF53B similarly argued that as diversity in Texas increases, the southernness of the state "gets diluted." These metaphors, in which maintaining southernness requires active effort and diversity causes southernness to be "toned down" or "diluted," indicate that for these subjects diversity and southernness are viewed as an either/or situation rather than characteristics which can be simultaneously present in the same city.

Similar themes are present in conversations arounds the words "hick" and "redneck." Like the regional identity label "Southern," HF29 states that "when I think of those words most of the time it's White people. And I am not White." And like "Southern," "redneck" and "hick" are associated with racism; HF29 describes rednecks as "having that racist quality or whatever that makes 'em redneck," and hicks as "the worst of the racist type of White person that there could be."

Other interviewees also commented on the association between "redneck" and whiteness. CM30A, for example, told the story of a time his father-in-law, who was born in Mexico, called him a redneck. As CM30A explained it, "we got into this whole conversation of . . . White doesn't mean redneck . . . that was just . . . his cultural interpretation of what 'redneck' meant." Thus, while AmM25 "shocked" people by embracing the label "redneck" (see §4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect* above), CM30A was considered a redneck by default on the basis of being White. CM61 also suggested a contrast between being redneck and being Hispanic:

> MO: So compared to Houston, do you think [Pasadena] is more redneck or about the same?
> CM61: It's less.
> MO: Less.
> CM61: Yeah. To me.
> MO: Hmm.
> CM61: I mean, I just – Deer Park and Pasadena b- just about equal on Spanish . . . Spanish families.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM61: Deepwater or – well that's Deer Park School District, that has become just about all Hispanic.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM61: All the people that I knew that I grew up there, they moved out and now like my father's house um a Hispanic person bought it and he lives right across from the elementary.
> MO: So you think that as Pasadena becomes more Hispanic it becomes less redneck? Am I correct in

CM61: Oh yeah. I'd say it's a lot less redneck now.
MO: Okay. Hmm.
CM61: Cause of the – the influence of the Spanish coming in.

In explaining why he thinks Pasadena is less redneck than Houston, CM61 comments on the many Hispanic families in Pasadena. When the interviewer attempts to clarify by asking directly if he thinks that Pasadena becomes less redneck as it becomes more Hispanic, he reiterates that Pasadena is "a lot less redneck," which he attributes to "the influence of Spanish coming in."

Similarly, many of the interviewees contrasted the speech of Hispanics with Southern or Texan speech. HF27 described the Houston dialect as having "less of a twang than like say Dallas," "especially now [that Houston's] got such a large Hispanic culture." CF53B commented that Hispanic families "[are] not gonna have the Southern drawl . . . they're gonna have more of a Hispanic lilt if you will to their speech." CM32B echoed CF53B's statement, noting that "I think their dialect is different. I don't think my wife [who is Mexican American] sounds like me." CF63 explained that "if we're talking about Texans and Texas dialect . . . the Hispanic dialect is different than that." Although CF63 hints at the existence of a "Hispanic dialect," she goes on to say that "I'm thinkin' about my daughter-in-law and she talks Texan as I do I think. But not when she's speaking Spanish." This shift to focusing on Spanish rather than Chicano English reflects a larger pattern within the interviews in which subjects more frequently described differences between Hispanic speakers and White speakers in terms of language rather than dialect. A similar shift can be observed in an excerpt from CM32B's interview:

CM32B: the only dialect difference [between Deer Park and Pasadena] you would notice is whether or not they're Hispanic or not. Whether Spanish was the first language. You notice then. If Spanish wasn't the first language, two, three generations from that, yeah, you wouldn't know the difference.
MO: Hmm. So for - for people who are native English speakers, you would say that they sound the same in Deer Park and Pasadena?
CM32B: Yeah, I do. As long as their parents were.
MO: Hmm.
CM32B: If their parents were native English speakers.

While CM32B initially states that there might be dialect differences depending on "whether or not they're Hispanic," he then restates his comment as "whether Spanish was the

first language." When the interviewer follows up by asking whether he perceives any differences between the native English speakers in the two cities, he asserts that Deer Park and Pasadena residents would sound the same "if their parents were native English speakers."

Like CM32B, many of the interviewees commented on the impact of generational differences on language; AmM25, for example, stated that how Southern Hispanic families sound would be dependent upon "how long they've been here" and whether their families were still "fresh." Elsewhere in his interview, CM32B argued that the main linguistic difference between Deer Park and Pasadena was that in Deer Park, "people are usually not first generation," whereas in Pasadena, "it's 'I just got here.'" Considering whether people in different parts of Texas speak differently, CM61 also noted generational differences:

> CM61: Yeah, I think Texas – everybody in Texas talks about the same, their language, to me.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM61: And when I'm talkin' to somebody, their language is the same. N- except if they were second or first generation Hispanic,
> MO: Yeah.
> CM61: now there's a difference there. But i- you know, if they – like third, fourth, fifth generation, you can't tell no difference.

According to CM61, "everybody in Texas talks about the same . . . except if they were second or first generation Hispanic." This comment is particularly significant in that he rejects the idea that there is any other major linguistic variation within his state, lending particular significance to his awareness of generational differences. He later added that "we had a lot of guys [at work] that were second generation . . . You wouldn't know." Generational differences also came up during the group interview, when CM32B said that "first generation Mexican Americans don't sound the same as me":

> CM32B: Because I don– I - I think first generation Mexican Americans don't sound the same as -
> CF63: Oh, I agree with that.
> CM32B: as me. I think that – I think once
> CF63: They don't talk with a Southern drawl. [laughter]
> CM32B: everything's been mixed for a while
> HF29: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: people start sounding the same, but
> HF29: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: I don't
> HF29: Mm hmm.

CF32B: I think that has a huge effect on the dialect.

This excerpt highlights another common topic of conversation – the idea that over time, "people start sounding the same." In some cases, interviewees suggested that this happened as result of the mixing or blending of two language or dialects; in other cases, their comments suggested that this would be due to a gradual assimilation to Texan or Southern norms. For example, CF53B commented that "the Hispanic accent . . . probably takes a while to get rid of . . . I think it takes a couple generations for that to fade away." CM61 partially agreed with a quote which suggested that places that are diverse are less Southern, but added that "if you've been in Texas for a while, you pick up everybody else's language or habits . . . you just blend in" and that Hispanics in Deer Park have "blended in good." However, he also emphasized that the different cultures in Deer Park "intermingle" and "learn to get along with each other," pointing out that the growing Hispanic population in Deer Park "changes your language a little bit" and that he has learned some Spanish vocabulary. CM32B also discussed this issue, contrasting his own experiences with those of his wife:

> CM32B: so our culture has a huge effect on how we dress, ever- everything. So I think people who are – are kids of um – my wife is first generation Mexican American
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: so like her culture is a little bit different than mine even though we grew up pretty close to each other. And that's because her mom took th- f- from Mexico. In the sense of who they were there and brought it here.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: Does that make sense? So I think when you have that kind of culture coming in and things look . . . eventually three or four generations down the line, their kids are gonna look just like this kid. Uh there might be some meeting in the middle a little bit because my kids will change and adapt to that culture.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: But there's a meeting in the middle. And everybody will eventually just sound the same. I mean look at my little White kids.

Initially, CM32B pointed out that his wife, who is first generation American, comes from a different cultural background than he does. He suggested that "three or four generations down the line, their kids are gonna look just like this kid," but added that "there might be some meeting in the middle." In this way, CM32B, like many of the other subjects, seemed to alternate between using language which suggested that later generations of Mexican Americans will assimilate to White Texan norms and acknowledging that cultural influences may work both

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ways. Overall, most of the interviewees' comments suggested that they predicted their community would become monocultural and monodialectal over time, a view further supported by the lack of subject comments which acknowledged the possibility of long-term dialect mixing or bidialectalism.

CF20A and CM30A, on the other hand, questioned the opposition between diversity and southernness suggested by many of the excerpts above. Considering whether Hispanic families would be less likely to speak with a Southern dialect, CF20A first stated that "their dialect might not be as Southern as ours," but went on to add that "I definitely know plenty of Hispanic people who have lived in this area for quite a while and as they learn English it's very Southern." CM30A also rejected the idea that Hispanic families are necessarily less Southern:

> MO: Do you think that in general if an area has more Hispanic families they tend to be less Southern?
> CM30A: Nope. Again, low rider trucks.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: You know, uh . . . and some friends of mine um worked a couple years at an orphanage in Kenya.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: And long story short, hearing a – you know, a Kenyan kid speak with a combination of Kenyan and Southern accent is hilarious.

CM30A offers the example of low rider trucks as a blending of Mexican and Southern culture. He further problematizes the idea that southernness necessarily entails Whiteness by providing the example of Kenyan kids who "speak with a combination of Kenyan and Southern accents." The subject of how the interviewees perceived the link between differing identities and speech is explored in greater detail below.

4.6.9 Linking Identity Labels to Speech

In Part D of the interview, subjects were asked to circle any of the identity labels that they believed affected the way that they talk. They were then asked to explain how each word affected their speech (see §4.3.2, *Part D: Identity and Speech* above).

As discussed in the quantitative results above (§4.4.5), the most frequently chosen label for this task was "Texan," which was circled by 7 out of 9 respondents, followed by "Southern," which was circled by 6 out of 9 respondents. In explaining why these identity labels affected

their speech, subject responses ranged from general acknowledgment of their Southern or Texan accents, "drawls," or "twangs" (AmM25, CM32B, CF63) to examples of specific dialect features that characterized their speech (CF20A, CM30A, CF53B, HF27, HF29). For the subjects who mentioned "drawl" and "twang," defining those terms seemed to be challenging. AmM25 described "drawl" as "talking a little slower," but initially stated that he "couldn't really pinpoint" what "twang" meant, finally concluding that "twang" just refers to "overpronunicating" the Southern dialect. While CM30A insisted that "twang" and "drawl" were "two completely separate things," he struggled to articulate a difference between the two, comparing it to asking "how is pepper different from salt?"

Turning to specific features, CF20A noted that being Southern and Texan affected her "more casual style of speech," particularly her "slurred" and "cut off" pronunciations of words (for example, "gonna" and "I'm 'bout to"). CM32B, HF29, and HF27 noted that they use the second person plural pronoun "y'all," and HF29 and CF20A pointed out that they use the immediate future marker "fixing to (do something)." CF20A and HF27 both described using the word "coke" as a generic term for all sugary, carbonated beverages. CF53B provided several additional examples of lexical items that might be regionally restricted:

> CF53B: where you're from affects, you know, the colloquialisms you use and the accent and stuff like that. It also affects your vocabulary because we call things certain things here that might not exist in other places or have different words for it.
> MO: Do you have any examples?
> CF53B: Maybe like the highway system, you know, we – we call 'em "feeder roads" or "access roads." They might call it something else in another area. [. . .] Uh my husband used to make fun of me when we would say – we would – like a colloquialism would be "tump." Like – but I – you know I've found that I don't use that any more, you know. He did not understand when he first moved here, he did not understand what that word meant.

While most subjects circled both "Southern" and "Texan," one subject circled "Southern" but not "Texan" and two subjects circled "Texan" but not "Southern." Generally, subject discussions of the regional influences on their speech tended not to distinguish between "Southern" and "Texan" features; however, some subjects suggested that these varieties might be different. For example, CF63, who circled "Texan" but not "Southern," stated that "I just was born here and have lived here my whole life and I don't know how to talk any other way." When asked whether sounding Texan was different from sounding Southern, she struggled to

provide an example of a difference between the dialects, finally stating that "I can't . . . think of anything specific. But yeah, I think 'Texan' is different from 'Southern.'"

Interestingly, although both HF27 and HF29 indicated that their speech included Southern features, they also hesitated to suggest that their speech was fully Southern; HF29 noted that she could "relate to" Southern speech, but also explained that "I don't know that my talk is as drawn out as I imagine that theirs is . . . I don't talk slow and low." Her reference to Southern speech as "theirs" further suggests that she does not associate these features with her own speech. HF27 acknowledged that she does say "y'all," but "not all the time" because she also uses "you guys." She also described her gradual abandonment of the term "coke" for all carbonated beverages, which she attributed to "soda" being more "correct":

> HF27: when I was younger I used to say "coke" for everything but now I say "soda" so.
> MO: I do the same thing.
> HF27: Yeah.
> MO: I don't know why I changed.
> HF27: Yeah. Me either. It seems like I got older and I was like, "No, that's not correct."
> MO: [laughter]
> HF27: [laughter] So I would say "soda." [laughter]

CM30A noted that being Southern affects the expressions that he uses, and he was also one of the few subjects to point out the receptive aspects of being Southern, explaining that there's "a lot of phrasing that I will understand because it's understood" in the South:

> CM30A: I can't hear it, but I know everyone else can hear that I – I've got a definite twangy drawl. Um so I – I just, you know, it's one of those things where . . . enough people call you a horse eventually it's time to buy a saddle.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: And that goes – that goes right into the "country," "hillbilly," and "Southern" influence, the fact that I'll occasionally use [laughter]
> MO: Those kinds of expressions? [laughter]
> CM30A: [laughter] those kinds of expressions.
> MO: [laughter]
> CM30A: Um . . . also because I understand those kinds of expressions.

Another label that was frequently linked to speech was "American," circled by 5 out of 9 subjects. 1 subject linked this to the fact that she speaks English; 2 subjects (AmM25 and CM30A) described themselves as speakers of American English specifically. CF20A described American speech as "more casual" than that of people outside of America, citing the lack of a

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formal system of address like that found in Romance languages. CM32B also noted that in playing online multiplayer Xbox games with strangers from a variety of countries he'd been told that "we [Americans] talk slow."

"Christian" and "urban" were each circled by 3 subjects. CF63 described Christians as having a "God-centered way of talking to people," while HF27 noted that as a Christian she was "more inclined to throw some 'Jesus' in my conversations" or to offer to pray for someone. CM32B characterized urban speech as having "different lingo" and "word choices." CF20A believed that being urban and suburban "influenced a slightly more educated style of speech than someone who might be rural, country, or a redneck."

"Teacher" was circled by 2 subjects, who both explained that this influenced the type of language that they used in the classroom. For CM30A, being a teacher who works with young kids meant using phrases like "use your walking feet" and "I think you've earned a chance to go in the treasure box" with his students. For CF63, being a teacher required that "you don't scream and yell and throw out profanity."

Although the subjects' comments in other portions of the interview suggested that they were attuned to many differences at the local (city) level, compared to the larger regional labels, fewer subjects circled the city labels as related to their speech; only 2 subjects circled "from Deer Park," and only 1 subject circled "Houstonian." CF20A suggested that the slang she uses might be city-specific; similarly, AmM25 argued that being from Deer Park impacted his vocabulary, and that this was "mostly a high school thing":

> AmM25: Deer Park, uh, I notice there's a lot of vocabulary that we use that a lot of other people don't, so.
> MO: Do you have any examples?
> AmM25: "Hoss."
> MO: Oh. [laughter]
> AmM25: People don't know what "hoss" is and it just really irritates me. Like "hoss" and uh . . . well there's a couple others. "Hoss" is the main one though. That one just baffles me.
> MO: So is there a particular - like can you give me an example sentence so I ma- make sure I know what you mean?
> AmM25: Oh, "That guy's a hoss." Like he's really good at what he's doing.

On the other hand, HF27 noted that while there might be dialect features that are specific to Texas, she doubted that there were any features specific to Deer Park:

HF27: Hmm . . . I guess . . . I don't know if there's – I mean I'd say "Texan," I'm sure there's things that are specific to Texas that, again I don't know what, but, I would think probably. Um but I don't know so much as like Deer Park, I don't think there's . . . mm [laughter] Yeah.
MO: Not anything specific to Deer Park?
HF27: Right. Yeah. Or any of the others. I would just say maybe specific to Texas.

One subject, CM61, did not circle any labels on his identity scale because, as he argued, "there's nothin' there that's taught me to talk one way or the other." However, in reflecting on his speech, he described the ethnic composition of his neighborhood as influential:

CM61: Well there's nothin' there that – that's taught me to talk one way or the other. I just
MO: You don't think?
CM61: No. I just talked – talked the way everybody else talked when I was growin' up. We lived in a . . . an all – all White neighborhood in – in Deepwater. There were very few Hispanics. No Blacks when I was growing up. And uh everybody talked the same. And we
MO: So you – do you think maybe then that your ethnicity affected the way that you speak?
CM61: Yeah. Your herit- I mean, where you grew - the area where you grew up in town. You know, if I lived in uh say South Houston, now growing up, I'd probably talk a lot more Spanishy.

CM61's response provides a clear example of the ways in which regional identity often symbolizes more than region alone and intersects with other identities - in this case, while CM61 refers to the neighborhood (Deepwater) where he grew up as influencing his speech, his explanation points to the fact that what he perceives as influential is not just where he grew up but the ethnic composition of this neighborhood, which also impacts the varieties spoken in the neighborhood. Thus, in the opinion of CM61, the local category of neighborhood holds more explanatory power than any of the other analyst-provided or interviewee-generated identity labels (Bucholtz and Hall 2005). As noted above (§4.4.5), there were also many labels related to the traditional social categories studied within linguistics (such as gender, age, and social class) which weren't frequently chosen by these subjects as related to their speech; this finding points to the importance of giving subjects the opportunity to provide their own identity labels and articulate their own understandings of how those labels influence their language.

Many of the themes that came up in subjects' discussions of the impact of their identities on their speech in Part D of the interview were also present in other parts of the interview. As

discussed above (§4.6.4), the idea that the Texan dialect differs from the Southern dialect was raised by CF63 at other points in her interview as well. Responding to a quote from the perceptual dialectology study in which a respondent argued that the Texan accent differs from that of the Deep South (#5 in Appendix J), she agreed, explaining that people from the Deep South "don't say their [a]s at the end of the words and . . . Texans don't talk like that." During the group interview, she also insisted that "when you hear someone talk from Texas, on the television or something, you can tell they're from Texas" and that "the Deep South . . . has a little bit different way to talk." Similarly, CF20A claimed that "being from Texas I can pick out someone who is from Texas," citing as proof a time when she recognized a family as Texan based on their accent while on a tour bus in Greece. CM30A believed that "the Southern twang . . . is not as prevalent in Texas" as it is elsewhere in the South, and CF53B described Texas as having "a different kind of drawl" compared to the Deep South, which she attributed to the influence of English settlers in the Deep South and Irish and German settlers in Texas. Like Llamas' (2006) younger subjects, who described their accent as "Middlesbrough" rather than Yorkshire or Teeside, residence in a transition zone may lead these subjects to identify less with their larger region and instead associate their dialect with their more local identities.

These descriptions of the Texan dialect as distinct from the Southern dialect may stem from the interviewees' awareness of the stigma attached to the Southern dialect (see also §4.6.4). As summarized above (§4.5.1, *The Southern Dialect*), CF20A explained that she has "worked on" her speech since moving away for college and described herself as "not necessarily wanting to off the bat be identified as a Southerner because that comes with some stigma." She reported that "people have told me . . . 'I wouldn't have guessed that you were from Texas.'" However, she also acknowledged that "that little hick just kind of sneaks in there maybe a little bit" when she speaks. Similarly, AmM25 described his accent as getting "worse" and "thicker" when he's either tired or "being lazy," as opposed to the way that he "over-enunciates" when he's more "alert." CF20A also stated that when she is tired she has more "hickish" speech, including "casual phrases" and "(ay)s [that] don't have diphthongs." CM30A stated that "doesn't usually hear" his own accent, but explained that "whenever I think about it I usually . . . do my best to avoid it." While acknowledging that he does understand what the word "warsh" means, he also

took a prescriptive stance in arguing that "the word 'wash' does not have an r in it" and admitted that when his family members say "warsh" he wants to "point and laugh at 'em."

CF20A was in many ways the most vocal in her support of prescriptive attitudes towards the Southern dialect, and linked this to her role as a teacher:

> CF20A: like I was saying earlier with words like "hillbilly" and "country," "hick," "redneck," um I kind of associate those with a thick, twangy Southern accent. Um so yeah and um to me it kind of reflects um either a lack of education or a lack of investment in an education um or desire for education. Although I know it's really not true. Um there are plenty of people who are so highly educated [laughter]
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: that still speak with like Southern accents. But um you know, like I – I mean and as a teacher also um you know, I – I teach good language.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CF20A: Um and so um it's something that's important to me. Um and I think that people can communicate better when their speech is clearer. [laughter] So um and then str- striving for um kind of an – an extended culture or whatever, striving to um yeah, just expand myself. Um and other people who are wanting to do that, I think that they um normally don't have just those thick local dialects I guess.

In the excerpt above, CF20A acknowledges that she associates "thick, twangy" Southern accents with "hicks" and "rednecks," and tends to assume that people with these accents are uneducated (though she notes that this is "really not true"). She also believes that as a teacher it's her job to "teach good language," which she links to "clearer communication" and "striving for an extended culture." CF20A thus sets up speaking Standard English and participating in "extended culture" in contrast to using "thick, local dialects," illustrating the ways in which using (or not using) a regional variety signifies more than region alone.

CM32B demonstrated his awareness of these attitudes in describing Texas "[trying] to be" more standard than the rest of the South because "people don't wanna sound hillbillyish." During the group interview, he also argued that "we have a bad stereotype":

> CM32B: here's an example. Uh uh I was just talking about Xbox
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM32B: Right?
> CF63: Right.
> CM32B: I play with people. When they hear – when they hear me talking they're like, "Where are you from?" and I'll say, "I'm from Texas." And they'll assume, you know
> CF63: That you're a hick.
> CM32B: that I have slaves working on my back 40
> CF63: Oh.

CM32B: and uh, yeah
CF63: Cause they're from other countries and
MO: Yeah.
CM32B: I don't know how to read or write and
CF63: Yeah.
CM32B: I'm not wearing shoes

In his description of the reactions of other players on Xbox to his accent, CM32B cites a number of negative stereotypes that he regularly encounters – that he is a hick, a slaveowner, illiterate, and that he doesn't wear shoes. He concludes by asserting that "people have a negative thought towards the twang." However, he also points out that these attitudes don't only apply to the Southern dialect, noting later that "any kinda accent that you have . . . people point it out."

As suggested above by HF27's decision to abandon using "coke" instead of "soda" based on perceived "correctness," these attitudes do seem to factor into the subjects' descriptions of their own speech. While HF27 granted that "being Southern probably affects the way I talk," she quickly added that "I don't know for sure. It's never been confirmed." She also pointed out her use of Southern and non-Southern features, for example, using both "y'all" and "you guys" for the second person plural pronoun. HF29 also said, "I don't know if I have a Texan accent," adding that even if she has it "sometimes" she doubts that she has it "all the time." HF27 and HF29's approach of describing themselves as somewhat Southern while also highlighting their non-Southern features may allow them to bypass some of the stigma associated with southernness. Their hesitancy may also betray their own attitudes towards the Southern dialect. While HF29 expressed positive or neutral attitudes towards the Southern dialect at many points in the group interview, her husband, CM32B, seemed to doubt that this was sincere:

HF29: Uh . . . I don't think it's bad to sound twangy.
CF63: No, I don't either.
HF29: I just think it's interesting.
CF63: Just the way we are.
CM32B: L- let's s- let's say ten years ago – fifteen years ago – let's say seventeen years ago
MO: [laughter] Seventeen.
CM32B: Seventeen years.
MO: Gotta be specific.
CM32B: Before we met, if you heard somebody with a – a thick twang, soundin' country,
CF63: [laughter]

CM32B: what would you be thankin'?
HF29: [laughter] I would think that they were . . . country.
CM32B: Hillbilly?
HF29: That they were -
CM32B: Redneck?
HF29: they were country.
CM32B: Would you say the word "redneck"?
MO: [laughter]
HF29: I would not say the word "redneck." I will never say that word
CF63: [laughter]
HF29: . . . again, apparently.
MO: [laughter]
HF29: I don't think it – I don't think that it nec- I don't know, I don't think it sounds bad.
CM32B: Mm.
HF29: I kinda – I mean it's nice – it's – it's different.
CF63: Mm hmm.
HF29: I don't think it has a bad connotation or anything like that. But that's just me.

In the above excerpt, CM32B seems to be trying to goad HF29 into making negative comments about the Southern accent, suggesting that before she met him she may have associated the Southern dialect with hicks and rednecks. HF29 resists, insisting that the sounding twangy is "nice" and "different." However, in her individual interview, HF29 was at times more hesitant to fully embrace the Southern dialect:

HF29: I don't think twangy is bad. I think it's just a different way of talking.
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: I think it's kinda cool. I w- I'd hope I don't talk like that though because I don't wanna be uh that cool.
MO: [laughter]
HF29: [laughter] But like I don't know. I don't think it's – I don't think it's terrible.
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: And - but I think that if you sound like that, you might be um like people might judge you.
MO: Mm hmm.
HF29: And say, "Oh you're like - you're just Southern," or, you know, "you're just hickish," or like - and I don't think that that would be great because whenever people generalize the South, I think sometimes they do generalize them as um racist or um things like that so that part I don't really like. But the twang of the accent, that's interesting.

While HF29 initially states that sounding twangy is "kinda cool," which suggests an awareness that there is some covert prestige associated with the Southern dialect, she also states

that "I don't wanna be that cool." Her claims that sounding twangy isn't "bad" or "terrible" also suggest that while she doesn't perceive the dialect in this way, other people might hold these negative attitudes. She describes herself as hesitant to be "judged" for her dialect, and reiterates that the Southern dialect is associated with racism (see §4.5.1, *The South as Racist/Prejudiced* above).

Beyond HF29's descriptions of the Southern accent as "nice," "different," "cool," and "interesting," there were occasional moments in the interviews that suggested positive evaluations of the Southern dialect, particularly as an ingroup or strategic variety. During the group interview, several of the interviewees seemed to agree that sounding twangy "just shows where you're from":

> CM32B: I don't think that [sounding twangy is] bad.
> HF29: Mm mm.
> CM32B: I think it's just
> CF63: It's okay with me.
> CM32B: it's not any different than having, you know, a Hispanic dialect I guess, it
> CF63: [or being from Boston]
> CM32B: just shows where you're from.

CM30A discussed the important role of different interlocutors in his use of the Southern dialect, highlighting the ways in which he might use his accent strategically by "intentionally [relaxing] into it . . . because to some people . . .[it's] a bit more disarming, and to some people it's the exact opposite":

> CM30A: it all depends on the audience. Um . . . trying to sweet talk an old Southern belle, then stronger – stronger drawl would – I say would be, is definitely to my advantage.
> MO: Mm hmm.
> CM30A: You know, uh . . . I speak differently to the principal that hired me, because there was a uh my – the principal that hired me and the assistant principal, um were both promoted to higher jobs shortly after they hired me. And so now I have a different principal and a different assistant principal. And uh . . . I speak differently to my current principal and assistant principal than I do to the two that hired me, in that, you know, if I were to see them, I would s - you know . . . be a bit more relaxed with – with my twang, with my drawl.

CM30A's assertion that using a "stronger drawl" when "trying to sweet talk an old Southern belle . . . would be to my advantage" is reminiscent of Johnstone's (1999) subject Terri

King who "turned on the Southern charm" to "turn businessmen to gravy" (p. 505). CM30A seems to be employing a similar tactic in using a stronger drawl when speaking to his superiors at work – suggesting that speaking with a Southern accent can be advantageous in in-group settings. The opposite, of course, can also be true – as when, at one point during the interviews, CF63 called out the interviewer for using the second plural pronoun "you guys," responding that "we never use 'you guys' either."

As the excerpts above illustrate, many of the stereotypes associated with the Southern dialect are negative, and the Deer Park residents interviewed in this study were well aware of those negative stereotypes. However, they also demonstrated some awareness of the value of using the Southern dialect within their home communities. This awareness of both the negative stereotypes associated with sounding Southern and the covert prestige associated with the Southern dialect is likely one factor which explains the preference for some subjects to identify with the South inconsistently and, in some cases, to identify more strongly with being Texan.

4.7 SUMMARY

As described above (§4.2), this study was motivated by a desire to better understand the regional identity labels which Deer Park residents use to describe themselves and the ways in which they believe these identities relate to their speech. While much of the previous work on regional identity in linguistics (Labov 1963, Tillery 1997, Hasty 2006) has used categorical responses to single questions to assess regional identity, this study builds on previous work using magnitude continua (Redinger 2010, Llamas et al. 2010) in piloting an approach to studying identity which is more task-based and amenable to mixed methods analysis. The identity label generation and ranking task outlined in this study (§4.3.2) combined with semi-structured interviews proved to be an effective way of prompting subjects to reflect on their identities, and, at least for these subjects, appeared to be an approachable task that yielded data which could better account for the complex, nuanced ways in which Deer Park residents negotiate their regional identities.

Evidence of the success of this task-based approach includes the fact that subjects made use of the entire magnitude continuum, were able to generate and rank the identity labels that were most important to them rather than only ranking labels provided by the researcher, typically

generated relevant social identity labels rather than labels associated with more individualistic personality traits, and, in ranking all of these labels (and a set of researcher-provided labels) on one scale, provided data on how important they believed particular identities were compared to other identities. This made it possible to consider the subjects' rankings of labels relative to each other rather than only examining the scores for each label.

One benefit to conducting interviews with the subjects to learn more about their rankings was additional insight into the data provided by subjects who, if using different methods, might appear to be "outliers." For example, based on the magnitude continuum data, CF20A ranked all three regional identity labels (city, state, and region) higher than any other subject. However, she also reported that she intended to move away and did not rate herself as having a very strong accent. In a study which had only used these questions about long-term residence plans or self-reported accent strength to assess identity, CF20A may have been sorted into a group of subjects with weaker regional identity, when in fact she seems to attach more importance to her regional identity than any other subject. Qualitative analysis of her interview provides insight into the reasons why these questions may be misleading – for example, as a teacher who subscribes to prescriptivist beliefs about "correct" speech, she may attempt to use a more standard and "less accented" variety even though she identifies strongly with her region (Greene 2010). Thus, a mixed methods approach validates the responses of this subject as "real" and suggests that she is not just "noisy data" or an "outlier."

Many of the findings of this study mirror or add to the results of the perceptual dialectology study (§3 above). While the sample size for this study was too small to draw definitive conclusions about correlations between the results of the first study and the second, CM30A and CF63, who both singled out Texas or Texas plus one other state as subregions within the South, were also two of the subjects who insisted most strongly throughout their interviews that there are some differences between being Texan and being Southern – CM30A highlighted the ways in which Texas combines Southern, Southwestern, and Mexican culture, and CF63 stated repeatedly that she believes the Texan dialect is not identical to the Southern dialect. This belief was also echoed by other subjects, and in some cases framed as a difference of standardness, with the Texan dialect described as more standard than the Southern dialect. This likely explains the finding of the perceptual dialectology study (Table 3.3 above) that 33%

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of the respondents to that survey believed Texas was only partly Southern in terms of dialect. At the city level, the finding of the perceptual dialectology study that Deer Park and Pasadena were not rated significantly different in terms of dialect southernness, but that both cities did differ significantly from Houston along this dimension, is likely due to the finding of this study that for many subjects urbanness and southernness were believed to be contradictory.

Qualitative analysis of subject commentary around the label "Southern" also revealed several themes which related to the findings of the perceptual dialectology study. For example, the theme "Unique States Within the South" lends additional information about subjects' reasoning for singling out particular states as subregions within the South in the perceptual dialectology study, and the theme "The Southeastern United States" is similar to the finding in the previous study that Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi (Table 3.2) were the states which were considered most Southern in terms of dialect. Many of the responses to the open-ended questions in the perceptual dialectology study also hinted at themes that were explored in more detail in this study – for example, subject responses which suggested that being Hispanic and being Southern are in some sense mutually exclusive.

Turning to the research questions for this study, the first research question (RQ1) was "Which regional identity labels do these Deer Park residents use to describe themselves?" The results indicate that for these subjects, the most frequent subject-generated regional identity label was "from Deer Park," which was provided by eight out of nine subjects. "Texan" was also generated by seven out of nine subjects. "Southern," on the other hand, was only generated by three out of nine subjects before that label was provided by the researcher for ranking. This suggests that without further prompting, many of these subjects may tend to think of themselves as "Texan" by default and "Southern" only secondarily.

In response to the second research question (RQ2), "Of these regional identity labels, which labels do subjects rate as most important for describing who they are?", while "from Deer Park" was the most frequent subject-generated regional identity label, it was not rated as the most important regional identity label on average. Averaging all subjects' scores together, "Texan" was ranked as the most important regional identity label, followed closely by "Southern." "From Deer Park" ranked lower than either "Texan" or "Southern."

The third research question (RQ3) asked, "How important are the regional identity labels compared to other identity labels for these subjects?" On average, the regional identity labels were rated near the middle of the scale, midway between the "least important" and "most important" ends of the continuum. Subjects were more likely to describe religion and family roles as most important for defining who they are, followed by gender (for the female subjects), occupation, and ethnicity (for the one Hispanic subject who generated these labels). Thus, it seems that most of these subjects do not rank regional identity as the most important type of identity in defining who they are (though it is worth reiterating that individual subjects varied considerably in their scores for the regional identity labels). That said, subjects who rated their regional identity highly did frequently rank regional identity labels higher than interactional identity labels and occasionally ranked regional identity higher than master identities like gender, suggesting that for some Deer Park residents regional identity is as important as some of the other types of identity traditionally studied by linguists.

Furthermore, subjects seemed to consider regional identity to be particularly important when describing the impact of their identities on the way that they talk. The fourth research question (RQ4) asked, "Which of these identity labels do Deer Park residents perceive as related to the way that they speak?" The main finding with respect to this research question was that the subjects primarily chose the regional labels "Texan" (seven out of nine respondents) and "Southern" (six out of nine respondents) as related to their speech, eschewing many of the labels related to the social categories traditionally studied within sociolinguistics (for example, labels related to gender, age, and social class). While the subjects' comments in other portions of the interview indicated that they were aware of many social differences between the cities of Deer Park, Pasadena, and Houston, they rarely linked their city to the way that they speak – only two subjects chose "from Deer Park" in this task, and they both primarily linked their hometown to the slang they had been exposed to.

The final research question (RQ5), which was the most broad and the most dependent upon the qualitative results, was "What are the associations and meanings behind these identity labels?" Given the focus on regional identity throughout this chapter, the main labels examined were "Texan," "Southern," and "from Deer Park." One of the main goals of this analysis was to better understand what identifying as "Texan" and identifying as "Southern" means to these Deer

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Park residents, as a way of answering the question, "Why is there this complex relationship between Texan and Southern identity?"

The results suggest a number of reasons why some subjects might not always identify as Southern, or might prefer to identify as Texan over identifying as Southern. The label "Southern" was described by subjects as too "general" and was thought of as more properly describing the Southeast or the "Deep South." The subjects were also aware that the Southern dialect is stigmatized, that being Southern is associated with racism and prejudice, that the South is not typically associated with diversity, and that Southerners are often thought of as White, straight males who are fanatic about their region. While many of these associations with the label "Southern" reflect the negative connotations attached to that label, these subjects tended to have more positive associations with the label "Texan." The label "Texan" was associated with uniqueness and independence, local pride, and greater diversity, particularly with respect to the large Hispanic community in the state. Subjects also highlighted the Southwestern influences in Texas, the many large urban areas within Texas, the substantial differences between Eastern and Western parts of the state, and the "blandness" or lack of clear stereotypes related to the Southwest, West, and Midwest as reasons why they preferred to identify as Texan over identifying with a larger region.

While fewer subjects identified with their city compared to their state, more local identities did surface as important for some subjects. For example, while HF27 did not rank her more locally-oriented identities very highly, she did generate the labels "from Deer Park," "suburban," and "small town" as relevant to her identity. Many subjects also discussed the importance of local jobs (primarily in education and industrial work) in describing what it means to be from Deer Park, linking their local identity to occupational identity, which subjects tended to rank higher. And just as some subjects preferred to identify with Texas over the South, some subjects chose to rate "Houstonian" as more important to defining who they are than "from Deer Park," even though they did not in fact live in Houston. For example, HF29 chose to rate "Houstonian" higher than "from Deer Park" because she associated more urban areas like Houston with greater diversity and acceptance – much like Hummon's (1986) Californians.

The examples above also serve to highlight the ways in which regional identity intersects with other identities for these subjects. For example, southernness is linked to rurality and

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whiteness; urbanness is linked to diversity. These associations are then reflected in the subjects' identities, leading some subjects to avoid identifying as Southern if they are not White or they perceive themselves as urban or accepting of diversity. One of the clearest examples of this was HF29's comment that she would not identify as Southern, or with the related labels "redneck" and "hick," because "when I think of those words most of the time it's White people. And I am not White." AmM25 found that his Southernness was questioned, most likely because he does meet the typical Southern stereotype of a White, straight male. And in describing her duty as an educator to "teach good language," CF20A links local identity and local accents to insularity and standard language to "better communication" and identifying with "an extended culture." These examples all highlight the ways in which regional identity intersects with other identities and signifies more than region alone – something that would not have been apparent in the absence of interview data which permitted subjects to explain their rankings.

As many of the examples above indicate, throughout the interviews, subjects demonstrate an awareness of stereotypes and negative attitudes related to their identities, and like Hummon (1986) and Greene's (2010) subjects, they engage in complex identity work around these stereotypes. At times they actually participate in some amount of self-stereotyping (Deaux 2001), as when CM32B admits that his image of a Texan is a cowboy "with a pistol on [his] hip" (§4.5.2, *Texan Cowboy Stereotypes*) or when CM30A references the Texan oil mogul on the Simpsons (§4.5.2, *The Texan Oil Industry*). Alternatively, some subjects hesitate to embrace a particular identity because of its connotations, preferring to identify as Texan rather than Southern (§4.6.4) or Mexican American rather than Hispanic (§4.6.8) because of their concerns about the negative stereotypes those labels entail. At the same time, subjects may choose to critique these images and point out the ways in which they are inaccurate, as when HF27 acknowledges negative stereotypes about Christianity but asserts that those stereotypes do not apply to her (§4.6.5). In this way, the subjects are able to acknowledge the aspects of their identities that are "an outcome of other's perceptions and representations" while also challenging those stereotypes through a process of "interactional negotiation and contestation" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, p. 606). One of the benefits, then, of using a methodological approach that allows subjects to speak for themselves is that it gives subjects the opportunity to acknowledge the widespread stereotypes related to their identities and then to dismantle or redefine them.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that prompting subjects to discuss their rankings can provide additional insight into many other factors which influence identity strength or importance. As described above (§4.6.5), several subjects discussed the ways in which discrimination or negative experiences related to their identities had increased the importance of those identities for them (Luhman 1990). A few subjects also factored their general preferences or the identities of others into their rankings, for example, when AmM25 ranked "urban" higher than "suburban" because he "liked the idea of being urban" and when CF53B claimed to have "Midwestern influences" by way of her family. Throughout the interviews, many subjects also commented that travel or time living outside of their region had had an impact on the importance of some of their identities – for example, in increasing or decreasing the importance they assigned to their regional identities. In their "relationality principle," Bucholtz and Hall (2005) state that identity "[acquires] social meaning in relation to other available identity positions and other social actors" (p. 598). Similarly, Deaux (2001) notes that situations which highlight identity differences may have the effect of increasing the salience of those identities. The subjects who had traveled extensively or spent time outside of Texas were often particularly reflective about what it means to be Texan and were most adept at providing examples or stories to support their claims. This suggests that sociolinguists planning to conduct research on regional identity may want to avoid narrowing their subject pools to "pure" representatives of a particular region since many subjects seem to be more attuned to their regional identity after experiencing a regional culture different from their own.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I summarize some of the main findings of the two studies that comprise this dissertation and their implications for future work. §5.2 reviews the implications of this work for research in perceptual dialectology. §5.3 reviews the implications of this work for research in regional identity. §5.4 suggests directions for future research.

5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY

The research summarized here presents a different approach from previous perceptual dialectology work in focusing explicitly on the South. The emphasis on the South throughout the survey constrained the frame of reference for Deer Park subjects in a way that focused them on Southern concepts and yielded a rich dataset of opinions concerning the South and the relationship between Texas and the South. And although it is convenient to talk about "the South," it is also clear that the South is not monolithic for these subjects. Subjects may have several competing notions of southernness and may identify salient perceptual regions within the South at a finer-grained level than what was probed by previous work. In reviewing the specific subregions within the South that subjects identified, it's clear that regional identity plays an important role in perceptual dialectological tasks: the tendency for subjects to isolate Texas as a region unto itself, highlight small subregions within Texas, and contrast the Southwest with the Southeast reflects a local perspective which is heavily influenced by notions of Texan distinctiveness. Thus, examining southernness at the regional and subregional level provides detail which may be missed in perceptual dialectology research more broadly focused on the entire country (i.e., Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Lance 1999).

The results summarized above also emphasize the importance of local concepts for perceptual dialectology. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the tendency for self-identification found in previous work, subjects provided a great deal of commentary about Texas, Deer Park, and the nearby communities of Pasadena and Houston, and response rates for the city rating questions were consistently high. The city-level southernness data suggests that subjects are able to

engage with this concept at a more local level than has been explored in previous perceptual dialectology research. The comments provided in response to the open-ended questions also serve to highlight salient distinctions between the Deer Park community and surrounding communities for these subjects, particularly regarding ethnic and racial differences and degrees of "urbanness." These results suggest that Deer Park residents may construct a "Deer Park identity" which is in part defined by its opposition to "Pasadena identity" and "Houston identity." In reflecting on southernness, the respondents engage with identity at multiple levels, simultaneously invoking local identities and comparatively less local "Texan" and "Southern" identities. Thus, identity emerges relationally (based on similarity to and distinction from other identities) and at multiple levels (locally, regionally, etc.) (Bucholtz and Hall 2005). By providing subjects with the opportunity to explain their responses, both at the state and city level, it is also possible to gain a better understanding of what subjects mean by southernness, rather than relying solely on the researcher's underlying assumptions.

The results summarized above also lend additional support to previous researchers who have argued for the importance of scale in perceptual dialectology research (Bucholtz et al. 2007, Evans 2013b). As Evans (2013b) notes, "when respondents are surveyed about variation within their own state or region rather than variation across the country, other kinds of organizational categories that that are important locally but unknown nationally . . . emerge" (p. 287). Here, local differentiation is apparent not only at the regional and state level, but at the city level. This emerging perceptual dialectology research at the regional and subregional level suggests that in designing perceptual dialectology studies, researchers should carefully consider the relationship between the scale of maps used in their elicitation materials (i.e., national, regional, state-level, city-level, etc.) and the types of responses received.

While this study was not specifically designed to probe differences across age groups, the age differences summarized here are suggestive. Given the uncertain position of Texas with respect to the South, the higher identification of Texas as its own region in the youngest age group is particularly intriguing. The points of contention across age groups in this study may serve as interesting points to explore in future research. More generally, the differences across age groups in this research serve as a reminder that speakers from different social groups may differ systematically in attitudes just as they do in production. While Niedzielski and Preston

(1999) present some data comparing the dialect ratings of subjects from varying age groups and social classes, much research within the perceptual dialectology tradition has focused primarily on differences across regions while ignoring potential differences across social groups. As the age differences in this study demonstrate, even within a small community like Deer Park, subjects may exhibit some disagreement in their perceptions of southernness. Importantly, these differences may also be related to identity – a topic explored further below.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL IDENTITY

The research presented in this dissertation differs from most previous linguistic work on identity in examining identity through a magnitude continuum task combined with a semi-structured interview. This approach made it possible to gain both quantifiable and more qualitative data related to regional identity and the importance of regional identity compared to other social identities.

As described by Redinger (2010), the magnitude continuum has many advantages over traditional Likert scale rating questions: it does not require researchers to choose an arbitrary number of points to include on the scale, it encourages subjects to make use of the entire scale (rather than avoiding the points at the extreme ends of the scale), there are no numbers for the subjects to interpret, and it produces fine-grained continuous data rather than categorical data. When adapted for use in identity label ranking tasks (Llamas et al. 2010), the magnitude continuum also makes it possible to gather data about the relative importance of different identities to the subjects themselves. The methodology used here also questions subjects directly about the importance of their various identities, which avoids some of the difficulties associated with traditional indirect methods of gathering identity information – for example, asking subjects about their plans to remain in a region, which may reflect many factors that are not necessarily related to identity. However, it should also be noted that asking subjects directly about identity may introduce issues related to social desirability bias; if subjects believe that some of their identities are stigmatized, they may be less likely to rate those identities as important to them.

Comparing the results for regional identity to other identities, regional identity labels were often ranked higher than identity labels which Tracy (2002) would classify as interactional identity labels and were occasionally ranked higher than master identity labels, suggesting that

for some Deer Park residents regional identity is as important as other types of identity studied by sociolinguists. And while most subjects rated other master identities as more important to defining who they are than regional identity, they did tend to consider their regional identity to be more important than their other identities in influencing the way that they speak.

Qualitative analysis of the subjects' commentary related to the regional identity labels "from Deer Park," "Texan," and "Southern" also helps to elucidate the meaning of these labels and the ways in which the extra "baggage" attached to particular labels can influence the rankings of those labels for individual subjects. These multiple definitions of what it means to be Southern and Texan may allow some subjects to vacillate between identifying as Southern and Texan depending on the interactional context and to simultaneously "display allegiance" to Southern identity and "hold back from endorsing [it] fully" (Coupland 2014, p. 300). This suggests that regional identity in border regions may be more fluid (Johnstone 1999, Llamas 2006, Hall-Lew and Stephens 2011, Cramer 2010, Cramer 2013), open to "negotiation" (Bucholtz and Hall 2005), and less static than Tracy (2002) suggests in classifying regional identity as a master identity. Thus, by interviewing subjects to learn more about their rankings, it's possible to gain a more accurate understanding of what the identity labels mean to the subjects themselves, rather than relying solely on the researcher's own hypotheses about these labels. This can be particularly helpful in interpreting data from subjects who might appear to be "outliers" when relying solely on traditional quantitative methods of measuring identity.

The results of this analysis also demonstrate the importance of intersectionality in studying regional identity. When regional identity is treated as a factor which can be boiled down to the answer to one or more indirect questions, it is easy to overlook the many other identities which may be interacting with regional identity. Tracy states that "persons who take on identities that are not seen as going together . . . will experience some communicative difficulties in enacting both identities satisfactorily" (p. 18). For example, HF29 rejected the label "Southern" at least partly on the basis of her understanding of the label as one that is reserved for "White people." AmM25 reported that sounding gay led others to question whether he was "Southern enough," and responded to this challenge to his Southern identity by embracing the label "redneck," which is typically associated with straight Southern White males (Shirley 2010). He was therefore able to assert Southern identity despite perceived conflicts

between his ethnic identity, sexual orientation, and regional identity. This example illustrates the ways in which speakers are able to "style" their social identities, "[manipulating] the identities that they project" (Coupland 2014, p. 290).

Based on the data presented above, it is likely that subjects who do attach importance to other identities that are at odds with the traditional stereotype of what it means to be a Southerner – for example, subjects who are Hispanic, gay, or living in urban areas – might also be less likely to identify as Southern, or may be less likely to perceived as "authentically" Southern. However, more research is needed to determine whether this prediction would in fact be borne out with a larger sample. In any case, it is clear that regional identity in Texas is much more complicated than a "yes"/"no" answer to the question "Do you consider yourself to be a Southerner?" (Tillery, Wikle, and Bailey 2000), and that even research which uses composite scores based on a number of indirect measures of regional identity (Underwood 1988) is unable to provide important information on the meanings of particular identity labels and how regional identities intersect with other identities. Just as Irvine (2001) argues that "the characteristics of a particular style cannot be explained independently of others" (p. 22), the meaning of regional identity cannot be fully understand without taking into account the other identities (related to ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and so on) that may be interacting with regional identity. Qualitative data drawing on interviews which permit the subjects to articulate their own understandings of their identities and the relationships between identities can fill this knowledge gap (Deaux 2001).

It is also worth reiterating that Texas is a particularly interesting site for studying regional identity precisely because it is a state which is located at the periphery of the Southern dialect region. Research on Texas has demonstrated that in terms of geography, history, and culture, Texas is in many ways not a prototypically Southern state (Reed 1972, Reed 1977, Reed 1991, Reed et al. 1993, Ely 2011). Similarly, work which has examined linguistic production in Texas has found that Texans do not necessarily exhibit Southern features at rates comparable to research conducted elsewhere in the South (Gentry 2007, Labov, Ash, and Boberg 2006) and research into attitudes and identity in Texas has provided evidence that Texas is often perceived as distinct from the larger Southern dialect region (Preston 1986, Lance 1999, Niedzielski and Preston 1999, Johnstone 1999, Hall-Lew and Stephens 2011, Oxley 2014a, Oxley 2014b). This suggests that states which serve as transition zones from one regional dialect into another may

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present special challenges for studying regional identity using traditional methods, but also that these states may be particularly well-suited to using methods like those outlined here for studying regional identity. Sociolinguists should be cautious when using research conducted in the South as a model for conducting research in Texas, bearing in mind that our subjects may not necessarily identify with the "'imagined community' imposed on them by the analyst" (Llamas 2006, p. 96) and that "local, ethnographically specific" identities may have more explanatory power (Bucholtz and Hall 2005, p. 592). Sociolinguistics conducting research in the South should also be cognizant of possible differences between "core" Southern states and states which are more ambiguously Southern, such as those situated at the border between the Southern dialect region and other dialect regions. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that individuals living in these border regions do not necessarily perceive their cities and states as simply transitional points between other regions, but as communities and regions in their own right, united by common themes which distinguish their communities from surrounding regions.

5.4 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The results of this study suggest several interesting directions for future research. First, the emphasis many subjects placed on how they are described or identified by others (§4.5.1, *Description or Recognition of Subjects as Southern by Others*; §4.5.2, *Description or Recognition of Subjects as Texan by Others*; §4.6.6) suggests that this may be an important dimension of identity which has not been well-studied within linguistics. In addition to asking subjects which labels they find most important for defining who they are, it might also be informative to ask them to indicate which of those labels are ones that they believe others would use to describe them.

Much more research is also needed to explore the relationship between regional identity and ethnic identity in Texas. Thompson and Sloan (2012) argue that "Just as we cannot discuss 'the South' without attention to race, we cannot truly apprehend 'southerners' without attention to racial identities" (p. 92). In her research on Black and White Southerners, Thompson (2007) argues that regional identity and racial identity interact, with Black Southerners tending to identify more strongly with their race and less strongly with their region, while White Southerners display the opposite pattern. She links this both to the White respondents' desire to

be "unique and different, rather than simply white" (p. 218) and to the implicit assumptions apparent in references to "Southerners" which often more properly describe only White Southerners.

Similarly, in the identity study presented in this dissertation, HF29 stated that she does not identify as Southern because she associates the label "Southern" with White people. She also preferred to identify with Houston over identifying with Deer Park on this basis. This suggests that more research is needed to examine the relationship between regional identity and ethnic identity in Texas, particularly for Hispanic subjects, and that interactions between regional identity and ethnic identity should be studied at multiple levels (i.e., city, state, and region). If, as many of the interviewees in this study claimed, Deer Park is currently undergoing demographic change and the Hispanic population of the city continues to grow, it would also be interesting to track whether this has any measurable impact on regional identity for the city's Hispanic residents over time. Would it become more common for Hispanic residents of the city to identify with being from Deer Park as the city itself becomes more Hispanic?

Another possible direction for future research would be to design a study which draws on the Deer Park residents' associations of southernness with Southeastern states and examines the ways in which this might impact their perception of Southern features. As in Niedzielski's (1999) work which examined the perceptual impact of labeling the same speaker as either from Michigan or from Canada, a similar study could be carried out in which Deer Park residents hear a Deer Park speaker who is alternately labeled as being from Texas or from Alabama (which was chosen as the most Southern state in the perceptual dialectology study). It would then be possible to test whether the subjects' beliefs about Texan and Alabamian speech influence their perception of stereotypically Southern features, like (ay) monophthongization. Such a study could also incorporate identity data to examine whether regional identity influences perception; for example, one could compare the results for Texans who exhibit strong Southern identity and Texans who do not identify strongly with the South.

As noted above (§4.7), the small sample size for the identity study also presents difficulties for examining potential correlations between subjects' responses to the perceptual dialectology study and the identity study. Given more subjects, it would be interesting to see whether subjects who identify strongly with being from Texas are more likely to single out

Texas as its own dialect region in the perceptual dialectology study. Further research with a larger, more demographically diverse sample is needed to better understand the relationship between "Texan" and "Southern" identity in Deer Park and how this identity shapes the folk linguistic landscapes of Deer Park residents.

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APPENDIX A: PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY STUDY RECRUITMENT FLYER

Deer Park Dialect Survey

Researcher: Meghan Oxley, Graduate Student, University of Washington Department of Linguistics

Purpose of Research:
The purpose of this study is to collect information on the perceptions of the English spoken in Deer Park, Texas and the Southern United States.

Who I am Looking for:
Native speakers of English from Deer Park who are at least 18 years old. Speaking a language natively means that you spoke that language regularly in your home growing up and that you learned the language before reaching adolescence. If you are bilingual or multilingual you are encouraged to participate as long as English is one of the languages that you speak natively.

What to Expect:
If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and to reflect on different dialects, making comparisons between those dialects and rating them on various features. Since this a study of your opinions, there are no right or wrong answers. The entire survey takes about 30 minutes to complete.

All information gathered in this study will remain confidential. Your name will not be published in the results of this study.

Interested?
You can access the survey by entering the following URL in your web browser:
     https://catalysttools.washington.edu/webq/survey/what/87812

Questions?
If you have any questions, you can contact Meghan Oxley at what@u.washington.edu or by calling 206-724-5778. Please note that I cannot ensure the confidentiality of information sent by email.

Please forward this message to any friends, family, or coworkers who you believe would be eligible to participate in this study.

APPENDIX B: PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY STUDY

CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CONSENT FORM
Deer Park Dialect Survey
Researcher: Meghan Oxley, Graduate Student, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Washington
Researcher Email*: what@u.washington.edu   Researcher Phone: 206-724-5778
*Please note that I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information sent by email.

Researcher's Statement
I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear by emailing what@u.washington.edu. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." You can print a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to learn about perceptions of the English spoken in Deer Park, Texas, and the Southern United States by surveying members of the Deer Park community.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to fill out a survey asking about your perceptions of the English spoken in Deer Park, Texas, and the Southern United States. There are two parts to the survey. **The entire survey will take about 30 minutes**.

Part 1: This part of the survey will ask you some questions about yourself, including questions about your age, ethnicity, and sex. You will also be asked about your education, occupation, residence history, and language experience. These questions are the most sensitive questions you will be asked in this survey.

Part 2: This part of the survey will ask about your perceptions of the English spoken in Deer Park, Texas, and the Southern United States. For example, you will be asked to rate how similar or different certain dialects are. You will also

be asked to rate the standardness of the dialects of various states and to indicate which states you think are part of The South.

RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may leave the study at any time by exiting the survey. You will be given the opportunity to indicate how your data may be used below.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may not directly benefit from taking part in this study. However, I hope the results of the study will allow me to learn more about perceptions of the dialects spoken in Deer Park, Texas, and the Southern United States.

OTHER INFORMATION

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You can stop at any time. Information about you is confidential. I will keep your name linked to the data indefinitely. If I publish or present the results of this study, I will not use your name. I may share the data with other researchers, but I will never share your name with them. ***If you have participated in any of my other studies, I will link your answers from that study to the answers you give in this study.***

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm.

Subject's Statement
This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research I can contact the investigator listed above. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the University of Washington Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098. I can print a copy of this form for my records.

Question 2.
I give my permission for the researcher to **contact me** to clarify information or invite me to participate in future studies. Giving your permission to contact you does not obligate you in any way.

◉ Yes

○ No

Question 3.
If you answered "yes" to the previous question, please provide your **email address** below. This information will only be available to the researcher.

Question 4.
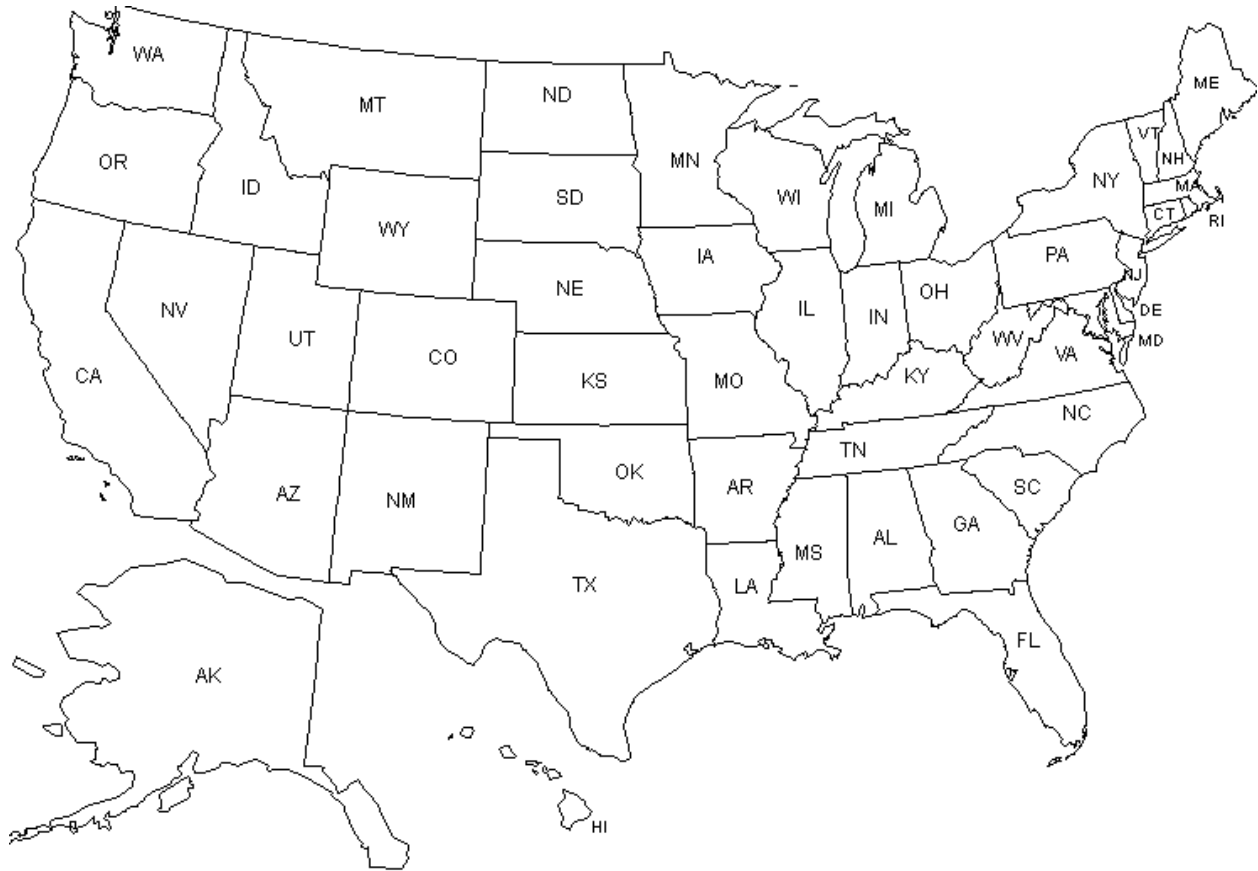**Name** (First and last.) This information will only be available to the researcher.
Required.

Question 5.
Today's **date**. (MM/DD/YYYY)
Required. Limit response to 10 characters.

APPENDIX C: U.S. MAP WITH STATE BOUNDARIES AND TWO LETTER STATE ABBREVIATIONS USED IN PERCEPTUAL DIALECTOLOGY SURVEY

APPENDIX D: IDENTITY STUDY CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
CONSENT FORM
DEER PARK IDENTITY STUDY

Researcher: Meghan Oxley, PhD student, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Washington

Researcher Email: what@uw.edu*   Researcher Phone: 206-724-5778

Faculty Advisor: Alicia Beckford Wassink

*Please note that I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information sent by email.

Researchers' statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what we would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When we have answered all your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." We will give you a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to learn about identity in Deer Park, Texas, by interviewing members of the Deer Park community.

STUDY PROCEDURES

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire.

Next you will also be asked to perform a task in which you create a list of labels that you would use to describe yourself and reflect on the meanings of those labels and how important those labels are to defining who you are. You will then be asked to complete the same task with labels provided by the researcher. These questions are the most sensitive questions that you will be asked in this interview.

You will also be asked to reflect on the way that you speak and whether you plan to stay in Texas for the rest of your life.

Finally, you will be asked whether you agree or disagree with statements made by participants in the 2010 Deer Park Dialect Survey and why.

If more than one member of your family participated in the 2010 Deer Park Dialect Survey, you may also be invited to participate in a group interview in which you will discuss some of the same questions with your family members.

You may refuse to answer any question. All portions of the interview will be audio-recorded. The entire interview should take about one hour.

RISKS, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. Some people may feel uncomfortable providing demographic information or answering questions related to their identity and their opinions. Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may leave the study at any time. After completing the interview, you may review your recordings and may request that I delete any portions of the interview.

BENEFITS OF THE STUDY

You may not directly benefit from taking part in this study. However, I hope the results of the study will allow me to learn more about identity in Deer Park, Texas.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH INFORMATION

Information about you is confidential. Any data from this study which is published or made available to other researchers will use a code instead of your name. Even though your name will not be associated with the data, it is possible that someone who knows you might recognize your voice. If you have participated in any of my other studies, I will link your answers from that study to the answers you give in this study.

I would like to keep your recordings indefinitely for my research and to share with other researchers. Your name will not be shared with other researchers. I would also like to use your responses in presentations and for educational purposes. Your responses may be used for other studies in the future.

Government or university staff sometimes review studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm.

OTHER INFORMATION

You may refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

_____
Printed name of study staff obtaining consent   Signature   Date

<u>Subject's statement</u>

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, or if I have been harmed by participating in this study, I can contact the researcher listed on the first page of this consent form. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Printed name of subject   Signature of subject   Date

Copies to: Researcher
                Subject

APPENDIX E: IDENTITY STUDY

DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

2010 Survey Speaker Code: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE (RETURN SUBJECTS)

1. **Occupation**: _____
If retired, please include former occupation.

2. Highest Level of **Education Completed**:

Elementary	Trade School	Master's Degree
Junior High	Associate's Degree	Doctorate
High School	Bachelor's Degree	Other: _____

3. Have you **lived outside Deer Park,** Texas at any time **since 2010**? If so, please **list all the places** (city, state, country) where you have lived in the last 4 years and your **ages when you lived there**.

Example:
Age 18-19: Pasadena, Texas, USA
Age 19-20: Atlanta, Georgia, USA
Age 20-22: Deer Park, Texas, USA

If you have not lived outside Deer Park since 2010, you can just answer "No" for this question.

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX F: IDENTITY STUDY

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Directions: Part A

(READ OUT LOUD)

For this first part, I'm going to give you an imaginary scenario. Don't worry too much about the details of the scenario – the point is just that everyone has the same situation in mind while doing this task.

Imagine that you've been asked to participate in a documentary-style TV show which focuses on the history and people of different regions in North America. The producers of the show would like you to describe yourself for a short profile on the show's website so that viewers can learn about who you are. Your descriptions of yourself should fit the prompt "I am (a/an) _____" or "I am from _____." Here are three examples.

(SHOW EXAMPLE RESPONSES)

So now I'll give you a piece of paper with those sentences on it and ask you to complete the sentences on the first side of this page. You don't have to complete every sentence, but remember the goal is to complete these sentences in a way that would summarize who you are for someone who doesn't know you. And if you don't mind saying the words you're writing as you go, that will help me later when I'm transcribing the recordings.

(LET THEM COMPLETE THE SENTENCES ON SIDE ONE)

Okay, now imagine that the producers told you that because this is a documentary about the history and people of different regions in North America, they'd like you to say a bit more about where you're from. If you flip over to the 2nd side, you'll see the same sentences. Could you complete a few more sentences, focusing on where you're from?

(LET THEM COMPLETE THE SENTENCES ON SIDE TWO)

Directions: Part B

Okay, so for this part I'm going to give you a piece of paper with a line on it and ask you to rank each of the words you just came up with according to how important you think those words are for describing who you are. So the left side of this scale would be words you think are "least important" for defining who you are, while the right side of the scale is words you think are "most important" for defining who you are. You can rank more than one word equally if you want to. So I'll give you a pen and you can draw a line and write down each word on this scale

wherever makes sense to you. And if you can say the words as you write them and maybe explain what you're thinking as you rank them that would be helpful for me later on.

(GIVE SUBJECT BLACK PEN AND BLANK SCALE SHEET TO WRITE ON.)

Okay so next I'm going to give you some words that I came up with and ask you to put them on your scale, again according to how important those words are to defining who you are. So I'll read these words out one by one and you can again write them on the scale and say a bit about why you're ranking them where you rank them. If you would never use a word to describe yourself, you can rank it all the way at the bottom, and remember that it's okay to rank more than one word equally.

(GIVE SUBJECT GREEN PEN)

American	Country
Southern	Hick
Western	Redneck
Southwestern	Hillbilly
Midwestern	
Texan	Urban
from Deer Park	Rural
Houstonian	Suburban

Directions: Part C

Okay, so now I'm going to ask you some questions about the words you ranked, focusing on what they mean to you and why you ranked them the way you did. And the more you elaborate on your answers the better.

I see that you ranked _____ highest. Why do you think this word is the most important for describing who you are?

I see that you ranked _____ higher than _____. Why do you think _____ is more important than _____ for describing who you are?

I see that you ranked _____ lowest. Why don't you think this word is important for describing who you are?

Can you think of any situations when it has been more or less important to you to be _____?

Are any of the words you wrote down ones that you think are more important to you now than in the past? Can you tell me more about that?

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Can you tell me a story that explains what _____ means to you?

Can you remember a time when you have described yourself or someone else has described you
        as _____? Can you tell me about it?

What sorts of things make you (a) _____?

What are the traits that you associate with someone who is _____?

What sorts of images come to mind when you imagine someone who is _____?

How is being _____ different from being _____?
        i.e.   from Deer Park, Houstonian
                from Deer Park, Texan
                Texan, Southern
                Southern, Southwestern
                Southwestern, Western
                Midwestern, Southern
                Midwestern, Texan
                Country, Hick
                Country, Redneck
                Hick, Redneck

Directions: Part D

(GIVE SUBJECT PURPLE PEN)

Okay so now I would like you to think about whether any of the words you've written on the
scale affect the way you talk, and for each of the words you think affects the way you talk, circle
the word and explain why you think it affects your speech.

(DO TASK)

And if you had to rate your accent on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "my accent is not very strong"
and 5 is "my accent is very strong," how would you rate your accent?

(GET NUMBER)

Directions: Part E

Do you think you'll stay in Texas the rest of your life, or do you think you will move away?

(GET ANSWER)

        If yes: Do you think you'll stay in Deer Park the rest of your life?

Why would you want to stay in Deer Park?

If no: Is there a particular place you think you'd move to?

Why wouldn't you want to stay in Deer Park?

Directions: Part F

Okay, for this last part, I'm going to give you a sheet of paper with some quotes that were taken from actual responses to my last survey. I'd like you to read each quote out loud and then for each quote say whether you agree or disagree with their comment and why.

(GIVE LIST OF QUOTES)

APPENDIX G: EXAMPLE RESPONSES FOR IDENTITY STUDY INTERVIEWS, PART A

Example 1:
I am a woman.
I am Canadian.
I am a designer.
I am Dutch.

Example 2:
I am a writer.
I am gay.
I am Californian.
I am Filipino.

Example 3:
I am a mom.
I am from the Northwest.
I am a Seattleite.
I am a baby boomer.

APPENDIX H: IDENTITY LABEL GENERATION
WORKSHEET FOR IDENTITY STUDY INTERVIEWS, PART A

I am (a/an) _____.

I am from _____.

I am (a/an) _____.

I am from _____.

I am (a/an) _____.

I am from _____.

I am (a/an) _____.

I am from _____.

I am (a/an) _____.

I am from _____.

APPENDIX I: IDENTITY RANKING SCALE FOR IDENTITY STUDY INTERVIEWS, PART B

Most Important

Least Important

APPENDIX J: QUOTES FROM IDENTITY STUDY
INTERVIEWS, PART F

1. I think Louisiana and Texas are significantly different within the "southern" states. They could each be their own region, but still a part of the southern dialect. Texas is more standard than the rest of the states, but I think parts still very much have a southern twang. (CF22B, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

2. Texas would be a region all by itself. We speak several dialects. "East Texas" has a distinct dialect (twang, hick) Deep South Texas has a distinct dialect (Spanglish), West and North Texas also have a certain dialect. (CF57, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

3. The folks from the East Texas Piney Woods have a different dialect then the West Texas Cowboy. (CM53C, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

4. Texas is more Western than Southern. (CM49, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

5. Texas . . . has more of a "southwest" dialect and mindset than "deep south." We have southern accents, euphemisms, and speech patterns, but without the extreme drawl and idiosyncratic vocabulary found in the deep south. (CF33B, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

6. Pasadena has a much larger percentage of Hispanic families in their city compared to Deer Park. Because of this I know that their dialect might not be as "southern" as ours in Deer Park. (HF29, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

7. Pasadena has much more a Southern and . . . redneck dialect than Houston. (MF26, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

8. Houston has culture and diversity. Deer Park is basically a redneck, very prejudiced little city. (CF60, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

9. Deer Park seems more southern like simply because it is not urban like Houston. (AF21A, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

10. Houston is more diverse [than Deer Park], therefore the dialects are certainly more diverse and generally less southern. (CF23B, Perceptual Dialectology Study))

11. [There is] no dialect difference at all [between Deer Park and Pasadena] . . . without the "entering/exiting the city" signs, a person would never know they'd gone between the two. (CF23A, Perceptual Dialectology Study)

12. When I first moved [to Deer Park] it was definitely distinctly Anglo, but now in this period we have turned a lot Hispanic into Deer Park now. So it's a pretty big change over the eighteen, nineteen years I've lived here. (CM53, Oxley 2009)

13. I don't think [the Deer Park accent] sounds as twangy, but I guess there's people who do speak like that, but we just don't. I don't think we sound twangy like a country music video or anything like that. Here in Deer Park it doesn't seem like they have it as bad. (HF26, Oxley 2009)

APPENDIX K: COUNTS FOR EACH SUBJECT-GENERATED LABEL (EXCLUDING RESEARCHER-PROVIDED LABELS)

Identity Label Type	Identity Label	Number of Subjects Who Provided Label
Family	Uncle	1
	Father/Dad	3
	Mother/Mom/Mommy	3
	Parent	2
	Husband	2
	Wife	1
	Married	1
	From My Mom's Belly	1
	[Mother's Surname – Removed for Anonymity]	1
Gender	Man	2
	Woman/Female	3
Religion	Christian	6
	Not Baptist	1
	Religious	1
Occupation	Teacher	3
	Educator	1
	Machinist	1
	Retired	1
	Employee of DPISD	1
	Secretary	1
Education	Student	1
	Graduate of DPISD	2
	Education	1
Hobbies	Cheerleader	1
	Musician	1
	Crocheter	1
	Reader	1
Ethnicity	Hispanic	1
	Mexican Descent	1
	Ethnic Melting Pot	1
	Part Native American	1
	Northern Ireland	1
	Descended from Early Settlers in Texas	1
	Southern	3
	Texan	7
	Birthplace of Texas	2

Region	from Southeast Texas	1
	Belton	1
	Houstonian	1
	From Deer Park	8
	Mid DP	1
	Pasadena	1
Urban/Suburban/Rural	Small Town	1
	Suburban	2
Personality	Introvert	1
	Silly	1
Age/Generation	20th Century	1
	Adult	1
	Age 67	1
Social Class	Poverty	1
Role	Model	1
Sexual Orientation	Gay	1
Stature	Large Human	1