



# THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN VERNACULAR ENGLISH

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Abstract: African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a distinct dialect spoken primarily by African Americans in the United States, with roots tracing back to the forced migration of African slaves and their interaction with English-speaking colonists. The development of AAVE is deeply intertwined with the history of slavery, segregation, and the cultural experiences of African Americans. Linguistically, AAVE shares features with both Southern American English and West African languages, yet it also exhibits unique phonological, syntactic, and lexical characteristics. Over time, AAVE has evolved under the influence of various social, political, and cultural factors, including the Great Migration, the civil rights movement, and ongoing urbanization. The dialect has often been stigmatized as "improper" or "incorrect" English, but in recent years, there has been a growing recognition of its legitimacy as a valid and complex linguistic system. Contemporary AAVE has also influenced mainstream American culture, particularly through music, literature, and social media, reinforcing its significance in both African American communities and broader society.

**Keywords:** African american, aave, culture, dialect, English, history, language, linguistics, phonology, syntax

**Аннотация:** Афроамериканский разговорный английский (AAVE) — это отличительный диалект, на котором говорят преимущественно





афроамериканцы в США, корни которого восходят к насильственному перемещению африканских рабов и их взаимодействию с англоговорящими колонистами. Развитие AAVE тесно связано с историей рабства, сегрегации и культурным опытом афроамериканцев. Лингвистически ААVE разделяет черты как с южным американским английским, так и с западноафриканскими языками, однако также имеет уникальные фонологические, синтаксические и лексические особенности. Со временем AAVE развивался под влиянием различных социальных, политических и культурных факторов, включая Великое переселение, движение за гражданские права и урбанизацию. Диалект часто стигматизации как «неправильный» или «некорректный» английский, но в все больше признается годы его легитимность действительная и сложная языковая система. Современный AAVE также оказал влияние на основную американскую культуру, особенно через музыку, литературу и социальные сети, что подчеркивает его значимость как в афроамериканских сообществах, так и в более широком обществе.

**Ключевые слова:** Афроамериканцы, aave, култура, диалект, английский, история, язык, лингвистика, фонология, синтаксис

Annotatsiya: Afrika Amerikaning suhbat ingliz tili (AAVE) — asosan AQShda afroamerikaliklar tomonidan gapiriladigan va Afrikalik qullarning majburiy ko'chirilishi hamda ularning ingliz tilida so'zlashuvchi koloniya aholisiga bo'lgan ta'siri bilan bog'liq bo'lgan o'ziga xos lahja. AAVE ning rivojlanishi qulchilik, segregatsiya va afroamerikaliklarning madaniy tajribasi bilan chambarchas bog'liqdir. Leksik va sintaktik xususiyatlarga ega bo'lgan AAVE, Janubiy Amerikaning ingliz tili hamda G'arbiy Afrika tillari bilan o'xshashliklarga ega, ammo o'ziga xos fonologik, sintaktik va leksik xususiyatlarga ham ega. Vaqt o'tishi bilan AAVE turli ijtimoiy, siyosiy va madaniy omillar ta'sirida rivojlandi, jumladan, katta migratsiya, fuqarolik huquqlari harakati va shaharlashtirish. Ushbu lahja ko'pincha "noto'g'ri" yoki "xato" ingliz tili deb stigmatizatsiyaga uchragan, ammo so'nggi yillarda uning haqiqiy va





murakkab til tizimi sifatida qonuniyligi tan olingan. Zamonaviy AAVE, shuningdek, musiqa, adabiyot va ijtimoiy tarmoqlar orqali asosiy Amerikan madaniyatiga ta'sir ko'rsatib, uning afroamerikalik jamoalarda va kengroq jamiyatda ahamiyatini mustahkamladi.

Kalit sozlar: Afroamerikaliklar, aave, madaniyat, lahja, ingliz tili, tarix, til, lingvistika, fonologiya, sintaksis

African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is a distinctive dialect primarily spoken by African Americans in the United States. Its development is deeply intertwined with the history of slavery, segregation, and the complex cultural experiences of African Americans. The emergence of AAVE can be traced back to the forced migration of African slaves to the United States, where they came into contact with English-speaking colonists. Over time, African slaves and their descendants developed a unique linguistic system, drawing influences from both the English language and African languages (Rickford, 1999). This linguistic blend, which includes features of West African languages alongside Southern American English, formed the foundation of AAVE. Linguistically, AAVE is characterized by distinct phonological, syntactic, and lexical features. The phonology of AAVE differs from Standard American English (SAE) in several ways, including consonant cluster reduction and the use of certain vowel sounds. Syntactically, AAVE uses different verb forms, such as the habitual "be" (e.g., "She be working") to indicate a repeated or habitual action, which is not present in SAE (Labov, 1972). Additionally, AAVE has a rich lexicon, incorporating words and expressions that are not typically found in mainstream English.

Historically, AAVE developed and evolved under the influence of several significant social, political, and cultural factors. The Great Migration, which saw millions of African Americans move from the rural South to urban centers in the North and West in the early 20th century, played a major role in spreading and shaping AAVE. As African Americans adapted to new environments, the dialect became more standardized in urban areas while continuing to evolve (Fogel,





2000). The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s also contributed to a growing sense of pride in African American culture and identity, and as a result, AAVE began to be recognized as a legitimate and valuable part of African American heritage. Despite its rich history and cultural significance, AAVE has often been stigmatized as "improper" or "incorrect" English. This negative perception has roots in racial prejudice and the longstanding social and economic disparities faced by African Americans (Smitherman, 2006). However, over the past few decades, there has been a shift in how AAVE is viewed. Scholars and educators have increasingly recognized that AAVE is not merely a set of incorrect grammatical rules, but a complex and rule-governed linguistic system with its own set of rules and norms (Rickford, 1999). In recent years, AAVE has become increasingly influential in mainstream American culture. The dialect's impact can be seen in music, particularly in genres like hip-hop, where AAVE plays a central role in the lyrics and cultural expression. The influence of AAVE has also extended to literature, film, and social media, where its expressions and vocabulary have become part of the broader cultural lexicon. Despite occasional criticism, AAVE continues to be a vital marker of African American identity and a symbol of cultural pride (Alim, 2004).

The development of African American Vernacular English is a testament to the resilience and creativity of African American communities. Rooted in a history of struggle and survival, AAVE has evolved over centuries, influenced by social, political, and cultural forces. Today, it is recognized as a valid and sophisticated linguistic system that contributes to the diversity of the English language.

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