**Perceptual Dialectology Assignment**

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**Notes for the teacher:**

Before completing the activity below, do the following:

* Ask students to read the two articles found in the references below
* Find a map of the U.S. online

**Directions for students:**

**Activity**

1) Draw boundary lines on the map around where you think different accents are located. Label these accents as best you can.

2) How would you describe or characterize these accents?

3) Give each region a score of 1-3 based on “correctness.” For example, 1 = correct; 3 = very incorrect.

4) Give each region a score of 1-3 based on “politeness.” For example, 1 = very polite; 3 = very impolite

5) Give each region a score of 1-3 based on how similar the region’s accent is to your own. 1 = very similar; 3 = not similar at all.

**Assignment**

Develop a hypothesis about how people you know will answer these questions.

Give the blank map to at least **three** other people and ask them to do the same. Record their answers and their statements.

Write up your findings in a report. The report should include:

* The purpose of your survey (5 pts.)
* Your hypothesis (5 pts.)
* Review of literature (summary of Dennis Preston’s article, attached) (10 pts.)
* Write-up of findings, including whether your subjects’ answers were consistent with Preston’s findings. Make some educated guesses about why your subjects may have answered in the way they did. (20 points)

40 points total

**References**

Preston, D.R. (2005). They speak really bad English down south and in New York City. Retrieved from http://www.pbs.org/speak/speech/prejudice/attitudes/

Preston, D.R. & Robinson, G.C. (2005). Dialect perceptions and attitudes to variations. In M.J. Ball (Ed.), *Clinical Sociolinguistics* (pp. 133-150). Malden, MA: Blackwell.