

BJ: Ask um...this is particular interesting since you're...teachers some questions about...language. Um...so have you ever heard of Pittsburghese? ((2-second pause)) Like (you know)...Pittsburghese?

ME: [Mm-mm]...no...

LS: [Mm-hmm]

ME: Pittsburghese? Now...uh...when we had the black children all come in she gave us uh...were you there when...we had to learn the different words?

BJ: Oh yeah.=

LS: =No.

BJ: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

ME: [Bi] something...what was that? What was...it was...

BJ: Yeah, I know what you mean though uh, when they're trying to raise your awareness about [African American speech]

ME: [() yes because the] white children didn't know what the black children were saying.

BJ: Oh.=

ME: =So she gave us a list.=

BJ: =Who was she? () she=

ME: [That was, you know]

LS: [Roseanne?]

ME: That was Roseanne, yes, our uh...What is she? Uh...guidance counselor.

LS: Right.

ME: Yeah.

BJ: Mm-hmm.

ME: She gave us a list, so that we would know what the child was saying and what he was referring to, 'cause...we didn't know ((sounds like smiling)) and

LS: Mm-hmm

BJ: When was this?

ME: When did they (build) that?

LS: I don't know.

ME: That was

LS: ((Intake of breath)) It [was there before I left]

ME: [It was probably in]

LS: And that was like nine years [ago but]

ME: [(Right.)]

LS: She hadn't given anything like that out yet.

ME: So=

LS: =The only little black girl I had wasn't even from there, [she was from]

ME: [Yeah]

LS: A foster home

ME: Yeah

BJ: Mm-hmm

ME: No. [She]

LS: [So]

BJ: [()] so you the the black kids when they came...definitely...had a different kind [of home life (than the)]

ME: [Enriched our vocabulary.] ((Laughs.))

BJ: [() Mm-hmm.] Did you ((1-second pause)) was there ever anything like that with any of the white kids, I mean, did they, did they ever

ME: [No.]

BJ: [() sort of] do things with language that seemed different from...you, or different from...how they were supposed to talk, or?

ME: No, we just didn't know what the terms meant, so she...gave us a list that...so that we would be knowledgeable. But they had speech therapy for the kids that, you know, needed it, (other than had).

BJ: So there was no (mean) but [with the other kids there were no particular things that stood out (that you had to work with)]

ME: [Mm-hmm. No. Mm-hmm. No, 'cause we didn't have German], we didn't have German or Spanish or [speaking children.]

LS: [Well once] in a long time we would have something, remember that little boy, he only talked French, that Eva got, and then I got a little girl, forget what country she was from, but she learned so rapidly.

BJ: Mm-hmm.

LS: She was really good. Pinchus Sue. She was so [cute.] ((Laughing))

BJ: [Hmm. Mm-hmm.] So you...[did have international student sometimes? Yeah. Uh-huh?]

ME: [Mm. Yeah. Mm-hmm.]

LS: [Once in a] long time. That's all.

BJ: [Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.] Are there any words or...expr-, yeah words, or...phrases or anything that...people in western Pennsylvania use that ((1-second pause)) seem...that you're aware of that are local?

LS: [((Laughs)) Like for "Throw mother from the train?"]

ME: [((Intake of breath)) "Throw MUMMA FROM A train?" ((Laughs))]

BJ: ["Throw mother from the train," yeah...huh...uh-huh... ((sounds like smiling)) Do you hear people saying things like that (and)

LS: Well my Dad did. ((Laughs))

ME: Yeah.

LS: ((Laughing)) () And I had to...quit using that kinda language when I was in college. Everybody looked at me and I thought, "What's wrong with them?" ((Laughs))

ME: Yeah.

BJ: [Huh.] ((sounds like smiling)) Do you know...do you have any idea where that came from or...[why?]

LS: [I think it] was Pennsylvania Dutch.

BJ: Mm-hmm.

ME: There is a list that tells about all the different sayings that the people from Pittsburgh use.

BJ: Mm-hmm.

ME: Do you have that?

BJ: Yeah. There're lots of lists like [that.]
LS: [Yeah.]
ME: [Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.] I was just on my email, somebody just emailed me "they know you're from Pittsburgh if you say this or, [yeah]
LS: [What do] they say? "Close the light? Or "turn off the light?" What do they do? 'Cause I know...
ME: The Dutch?
LS: Yeah.
LS: "Outen the light," they say. ()=
ME: ="Outen the light." Yeah, that's what they say. [Yeah.]
LS: [Ummm]
BJ: Yeah, well...some of the words that are on that list are things like "redd up?"
ME: Yeah! "Redd [up." Yeah.]
LS: [() I]...I still say that.=
BJ: =(You) say that?
LS: Yeah. ((Laughs))
ME: ((Laughs))
BJ: () there's nothing wrong with it [not necessarily, it's just there]
LS: ((Laughing))
ME: ((Laughing))
LS: Tidy up ((Continuing laughing))
ME: [Yeah.]
LS: Try to...well, what do you say? [Clean up.]
ME: [Clean up.]
LS: Oh okay.
BJ: And your mother didn't say "redd up?"
ME: Mm-hmm. We always "cleaned up" or [else. ((Laughing))]
LS: [No. We always (). ((Laughing))]
ME: [So we always cleaned up. ((Laughing))]
LS: Well we always "redd up." ((Laughing)) Oh dear.
BJ: Another word that's often on those lists of things is "yinz" or "yunz" or "you-inz."
ME: "You-inz," yeah.
BJ: Did you grow up saying that or was that more of a?
LS: I think we did say that. But I have tried very hard to overcome saying things that other people around me don't say.
BJ: Mm-hmm
LS: [()]
BJ: [Well as a teacher you're sort of were expected to do that.]
ME: [() yeah. Right.]
LS: (((Laughs)) Mm-hmm]
BJ: Uh-huh. Yeah. So you don't know other words that are ((1-second pause)) words that are on the list like that with () western Pennsylvania words? What about "grinney?" Is that a word that people use around here?
LS: Grinney?=
BJ: ="Grinney?"

LS: That's like for chipmunk?

BJ: Uh-huh=

LS: =Uh-huh. (My par-) I've heard it.

BJ: Did you grow up using that or?

LS: No, I didn't. Did [you?]

LS: [Mmm. No.] We called 'em chipmunks. "Grinneys?" "Grinney?" I think "grinney" was a little black...isn't it a little black...animal?

BJ: Like a little vole [or a mole or something (like that)?]

ME: [Up yeah.] Yeah. Yeah. Like a "grinney."

BJ: I think some people

ME: Called them "grinneys."

BJ: Call them "grinneys" too, [yeah.]

ME: [() Yeah. Yeah.]

BJ: I think the old...original meaning was of a chipmunk.

LS: Chipmunk.

ME: Chipmunk was it. [Hmm.]

BJ: Um ((1-second pause)) what about if somebody had...uh...you know, said "the car needs washed" or "the shirt needs ironed" or... "these customers want served?" (Is that a)...normal way of...(that sound)?

ME: Sounds all right to me. It sure [does need washed ((laughing))], you should see mine.

LS: [Mm-hmm] ((Laughing))

BJ: Well, it's, because it's about to rain, so...you may not have to worry [about that, if you're parked outside.]

ME: [Very good. I agree with you.] ((Laughing))

LS: ((Laughing))

BJ: ((Laughing)) Okay, um...so when you...your kids didn't come to school needing a lot of help with language in any particular way except (the)=

LS: =No=

BJ: =African American students and the...a few international students? Mm-hmm. Great, okay, well that uh, that's the...um, all the questions I have for you. I wonder if you'd...have just a few more minutes to read a couple of passages out loud?

ME: Okay.

BJ: Just, gives me a sense, since I'm interested in ((1-second pause)) people's...you know, comparing different a- ages and different places how people talk. If I have everyone do the same thing, then it gives me a good comparison. Great. All right, so um –