On the surface level it must appear to the reader(s) that a writer using literary dialect will do so because of using a dialect with which the audience is familiar or a dialect which the members of the audience use to a substantial degree. Further, if the motive is one of establishing verisimilitude, the writer will be faithful to the dialect unique to each character, if for no other purpose than being at one with an oral reality of discourse.

Many writers of literary dialect--among them such figures as Whittier, Lowell, and Poe, in this country--have been unsuccessful in the usage of dialect. The burden placed on general or wide audiences, the difficulty of representing the phonology of the dialect, and the distraction of the dialect itself are among major reasons for lack of writer-success in using dialect.
Krappe and Ives have discussed the nature of dialect and reasons for its lack of success, overall. However, some writers who have not articulated in terms of any literary criticism their employment of dialect have used dialect in a wider perspective. Such writers number Mark Twain, and Eugene O'Neill. Mark Twain used literary dialect to show geographic and psychological dialect determinations, as well as individual delineations. However, it is to Eugene O'Neill that this thesis looks for the more unifying features of literary dialect.

Eugene O'Neill's use of literary dialect was founded on O'Neill's desire to encompass a total reality as to region, individual, groups, and philosophies. His completed forty-eight plays have thirty-three plays containing one or more varieties or subclasses of dialect. At least twenty different dialects have been counted.

It is the total position of this thesis that O'Neill used dialect so thoroughly and successfully through dramatic need, through the need to individualize each character, and through representing the essential moral or ethical characters of the characters using each dialect. In this demonstration, three of O'Neill's play, selected at random, are used: The Iceman Cometh, The Long Voyage Home, and Desire Under the Elms. This thesis in considering dialect as unity goes
beyond the work done on O'Neill by Ruth Blackburn and Polly Fitch.

The treatment of plays in the thesis reveals that O'Neill's use of literary dialect is central to the plays in the sense of unifying each character to the dramatic resolution of each play. It is true that in achieving the physical, intellectual, and emotive interplay essential to achieving a solution of the conflicts and crises unique to each play O'Neill manipulated some elements of dialect to remove inconsistencies which would have appeared otherwise.
THE DRAMATIC WORK OF EUGENE O'NEILL CONSIDERED AS TO HIS USE OF LITERARY DIALECT AS A UNIFYING ELEMENT

by

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CHAPTER I

NATURE OF THE THESIS, PURPOSES, PREVIOUS WORK,
SPECIFIC ELEMENTS TO BE PROVEN, PROCEDURES,
ESSENTIAL DEFINITIONS

I. GENERAL STATEMENT ON THE NATURE OF THE THESIS

Any system of articulated sounds through which members of a like-speaking group communicate, express, or commune is a language. Within this like-speaking group, the language particular to that group is recognized and understood through its syntax, morphology and phonology. Any variation within the syntax, morphology or phonology of that language indicates the presence of a dialect or dialects of that language.

Since language is a system of articulated sounds, what is written on a page, or on a stone wall, by whatever culture, is not the language itself, but only a graphic representation of that language. Consequently, any variations in a language, whether in syntax, morphology, or phonology, when captured in print, are not the actual dialect of that language, but only a graphic representation of the dialect. Therefore, the representation of dialects
of a language, just as the representation of the language itself, suffers from many of the same restrictions, such as the lack of representation of stress, pitch and juncture, or the non-linguistic gesture. Additionally, dialect representation presents great difficulty in depicting certain phonological differences with a limited phonetic system. Our present alphabet system is utilized for a recognized standard of spelling which has not the capacity to accurately indicate distinctions in pronunciation.

Even the International Phonetic Alphabet, which will be utilized in this essay, cannot remedy the situation, since it is not acceptable for general consumption. Rather, it is used, as it will be here, on an academic and/or research level. Considering the difficulties in representing dialect, it is ironic that the reason for its very existence in language is almost impossible to discern. Under these circumstances, one might ask what would prompt a writer to use dialect.

One reason for a writer to rely on dialect is that he normally uses a dialect which his audience uses, or is quite familiar with. Such an audience would consequently be limited to scope. Robert Burns' poetry illustrates this fact, in that he wrote in his own Scots dialect, with its many phonological and morphological variations from the English language. His Scots dialect was a northern dialect of English spoken by Scottish peasants and (on other
than formal occasions) by most 18th-century Scottish gentlemen as well. Ironically, when Burns attempted to write in standard English, the result, except in an occasional lyric like Afton Water, became stilted with all the stock conventions of his day.\(^1\) Though his audience did broaden beyond his geographical region, Burns initially wrote of his life and people, to his people. Thus, Burns used dialect as a tool to create the atmosphere of a simple life he loved.

One point to consider here is whether or not a dialect spoken by a character which has the same linguistic features as that of the author and his audience, would be recognized by that audience as a dialect per se, and thus appreciated as such. William Gilmore Simms, an American writer from Charleston, provides an illustration of this point. Even though Charleston natives had distinct phonological differences in their speech from other southern cities, Simms made no effort to represent these differences in the speech of any of his Charleston characters. The explanation is that Simms did not realize how "exotic" these sounds were, because he used them himself, and therefore did not try to represent them.\(^2\) Consequently, though the


linguistic features of a regional speech are distinctly different from other regions, the author may not recognize it as a dialect, and thus find it unnecessary to represent it in a literary work.

Whereas, the flavor of writing was enhanced by dialect in Burns' work, Simms saw no literary purpose in utilizing it. But, ultimately, when Simms indulged in representing other dialects, he, like any other writer, took certain risks to gain a universal audience which is more akin to using a standard or formal dialect. A writer using a dialect directed at and appropriate to an audience using the same dialect is most often dealing with phonological distinctions whose graphic representation would limit the reading audience.

Some writers prefer to limit their reading audience, and will do so by relying on a dialect involving morphological and syntactical distinctions, rather than the phonological one. Such writers use dialect to represent language that is appropriate to a region, to a social class, to a professional class, or to a class differentiated ethically or morally from any other class or classes. Such a writer is one writing an essay on a formal educational or instructional level, such as a writer, writing a text on dialect, who anticipates a receptive, but limited audience. If the morphology and syntax of this specific dialect are
of such levels as to be admired and emulated by speakers of other dialects, the dialect will become a "prestige" dialect. But it is still appropriate to a limited audience. If, however, such a prestige dialect is widely accepted by the majority of speakers of a language as the "best" dialect of that language, it becomes a standard dialect. In many cases, the standard dialect will be that of the educated and socially, economically, politically, and artistically prominent citizens of the dominant region.

Prestige dialect, though limited in scope, remains stable, barring major social upheaval. That is, changes may occur in the dialect, as in all language, but the group to which the dialect is appropriate remains intact. In contrast is the current "fad" type dialect based on morphological and syntactical variations which include a limited audience. But the future of that audience depends on current social and economic situations, and is questionable. The "CB'er", for example, depends on a special dialect in order to communicate with another member of his group. It involves, basically, a vocabulary of concise terms which are decoded by the receiver, a vocabulary based on complete sentence equivalents the receiver has stored in his memory. The instability of such a dialect is a result of the social situations which have spawned it. The trucking hero, the independent driver who represents the spirit of individualism admired by the common man and reflected by the commercial
media, has given CB'ing its present status. As the American people adopt new heroes to emulate, the CB and its special language will decrease in stature and fade in popularity.

Dialect, then, in whatever class it is found, can be identified through its phonology, morphology, and syntax. Certain written dialects, such as those noted earlier, which are directed at and appropriate to a specific audience using the same dialect, depend on phonological differences, particularly. Dialects particular to a class of people rely more on the morphology and syntax of a dialect to communicate to that specific group. But another writer may use dialect that is directed at a broader audience than has been considered: and may depend on all three elements of dialect to relate effectively to that audience. Such dialect is called "Literary Dialect."

Theories of literary dialect have been expounded upon at length by such recognized authorities as George Philip Krapp and Sumner Ives. The former demonstrates his theory in a lengthy article entitled "Literary Dialects." 3 Krapp's theory was later both supported and refuted by Sumner Ives in his "Theory of Literary Dialects." 4

The literary dialect, according to Krapp, depends for success upon its being positive and readily recognizable. It makes no effort to conform to reality. That is, whereas a scientific notation of existing dialect attempts to exhaust every detail of dialect speech which can be observed, the literary dialect is composed of only those materials which are needed to create an illusion of "real" dialect speech. Such materials, according to Krapp, are relatively slight departures from the forms of standard speech, which is the background against which the dialect is contrasted. The departures from the standard are arbitrary, in that no two speakers would make the exact observations about a language, because no two speakers actually speak the same language. Thus, nearly all writers of dialect strive to create the feeling of local speech, rather than endeavor to relate accurate differences from the linguistic standard. Consequently, as Krapp has noted, much of the literary dialect often utilized for the sake of local color in a specific locale, can be transplanted into and function in a different region altogether.

Thus, Krapp determined that all local dialects of this kind are at bottom merely general colloquial or low colloquial American English, with a sprinkling of more characteristic words or pronunciations, some of which suggest fairly definite local associations, often in the
case of words by connection with some peculiar local occupation or activity. In other words, there is no true literary dialect -- only a more or less formal standard and the more or less informal colloquial. The literary dialect utilized by James Whitcomb Riley is branded as an "abundance of ordinary colloquialisms, including much eye dialect, with some archaisms of speech which survive as low colloquialisms." Additionally, Joel Chandler Harris' Uncle Remus stories, written to illustrate the dialect of the Negro, rather than to publish a story, were considered by Krapp to be merely "general low colloquial English with a light sprinkling of words or phrases which by custom have come to have closer association with negro speech." It is this point in particular to which Ives took exception and refuted in his later theory on literary dialect.

Ives refuted Krapp's general theory of literary dialect on the basis of the inadequacy of evidence, in that Krapp used too small a sample of each dialect, and that regional patterns of American speech and the distribution of individual features were imperfectly understood when Krapp made his analysis. Ives notes, also, that represen-

6 Ibid., p. 245.
7 Ibid., p. 251.
tation of each dialect was judged on the basis of an irrelevant standard of dialect pronunciation. That is, little consideration was given to the dialect spoken by the author himself, that which would affect the author's observation of other dialects. Krapp did not detect any particular or peculiar differences between dialects because of comparing them to his established standard of language, rather than of comparing them to each other. Ives, therefore, suggested an alternative method of evaluating dialects which involved reconstruction of the author's own speech as a prelude to the interpretation of his dialect spellings, categorization of each dialectical feature in a spelling, comparison to standard English (based on the author's determined speech), and consideration of authenticity, as well as the degree of individuality the dialect has. 8

Literary dialect is viewed, here, as a combination of linguistic features, the elements of which can be found in one word or group of words, as well as in the dialect represented as a whole.

Not every dialectical feature can be represented if the writing is to maintain any level of artistry because deciphering the graphic notations would impair readability. As the reading audience expands, the graphic representation

of dialect must become less detailed. Therefore, the
writer must carefully observe the speech of the dialect
group to determine the details of that dialect which most
closely identify it. Finally, the writer decides on the
variations in syntax, morphology and phonology most recog­
nizable to the wider audience as different from their own.
He must then determine which of those differences are
significant enough to give realism to the content of the
writing.

Those writers who use dialect in a literary sense
usually focus on one kind of dialect almost always sub­
standard in nature. Historically, dialect writing has been
imposed for the sake of comedy, to show the ignorance of
some character as opposed to his more intellectual counter­
part. George Washington Harris, who preceded Mark Twain,
created a dialect character in Sut Lovingood, a prolific
spinner of Southwestern yarns, whose illiterate speech has
amused a multitude of readers over the years, in Sut Lovin­
good's Yarns. Though Sut's speech is considered an
accurate representation of a typical Tennessee mountaineer,
most serious dialect linguists do not include Harris among
those writers who have attempted to preserve with calculated
accuracy, the morphology, phonology, and syntax of a dialect.

9George Washington Harris, Sut Lovingood's Yarns,
Harris is associated, however, with the likes of David Ross Locke (Petroleum v. Nasby) and Henry Wheeler Shaw (Josh Billings), who "exhuberantly misspelled words as an indication of their characters' illiterateness." The comic effect of this illiterate speech is apparent when juxtaposed to that of educated speech, as in the "Dedictory" to Sut Lovingood's Yarns.

Several dedication options are suggested by the editor to Sut before his collection of yarns goes to press.

DEDICATED TO

The Memory of
Elbridge Gerry Eastman,
The Able Editor, and Finished Gentleman, The
Friend, Whose Kindly Voice First Inspired
My Timid Pen With Hope.

GRATEFUL MEMORY

Drops a Tear Among the Flowers, as Affection
Strews Them O'er His Grave.11

TO

WILLIAM CRUTCHFIELD, OF CHATTANOOGA,
My Friend in Storm and Sunshine, Brave
Enough to Be True, and True Enough
to be Singular; One Who Says What He Thinks,
and Very Often Thinks What He Says.12

Finally, Sut suggests his own dedication.

10 Harris, op. cit., p. 14.
11 Ibid, p. 29.
12 Ibid.
Thus, the humor of Sut's character is underlined by his dialect in relation to the standard of educated speech. This humor is strengthened by the irony of Sut's simple, direct speech, with the hazy, rather euphemistic speech of the educated speaker.

Dialect attempts to restrict a character or characters geographically or socially in making the reader aware of the "difference" between the dialect character and another more educated character, who subsequently speaks a standard dialect. Consequently, the writer seldom deems it necessary to indicate any peculiarities in the speech of his "better" characters.

Many writers, including Harris, have resorted to a rather crude "quasi-phonetic" respelling of certain words to indicate a pronunciation differing from the standard. Such a practice, "eye dialect," has been used and abused as a literary device. Eye dialect was exaggerated for comic effect in its early use. The user of this writing tool was "not attempting a scientific delineation of a regional or class dialect."

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13 Harris, op. cit., p. 30.
Rather, such authors were "laying it on thick" in order to give the readers a laugh. Other writers resorted to such a technique because of the funny appearance such misspellings made on the printed page. Such an exaggeration of eye dialect resulted, in many cases, in cumbersome reading; when the real purpose of the technique was to indicate, without complicating the text, that this or that character is different.

Through eye dialect, the pronunciation is not actually changed, but the message is relayed from the eye to the brain that there is a distinction in the speech of the characters. That distinction is often one which infers the inferiority of the dialect speaker in some way.

However, some writers have used dialect to reveal other literary dialects. One earlier artist, Mark Twain, claims to have represented some four different dialects in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, each carefully distinguished from the others: Missouri Negro, Backwoods South-Western, Pike County, and four modified versions of the last. However, Curt M. Rulon takes issue with this figure and suggests two basic dialects in the novel -- Negro and White. In any case, Twain did reveal more than one dialect in his writing, and

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15 Harris, op. cit., p. 14.
neither of the two was used specifically for comic effect, or to insinuate inferiority of either main character to the other.

Another even more impressive master of dialect is Eugene O'Neill, an American dramatist who changed the direction of American theatre in the twentieth century. O'Neill rescued the American theatre from the long, sentimental drama of the 1920's, and introduced it to expressionism, realism, and naturalism in his own plays. O'Neill's arrival on the American dramatic scene coincided with an American public's coming of age both politically and culturally after its war settlement. Thus, many American theatregoers were more receptive to the realism of O'Neill's plays. That desire for realism motivated O'Neill, as it did Mark Twain, to utilize literary dialect. But Eugene O'Neill's use of literary dialect art reveals a wider range of dialects than is true of the art of Mark Twain. That truth is explained in part by the fact that Eugene O'Neill's dramatic art is his most significant contribution to literature. He completed forty-eight plays, of which some thirty-three contain one or more varieties of sub-standard dialect (in this case, different from the standard as O'Neill knew it and spoke it). In fact, from the total of thirty-three plays containing dialect(s), some twenty different dialects have been counted.
I do make the assumption, here, to be proven, that O'Neill used this large number of dialects in his plays because of the dramatic need to do so, because it individualized each character, and because it helped represent essential moral or ethical natures of the characters using each dialect.

In O'Neill's plays, as in any work of art involving literary dialect, we encounter the persistent question as to whether such dialect makes the play or story more effective, or as to whether literary dialect detracts from the artistic merit of the work. Such a judgment is secondary to the essential consideration of whether the use of literary dialect is, in fact, central to the work of art as such. Does it provide an element of unity?

I believe that the work of O'Neill is most appropriate for any inquiry into the nature of literary dialect as a unifying element. O'Neill's range of experience is greater than that of many other American dramatists. His theatre experience had its beginnings in his infancy. Born in a hotel to an actor-father, Eugene O'Neill accompanied his family throughout the country while his father performed in the "Count of Monte Cristo" as the lead. During Eugene's young adulthood, he served under his father as a technician, stage manager, understudy, and actor, and occasionally worked on his own as a playwright. Later,
during months of estrangement from his father, Eugene travelled and worked on numerous merchant sea vessels, and frequented the rag-tag bars on the pier. He eventually made his home in parts of Europe, where he served in a number of official positions. Then, upon returning to the United States, O'Neill retained a position as a newspaper writer.17 O'Neill absorbed and retained much from his extensive life experience. His insights into these experiences are the seeds of character development seldom equalled by other modern dramatists. It is also this breadth of experience which aids O'Neill in developing the distinct dialects in his plays. In fact, O'Neill's use of literary dialect is so frequent and so sustained as to be seriously considered as an integral part of his art.

II. PURPOSES

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that a writer, in this case, an American dramatist, is able to use literary dialect as central to the total nature of the characters in the literary work. The dramatist, Eugene O'Neill, is selected as an excellent example of a dramatist using dialect to reveal the personalities of many characters in three of his plays. Since speech is the most intimate

aspect of one's behavior, there should be a relationship between a character's speech and his personality.

O'Neill is chosen, as well, because his extensive and varied dialect representation reveals that he is not tied by choice or by birth or environment to one specific dialect or to one dialect region. When one considers O'Neill's range of experience and observation, it is easy to see why this is true. In fact, in a letter to George Pierce Baker for acceptance as a special student at Harvard, to take course work in play-writing, O'Neill comments upon himself that, "if varied experience be a help to the prospective dramatist, I may justly claim that asset, for I have worked my way around the world as a seaman on merchant vessels and held various positions in different foreign countries."\(^{18}\) If O'Neill's many years of exposure prior to these travels is included in the enumeration of his experiences, O'Neill is indeed a playwright of vast experience. It is, then, this artistic power of observation and recall of the experiences which assists O'Neill in realistic character development.

Accompanying this initial purpose of demonstrating literary dialect as central to the total nature of the character are several other purposes integral to the thesis.

Under consideration will be the re-spelling used to indicate dialect sounds that vary from the author's own speech, the use of word clues and morphological clues to suggest a character's status, and O'Neill's consistent use of dialect throughout each play as each character maintains his dialect consistently to distinguish him from other characters. It is important to consider these three points, since the successful or unsuccessful use of these elements will determine the nature of each character as dialect is involved.

Using three of O'Neill's plays, I will show the extent of his dialect as to specific kinds, how dialect is used to evoke reader-response, and how dialect is central to the philosophy of the individual character using each dialect. The three plays selected at random are The Iceman Cometh, The Long Voyage Home, and Desire Under the Elms.

III. PREVIOUS WORK THAT HAS BEEN DONE IN THE FIELD

O'Neill has attracted a normal amount of literary research on the whole. However, considering the way in which dialect permeates some twenty of O'Neill's forty-eight plays, a negligible amount of critical research has been produced in this area of dialect study. Numerous critical evaluations have surfaced over the years regarding O'Neill's lack of facility with the language: these articles state that his language is a rough-hewn and non-poetic form of
prose. Yet, so many of O'Neill's characters are rough-hewn either by birth or experience. And the poetry of his dramatic prose is often engendered in their dialect. But so little has been unearthed about these dialects, and what earlier critical commentary exists shows no agreement on the effectiveness or genuineness of his dialect.

The major work in the field is a dissertation by Ruth M. Blackburn, "Representation of New England Rustic Dialects in the Plays of Eugene O'Neill," a work reviewing O'Neill's treatment of dialects and providing a singular analysis of the dialects of Desire Under the Elms. Certain assumptions upon which this thesis is based are a result of elements developed by Ms. Blackburn. Her research was based on the premise supported by Sumner Ives that the valid critical evaluation of literary dialect must be based on the speech of the author under consideration as the standard. Ruth Blackburn discovered O'Neill's speech to be cultivated Eastern New England and his variations of that standard to be accurate in representation of pronunciation in Desire Under the Elms.

The only other major research or critical evaluation approximating Blackburn's work is another dissertation by Polly M. Fitch, "The Language of the Last Three Major Plays of Eugene O'Neill." She cites O'Neill as one of America's greatest playwrights, but as one whose use of the language

suggests incompetence. The method by which O'Neill's dramatic language is evaluated in this case is through *Moon for the Misbegotten*, *A Touch of the Poet*, and *Long Days Journey Into Night*. Ms. Fitch utilizes a recognition of assonance and dissonance to identify certain sounds in the language of the three plays. She also has under consideration the diction of the plays as repetition and alliteration are involved, and figurative language, particularly, as simile and metaphor are involved. Additionally, she gives consideration to the elements of irony, and symbolism, and rhythm where she can objectively establish its presence in the plays.

Ms. Fitch suggests further that the vocabulary of the characters reflects the theme of the play and the strong desires of the characters, and thus intensifies dramatic effectiveness. However, she adds that the repetition of a few words becomes monotonous.

Her conclusions are negatively charged, for Ms. Fitch indicates that O'Neill, in her interpretation, had little awareness of the mechanics and sound of the language. According to her findings, O'Neill abused syntax, used alliteration where it opposed the intent of the passage, and allowed the rhythm to contradict its purpose.

Some of these points developed by Blackburn and Fitch in their respective dissertations will be considered.

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in this essay, both on the negative and positive sides, for it appears that the former dissertation of 1968 might be a type of indirect refutation of the latter one written in 1966.

IV. SPECIFIC ELEMENTS TO BE PROVEN

The major consideration of this thesis is whether, in the case of Eugene O'Neill's dramatic endeavors, his use of literary dialect is central to the plays themselves. Does it serve as a unifying factor in the plays, and is it an integral part of characterization? To resolve any of these queries, I must prove a number of specific elements. In this essay, seven points will be developed as a means to this end.

The first of these elements to be proven is that O'Neill in his plays characteristically uses a certain or specific dialect for each one which can be represented. The system for illustrating his specific dialect involves a respelling system for stressed vowels. Though such a system did vary from play to play, it remained consistent throughout whatever play was under consideration. In a sense, the system used by O'Neill is self-explanatory. Those vowels in an accented syllable are re-spelled. The pronunciation of that vowel phoneme or combination of phonemes within the word should then be appropriate to the
specific dialect group being developed. These respellings, of course, are variations of O'Neill's speech, which is considered the standard in this case.

The next point under consideration is that O'Neill's art indicates very little use of eye dialect. Those instances when it does occur will be noted. But, by contrasting the frequency of reliance on eye dialect to other instruments of dialect representation used by O'Neill, this element can be demonstrated and proven. Though eye dialect does occur in O'Neill's plays, by its very nature it would prove ineffective in staging a play where any phonological distinctions must be noted by the ear as opposed to the eye.

The third element to be shown and proven is that O'Neill's use of apostrophes plays an integral part in giving the speech of his characters both genuine articulation and natural rhythms. The use of apostrophe in much of the American speech is almost a way of life. It is that one element which makes translation of book English into popular speech so difficult for a foreigner. O'Neill employs this device most successfully in conjunction with his respelling for stressed vowels, as will be indicated at a later point in the thesis.

The fourth point to be shown is that O'Neill, in his art, uses sound, morphology, and syntax variations from standard sentence-patterning to get the phrasing that is
non-middle class in his lower class characters. It might be noted here that O'Neill provides his "middle-class" characters with conventional spellings. The phonology, morphology and syntax of their speech are those of an educated person. Consequently, there are no distinctions made in the speech of such characters from that of the author.

The fifth point is O'Neill's artistic method of shifting to one dialect from another to reveal character traits and qualities. Ruth M. Blackburn focuses on this point in her article on dialect in O'Neill's plays:

When O'Neill knew a dialect well, as he did Irish-American, he would use it to convey the subleties usually available only to a native speaker: humor, sarcasm, irony, lack of respect, ridicule, complete humiliation, feelings he conveyed to the reader largely by switching and lapsing of the speaker from an acquired dialect to a native one, or vice versa. 19

There is a sort of "jolt" to the consciousness of the reader or viewer produced by a character's purposeful switch to a different dialect. The reader is then aware of the switch and is usually able to discern the subtle motivations of the character who resorted to it.

Not every switch of dialect is purposefully made by a character. Certain emotional upsets can cause any person to dispose of his more "standard" dialect temporarily.

in order to freely express his emotions uninhibited by the rules of rhetoric. Therefore, the sixth view will show that emotions play a large role in determining, from O'Neill's vantage point, how much one will slip back into a mother or native dialect. Nearly all readers or viewers of O'Neill can readily refer to his near-monologue play, The Emperor Jones, in which Jones lapses back into an illiterate Negro dialect when he is in flight for his life. Such instances will be illustrated in more detail in the three plays chosen for discussion.

Seventh, it will be shown that the dialect for each O'Neill character is not one which reveals only age, sex, regional geography, and trade or profession, but also moral or ethical individualization.

V. PROCEDURES

The purpose of the first chapter is to show the nature of this essay, the main purpose, what has been done in the field, specific elements to be proven, and the procedure for doing so, as well as any definition of terms essential to the development of this essay.

Chapter Two contains a treatment of The Iceman Cometh according to the aforementioned procedures, in which each element to prove will be treated. Chapter Three contains a treatment of The Long Voyage Home parallel to that of The
Iceman Cometh, and Chapter Four completes the discussion of the three plays by parallel development in Desire Under The Elms.

Chapter Five contains a summary and synthesis of Chapters Two, Three and Four.

VI. ESSENTIAL DEFINITIONS

In order to develop any elements of proof in this essay, it is necessary to clarify any discrepancies in understanding of essential terms. Thus, the following pages include definitions of terms which this author feels could pose a problem in the overall consideration of this essay.

Dialect. This term can cause confusion in that it is often considered within a limited framework. That is, the elements of dialect are not discussed in their totality. If we consider dialect as the variety of language spoken by members of a homogenous group, we know that language varies in morphology, phonology, and syntax. Dialect, dealing with vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical structures, is not limited to any specific element. In this case, we are considering all of these variations within the language of characters who have acquired those distinct differences because of their close association over an extended period of time with a group of people who have a common occupation, environment, and/or geographical restrictions. Dialect
characters in O'Neill's plays are products of a homogeneous group, whose members find themselves in a heterogeneous group, or another homogeneous group different from their own. Consequently, the distinctions in speech, the variations in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, become more pronounced. In other words, such characters are sort of linguistically-displaced persons, people who frequent Eugene O'Neill's plays.

*Phonology.* This rather general term refers to any matters relating to the sound system of the English language. It includes both phonetics and phonemics, the former being the organization of sound features into speech sounds or phones, and the latter being the organization of these phones into groups called phonemes which constitute the significant sounds of speech. Under the heading of phonology is often included the devices of juncture, stress, and pitch. These devices would be difficult to observe without an actual staging of the plays, since these three devices would generally come under the heading of intonation. But even though these devices are recognized as phonemes, and are logically included in a study of phonology, it would be of little benefit to consider them in this essay. Therefore, the phonology of O'Neill's dialect speech is considered as the variation in phoneme pronunciation, exclusive of the phonemes of intonation.
Morphology. As a subdivision of grammar, morphology deals with the structure of words. Since morphemes include word roots and bases, prefixes, suffixes, and inflections (word form changes), all of which provide an element of meaning to words, morphology in reference to this essay embraces these elements as they differ from the standard. Additionally, variations in actual word usage, that is vocabulary, are considered here.

Syntax. Syntax includes the patternings of morphemes into larger structural units - noun groups, verb groups, noun clusters, verb clusters, prepositional groups, clauses, and sentences. Consequently, certain morphological elements such as inflections and derivational suffixes are viewed in this context because they function as signals of word order. That is, the reader expects, because of his conditioning in language, to have a certain patterning of words follow certain signals. For example, the morpheme "ous" has no lexical meaning, but using it as an ending on "courage" immediately indicates that its function, and consequently, its position in the word order are changed. Though such morphemes function as syntactic devices, in this essay, they will be considered in the category of morphology.

Syntax, here, will be restricted to word order and structure words. Structure words help the reader to anticipate the structures to follow. Such structure words include
articles, verb markers, prepositions, and conjunctions. Any deviations from the standard dialect syntax in the three O'Neill plays under consideration will possibly occur more frequently in this context.

**Standard.** To reiterate somewhat, the standard dialect is a variation of the language, which, having achieved the status of a prestige dialect is recognized by the majority of speakers as the "best" available. At this point, it moves into the realm of a "standard." Thus, there are any number of standards within our own language.

In the case of O'Neill's use of dialect, the standard is perceived in relation to the author. Any linguistic variations represented in the plays are in contrast to O'Neill's own speech. The author provides the standard, since the variations indicated are based on his own interpretation of the morphology, phonology and syntax of his language.

**Sub-Standard.** Though the connotation of this term is one of inferiority, it denotes a deviance from the standard noted above. In this case, the dialects are all sub-standard which are not those of O'Neill's middle class characters whose speech indicates no dialectical distinction. Ruth Blackburn substitutes "non-standard" for sub-standard. Such a connotation is a bit more accurate. Thus, in this case, it would be well to give the same connotation to "sub-standard" being utilized here.
**Literary Dialect.** Literary dialect, according to Ives and Krapp, can be viewed as an author's attempt to represent in writing a speech that is restricted regionally, socially, or both.

**Eye Dialect.** This literary device used to suggest sub-standard speech by quasi-phonetic respellings of the standard pronunciation of common words like "wimmen" for "women", suggests the distinction to the mind's eye. It is not meant as a detailed rendering of dialectical differences.

Regardless of the method of dialect representation utilized by a writer to restrict a character socially, geographically, or economically, that method must be consistent for the sake of character credibility. If the dialect speech is consistently and artistically developed, the reading or viewing audience should be unable to disassociate the dialect and the character who possesses it. The restricted speech should become an integral part of that character's personality. This integration of speech and personality should ultimately strengthen the overall unity of the particular writing endeavor.

In the case of Eugene O'Neill, his play *The Iceman Cometh* is a good writing endeavor to consider for the effect of dialect on the unity of a play. This lengthy four-act drama provides a wide assortment of dialects to study.
By placing his characters with heterogenous backgrounds in a homogeneous setting, O'Neill sharpens the contrasts of restricted speech among the characters in the play, as well as the contrast between the respective dialects and the standard as O'Neill knew it.

In the following chapter, I will determine how successful O'Neill is in distinguishing among characters through dialect; and whether his successful development of literary dialect is a unifying element in *The Iceman Cometh.*
CHAPTER II

THE ICEMAN COMETH

In spite of the frequent criticism of O'Neill's lack of facility with the language, a study of the title of this drama, The Iceman Cometh, written in 1939, reveals about O'Neill a definitive awareness and mastery of the language as he knew it and spoke it. This point can be illustrated by careful scrutiny of the title, The Iceman Cometh, in relation to the theme of the play.

Regarding theme, the title, The Iceman Cometh, provides several levels of interpretation, which can only be discussed by defining the term "iceman", and clarifying the origin of the phrase, "the iceman cometh". In defining "iceman" as an underworld term, the surface theme can be discerned. However, that would fail to unearth the true philosophical significance of the title. The Dictionary of American Underworld Lingo defines "ice-man" (rather than "iceman") as "any official or inmate whose promises are not to be relied upon," or "one who makes ostentatious gifts of worthless or trivial things." The "iceman" whose arrival is awaited throughout most of Act I by the down-and-outers at Harry Hopes' bar is Hickey, or Theodore Hickman, the hardware salesman whose periodic binges at Hope's bar provide...
the rest of its drunken inhabitants with an unlimited flow of liquor for the duration of Hickey's stay.

However, upon Hickey's arrival, these permanent occupants discover that not only has Hickey changed, but he is preaching his form of personal salvation to his inebriated friends. Hickey insists that his "peace" came to him by ridding himself of his pipe dreams -- those plans for a better tomorrow which pacify our consciences, yet never produce results. Hickey spends the duration of Act II and III convincing his bar friends to do away with their own lying pipe dreams, and Hickey offers his assistance to assure their success. As Hickey succeeds in destroying each of their personal illusions, the men and women in the bar begin to hate each other, for each one is eager to ridicule the pipe dreams of the other, but few can handle the reality of facing his own personal dishonesty about his pipe dreams. Thus, the whisky loses its "kick", and Hickey's prospective converts lose any zest for what little life they have left.

In Act IV, the slowly sobering group in the bar is informed by Hickey that what he really rid himself of was the pipe dream his wife had about him for his eventual reform. Her invincible faith in her husband led Hickey to destroy her and her pipe dream. Hickey admits to the group, in the presence of the detectives whom he has summoned, that
he shot his wife in her sleep. Ironically, the murder was committed with the very weapon Hickey has given his wife to protect herself in his absence. The strongest irony in the play, however, is the love/hate or love/death motif which seeks its culmination in Hickey's statement, "Well, you know what you can do with your pipe dream now, you damned bitch!" Then, with a horrified start, Hickey stammers, "No, I never--."20

Therefore, Hickey, as the iceman whose promises are not to be relied upon, assumes a valid identity for the dazed men and women in the bar. Yet, this association with the title of the play does not provide real thematic significance. Rather, it is the love/death connotation inherent in the phrase "the iceman cometh" which gives strength to the title and its clues, and consequently, to the theme. It is the iceman as a ribald joke which acquires a deeper and more terrifying meaning as Death in this phrase.

The humor of the references to the iceman which repeatedly surface throughout the play, is from the joke in which the husband, calling upstairs to his wife -- "Has the iceman come yet?" -- gets the reply, "Not yet, but he's breathin' hard." Such a vulgar joke flourished in an era when the iceman walked freely in upon the negligee-clad

wife. It is within this framework that Hickey had presented his wife's image for so many years to his bar friends. In this framework, the iceman, representing an illusion of love, brings a sexual "death", a concept proliferated in literature for scores of years. But the real death which O'Neill sees is love itself. The two ideas of love and death are inextricably combined in the written word, from the most sublime poetry to the simplest nursery rhyme -- from "Who killed Cock Robin" to Edmund Spencer's complaint of how Cupid's arrow "dost wound. Full many hast thou pricked to the hart..."  

But, the real humor that O'Neill projects in this play is the ironic fact that man views love, both human and spiritual, as a source of life, when, according to O'Neill's point of view, love brings only death and destruction. Thus, the love relationships considered in the play are represented as useless and destructive. For example, Parritt's "love" for his mother results in her imprisonment for subversive activity resulting from her involvement in an Anarchist Movement. Her indictment was


initiated by Parritt, who was financially rewarded for his information. This action allowed Parritt to maintain his woman of pleasure, but eventually brought him to the depths of despair and guilt, and finally, suicide. Thus, the guilt stemming from Parritt's love for his mother is destructive.

Likewise, Hickey, as noted previously, destroys his wife because her love was destroying him and any hope for life. Neither of these relationships, therefore, or the relationship of Harry Hope and his late wife, Bessie, has been productive. None has created any new life, which in itself is the only source of hope.

Consequently, death permeates the play. The setting of the play itself is a sort of Hell Hole, the end of the line for down-and-outers, a dark and dingy breeding ground for filth. The back room, according to the stage directions, is separated from the bar by a "dirty black curtain;" with two windows so "glazed with grime, one cannot see through them..." Light is provided by two wall bracket lights on the left and two at the back. The occupants of Harry Hope's bar often sit in this environment in deathlike drunken trances and speak freely of death. There are frequently references to the morose dive as a morgue, and questions to several of its occupants as to why they have not "croaked" yet.

Thus, the love/death significance of the title becomes apparent through the strong and consistent clues placed throughout the play. Such clues indicate O'Neill's awareness and deft utilization of the nuances of the language. The unity produced by this successful development of title and clues is carried through by the use of specific literary dialects for each character. For this love/death theme is reflected in the unique language of each character in *The Iceman Cometh*. The dialectical aspect of the language in this play is an integral part of the character development because the strength of characterization determines the successful development of the theme.

It is important to note here that the literary dialect utilized in the genre of drama, by necessity, exceeds in complexity the literary dialect developed for a reading audience. A local color novelist, for example, must present dialects which are visually distinguishable in print from one another. In contrast, the dramatist, whose language is most often perceived by the ear rather than the eye, must provide distinctions in the language of his characters which can be heard as well as seen -- a language which gives characters depth and credibility. In *The Iceman Cometh*, the dialects which restrict the language of each respective character phonologically, morphologically, and grammatically, are the basis for the depth of characterization.
I. Among the nineteen characters in the cast of *The Iceman Cometh*, three major dialect groups emerge, from which other sub-classifications are established. The standard dialect as O'Neill knew it and spoke it, which provides the middle class standard by which the remaining characters' speech is measured, is present in some four of the nineteen characters. A second major dialect group of three characters can be identified by their inconsistent usage of the standard dialect, including deviations in morphology most particularly. The third, and largest group of speakers, consists of individually distinctive ethnic, regional, and racial dialects. A study of these three major groups will demonstrate that O'Neill has provided distinct and consistent patterns of speech for each one which can be represented through phonology, morphology and grammar.

In creating the phonetic distinctions which give uniqueness to pronunciation within a given dialect, O'Neill often relied on a respelling of stressed vowels. However, the variations in vocabulary and grammar of a dialect character are represented through creating levels of substandard usage and shifts in syntax.

The language as O'Neill spoke it which here becomes the standard dialect of the middle class is represented by four characters whose education and environmental
experiences have provided them access to the standard. This group includes Willie Oban, a Harvard Law School alumnus; Jimmy Tomorrow (or James Cameron), a one-time war correspondent; Larry Slade, a well-read, philosophic former Syndicalist Anarchist; and Don Parritt, an eighteen-year-old son of an Anarchist mother. The main elements they have in common are their residency at Harry Hope's bar and rooming house and their middle-class standard dialect.

The second major classification of speakers is based on the fact that its members attain levels of standard diction inconsistently. When they do not, their language is restricted by substandard grammar and pronunciation. More often, however, it is the vocabulary of characters like Harry Hope, Harry's brother-in-law, Ed Mosher (a one-time circus man), and his friend, Pat McGloin (former Police Lieutenant) which indicates their restricted social position and education.

Some observations of this second group of dialect characters reveal that Harry Hope's grammar falls prey to frequent subject elimination, double-negatives, and an occasional incorrect subject-verb agreement. Meanwhile, Hope's vocabulary indicates a less than standard usage by his characteristic use of "Bejees!" as an interjectory comment.
Always the way. Can't trust nobody. Leave it to that Dago to keep order and it's like bedlam in a cathouse, singing and everything. And you two big barflies are a hell of a help to me, ain't you. Eat and sleep and get drunk! All you're good for, bejees! Well, you can take that "I'll-have-the-same" look off your maps! There ain't going to be no more drinks on the house till hell freezes over.24

The subject elimination is especially well illustrated in the above passage. Such a practice produces a short, choppy group of sentences which speed up the pace of the speaker's dialogue. But it is the linguistic habits producing this rapid pace which place Hope in the second major classification of speakers.

Like Hope, Mosher and McGloin engage substandard grammar and vocabulary in their speech, but they both do this less frequently than Hope. The appearance of "ain't" in their vocabulary, as well as certain idiomatic expressions as "gone teetotal on us", indicates the extent of deviation from the standard. Therefore, were it not for the inconsistent appearance of substandard usage which

24 Ibid., p. 598.
indicates the social and economic levels, these two men would be included with the first major classification which represents the middle class standard.

Even Hickey, who is a member of the first group, slips grammatically in Act II in his subject-verb agreement, when he says "Harry don't even want to remember it's his birthday now." However, such errors are so infrequently made in comparison to Hope and his two friends, that Hickey may still serve as one of the models of standard speech.

The deviation from the standard which Hickey represents is greatest in the regional/ethnic dialect group whose members are the most numerous. In this third and final major classification, pronunciation becomes the dialectical element of importance, as opposed to grammar and vocabulary in the second classification. Because of the size of this classification, it will be divided into four sub-classifications. These four sub-groups will be considered on the basis of how the re-spelling of stressed vowels is used to develop the phonetic distinctions in the speech of its members.

The largest sub-group of this third major group is a regional dialectical group whose dialect has characteristics of Lower East Side New York. With this group, O'Neill

25 Ibid., p.653.
has striven toward complete consistency. In the characters of Rocky, the bartender and resident pimp; Chuck, the alternate bartender and "fiance" of Cora, a streetwalker; as well as the other two prostitutes, Margie and Pearl, there is the same social, economic and educational level, overall. The commonality of background is thus extended to their speech patterns. Within this group, all of the -ir, -ur, -or, and -ear combinations which are phonetically the same (\(\gamma\)), are pronounced with an -oi/-oy sound (\(\partial\)) as in "boy", or "toil".

In Act I, the conversational dialogue among the bar dwellers is extensive, allowing the homogeneity of this subgroup of speakers to materialize for the viewer. Margie demonstrates the respelling of the -ear combination in response to Rocky's question about how successful their night was: "Pretty good. Didn't we, Poil."26 In another passage, Pearl illustrates the respelling of the -or phoneme when she comments to Margie, "Yuh'd tink it was him done de woik."27 Pearl comments in a later passage

26 Ibid., p.612.
27 Ibid., p.613.
that "Cora giggles like she was in some grammar school and some tough guy'd told her babies wasn't brung down de chimney by a boid."28 In that passage, the -ir stressed vowel is respelled. The respelling of the -ur vowel is illustrated by Cora in her statement: "Den I toined him 'round, and give him a push to start him."29 A final illustration of this respelling of stressed vowels is provided by Cora's comment that "we've decided Joisey is where we want de farm."30

The respellings occur randomly in other instances, such as respelling -er (as in "air") as -ur (as in "turn") when, in Act I, Cora refers to Navy Yard booze as "turrible bugjuice." In the same act, Rocky refers to Harry acting "deef" rather than "deaf."

Other than the respelling of stressed vowels as they occur within this dialect sub-group, a certain amount of consonant substitution is also apparent. The replacement of the soft -th sound (as in "the") by -d can be noted throughout the above bits of dialogue. Additionally, the substitution of the simple -t phoneme is made for the hard -th sound (as

28 Ibid., p.614.
29 Ibid., p.617.
30 Ibid., p.631.
in "think"). In some cases, the utilization of the -t for the hard -th, necessitates respelling the stressed vowels, as in "nothing." Here, the hard -th, for the sake of consistency in the passage, must become a -t, which must be doubled in spelling to assure pronunciation of the stressed vowel as a short vowel rather than a long one, which phonetically, it would become. At this point, "nottin'", to retain the short vowel phoneme (as in "utter") must be changed to "nuttin'". This pronunciation within the dialogue below reiterates the commonality of speech within this sub-group. To Rocky's question to Margie about what she had said, Margie replies, "Nuttin'", and Rocky exclaims "It better be nuttin'." 31 Thus the element of consistency is O'Neill's use of dialect is further verified.

However, consistency of dialectical elements in the speech of O'Neill's characters takes on a broader perspective, when, as in The Iceman Cometh, each sub-class of characters has distinct speech characteristics which distinguish its members from any other sub-class of dialect characters. The respelling utilized in the above dialectical sub-class relied mostly on one phonetic deviation maintained consistently by each character whose background demanded that he have that deviating element in his speech.

31 Ibid., p.631.
The dialects of the remaining members of this sub-group of characters in *The Iceman Cometh* are quite distinctively different from one another, particularly in the area of phonology. It is in this area that the strongest differences in dialect are noted. Cecil Lewis, the Britisher; Hugo Kalmer; Piet Wetjoen, the former Boer commander; and Joe Mott, the Negro who passes for White, possess in their speech attributes of their individual ethnic groups. Again, they are distinctly different from one another, yet consistent in their differences.

Hugo Kalmer, a one-time editor of an Anarchist periodical, fades in and out of consciousness, and offers repeated attacks at a non-existent group of capitalist, bourgeois swine. The respelled vowel utilized here to represent Hugo's dialect is the (I) as in "little" which becomes (i) as in "leedle." However, this respelling only occurs in this one word "little." Similarly, the vowel change in "that" from (ae) to (ah) is confined to that singular word. Since the appearance of either of these respellings is infrequent, because of the limited dialogue of Hugo, the consistency of vowel respelling in this case is difficult to consider.

However, O'Neill does make consistent use, in Hugo's repetitious mental wanderings, of the phoneme (v) in place of the consonant (w), exclusive of one instance. That is,
in Act I, the word "swine" is present, in contrast to its spelling in Act II as "svine." This inconsistency might be explained through a consideration of the context of the particular passage. In Act I, the reference is to "capitalist swine," and the reference in Act II is to "bourgeois swine." In the former spelling, the initial (sv) sound, immediately preceded by an (st) final sound, becomes almost impossible to pronounce. In contrast, the latter (-sv) spelling elides with the French vowel-like ending of "bourgeois."

Perhaps O'Neill spent less time than was needed to develop the characteristics of Hugo's dialect completely, which might also account for the discrepancy discussed above. But, overall, Hugo's dialect is individual and distinctive enough to avoid confusion for the ear which also perceives the dialect of Piet Wetjoen, whose dialect has some characteristic in common with Hugo.

Wetjoen, a former Boer commander, substitutes the (v) for (w), and the (æ) for (a) in his dialect as does Hugo. But other phonological elements separate Wetjoen's dialect from that of Hugo's, as Wetjoen's dialect entails far more substitutions than Hugo's. The vowel phoneme substitution present in the respelling of "that" as "dot"

32 Ibid., p.634.
is not carried over into other stressed (\(\text{æ}^\text{C}\)) vowels of Wetjoen's speech. Rather, a respelling pattern develops among the consonants in his speech, which could be summed up in the following manner:

\[
\begin{align*}
    w &= v \\
    v &= f \\
    b &= p \\
    \text{th} &= d \\
    d &= t
\end{align*}
\]

Act II contains illustrations of any of the above consonant respellings. The first consonant substitution is illustrated by Wetjoen's statement that "I am not afraid to work with my hands."\(^{33}\) Another statement exemplifies the substitution of (p) for (b). "I was a farmer before the war ven ploody Limey thieves steal my country."\(^{34}\) However, with careful observation, inconsistencies in this consonant pattern become apparent, at times within the same sentence, as in the above sentence. Note the occurrence of war/vas, and before/ploody.

Such inconsistencies have rarely affected the readability of the play, or the credibility of the character. Within a simple literary dialect graphically represented, such inconsistencies might be necessary at times for maintaining readability. However, to a listening audience, such instances of inconsistent usage of a native ethnic dialect would be noticeable and disturbing. This is particularly true in this case, where Wetjoen's language

\(^{33}\) Ibid., p.676.  
\(^{34}\) Ibid.
is so restricted. What seems to redeem this error in dialectical calculations, however, is the syntax of Wetjoen's sentences. For this element is much more consistent throughout the play than the consonant respelling pattern.

All of the elements of Wetjoen's dialect appear to be more significant because of their frequent juxtaposition to the dialogue of Cecil Lewis, the sometime friend/sometime enemy of Piet Woetjoen. Lewis, a Britisher, speaks a near-prestige English dialect. However, as a Britisher, this character was not included in the first major class of characters who used the middle class standard, because Lewis does not represent the dialect as O'Neill knew it and spoke it. Additionally, certain elements of Lewis's vocabulary indicated his social background was less than that of a gentleman. "They'd bloody well have promised him the moon."^35 Though the pronunciation and syntax are correct, Lewis' repeated use of bloody in his vocabulary indicates something a bit negative about his breeding.

Additionally, Lewis's reliance on his native vocabulary presents certain idiomatic expressions unfamiliar to

^35 Ibid., p.676.
the American speaker. This factor then, played a part in placing Lewis in the final major dialect classification rather than the first.

The final member of this sub-class of dialect groups under discussion is Joe Mott, the Negro who often passed for white when it was necessary to his survival. Consequently, his dialect reflects this camouflage; because Joe Mott relies on a Black dialect combined with white speech patterns acquired from his experience with Whites. For, like Rocky's sub-group, the substitution of -d for initial, medial, and final -th sounds is much more frequent in Joe's speech than the occurrence of respelled stressed vowels.

In fact, those vowel respellings which do occur are more characteristic of eye dialect because the differences in actual pronunciation of these vowels are so minute. In considering Joe's comment, "Gittin' drunk every day for twenty years ain't give you the Brooklyn boys," the word "gittin" often has the same sound in much of what is considered middle class pronunciation. Granted, the pronunciation is sub-standard as printed. But unless the phonological distinctions are emphasized, the discrepancy

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Ibid., p.601.
might not be noted aurally. It is this point which Krapp stressed in his "Theory of Literary Dialect," and a point which gains some validity by this illustration.

Another vowel respelling in Joe's speech indicates a certain inconsistency of usage. This may be attributable to Joe's racially mixed environment, yet it is disturbing to find in Act I "nuttin'" and "nothin'" within the same passage of dialogue, as illustrated below:

If dere's one ting mor'n anudder I cares nuttin' about, it de sucker game you and Hickey call de Movement... De Anarchist he never works. He drinks but he never buys, and if he do ever get a nickel, he blows it in on bombs, and he wouldn't give you nothin'.

Though both spellings and subsequent pronunciations of the word "nothing" are substandard, there is no ready explanation for the varied usage, here. Unlike Hugo's use of swine/svine, the position of the two words is not a factor in this inconsistent usage.

However, in spite of the discrepancies in Joe's dialect usage, among the strongly dialectical characters like Rocky and the group he represents, Hugo, Wetjoen, and Joe Mott, one of the more successful and credible dialects in the play is Joe's black speech. Perhaps this is because of O'Neill's various attempts at black dialect in works prior to The Iceman Cometh.

37 Ibid., p.584.
Successful dialect development is not exclusive to the character of Joe Mott, however, because O'Neill gave equally strong credibility to the dialectical speech of his bartenders and prostitutes. Of course, O'Neill's experience with this particular dialect was very extensive, because of his years spent in and around the Lower East Side of New York City.

Therefore, with the dialectical credibility the strongest in those characters who depend more on consonant substitution than stressed vowel respelling, it appears that stressed vowel respelling as the main element of O'Neill's dialect writing, is not as well utilized in The Iceman Cometh as Blackburn suggests it is used overall. Rather, the various patterns of consonant substitution which develop for each dialect character provide the strong dialectical flavor of the play. Additionally, the utilization of these patterns offers proof to the supposition that, in The Iceman Cometh, O'Neill did create a believable dialect for each one which could be represented in that specific dramatic location and situation. But the respelling of stressed vowels was not the chief means of developing the respective dialect characters in this play.

II. The main concern with dialect in drama is that its effect on the aural perception must have considerable
priority over the visual perception. What is often written in literary dialect has its impact on the brain through the eye. But drama is written to be performed. Therefore, much of literary dialect which indicates restrictive speech in a character would be vaguely recognizable to the ear as different from a standard which the audience normally hears and uses itself.

Moreover, if the dialect is as important to characterization as it is in The Iceman Cometh, a greater distinction must be made among the speech of the characters, in order for the ear to discern the difference. Thus, eye dialect is not a helpful tool in drama, though there are instances of its use in The Iceman Cometh.

In Act I, for example, Rocky comments "Hell, yuh'd tink I wuz a pimp or somethin." The respelling of "was" is recognizable to the eye, but since the spelling is almost phonetically that of the pronunciation, the ear would make no distinction between the two words. Interestingly, in the sentence following, the standard spelling and pronunciation appear twice in the same sentence. "Strictly business, like dey was fighters and I was deir manager." Conceivably, O'Neill meant the restricted spelling for aural emphasis, indicating a strong emotional reaction,

38 Ibid., p.580.
when one considers that Rocky felt the same way about being called a pimp as Joe Mott did about being labelled "nigger."

In contrast, the reason behind Margie's use of eye dialect in Act I is difficult to perceive. She comments that she and Pearl "nailed a coupla all-night guys on Sixth Avenoo." The double -o or phonetic (-u) is more often heard in the pronunciation of "avenue" than its correct pronunciation of the final syllable as (-nyu). This makes it difficult, or nearly impossible, for the untrained or unrefined ear to discriminate between the correct and the incorrect, since the erroneous or sub-standard pronunciation sounds correct and standard. Here again, the eye will detect this dialectical message, whereas, the ear may not decode this information as readily, unless the speaker of that word exaggerated the difference in pronunciation. If, however, the speaker did not emphasize the distinction of this particular pronunciation, the dialect spelling of "avenoo" is an example of eye dialect.

Another occurrence of eye dialect is in the use of "yuh're" by Margie. Her references to the second person

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39 Ibid., p.613.
pronoun have been pronounced as "yuh", so it is only logical for Margie to contract the pronoun "you" and the corresponding verb of being "are" to "yuh're" in her dialect usage.

The problem, here, however, is the same. Care must be taken by the speaker to assure that the listening audience can discern the difference between this pronunciation and their own, in order to maintain the dialect of the character as definitely restricted. Without a concerted effort to give this pronunciation of "you're" distinction, it becomes a form of eye dialect.

As noted, then, only three observable instances of eye dialect have been unearthed in this drama of The Iceman Cometh, and the isolation of their occurrence suggests strong validity in the original supposition that O'Neill's plays include very few instances of eye dialect. Additionally, when these instances are compared to the other elements of dialect representation apparent in O'Neill's The Iceman Cometh, they are insignificant.

III. What O'Neill does utilize to a much greater extent is the apostrophe, which shortens and/or combines words, giving the whole passage of dialogue a rhythm. It is this rhythm and the changes of rhythm of speech among the characters in the play that give them life. In addition,
the juxtaposition of these varying rhythms provide colorful character contrasts, thereby strengthening characterization overall.

The dialectical contrasts of the use of apostrophe by certain characters suggest the same classification of speakers as noted earlier. The bartenders and prostitutes all submit to the same linguistic habits in reference to the apostrophe, making the rhythms of their respective speech quite similar. Thus one of its members' speech is representative of the others. In Act I for example, Margie comments disgustedly about Cora and Chuck:

I'll bet dey been sittin' around kiddin' demselves wid dat old pipe dream about gettin' married and settlin' down on a farm. Jees, when Chuck's on de wagon, dey never lay off dat dope! Dey give yuh an earful every time yuh talk to 'em!40

By clipping initial and final phones of words, the diction is speeded up considerably. The -ing endings are all shortened in -in', resulting in fewer movements of the mouth and other speech producing organs, as opposed to pronouncing fully the -ing, and preparing for the initial sound of the proceeding word.

Rocky, as a dialect character, follows these same patterns of clipping initial and final consonants, as well as creating some unorthodox word contractions like the following:

40 Ibid., p.614.
...If I ain't a sap to let Chuck kid me into workin'. his time so's he can take de mornin' off. But I got sick of arguin' wid 'im. I says, 'Aw right, git married! What's it to me?' Hickey's got de bot of dem bugs.41

The phrase, "so as to" or "so that" would be inappropriate to Rocky's character, but his use of the contracted "so's" is acceptable within the framework of his dialect.

In contrast, Joe Mott contracts the first person singular pronoun "I" with the third person or singular present tense verb ending "-s" -- "I's." This practice tends to neutralize the clipping of the final consonant to which Joe Mott also falls prey, thus limiting the speech of his speech patterns. An oral reading of the dialogue passage below will illustrate this point:

Dat's my business. I ain't buttin' in yours, is I? Sure, you think he's all right. He's a white man, ain't he? Listen to me, you white boys! Don't you get it in your heads I's pretendin' to be what I ain't, or dat I ain't proud to be what I is, get me? Or you and me's goin' to have trouble!42

The apostrophe is utilized throughout this preceding passage by clipping the -ing endings, as did Rocky and Margie. But

41 Ibid., p.665.
42 Ibid., p.637.
the main difference between their speech and Joe's speech is the subject/verb combination "I is", and its contraction, "I's" which are so prevalent in Joe's speech. Such subject/verb combinations as Joe's slow the rhythm of his speech because the two elements do not elide as do "I am" and "I'm."

It appears that Rocky and the subgroup he represents, and the Negro, Joe Mott, are most representative of the success of apostrophe used to establish certain rhythms. This natural rhythm is particularly established by juxtaposing the slower speech of Joe Mott to that of his faster-speaking comrades as illustrated in a passage of dialogue between the two sub-groups in Act II. The scene involves Joe shamefacedly acknowledging Rocky's statement of how good Harry Hope has been to Joe. The conversation shifts to harsh words among the group, and back to Joe, who admits his error. In this way, a certain rhythm is developed in the speech of these characters which is reiterated by the juxtaposition of their speeches.

IV. Not only are variations in pronunciation imperative to consider in surveying the success of dialect development in dramatic literature, but the elements of grammar, syntax and morphology are equally important to a complete and fair consideration. In the case of The Iceman Cometh, the best
Illustration of O'Neill's ability to develop the specific element of dialectical syntax is in the character of Piet Wetjoen. Wetjoen's deviation from the basic sentence pattern is noted in the following passage from Act III:

Dot's biggest pipe dream of all. What little brain the poor Limey has left, dot isn't in whiskey pickled, Hickey has made crazy! 43

Several other bits of dialogue from Wetjoen also illustrate a difference in syntax from the standard such as:

I could de whole weight of it lift. 44

And in Act I, this example was observed:

Me, in old days in Transvaal, I vas so tough and strong I grab axle of ox wagon mit full load and lift like feather. 45

Therefore, as illustrated, the substandard syntax of Wetjoen's sentence construction is produced by moving the verb completer to a position preceding the main verb, or shifting the adverbial phrase into a position before the main verb. Thus, O'Neill created, in Wetjoen, a character whose speech has acquired the English vocabulary, but has retained the syntax of his native dialect.

In contrast to these syntactical errors which place Wetjoen in an ethnic dialect group, the grammar and

43 Ibid., p.676.
44 Ibid.
vocabulary of Harry Hope, Mosher, and McGloin prevent them from being considered as standard middle class speakers. For example, in Act I, Harry Hope expresses his disgust for Wetjoen, and for the entire bar clientele, thereby revealing: substandard elements of grammar and vocabulary:

No lip out of you, neither, you Dutch spinach! General, hell! Salvation Army, that's what you ought t' been General in! And now the two of you bum on me. 46

Here, the vocabulary becomes a jargon, a vocabulary pertinent to a specific group.

Additionally, as Hope continues to speak, the variations in his grammar surface. In the following passage, Hope uses the auxiliary verb "have" without the participle ending, a practice that he engages in frequently:

But you've broke the camel's back this time, bejees! 47

Such errors are not always observed by the eye, but are much more apparent to the ear trained to hear standard usage.

Like Harry, his brother-in-law, Ed Mosher, slips into less than standard usage, as is revealed by the subject/verb

46 Ibid., p.602.
47 Ibid.
disagreement in Mosher's retort to Hope, "Wonderful thing about you, Harry, you keep young as you ever was." 48

Another example of Mosher's periodic substandard usage involves a double negative: "There wouldn't be no more fun in robbing the dead." 49 Such usage errors as Mosher's are perhaps more glaring than those of Hope's. Regardless of the extent of error, however, the occurrence of the errors in vocabulary and grammar, themselves deny Hope, Mosher and McGloin membership in the group of middle-class standard speakers.

The sub-group of Hope, Mosher and McGloin represent a distinction between this middle class standard dialect and one sub-standard dialect, in regard to the two elements of grammar and vocabulary. However, the most colorful and extensive contrast of sub-standard to standard diction is that of the bartender/prostitute sub-group represented by Rocky. The following passage from Rocky's dialogue illustrates numerous and diverse variations of the middle class standard dialect:

48 Ibid., p. 604.
49 Ibid., p. 609.
It better be nuttin'! Don't let Hickey put no ideas in your nuts if you wanta stay healthy! (Then angrily) I wish de louse never showed up! I hope he don't come back from de delicatessen. He's gettin' everyone nuts. He's ridin' someone every minute. He's got Harry and Jimmy Tommorrow run ragged, and de rest is hidin' in deir rooms so dey won't have to listen to him. Dey're all actin' cagey wid de booze, too, like dey was scared if dey got too drunk, dey might spill deir guts, or sometin'. And everybody's gettin' a prize grouch on.50

The elimination of auxiliary verbs which produces inaccurate tense frequents not only Rocky's speech, but others in his sub-group. In addition, the passage is plagued with double negatives and disagreement of subject and verb. Such linguistic habits in this proportion are alien to standard English. Some deviations from standard dialect can occur within a standard dialect group, but even those characters who represent the standard in The Iceman Cometh made only one detected error per speaker.

Since relatively few speakers of English have truly flawless speech, an isolated subject/verb disagreement or double negative adds a bit of realism to the character development of Hickey and Larry Slade. But most importantly, the presence of a standard dialect as spoken by Hickey,

50 Ibid., p.631.
Larry, Willie Oban and Jimmy Tomorrow, is necessary for creating a contrasting background against which the sub-standard dialects in the play can be positioned. As a photographer places his subject in a contrasting background to give his work dimension, so has O'Neill placed his sub-standard dialect characters against a middle class standard dialect to give his characters depth and dimension.

V. This depth and dimension of a character is exposed, and the linguistic ability of O'Neill is reaffirmed when a character resorts to purposeful shifting of dialects. Such an action reveals character traits and qualities, perhaps not recognized prior to the shift, such as a certain sensitivity or a bitterness not brought to the surface earlier.

Such dialectical shifts are quite subtle in such a case as Larry Slade's. Larry, an articulate individual, reveals little of himself or his true feelings in his conversations. But a subtle, purposeful dialect shift is observed when Larry, in Act I, speaks to Hugo, a fellow past Anarchist. Larry's disdainful approach to Hugo involves resorting to a sub-standard level of speech immediately after attaining a near-eloquent level of diction, in an explanation of his philosophical detachment:
And I took a seat in the grandstand of philosophical detachment to fall asleep observing the cannibals do their death dance. Ain't I telling him the truth, Comrade Hugo? 51

Here, the shift from consistent standard usage to a sudden substandard usage suggests specific motivation on Larry's part, though it is doubtful whether the vaguely-conscious Hugo comprehended it.

Additionally, in Act I, Willie Oban illustrates what, from his dialogue, appears to be a bitter reflection of his true feelings about his father. Willie, cajoled into law school by a father evading the law, acquires a Harvard education with 'all the trimmings', so to speak. Thus, he speaks quite eloquently on most any subject, including his father. Yet, in the midst of his somewhat facetious ministrations to his peers, Willie speaks abruptly in a near-jargon:

51 Ibid., p.579.
Why omit me from you Who's Who in Dypsomania Land? An unpardonable slight, especially as I am the only inmate of royal blood. Educated at Harvard -- you might have noticed the atmosphere of culture here. My humble contribution. Yes, Generous Stranger -- I trust you're generous, I was born in the purple, the son, but unfortunately not the heir, of the late world-famous Bill Oban, King of the Bucket Shops. A revolution deposed him, conducted by the District Attorney. He was sent into exile. In fact, not to mince matters, they locked him in the can and threw away the key. Alas, his was an adventurous spirit that pined in confinement. And so he died.\textsuperscript{52}

The whole irony of this passage, if this purposeful and short-lived dialect shift is aimed at his father, is Willie's resentment of his father for insisting on Willie's legal education and subsequent speaking ability. Yet, Willie derides his own father's speech, thus victimizing the man who provided the opportunity for eloquence with that same eloquence.

Eloquence rises again to the forefront in the character of Cecil Lewis, the former British war commander. As noted earlier, Lewis' grammar is excellent, yet his vocabulary often exudes ungentlemanly airs. Throughout Acts I and II, this problem has not concerned Lewis. However, by Act III, Lewis, like so many other characters

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., p.579.
in the play, has become quite defensive under Hickey's incessant harassment to recognize his own pipe dreams. Thus, Lewis, encountering Rocky's invitation to a drink, becomes much more formal. In fact, one word "shan't" has not been observed in Lewis' vocabulary up to this point in the play.

It is seen in context in the passage below:

Good morning, gentlemen all. A jolly fine morning, too. An eye-opener? I think not. Not required, Rocky, old chum. Feel extremely fit, as a matter of fact. Though can't say I slept much, thanks to that interfering ass, Hickey, and that stupid bounder of a Boer. I've had about all I can take from that fellow. It's my own fault, of course, for allowing a brute of a Dutch farmer to become familiar. Well, it's come to a parting of the ways now, and good riddance. Which reminds me, here's my key. I shan't be coming back. Sorry to be leaving good old Harry and the rest of you, of course, but I can't continue to live under the same roof with that fellow.53

This shift in dialect usage from a comfortable diction to a near-stuffy usage indicates a somewhat frightened Lewis trying out his new transparent self-assuredness on his friends in order to convince himself of his own inner strength.

53 Ibid., p.674.
However, it is the inner weakness which often surfaces as purposeful dialect shifts occur in certain characters. Larry exposes his philosophical detachment as condescension. Meanwhile, Willie unveils the emotional confusion he feels about his father, and Lewis reveals his insecurity and fear of the truth.

VI. Whereas the dialect shifts apparent in the speech of Larry, Willie and Cecil are purposeful and conscious, certain instances exist in The Iceman Cometh in which a character unconsciously shifts from an acquired dialect back to his native dialect. Hugo slips in and out of his acquired dialect almost in syncopation with his slips in and out of consciousness. For example, in response to Rocky labelling him as a "bughouse bum," Hugo offers his retorts:

Capitalist swine! Bourgeois stool pigeons!
Have the slaves no right to sleep even?
(Then he grins and his manner changes
to a giggling, wheedling playfulness)
Hello, leedle Rocky! Leedle monkeyface!
Vere is your leedle slave girls? (With
an abrupt change to a bullying tone) Don't
be a fool! Loan me a dollar! Damned
bourgeois Wop!54

Since Hugo's level of consciousness is ever questionable, as well as his depth of communication, these dialect shifts

54 Ibid., p.579.
usually resulting from a personal affront to Hugo, are
considered here as unconscious shifts of dialect.

But, whereas Hugo's dialect chronically slips in
and out of his acquired dialect, Joe Mott's acquired
dialect slips by degrees into his native dialect. It is
the emotional pressure of Hickey's harassment, complicated
by the resulting defensiveness of the residents of Hope's
bar, which causes Joe to relapse into the submissive slave-
like speech. The changes in grammar and pronunciation are
particularly noteworthy in the contrasting passages below.
The first passage is from Act I, prior to Hickey's
arrival, when the mental attitudes about the bar are at a
calm status-quo:

If? Man, when I don't want a drink, you
call de morgue, tell dem come take Joe's
body away, 'cause he's sure enuf dead.
Gimme de bottle quick Rocky, before he
changes his mind. 55

Though the above passage is obviously substandard, its
dialect elements produce a dialect somewhere between Harry
Hope's and Rocky's.

But in Act III, Joe's recognition of his own pipe
dream through the guidance of Hickey and by the harassment
of his fellow pipe dreamers, cause Joe to rely on his native

55 Ibid., p.586.
dialect to express his previously unexpressed opinions about himself and the group in the bar.

You's right, Larry. Bad luck come in de door when Hickey come. I's an old gamblin' man and I knows bad luck when I feels it! But it's white man's bad luck. He can't jinx me! De bread's cut and I's finished my job. Do I get de drink I's earned? I's finished wid dis dump for keeps. Here's de key to my room. I ain't comin' back. I's goin' to my folks where I belong. I don't stay where I's not wanted. I's sick and tired of messin' round wid white men.56

This passage denotes distinct dialect changes. The contraction "I's" appears some seven times. Additionally, the syntax is that of the simple kernel sentence throughout the passage, whereas, adverbial clauses, compound and complex patterns emerge in the Act I passage. These alterations of usage in grammar and syntax suggest that the emotional stimulus from Hickey has brought Joe Mott by degrees back to his linguistic origins.

VII. The variations in the language of O'Neill's characters in The Iceman Cometh indicate sexual, chronological, geographical, professional, and ethnic restrictions. But these diverse levels of vocabulary and syntax present in the play suggest an ethical or moral individualization

56 Ibid., p.673.
as well. That is, certain phraseology can reflect a character's moral attitudes.

Rocky, the bartender/pimp, for example, chooses words which indicate his lack of respect for people, as well as a lack of respect for religion. His reference to Hope's periodic thrift marathons is that of "gettin' one of his tightwad buns on."57 Also, Rocky precedes his remark about Hugo as a "bughouse bum" with "Aw, fer chris' sake..."58 Such vocabulary reflects not only lack of breeding, but lack of respect for anything meaningful as a result of that breeding.

Additionally, the fact that Rocky can "fix the cops for dem so's dey can hustle widout gettin' pinched," even if taken out of context, would indicate a low point of morality and ethics. But the choice of vocabulary, especially, illustrates this lack of morality in Rocky.

Joe Mott, as well, demonstrates his appreciation of ethical behavior in his statement: "I pays my sugar on de dot, and de cops and I is friends."59 Here again, the vocabulary has the strongest impact in reflecting moral attitudes, such as "paying sugar". Therefore, it is the vocabulary, overall, which indicates individual moral and ethical values.

57 Ibid., p.578.
58 Ibid., p.579.
59 Ibid., p.601.
CHAPTER III

THE LONG VOYAGE HOME

Though the setting of The Long Voyage Home is similar to the environment of The Iceman Cometh, and the faces of certain characters look familiar, but more severe, the pace of The Long Voyage Home is more rapid than that of The Iceman Cometh. The basis for the rapid pace of this play is that The Long Voyage Home is a one-act play demanding the building of climax and denouement in almost rapid-fire succession, whereas The Iceman Cometh has three additional acts to produce these necessary dramatic steps.

In addition, there is a feeling of transience in the The Long Voyage Home. In contrast to The Iceman Cometh, in which the characters were almost permanently sedentary throughout the play, the characters in The Long Voyage Home are actively involved in the workings of the play. They are transient characters, either completing a voyage and preparing to ship out again, or completing one final voyage and awaiting that last trip home.

The truth about each transient character is reflected in the title, The Long Voyage Home, as each one is making some individual struggle to get home -- to whatever home is for him. Thus, the key to this play, and the impact of the
title lie in this word "home" with its individual connotations for each character. In a general view, home is where one belongs, or feels he belongs. The realization that one does not "belong" can be a devastating experience, as when Yank in The Hairy Ape discovers he is not accepted within the human society as he knows it, and he dies trying to reestablish some identity.

Home connotes security in one's identity, acceptance and affection from others. These are drives so basic to human nature, that home becomes analogous to the womb, as men struggle to find and return to their origins. These origins have deep significance. For not only is man searching for the return to a warm hearth or a protecting womb, but also striving toward a reunion with his God. If this title The Long Voyage Home were considered in regard to O'Neill's constantly thwarted efforts to find the God he could truly accept and believe in, then this title would infer the long, arduous years spent trying to find one's God, with no better results than continued searching and impending failure.

Such failure is reflected by the fate of Olson, a character in the play determined to keep his money and return home to Sweden to the farm. Upon returning from his "final" voyage, Olson visits a waterfront bar with his sailing friends, all of whom are on shore leave from the
tramp steamer, Glencairn. Two of the sailors, Driscoll and Cocky, take their drunken cohort, Ivan, back to the hotel. In their absence, Olson, who remains behind in the bar, is coerced into drinking a ginger beer he does not know is drugged. Olson "passes out" as a result, and is taken to a ship leaving port, as per an agreement between Nick, the agent, and the ship's commander. Consequently, Olson's plans for returning home permanently are delayed indefinitely by a force he could not control.

An analogy drawn from this one-act play, suggests that no matter how determined man is to find his identity, or to belong to the temporal or spiritual society, his efforts are frustrated by an arbitrary power which prevents successful union of man to man, or man to God. But, unlike The Iceman Cometh, which reflects the stagnation in the will of man, The Long Voyage Home provides a ray of hope, a continuation of the searching for truth, rather than ignoring it or blinding oneself to it.

To make a strong impact with this theme in only one act, each dramatic element must be strong and believable. Setting, plot, and characterization must be credible and strong.

In The Long Voyage Home, the setting is a London waterfront dive, which could almost pass as Harry Hope's bar under new management. The major difference, however, is the location, since only on the London waterfront could
this plot have real credibility. For it is doubtful that the practice of "shanghaiing", which is the basis for the plot, could have occurred on American shores in 1917. Therefore, as the plot is conceived, it is unified with the setting.

As a result of this unity of setting and plot, the characterization in the play must be developed in coordination with it. Thus, each one of the eleven characters in The Long Voyage Home who is placed in this London waterfront setting speaks in a substandard dialect. Since no character within this particular environment would conceivably speak the language as O'Neill knew it and spoke it, these variations in the speech of the characters are all sub-standard. These specific substandard dialects in The Long Voyage Home, including Cockney, Irish brogue, Swedish, and Russian, will be grouped accordingly for consideration in this chapter.

The substandard pronunciation by the various dialect speakers in The Long Voyage Home is considerably more extensive proportionately, than that of The Iceman Cometh. Since there are no contrasting middle-class standard speakers in the play, each character's speech is substandard. This is reflected, particularly, in the area of phonology. A brief examination of some dialogue from the play will reveal vowel respellings, consonant substitutions, and a plethora of
apostrophes in initial and final positions. However, each of the four dialect groups makes specific use of each of these elements in order to create as many of the dialects as can be developed for that given situation and location.

I. The patterns of pronunciation for each dialect group might be easier to perceive in *The Long Voyage Home* if the dialogue were verbalized in production, since the rhythms of each dialect can be discerned only with some difficulty when read. However, some patterns produced by stressed vowel respellings and consonant substitutions do emerge from each dialect group for consideration here.

There is a more comprehensive utilization of the respelling of stressed vowels in *The Long Voyage Home* than in *The Iceman Cometh*. This is perhaps because the extensive Cockney dialect present in the former, is best represented through vowel respelling. Fat Joe, proprietor of the waterfront bar, best represents the Cockney dialect group, which includes Nick, Maggie, Freda, Kate, and Cocky. But only four of these six speakers are provided with enough dialogue to support any assertions about this dialect group. Thus, Mag and Kate are eliminated from consideration in favor of Fat Joe, Nick, Freda, and Cocky.

Within this group of four, one of the more commonly observed stressed vowel respellings is the (ae) vowel
phoneme as in ("cat") respelled and pronounced as (ar).

This respelling is observed in and illustrated by the following excerpts from Fat Joe's dialogue:

Blimey if bizness ain't 'arf slow tonight.
I donnow wot's 'appened. Ho, you Nick!
Wot's the name o' that wessel put in at the dock jest arter noon?59

Two instances of this particular respelling occur in "half" as "'arf" and "after" as "arter." Similarly, Nick reflects such respellings in his speech, as noted in his negating of Joe's statement about the availability of sailing men:

Not fur this ship, ole buck. The capt'n an' mate are bloody slave-drivers, an' they're bound down round the "orn. They 'arf starved the 'ands on the larst trip 'ere, an' no one'll dare ship on 'er.60

In this passage, "'arf" reappears accompanied by "last" as "larst." Additionally, Freda's speech indicates similar usage in this question to Olson:

An' you'll git another ship up there arter you've 'ad a vacation?61

In this passage, the recurrence of "after" as "arter" not only affirms the presence of this vowel respelling among


60 Ibid., p.495.

61 Ibid., p.502.
the four Cockney characters, but suggests that its occurrence is limited to this (ae) phoneme, immediately proceeded by an (s) or (f) phoneme, as further illustrated by Cocky's comment:

An' a glarse o' ginger beer fur our blarsted love-child 'ere.62

Here, the (ae) vowel phoneme is proceeded by an (s) rather than an (f). Yet the resulting pronunciation is the same. But this respelling is limited to these two aforementioned phoneme combinations, since no other consonant combined with this particular vowel phoneme has been respelled in this manner.

Several other vowel respellings shared by these four characters are present. One of these is a respelling of (-e) as in (bet) as a (-u) as in (but), but it is also limited. This respelling is observed in the speech of Fat Joe and Nick, whereby they consistently pronounce "yes" as "yus" throughout the play; but this respelling is observed in no other use of this (-e) vowel phoneme in their speech. It is however, a bit more frequent and varied in Freda's speech:

Ow, you ain't gointer leave me, are yer?
An' we 'avin sech a nice talk, an' all.63

62 Ibid., p.497
63 Ibid., p.504.
This respelling of (-u) as (-e) in "sech" is also apparent in Freda's later admonition to Olson: "Fer Gawd's sake, shet that door". Therefore, in spite of the limited occurrence of this vowel respelling, it is shared by three of the four speakers of the Cockney dialect.

In fact, one other vowel respelling is shared by these same three characters. It is the (-ou) vowel combination as in (out) respelled as (-ah) as in (father). Nick, for example, pronounces "about" as "abaht" in this statement: "An' I ain't slingin' me 'ook abaht the 'ole bleedin' town fur now man." Likewise, Joe uses this respelling in pronouncing "out" as "aht" in the following: "'Op it aht o' this!" Additionally, Freda utilizes this respelling when she asks Olson to tell her "abaht" himself.

There are numerous other distinctive speech characteristics of this nature throughout this play among the Cockney speakers, but not all are present in each of the speakers. Consequently, the above-mentioned respellings were considered, since they are noted commonly among the majority of the four Cockney speakers.

64 Ibid.
65 Ibid., p.494.
66 Ibid.
Though the Cockney dialect does produce the largest number of stressed vowel respellings in this play, the Irish brogue and the Russian dialect create distinctive respellings of their own. From the eight vowel respellings in Driscoll's Irish brogue, one was more noticeable than the others. The respelling of (I) as in (five) as (-oi) as in (boy) captured the flavor of the brogue better than any other respellings observed in the play:

"'Tis a foine sight to see a man wid some sense in his head insteapd av a damn fool the loike av us."67

Here, both "fine" and "like" are respelled with the (-oi) vowel phoneme. Yet inconsistencies are noted in the same passage since the words "sight" and "alive" are not respelled. In spite of this inconsistency, however, this respelling is effective to a degree in creating Driscoll's Irish brogue.

A unique respelling of stressed vowels surfaces in the speech of Ivan, a Russian sailor. Ivan's dialogue in The Long Voyage Home, like that of Hugo in The Iceman Cometh, is infrequent and drunkenly muddled, but repetitive. Ivan's habit of doubling the vowel (I), as a consonant is doubled, is particular to his speech. Of the six times Ivan speaks in the play, he says, "I don' li-ike dis place" three times.

67 Ibid., p.498.
It is difficult to discern the exact pronunciation of this doubled vowel as Ivan uses it. As it is written, this pronunciation could suggest only Ivan's drunken condition and subsequently slurred speech, rather than any ethnic dialect distinction.

The stressed vowel respellings become even more scarce in Olson's speech, since the flavor of his Swedish dialect is inherent in the substitution of consonants, rather than any stressed vowel respellings. There are three such substitutions of special import in Olson's dialect. They include the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
th &= t \\
j &= y \\
z &= s
\end{align*}
\]

The following passage of dialogue will illustrate all three of these consonant substitutions in Olson's dialect.

She iss eighty-two. You know Miss Freda, I don't see my mother or my brother in, let me tank - must be more than ten year. ...So dis time I say to myself: Don't drink one drink, Ollie, or sure you don't get home. And I want go home dis time. I feel homesick for farm and to see my people again. Yust like little boy, I feel homesick.\(^68\)

In this passage, each of the abovementioned elements are present, and these elements do occur throughout Olson's...
dialogue, though some discrepancies are apparent. The first consonant substitution noted in the above passage is really a consonant addition. The phoneme (-z) as pronounced in "is" is replaced by the (-s) phoneme, which is created by the doubling of the (-s). Other substitutions, like (-t) for the hard (-th) phoneme and (-d) for the soft (-th) phoneme appear in "tank" and "dis" respectively. However, within the above passage, the word "than" shows no alteration to what should become "dan". The final and more familiar of the consonant substitutions in the Swedish dialect is the replacement of the (-j) as in (jewelry) for the (-y) as in (yes). As noted, the dialect development is not flawless in Olson's speech. However, the characteristics represented do give Olson's dialect a definite Swedish flavor.

It is only in the character of Olson that this consonant substitution, which flourished among the characters in *The Iceman Cometh*, is very fully developed. Overall, the respelling of stressed vowels is the means by which a good portion of the phonology of the dialects in *The Long Voyage Home* was developed.

II. A brisk overview of these various dialectical elements in *The Long Voyage Home* suggests a resemblance of the dialogue to a maze. In fact, it takes the eye some-
time to adjust to the extensive graphic representation of the dialects in this play. Even if readability were no problem, the rhythm and flavor of these various ethnic and regional dialects do not surface. Dramatic language and the dialects which create dramatic language in this play demand verbalization in performance to give life to these various dialects. The eye alone makes the character's speech one-dimensional. Since there are very few words in The Long Voyage Home which require only the eye to fully discern dialectical distinctions, reliance on eye dialect as a means of dialect distinction is quite limited.

In fact, only three specific instances of eye dialect are observed in The Long Voyage Home. Two of these occur in Freda's speech and one occurs in Kate's. Freda's uses of the words "lovely" and "again" are represented as "luv'ly" and "agen" respectively, and Kate's reference to "Russia" is represented as "Russha." Therefore, though there is some question about the identification of some four other spellings, these three examples, just discussed, compile the only definitive list of uses of eye dialect in The Long Voyage Home. It is the brevity of this list which affirms the lack of eye dialect in this O'Neill one-act play.
III. What *The Long Voyage Home* lacks in eye dialect, it makes up for in the frequency of the use of apostrophe. Its presence in this play exceeds its use in *The Iceman Cometh*, proportionate to the lengths of the plays. Of course, the Cockney dialect accounts for a considerable percentage of the apostrophe use in *The Long Voyage Home*, since it replaces the initial (-h) and the final (-g) in -ing bound morphemes, and contracts numerous subject/verb combinations.

All of these apostrophe uses are apparent in this passage of dialogue with which Fat Joe opens the play:

> Blimey if bizness ain't 'arf slow tonight. I donnow wot's 'appened. The place is like a bleedin' tomb. Where's all the sailormen, I'd like to know? Ho, you Nick. Wot's the name o' that wessel put in at the dock below jest arter noon? 69

The substitution of the apostrophe for (-h) in "'arf" (half), and for the (-g) in "bleedin'", as well as for the contracted forms of "wot's" for "what is/has", and "where's" for "where is/has," generally occurs throughout the play in the Cockney dialect. Generally, these substitutions by apostrophe are represented in the proportion observed in the above passage, with one exception. The apostrophe as replacement for the initial (-h) in this Cockney dialect is proportionately more frequent than is apparent here.

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69 Ibid., p.493.
In contrast, however, other dialects in *The Long Voyage Home* do not depend on the apostrophe as extensively as does the Cockney dialect. Driscoll, for example, speaking in an Irish brogue, most frequently eliminates the (-g) of the bound morpheme -ing. This is indicated, like the Cockney, by substituting the apostrophe in that position.

Any substitutions of initial letters in Driscoll's dialect result from subject/verb combinations, as illustrated below:

So ut's you, is ut? 'An the same damn rat's-hole, sure enough. I rememb'red or six years back 'twas here I was sthripped av me last shillin' whin I was aslape. God stiffen ye, come none av your dog's thricks on me this trip or I'll — 70

The apostrophe is here replacing the (-g) in "shilling." 71

But it also contracts subject/verb combinations like "ut's" and "twas". Here, the subject/verb combination "it was" is observed in an archaic and somewhat literary form as "'Twas". In a later passage, the present tense of this combination is seen as "'tis." Ironically, though such a form is not standard, it is present and acceptable in the language of poetry.

One other initial substitution by the apostrophe is quite possibly in error. That is, the word "'An" in the first line of the passage, when compared to other spellings of "and" in Driscoll's dialect, has the apostrophe

70 Ibid., p.496.
71 Here the (-ing) is not a bound morpheme, but part of the whole word "shilling."
after the (-n) to replace the lost (-d). Thus "An'" should be the proper substandard spelling. In spite of this apparent error, Driscoll's use of initial apostrophe gives a lyrical quality to his speech, as it often does to poetry.

However, the use of apostrophe in any form has little purpose in the speech of Ivan, the Russian sailor. The only observable instances of substitution by apostrophe are in some isolated uses of "don't", in which the contraction is further contracted to "don'". In addition to respelling of the contraction of "that's" as "dot's", this is the extent of utilization of apostrophe in Ivan's Russian dialect of the English standard.

Whereas the presence of apostrophe in Ivan's speech is insignificant in relation to the Cockney speech of the majority of characters and to the Irish brogue of Driscoll, the apostrophe, as a means of reducing word length, is practically non-existent in the speech of Olson, the Swede. Olson does not clip his(-ing) endings or eliminate initial consonants in his pronunciation. In fact, there are even limited instances of standard contractions, since Olson's emphatic pronunciation of the (-z) phoneme as (-s) in forms of the verb "to be" restricts any tendencies to contract the verb. Any attempts to contract the subject and verb of a representative sentence would be
nothing short of humorous. "Cocky iss very drunk, too, and Drisc--" 72 Such a combination would be difficult to contract and maintain the emphatic (-s) on the verb.

Not only is the substitution of the (-s) phoneme for the (-z) phoneme apparent in this passage, but also the lack of apostrophe in the construction of the words in the sentence. Even with the consonant substitutions which are present, Olson's dialect speech reflects a concerted effort to speak as clearly and as correctly as possible, a language which, for him, is difficult to use.

This difficulty which Olson experiences with the English language is illustrated more clearly by considering the syntax and specific grammatical areas of his dialect, which will be done at a later time.

Meanwhile, it is important to recognize some specific points regarding the use of apostrophe in the whole of The Long Voyage Home. Whereas Olson's dialect can be graphically represented unaided by the apostrophe, other dialect groups in The Long Voyage Home, by necessity, must utilize it in order to transmit accurately dialectical distinctions. Additionally, some dialect groups require its use more frequently than others. However, consideration

of the apostrophe in this play is more than a matter of degree of usage. Rather, its importance lies in the position of the apostrophe in the word in creating specific dialect pronunciation characteristics.

IV. The apostrophe is as important as stressed vowel respelling and consonant substitutions in developing the phonological aspects of O'Neill's plays. But the phonology of a dialect, to reiterate, works in conjunction with other elements of dialect. Elements of syntax, grammar and morphology are equally important in representing specific dialect groups set apart from the middle class standard. However, as previously mentioned, no middle class standard is present in The Long Voyage Home as a background against which the various substandard dialects may be positioned.

In fact, unlike certain characters in The Iceman Cometh, there is no speaker even close to standard in this play. Each character falls prey to one or several elements of substandard usage, and where one substandard element is not apparent, another is emphasized. Olson, for example does not utilize the apostrophe in his dialect, but the variations in syntax are quite apparent.

The major syntactical distinction in Olson's dialect is his elimination of the noun determiner, or the article, as illustrated below:
No, I don't never ship on sea no more.
I got all sea I want for my life --
too much hard work for little money.
Yust work, work, work on ship. 'I
don't want more.73

Apart from the double negatives which clutter Olson's speech, the absence of a noun determiner or article is the most obvious substandard usage detected by both the trained and untrained ear. It is so noticeable because it makes the rhythm of Olson's speech halting and awkward, almost staccato. Such rhythm is strengthened by the very basic sentence construction previously discussed. In spite of these substandard elements, however, Olson's speech remains easily comprehensible, because the representation of substandard pronunciation is not involved in developing Olson's dialect.

However, the representation of substandard pronunciation is combined with the area of syntax in the Irish brogue as spoken by Driscoll. In this dialect, some vowel and consonant respelling and utilization of apostrophe are joined with periodic alterations of syntax. However, these variations in syntax are incidental in comparison to Olson's speech. Yet, when these syntactical alterations occur, they do not escape notice, perhaps because they are uniquely different from the English standard.

73 Ibid., p.502.
Ut's fat ye are, Katy, dear, an': I never cud endure skinny wimmin.\textsuperscript{74}

If translated into standard English, much of the color of the speech is lost. In spite of its substandard identification, the syntax of "Ut's fat ye are, Katy, dear..." tends to subdue some otherwise unpleasant vowel sounds inherent in "Katy, you are fat."

A brief comparison of this passage of Driscoll's dialogue with Olson's previously noted comment on the sea will validate the proposal that O'Neill used all the elements of dialect that he could to develop dialect in his plays. But he was careful to utilize the specific elements of dialect to the degree that they most effectively represented a dialect. In other words, in The Long Voyage Home, if syntax were the distinguishing dialect element, pronunciation and vocabulary would not be developed as extensively. However, if pronunciation were the major factor in developing a specific dialect, grammar and syntax would play a minor role.

Thus, the Cockney dialect, which involves considerable respelling and apostrophe use, shows no serious syntactical errors. Substandard grammar usage, however, is apparent in this dialect, particularly in the areas of negation and subject/verb agreement; but these errors are

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., p.500.
not present to the extent that vowel respelling is in the Cockney dialect. The double negative, for example, is noted sporadically in Fat Joe's speech: "'Op it, will yer? There ain't no time to be dawdlin'. See? 'Urry!'"\textsuperscript{75} The double negative in "ain't no" is one of the most common errors of its type in the English language, and it occurs in the speech of other Cockney dialect characters.

Likewise, substandard grammar occurs in other forms, as well, and in other dialects besides the Cockney. A passage from Kate's limited dialogue illustrates an error in subject/verb agreement which is also observed in Driscoll's Irish brogue. Kate's error is illustrated below:

\begin{quote}
Oo-ee! That wasn't what you was goin' to say, you bad Cocky, you!\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

Driscoll relies on this same third person verb usage with the second person subject, (with the only difference being a variation in pronunciation of the subject):

\begin{quote}
...Ye was moanin' for girrls an' whin they come you sit gruntin' loike a pig in a sty.\textsuperscript{77}
\end{quote}

Though O'Neill balances out the elements of phonology, morphology, and grammar in the dialects in \textit{The Long Voyage Home}, he does not restrict identical grammatical errors to

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., p.505.  
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., p.501.  
\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
one singular dialect.

In still another dialect group, errors occur in references to verb tense. In his Swedish dialect, Olson does not appear to recognize tense. No matter what time reference is concerned, Olson speaks in the simple present tense, as illustrated here:

You know, Miss Freda, I don't see my mother or my brother in -- let me tank -- must be more than ten year. I write once in while and she write many time; and my brother he write me, too. My mother say in letter I should come home right away. My brother he write same ting, too. He want me to help him on farm. I write back always I come soon; and I mean all time to go back home at end of voyage. But I come ashore, I take one drink, I take many drinks, I get drunk, I spend all money, I have to ship away for other voyage. So dis time I say to myself: Don't drink one drink, Ollie, or, sure, you don't get home. And I want go home dis time. I feel homesick for farm and to see my people again. Yust like little boy, I feel homesick. Dat's why I don't drink noting tonight but dis - belly-wash! 78

The lack of tense development coupled with the loss of the article or noun determiner gives Olson's speech its dialectical flavor. It is the syntax and grammar which play an integral part in developing Olson's dialect. But these same elements of grammar and syntax play an important role as well, in rounding out and giving dimension to the various other dialects in the play. These variations of grammar and syntax are balanced with the variations in

78 Ibid., p.506.
phonology to provide dialects which no middle class person in England or America would speak, or want to speak.

V. Some speakers want to speak in a dialect different from their own, if it is in their interest to do so.

Larry Slade, in The Iceman Cometh, purposely stepped momentarily from standard to substandard usage in order to subtly deride Hugo. But no characters in The Long Voyage Home move from standard usage, as Larry did, because no one speaks standard middle class English. Additionally, those who attempt to adjust their substandard dialects upward have little success, for they have no experience or environment from which to draw.

Consequently, any attempts at improvement of speech are only vaguely apparent, since the change would be in such a small degree. Such is the case with Fat Joe, who tries to adjust his speech slightly upward to impress his sailor patrons. Under ordinary circumstances, Fat Joe's dialect speech sounds much like the following directions to his employees:

'Urry, 'urry, 'an't yer? The other blokes'll be 'ere in arf a mo'. 'ere, you two, tike 'im in under the arms like 'e was drunk. Tike 'im to the Amindra - yer knows that, don't yer? - two docks above. Nick'll show yer. An' you, Nick, down't yer leave the bleedin' ship till the cap'n guvs yu this bloke's advance - full month's pay - five quid, d'yer 'ear? 79

79 Ibid., p.508.
Here, phonological elements of this Cockney dialect, as discussed previously, are apparent, with grammatical errors at a minimum.

But the substandard pronunciation, via vowel respellings and apostrophe usage, in the previous passage is more subdued in the brief dialogue Joe carries on with his patrons:

Yer must be mistaken. This is a honest place, this is.\[^{80}\]

The above comment contains definite substandard pronunciation, grammar, and syntax, as illustrated, by "yer" for "you." "a" honestrather than "an" honest, and the repetition of "this is" respectively. However, when compared to the series of errors in any two sentences of the lengthier illustration, it becomes apparent that Fat Joe made some effort to improve or standardize his speech—probably for the sake of business.

This incident represents a purposeful, but limited effort to change a dialect. However, Fat Joe is the only character who attempts to change his speech, or who has any real reason to do so.

VI. Additionally, no character in The Long Voyage Home is motivated unconsciously to resort to any other dialect,\[^{80}\] **Ibid.**, p.496.
be it an improvement, or a relapse into a native dialect. As noted, Fat Joe's motivation to alter his speech is conscious and purposeful. But, overall, the dramatic situation of The Long Voyage Home does not promote adoption of different speech patterns among its characters.

Consequently, the emotional pressure which produced certain unconscious dialect adjustments in The Iceman Cometh is simply not present in The Long Voyage Home. As a matter of fact, there would not have been enough time, considering the limited length of The Long Voyage Home, to create a situation inducing such linguistic behavior as observed in Joe Mott in The Iceman Cometh.

VII. Though no similarities are apparent between The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home in reference to subconscious dialect adjustment, there is a near parallel between the two plays insofar as certain dialects in the two plays reveal moral and ethical traits. In The Iceman Cometh, Rocky, a part-time bartender, and part-time pimp reveals his moral attitudes in his vocabulary. In The Long Voyage Home, Nick, a part-time bartender and part-time crimp reveals his moral attitudes in his comment about himself and the law:

...Wot wi'v the peelers li'ble to put me away in the bloody jail fur crimpin', an' all?81

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81 Ibid., p.494.
Nick's reference here to the police is "the peelers." In itself, it suggests a disrespect for the law, but the very activity for which Nick acts as agent, illustrates his lack of respect for human life and freedom. His only concern about his participation in such an activity is getting caught.

Nick and Rocky both ran profitable illegitimate businesses in selling people, and their vocabularies reflect a lack of respect for anything of value to human nature. O'Neill has provided these two characters with such strongly substandard dialects that it tends to reflect this disrespect.

Yet, in spite of the similarities in character types between The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home, as well as the proximity of scene development between the two, the two plots are totally divergent. Consequently, the approach to dialect development in The Long Voyage Home is different, in many cases, from The Iceman Cometh.

The development of phonology involved almost opposite approaches between the two plays. Whereas the vowel respelling was sporadic and infrequent in The Iceman Cometh, it is consistent and frequent in The Long Voyage Home. Additionally, where the apostrophe suggests generally substandard diction in The Iceman Cometh, it provides distinct phonological characteristics in The Long Voyage Home.
The element of grammar in its various substandard forms is proportionately greater in *The Iceman Cometh*, yet syntax is more purposefully and finitely developed in *The Long Voyage Home*.

Because of the more numerous dialect groups in *The Iceman Cometh*, the element of morphology is more generously developed in it than in *The Long Voyage Home*, since each dialect group has a morphology particular to it. Additionally, in *The Long Voyage Home*, some substandard morphology is common to a majority of speakers, limiting the morphology.

It is interesting to note, here, that, whereas a singular study of the dialect development of an O'Neill play reveals his linguistic ability, a comparative study indicates the extent of his ability. Further comparative study, through consideration of *Desire Under the Elms*, may reveal to what extent O'Neill can dialectically individualize his characters.
CHAPTER IV  
DESIRE UNDER THE ELMS  

In contrast to the waterfront saloon settings of The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home, the setting of Desire Under the Elms is a rustic New England farm. The light and the fresh country air so lacking in the two waterfront plays find their place in this rural setting. Yet, the oppressive atmosphere of The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home resurfaces in this play, and a sense of gloom pervades the setting, as noted in O'Neill's first stage directions for Desire Under the Elms:  

...Two enormous elms are on each side of the house. They bend their trailing branches down over the roof. They appear to protect and at the same time subdue. There is a sinister maternity in their aspect, a crushing, jealous absorption. They have developed from their intimate contact with the life of man in the house an appalling humaneness. They brood oppressively over the house. They are like exhausted women resting their sagging breasts and hands and hair on its roof, and when it rains their tears trickle down monotonously and rot on the shingles. 80  

The oppressive atmosphere is represented in these stage directions by the pair of sagging elms flanking the sides of the farmhouse.  

The source of this atmosphere is indicated, in a sense, by the title - Desire Under the Elms. The initial word of this title suggests a sexual reference, and sexual desire is undoubtedly a basic element of the plot. But this title and the ensuing action do not, as critic, Eric Bentley stated, indicate that O'Neill had "sex in the head." The element of desire goes much deeper than sexual desire, to the basic human need for security, which ultimately has some effect on the human sex drive. Each character in Desire Under the Elms has an unsatiated need for personal security obtained through possession of physical, tangible things. It is this need to possess which motivates the actions of each major character. The point of possession is the farm on which a father and his three sons toil.

The father is Ephraim Cabot, owner of the farm. He is a seventy-five year old farmer who over the years has made tillable, fertile soil out of useless, rocky ground. This transformed land represents Ephraim's whole identity and his sense of belonging, since his sweat and blood are a part of that soil. In fact, he would go so far as to free the livestock and burn the house down rather than allow anyone else to possess it.

Yet, each of Ephraim's sons considers a portion of the farm to be his birthright, and works in its fields while awaiting the final breath from Ephraim. The youngest son, Eben, has a vested interest in complete possession of the farm, since he believes that Ephraim stole the property from his mother. It is through full possession of the land that Eben feels he may bring his dead mother peace.

Eben's enduring desire is enhanced when his plan of acquisition through purchase of his brother's shares, is jeopardized by the arrival of Ephraim's young wife, a woman of thirty-five, whose passion to possess the farm equals Eban's.

What O'Neill has done, then, is "to examine the motive behind the affection for the Old Homestead—the desire to possess—and he equates this desire with the animal desire to possess other things." Because of this dream which grows out of a feeling of instability or insecurity, O'Neill's vision of life is without foundation, without creeds or beliefs, struggling for a symbol of security, a few rocky acres of a New England farmstead.

Thus, this New England farm, as the setting of Desires Under the Elms is also the source of conflict which

establishes the plot. It is this very basic human drive for security which forces each character to seek fulfillment in possession of the farm. However, as the desire for gold outweighs the desire for the farm, Simeon and Peter, the two older brothers, head for California, allowing the plot to evolve around the trio of Ephraim, Eban, and Abbie.

As is often observed in O'Neill's plays, the plot thus takes on a classical twist of a January/May marriage entered into by an aging man seeking companionship, and a passionate young woman wanting financial security. Predictably, the union is complicated by the presence of an equally passionate man living on the premises. In this case, the roles are filled by Ephraim, Abbie, and Eben, respectively. The physical attraction and emotional repulsion between Eben and Abby create a sense of sexual ambivalence. Thus, there is a definite element of sexuality in the "desire" noted in the title, but at the heart of the motivation of these characters is a deep and individual need for security.

Not only do the characters in Desire share a common desire or motivation, but they share a common language. In contrast to the preceding discussions of The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home, in which a variety of dialects are developed to individualize character types, the major characters in Desire Under the Elms share one dialect which
is geographically restricted to the New England rural area, and is educationally restricted to the dirt farmer.

In fact, distinctions in personal dialect usage are somewhat limited. That is, certain words within the dialect may be pronounced differently among the dialect group, but the distinctions are few. Consequently, whereas the numerous characters of the plays in Chapters II and III required classification for study, the dialect characters under study in this chapter will be considered as one major group, with consideration and comparisons of its individual members.

I. O'Neill made no apparent attempt to individualize characters dialectically, but he did create in *Desire Under the Elms*, a unique dialect group, the representation of which depends much on the element of phonology. To develop the phonology of this rustic New England dialect, O'Neill utilized (as previously discussed) the respelling of stressed vowels, though with somewhat less frequency than observed in *The Long Voyage Home*. But with only one dialect to deal with in *Desire*, the various vowel respellings which helped to distinguish speech among the characters in *The Long Voyage Home* are not needed for that purpose in this play.

One particular respelling, which also occurs in *The*
Iceman Cometh, changed the spelling and pronunciation of the \((\text{ɔ})\) phoneme (as in bird, word, hurl, serve) to a short \((-u)\) as in (rust). This use is observed in the speech of each of the five characters. Simeon and Peter both pronounce the \((\text{ɔ})\) sound in (work) as the \((-u)\) vowel in (luck), as indicated here in Simeon's comment to Peter:

\[
\text{We've wuked. Give our strength. Give our years. Plowed 'em under in the ground -- rottin' -- makin' soil for his crops.}^{83}
\]

The same phonetic distinction is noted in this fragment of Peter's speech:

\[
\text{An' till he comes, let's yew an' me not wuk a lick,}...
\]

This respelling of the \((\text{ɔ})\) phoneme as \((-u)\) is not restricted to the word "wuk", but is noted in words like "first", "worst" and "curse" in the speech of Ephraim, Eben, and Abbie. Ephraim yells to his sons, as they head for the gold in California, "My cuss on ye!"\(^85\) Even though the word "cuss" as a verb is often heard in the speech of standard speakers, its use as a noun, as in this case, is limited, and definitely substandard. It is, however, representative of one of the respellings utilized.

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\(^{83}\) O'Neill, "Desire Under the Elms," p. 204.

\(^{84}\) Ibid., p. 215.

\(^{85}\) Ibid., p. 223.
to create the rustic flavor of the New England rural dialect.

Another vowel respelling of this type is that of the (-e) as in (bet) for the (-u) as in (but). Though this respelling has been observed in *The Long Voyage Home* in the Cockney dialect, it does not create the same effect in *Desire* because it is used in conjunction with dialect elements which are different from the ones used in *The Long Voyage Home*. At any rate, this dialectical respelling of the (-u) as (-e) is observed among the members of this rustic New England dialect group. For example, Simeon's speech reflects the respelling in the following passage:

...He [Ephraim] druv off in the buggy
all spick 'n' span with the mare all
breshed an' shiny, druv off clackin'
his tongue an' wavin' his whip...86

In this segment of dialogue, "brushed" is respelled as "breshed." Eben repeats this vowel respelling in his pronunciation of "such" in this statement: "Love, I don't take no stock in sech slop."87 Like Eben's speech, the whole family's speech is characterized phonologically by this respelling. Interestingly, there is no variation noted in the speech of the family's newest member, Abbie, who had lived elsewhere in the region. The various vowel

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respellings present in the speech of the men are just as much a part of Abbie’s speech, as observed in her respelling and pronunciation of "just":

Jest one more kiss afore ye go. I’m goin’ t’ miss ye fearful all day. 88

This respelling of "just" as "jest" follows the specific pattern of respelling established among the male dialect speakers in the play.

Another pattern of respelling which has not been observed in either The Iceman Cometh or The Long Voyage Home is the respelling of the (-oi) as in (boil) to the (-I) as in (kite). Interestingly, Driscoll, in his Irish brogue in The Long Voyage Home, respelled the (-I) as (-oi), in direct reversal of this respelling in Desire Under the Elms. Because of its isolated use in the New England rustic dialect, the (-oi) respelling is perhaps the more noteworthy stressed vowel respelling in the dialects of this play. It is observed in such dialogue as the following from Eben:

It was only arter she [Maw] died
I come to think o’ it. Me cookin’ -
do’in’ her work - that made me know her,
suffer her sufferin’ - sh’ed come back
t’ help - come back t’ bile potatoes -
come back t’ fry bacon, come back t’ bake
biscuits... 89

88 Ibid., p.244.
89 Ibid., p.209.
Here, the phoneme (\textsuperscript{-oi}) in the word "boil" is respelled as (\textsuperscript{-I}) in Eben's use of "bile", which is consistent with the suggested pattern.\textsuperscript{90}

Numerous instances of this vowel respelling appear in Ephraim's speech, as represented by the following segment of his soliloquy:

'Twas arter I'd been here two year.
I got weak - despairful - They was a party leavin', givin' up, goin'
West. I jined 'em. We tracked on 'n' on.
We come to broad medders, plains, whar
the soil was black and rich as gold...\textsuperscript{91}

In this passage, the respelling of "joined" as "jined" reinforces the presence of the respelling. However, the word "soil" in the same passage is not respelled, which reflects a certain inconsistency.

Yet, in spite of the inconsistencies noted here in respelling stressed vowels, they are not glaring errors which would distract the viewer from his willing suspension of disbelief. Like the dialects created in The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home, the singular dialect of Desire Under the Elms is sprinkled with inconsistencies in phonology, but the unities of character and setting are not affected.

However, in the phonological development of this New England rustic dialect, one element is glaringly absent.\textsuperscript{90} One inconsistency does surface in this passage, however. The (\textsuperscript{\theta}) phoneme in "work" is not respelled.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{90} O'Neill, "Desire Under the Elms," p.237.
That element, the consonant substitution which contributed so much to the dialect development of *The Iceman Cometh*, is only present in very isolated instances in *Desire Under the Elms*. There are no readily observable instances of a phonemic substitution, even though some consonant substitutions are present. For example, substitutions of (-k) for the hard (-c) as in (cat) only represent dialect distinctions to the eye and would not be aurally meaningful.

II. The aforementioned consonant substitutions and equally isolated occurrences of word respellings which involve no phonemic alteration make up the list of words which may be actually termed eye dialect in *Desire Under the Elms*. In fact, there are as few instances of eye dialect in this play as were apparent in *The Long Voyage Home*. Only four instances are actually pinpointed in *Desire*, and the most frequent, by right of its structure and function, is the pronoun "you." There is no difference noted between the pronunciations of (y-o-u), and (y-e-w) as it appears in the text of the play, which suggests identification of the latter spelling as eye dialect.

However, there is no observable pattern in the shift in usage from "yew" to "ye" which occurs in the play text. What is noted, in any case, is the differing effects the two pronoun pronunciations have on the pace of the dialogue.
"Ye" may heighten the pace of the characters' speech and create a stronger rhythm, as opposed to the "y-e-w" spelling which slows the pace of speech because it demands full pronunciation of the phonemes involved. Consequently, even though "yew" is a form of eye dialect in *Desire Under the Elms*, it still has an effect on the phonology of the dialect insofar as the pace and rhythm are concerned.

The appearance of both forms of the pronoun you, is noted in the following passage in which Abbie attempts to seduce Eben:

I'll sing fur ye! I'll die fur ye! Don't cry, Eben! I'll take yer Maw's place! I'll be everythin' she was t' ye! Let me kiss ye, Eben! Don't be afeered! I'll kiss ye pure, Eben--same's if I was a Maw t' ye--an' ye kin kiss me back 's if yew was my son--my boy--sayin' good-night t' me. Kiss me, Eben...92

The frequency of "ye" in this passage is much greater than that of the form "yew." So much of the passage is expressed in a state of passion, that the pace must be faster; hence, the reliance on the shorter "ye" form.

Unlike the eye dialect of "yew" which functions in two dimensions, the remaining examples of eye dialect in the text of *Desire Under the Elms* are simply that, eye dialect. Phonemically, the three words "agen", "likker" and "enuf" are identical to their counterparts, even though

they are spelled differently. The word "agen", exclusive of the prestige pronunciation, is pronounced according to the standard, in which the stressed vowel diphthong (-ai) is pronounced as ('-e') as in 'ten'. It is observed in its respelled form as eye dialect in the dialogue which ensues between Eben and Abbie when he discovers her motives for seducing him:

Eben: I hain't wantin t' kiss ye never agen! I'm wantin' t' forget I ever sot eyes on ye!

Abbie: Eben!--ye mustn't--wait a spell --I want t' tell ye...

Eben: I'm a-goin in t' git drunk. I'm a-goin t' dance.

Abbie: If I could make it--'s if he'd [the baby] never come up between us --if I could prove t' ye I wa'n't schemin t' steal from ye --...if I could do it--ye'd love me agen, wouldn't ye? Ye'd kiss me agen? Ye wouldn't never leave me, would ye?93

Unlike the pronoun "yew", this adverb "agen" has no observable function on a phonological level, and it is thus classified as eye dialect.

The pronunciation of "enough" does not vary either when dialectically respelled as "enuf." Ephraim, Eben, and Abbie all use this dialectical spelling whenever the word

93 Ibid., p.258-259.
is used. For example, the reference to it in Eben's comment following suggests substandard usage, but only in the visual dimension:

If I told him, the old skunk'd jest be stinkin' mean enuf t' take it out on that baby. 94

Though the word "enuf" does not appear frequently, it is consistently spelled in this substandard form when it does appear.

Likewise, the word "liquor" occurs infrequently, but its substandard spelling is always "likker" in the text of the play. The following passage from Ephraim's dialogue includes this respelling:

Ye're fellin' right chipper, hain't ye. Whar'd ye steal the likker? 95

The dialectical respelling of "likker," as well as the previously discussed dialectical respellings, does not alter the phonemic structure of these words. Their sporadic appearance throughout the play indicates a sort of appeasement for the reader whose mind's eye can spot the substandard spelling, but whose ear does not hear the actual production of the dialectical sounds. Consequently, eye dialect is a sparse commodity, as it is in The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home.

94 Ibid., p.260.
95 Ibid., p.246.
III. The scarcity of eye dialect is accompanied, as it has been in consideration of the two previous plays, by a corresponding abundance of apostrophe. As a means of phonemic alterations of the standard pronunciation, the apostrophe is a powerful element of dialect development. It has had a strong and vivid effect on the dialect development of The Iceman Cometh and The Long Voyage Home. The reliance on apostrophe has been equally extensive in Desire Under the Elms. But since only one dialect is involved here, the apostrophe could be considered from some very specific angles, including the substitution of the apostrophe for the (–t) in (to), the (–f) in (of), and the (–g) in the (–ing) bound morpheme. The apostrophe usage in Desire is more consistently utilized than any of the other dialectical elements in the play.

As a substitution for the (–o) in (to), the apostrophe speeds up the speech of characters considerably. In the following passage of Ephraim's dialogue, this substitution is noted, as well as a variety of other less frequent substitutions:

Will ye ever know me – 'r will any man 'r woman? No, I calc'late 't wa'n't t' be.\[96\]

\[96\] Ibid., p.236.
In conjunction with the (-o) substitution in (to), some four different variations of apostrophe are used in these two sentences. They are summarized below:

or - 'r
calculate - calc'late
it - 't
wasn't - wa'n't

Though these apostrophe uses, as well as others, are frequently noted in the play, (to) is considered because of its repetitive use as an infinitive and preposition. Likewise, the apostrophe substitution in (of) and (-ing) morphemes come under consideration because of their repetitive use.

The apostrophe replaces the (-f) in (of). It is noted repeatedly in the threat Eben makes to Abbie to get revenge on her and his father:

I'll git squar' with the old skunk
an' yew! I'll tell him the truth
'bout the son he's so proud o'. Then
I'll leave ye here t' pizen each other --
with Maw comin' out o' her grave at
nights--an' I'll go t' the gold fields
o' California whar Sim and Peter be!97

The interesting point regarding the substitution of the (-f) in (of) is the principle of eliding. Frequently, in

97 Ibid., p. 257.
this play, the (-o) precedes an initial vowel word, a practice which in standard usage could cause a problem, since effort is required to pronounce the two vowels in sequence. This is noted below in Peter's comment in Act I about his father:

He's slaved himself t' death. He's slaved Sim 'n' me 'n' yew t' death - on'y none o' us haint died--yit.98

In the above passage, what would normally elide is the consonant phoneme with a preceding initial vowel. Instead they become two separately pronounced vowels, which demand more careful enunciation. Overall, however, this apostrophe usage works well within the text of the play to help create the flavor of the dialect.

Additionally, the morpheme (-ing) bound to present tense verb forms is altered by the apostrophe which replaces the (-g), as in a segment of Ephraim's recitation of his life story to Abbie:

...God's hard, not easy! God's in the stones! Build my church on a rock out o' stones an' I'll be in them! That's what He meant t' Peter! Stones. I picked 'em up an' piled 'em into walls. Ye kin read the years of my life in them walls, every day a hefted stone, climbin' over the hills up and down, fencin' in the fields that was mine, whar I'd made thin's grow out o' nothin' - like the will o' God, like the servant o' His hand. It wa'n't easy. It was hard an' He made me hard fur it. All the time I kept gittin' lonesomer. I tuk a wife.99

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98 Ibid., p. 207.
99 Ibid., p. 237.
This apostrophe as a substitution for the (-ing) has been observed in *The Iceman Cometh* and *The Long Voyage Home*, but the apostrophe in *Desire Under the Elms* is used in conjunction with dialectical elements which differ in some aspects from those used in the other two plays. Thus, the apostrophe in this play influences dialectical development in a different way because of its differing combination of dialectical elements.

IV. Phonology, then, including the previously discussed respellings and apostrophe usage, is one integral part of the entire dialect development of a play. Equally important to consider, however, are the elements of morphology and grammar.

In reference to the morphology of *Desire Under the Elms*, it lacks the occupational jargon so apparent in *The Iceman Cometh*. Few words are observed in the text of *Desire* which suggest a restricted vocabulary. As a matter of fact, the force of the morphology in this play has its strongest impact in the idiomatic expressions appropriate to the region. Such expressions as "bitter as a hickory nut" and "bitter 'n wormwood" are the last detail, the final attempt to capture the flavor of this rustic dialect. Thus, the morphological element has its purpose in *Desire*, but its frequency of use is not significant compared to
The Iceman Cometh.

Whereas the morphological element plays a lesser role in the dialect in Desire, the role of grammar in pointing up the substandard, non-middle class usage is strong. In this play, as in The Long Voyage Home, there is no middle class by which to contrast the dialectically-restricted speech. Thus, the notation of error is based on the grammar of the middle class speech in The Iceman Cometh which is equivalent to the representation of the standard dialect as O'Neill knew it and spoke it.

Grammar reveals the substandard level of speech to an audience or reader more clearly and rapidly than any other dialect element in the play. Though both phonology and grammar in any restrictive dialect are substandard, the substandard pronunciation is more acceptable to the standard dialect speaker than substandard grammar is. Dialect pronunciation indicates a certain personal heritage, but substandard grammar suggests, purely, a lack of education. As dirt farmers who seldom ventured into town, the male characters in this play are uneducated, and their grammar reflects this.

The major flaws in grammar which appear in Desire concern three areas, two of which were noted in the previous two plays. The third area concerns a point of substandard usage which appears in neither of the other two plays.
The first area of restrictive grammar is the use of the double negative. Many negated statements in the dialogue of this play include a double negative. Eben, for example, asks his brothers about their treatment of his mother; and—uses—in the following passage, a type of double negation in the text of his dialogue:

...Why didn't ye never stand between him 'n' my Maw when he was slavin' her to her grave—t' pay her back fur the kindness she don't' yew? 100

In the preceding passage, the phrase "didn't never" composes the double negative. Another variation of the double negation is observed in Ephraim's speech:

...I couldn't work today. I couldn't take no interest. T' hell with the farm! I'm leavin' it. 101

In a non-contracted form, the phrase "could not take no interest" clearly adds to the double negations noted in the play.

In contrast to the periodic appearance of the double negative, the verb tense is observed to be in error less frequently. Like the double negative, it appears in various forms. But the possible substandard combinations are greater. The substandard verb tenses in the play result

100 Ibid., p.208.
101 Ibid., p.267.
from conjugating an irregular verb like a regular verb and adding (-ed) to the present form of a verb which forms it preterite differently. Such erroneous tense formations as "knowed", "gittin' woked up", and "growed" are part of a pattern which is developed to establish tense in the dialect. But the substandard usage occurs only in reference to irregular verbs, which limits its frequency of appearance.

Another example of the substandard grammar in Desire Under the Elms is less frequent than the erroneous formation of verb preterite tenses. Yet, it deserves mention because it is unique to this play. That is the substitution of "nor" for "than" in a comparative form. This substitution, like the morphological distinction of the idiomatic expressions, is one of the minor details which give credibility to the other major elements of dialectical development in the play. An instance of this substitution is noted in Ephraim's fierce comment about Eben:

T' hell with Eben! Eben's done fur now! I got a new son! But ye needn't laugh at Eben, none o' ye. He's my blood, if he be a dumb fool. He's better nor any o' yew!...102

102 Ibid., p.249.
In standard usage, "better nor" would become "better than" in a comparison. It is used consistently in its sub-standard form throughout the text of the play.

One area of particular interest in considering morphological and grammatical variations from the middle class standard is difficult to classify, yet it requires consideration. The personal pronoun, when functioning in a sentence as a possessive noun, acquires distinctly substandard spelling which resembles the formation of the first person singular possessive pronoun, "mine". That is, any personal possessive pronouns functioning as a subject, object, or subject/object complement adds an (-n) in the final position, as in "your'n/you'rn," "her'n," and the more familiar "his'n."

Several of these spellings are noted in the proceeding passage of Ephraim's dialogue about willing his farm to his new son:

It's his'n, I tell ye -- his'n arter I die -- but I'll live a hundred year t' fool ye all--an' he'll be growed then-- yewr age a'most...Ha? Ye think ye kin git 'round that someways, do ye'? Waal, it'll be her'n, too--Abbie's--... 103

Here, the third person singular possessive pronoun forms were transformed to "her'n" and "his'n". A bit further on

103 Ibid., p.255.
in Ephraim's tirade is a reference to the second person possessive pronoun:

...An' the farm's her'n! An' the dust o' the road--that's you'rn. Haw! Now who's hawin'.\textsuperscript{104}

In addition to the above pronoun references, the first person plural possessive form of the pronoun in this dialect is "our'n," a word Abbie uses to identify the parlor where she and Eben had their initial sexual encounter: "We made it our'n last night, didn't we?"\textsuperscript{105}

This particular respelling of the possessive pronoun to resemble the possessive first person singular form is observed in neither of the other two plays. But, again, it is one of the various details of a dialect which give it the regional flavor. Elements such as this one regarding pronouns, or the substitution of comparison words are noticed because of their uniqueness. Therefore, these details must be accurate and consistent enough to reinforce the listener's willing suspension of disbelief.

The dialectical areas of morphology, grammar, and syntax in representing non-middle class speech are balanced in \textit{Desire Under the Elms}, as they were in \textit{The Iceman Cometh} and \textit{The Long Voyage Home}. Since among these

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Ibid.}, p.245.
three elements, grammar tends to be the most influential point of dialect development in *Desire*, the other two are less significant. Morphology, as noted, has little impact in contrast to grammar usage in the play. Moreover, the absence of substandard syntactical variations suggests insignificance regarding syntax. Thus, phonology and grammar are in the forefront of consideration in reference to dialect in *Desire Under the Elms*.

V. Unlike *The Iceman Cometh* and *The Long Voyage Home*, no voluntary adjustment of dialect in *Desire Under the Elms* is observed. The characters in *Desire*, since they all speak the same dialect, have no motivation to change their speech patterns and habits. Like the characters in *The Long Voyage Home*, those in *Desire* have no point of comparison regarding language which would allow them to hear the differences in speech and apply their conclusions to their own language. Consequently, the purposeful change of dialect which O'Neill utilized in *The Iceman Cometh* and *The Long Voyage Home* is not apparent in *Desire Under the Elms*.

VI. An unconscious adjustment of the language does occur, however, when Ephraim is overcome by his "love" for Abbie, and begins to shower Biblical conceits upon her. It is this sudden paraphrasing of the Bible which lifts Ephraim's
speech to a higher level of morphology and grammar. The sentence structure is parallel, though a bit repetitious; but the morphology includes words not seen in Ephraim's vocabulary prior to this point in the play. A sample of this adjusted language is noted below:

Yew air my Rose o' Sharon! Behold, yew air fair; yer eyes air doves; yer lips air like scarlet; yer two breasts air like two fawns; yer navel be like a round goblet; yer belly be like a heap o' wheat....

In this paraphrased Biblical passage, though pronunciation is substandard, as it would logically be, the syntax and grammar are closer to the standard dialect than Ephraim has been able to reach in his daily language use. Moreover, the vocabulary of this passage is based on terms which would not normally be a part of Ephraim's vocabulary. References to the female anatomy, such as "breasts," "navel," and "belly" would be socially restricted from usage in this particular time and setting.

Additionally, the appearance of words like "goblet" and "scarlet" have never been noted within Ephraim's frame of verbal reference. The only comparison which comes

106 Ibid., p.232.
near to Ephraim's frame of reference is Abbie's "belly" likened to a "heap o' wheat."

Consequently, vocabulary and inflated conceits are not naturally part of Ephraim's regional dialect. However, Ephraim resorts to it to express himself in his limited realm of passion, (he is covering her hands with kisses). Though Biblical paraphrasing provides a channel to express feelings he would otherwise find difficult to profess, there appears to be no purposeful, conscious shift of dialect. Rather, it seems to catch Ephraim unaware.

Therefore, though this solitary dialect shift is subtle, it reveals something important about Ephraim. Though he incessantly reminds his sons and neighbors of his manly strength and energy, he lacks the deeper human quality of tenderness, and becomes awkward and clumsy when tenderness is required of him.

VII. Not only can a dialect reflect personality characteristics or deficiencies, as it does in Ephraim's case, it can also unearth certain moral or ethical deficiencies. And, as in Ephraim's case, it is the vocabulary which suggests this lack or morals or ethics. Moreover, one isolated choice of words might indicate more about a character's moral attitudes than the remaining dialogue which that character might have spoken. For
example, when Ephraim is informed about Eben's "advances" toward Abbie, he rages: "By the A'mighty God-I'll end him!" There is a certain amount of irony here, because Ephraim draws God's approval down on what would be a wrathful murder, thus attempting to justify the action. Such an attitude indicates an inverted morality, because Ephraim's strong moral code allows him to see the sins of others, but blinds him to his own sins.

Ephraim's religious hypocrisy is reiterated in a statement by Eben, who, imitating his father's voice, says:

"I'm ridin' out t' learn God's message t'me in the spring like the prophets done," he says. "I'll bet right than an' thar he knew plumb well he was goin' whorin', the stinkin' old hypocrite!"

Additionally, Eben reflects his own moral attitude by his lack of respect for his father and his father's new wife by labeling Ephraim's marriage as "goin' whorin'."

As illustrated by the above dialogue, the adage that "It's not what you say, but how you say it," has validity. A character may say one thing, which has a surface and conscious meaning, but on a deeper level, the same character may also have unconsciously related his true values.

107 Ibid., p.233.
108 Ibid., p.215.
In handling the dialect of *Desire Under the Elms*, Eugene O'Neill has met with some inconsistency in pronunciation, particularly. But the phonology of a dialect is the most complex, and consequently, the most difficult to handle, particularly in the respelling system O'Neill utilized. Insofar as grammar is concerned, most verb preterites used in the dialogue which were noted in the *Linguistic Atlas* were accurate and regionally appropriate.\(^{109}\) The morphology of the dialect, though insignificant in relation to phonology, is influential in relating nuances of personality not otherwise noted in characters in *Desire Under the Elms*.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been more than to determine how Eugene O'Neill developed some of the dialects in his plays: additionally, these dialects are effective in developing characterization. Are these dialects an important element in forming and giving life to a character? If these dialects are effective in characterization, do they, consequently contribute to the unity of the play?

A study of three of O'Neill's plays has been undertaken to gain insight into these areas of inquiry, and an overall positive response must be offered to each question. A consideration of dialects in The Iceman Cometh, The Long Voyage Home, and Desire Under the Elms reveals that O'Neill had an astute perception of variations in language, and was able to represent them in his dialect characters. However, the dramatic character is not a vehicle for O'Neill to illustrate dialect. Rather, dialect is used as a means of characterization. To coax the audience into a willing suspension of disbelief, the representation of these dialect requires a certain level of accuracy. Scientific accuracy is unnecessary and inappropriate, because
scientific representation would be so complex as to destroy the artistry of the dramatic creation.

Therefore, O'Neill worked toward accuracy with a careful hand. As a result, the inconsistency in certain dialectical element is kept to a minimum and does not affect the credibility of characterization.

The dialectical elements of phonology, grammar, and morphology are all utilized by O'Neill to create a believable dialect character. However, the study of the three aforementioned plays has revealed that these three dialectical elements are not equally utilized in each play. Phonology is always at the forefront in dialect development, but morphology, grammar, as well as syntax will rise and fall in prominence, depending upon the combination of elements O'Neill has used to get the desired dialect effect.

In The Iceman Cometh, because of the variety of professional and educational backgrounds, phonology and morphology are significant. In contrast, phonology, grammar, and syntax are valuable tools in creating the dialect characters in The Long Voyage Home. Likewise, phonology and grammar are the important combinations in Desire Under the Elms.

Phonology, then, is the main ingredient in successful dialect development, and O'Neill was able to utilize it to create numerous dialects. According to Ruth Blackburn's
study, the respelling of stressed vowels is the chief method of defining phonological distinctions. This is, indeed, the case in *The Long Voyage Home* and in *Desire Under the Elms*. However, the process of consonant substitution is used in *The Iceman Cometh* to create phonological distinctions.

There is complete agreement on Ms. Blackburn's findings on eye dialect. O'Neill, realized the futility of eye dialect with an audience and avoided using it beyond three to four words in each play. Eye dialect would only have phonological value if certain phonemes within the word were vocally emphasized, and that would only work on some of the eye dialect words.

As a phonological element, the apostrophe is extremely effective. Because it shortens words by dropping phonemes, and limits phrases by contracting them, the apostrophe creates a faster pace of speech. It can, conversely, slow down that pace by causing phonemes to be juxtaposed which are not able to elide. Thus, by placing the apostrophe in positions appropriate to the phonology of a particular dialect, as well as in a position which increases or decreases the pace of speech, a natural speaking rhythm is provided.

An interesting point about the apostrophe is that the same elements of a word, such as the initial or final phoneme, may be eliminated in identical words in two or
three different plays, and replaced by an apostrophe and
the dialectical effect will be different for each,
depending on the other phonological elements combined
with it.

The dialects become even more distinct and
individualized when phonology is combined with specific
elements of grammar, syntax, and morphology. Grammar,
in the three plays studied, indicates non-middle class
speech more quickly in the characters than does morphology
or syntax. --Whereas--subject/verb-agreement is most--frequently
utilized in The Iceman Cometh, erroneous formation of the
irregular preterite tense is the distinguishing element of
substandard grammar in Desire Under the Elms. But, in all
three cases, the use of the double negative is flagrant.

The combination of phonology and syntax is strongest
in The Long Voyage Home, and rather insignificant in the
other two plays by comparison. However, there was only one
Swedish-American and one Irish-American speaker among all
of the collective speakers. Both of these dialects require
distinctive variations from the standard sentence pattern,
and both these characters are in The Long Voyage Home.

The variations in syntax cause the listener to "jolt" to
attention, because, even if a person has restricted dialect
speech, the syntax is not often affected. Variations in
syntax, therefore, more readily point to an ethnic dialect.
Whereas the alterations of syntax are blatant to standard, and some substandard speakers, subtlety is the major approach regarding dialect shifts. Conscious, purposeful shifts from one dialect to another are quite subtle. Several shifts of this type occur in *The Iceman Cometh*, and one was noted in *The Long Voyage Home*. Usually, when the shifts take place, the message is meant for one or two specific individuals; hence the subtlety.

In contrast, whenever a dialect is unconsciously shifted, the shift is obvious, as when Joe Mott, in *The Iceman Cometh* becomes so overwhelmed with emotion that he resorts to speaking in his native dialect. There is one unconscious dialect shift in *Desire Under the Elms*, one which is brought about through a build-up of emotions, when Ephraim professes his love for Abbie. But time restricts the emotional responses to a situation in *The Long Voyage Home*. Consequently, there is no unconscious shift of dialect in *The Long Voyage Home*.

Overall, *The Iceman Cometh* far outranks the other two plays in the frequency of dialect shift of the conscious or unconscious type. O'Neill has utilized this element of dialect characterization, and it has given added dimension to character. But it must have the dramatic situation and the time for it to develop.
Iceman has the dramatic situation and more than enough time.

The dialectical element of morphology takes on significance in these plays when nuances of character are sought, because it is often the vocabulary of a character which reveals previously-unnoticed character traits. This is particularly true in determining moral or ethical attitudes of a character. This study suggests that morphology is most useful and significant in this area.

Through this study, the proposal that dialect characters contribute to the unity of a play is validated. Well-developed dialect, as O'Neill has provided his characters, gives added depth and dimension to those characters. The stronger the characterization, the more intense and meaningful the plot can be.

Even though O'Neill's use of the language in his plays has been extensively and severely criticized, he utilizes dialect well and his plays work well with dialect. In fact, his dialect characters tend to be more interesting than the middle class characters; in fact, "as soon as Mr. O'Neill gets a character who can only talk some kind of vernacular, he begins to write like a poet".110 O'Neill admits that

eloquence as expected by the critics is beyond his reach. However, O'Neill repeats the speech of the common man vividly and believably. Eloquence is unnecessary.

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A. BOOKS


B. PERIODICALS


