

Episode 2

Bumper and Tease:

NARRATOR:

Now, back to Do You Speak American? Tommy Taylor: (singing) Had a piece of pie, had a piece of pudding, well I give it all away to the other side of goodin'.

NARRATOR:

Down South, language is a colourful blend of vibrant parlance... (Cajun men chatting in Karl's Restaurant)

NARRATOR:

And down-home humour.

JEFF FOXWORTHY:

Whichadidya...hey you didn't bring your truck whichadidya?

NARRATOR:

In this part of our journey you'll hear flamboyant and distinct dialects, from Appalachia...

TOMMY TAYLORr:

Hey boy, put that car in the grudge.

NARRATOR:

Down to the Tex-Mex border, where we'll see if English itself is endangered.

ROBERT GARCIA:

They've got calls, threats, what are you doing speaking Spanish as an official language in America.

NARRATOR:

It's a sizzling combo of rich cultures and traditions.

MOLLY IVINS:

We like our food spicy and we like our language spicy.

NARRATOR:

This time, on Do You Speak American? ***Title Sequence:***

WOMAN:

Do you speak American?

WOMAN:

Do you like speak American?

LOBSTERMAN:

Do you speak American?

WOMAN:

Do you speak American?

YOUTH:

Do you speak American dog?

COWGIRL:

Do you speak American?

JEFF FOXWORTHY:

Do y'all speak American?

WOMAN:

Tu parles Americain?

SOLDIERS:

Do you speak American?

STUDENTS:

Do you speak American?

PATRICIA LOPEZ:

Estás hablando American? *Hour Two:*

ROBERT:

WE'RE ON A JOURNEY THAT TAKES US ACROSS THE USA AND THROUGH THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE. NOW WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT HOW TODAY'S SOUTHERNERS ANSWER THE QUESTION "DO YOU SPEAK AMERICAN?" THE GREATEST DIVISION AMERICA EVER EXPERIENCED WAS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH AND THAT IS STILL REFLECTED IN OUR LANGUAGE.

ROBERT:

Now we're running along the beautiful Ohio River to Louisville, Kentucky. The Ohio River the traditional Northern boundary of the Southern accent.

ROBERT:

So is it true that the Ohio River ...

ROBERT:

WALT WOLFRAM, A LINGUIST FROM NORTH CAROLINA, IS ON BOARD FOR THIS PART OF THE TRIP.

WALT WOLFRAM:

The first group to settle an area seems to have a lasting effect on the dialect area. And even though we've got all these changes over a couple of hundred years...

ROBERT:

Yeah.

WALT WOLFRAM:

The original dialect boundaries seem to be fairly intact still.

ROBERT:

THE FIRST ENGLISH SPEAKERS TO SETTLE AROUND HERE WERE FRONTIER FIGHTERS LIKE DANIEL BOONE AND LATER DAVY CROCKET, WHO PUSHED THROUGH THE CUMBERLAND GAP AND DOWN THE OHIO AND TENNESSEE RIVERS. MOSTLY SCOTS-IRISH, THEY SPREAD THEIR WAY OF SPEECH FROM PENNSYLVANIA, TO WEST VIRGINIA AND DOWN THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL, INTO KENTUCKY AND TENNESSEE. THAT SPEECH LIVES ON IN THE HILLS OF APPALACHIA, BUT IT TOO IS DISAPPEARING.

ROBERT:

This was a shot in the series of *The Story of English* you know...

WALT WOLFRAM:

Sure, sure, I know I use it all the time...

ROBERT:

You use this? Oh well you know this then. Yeah this is ah Mrs. Hicks and Ray Hicks telling us how you get to their house Mrs. Hicks: (captioned) You fly in a aeroplane as far as you can come. Then you get in a car or a truck and ride as far as you can go in hit. Then you get down and run as far as you can. Then you crawl on your hands and knees as far as you can come. Go that-a-way and then you straighten up and then you find a house. It's a old-timey one. It looks haunted but it's really not.

ROBERT:

RAY HICKS USED TO BE FAMOUS ROUND HERE. PEOPLE WOULD COME FROM MILES AROUND TO HEAR HIM TELL FOLK TALES IN ONE OF THE LAST SURVIVING EXAMPLES OF TRUE APPALACHIAN DIALECT.

BOY:

Howdy, Ray!

RAY HICKS:

Howdy, howdy.

ROBERT:

Now howdy that sounds more like Texas to me but that that's...

WALT WOLFRAM:

Well they do use some of that in Appalachia.

WOMAN:

Howdy Ray!

RAY:

Howdy!

WOMAN:

How're you today?

RAY:

Just amazin'. How are you? Just com'on in. Boy:

Howdy Ray!

RAY:

Jus com'on in. Boy:

Give us a ghost story, Ray!

BOYS:

Yeah, tell us a ghost story!

RAY:

Ok.

ROBERT:

RAY HICKS LOVED TO TELL JACK TALES. THE MOST FAMOUS IS JACK AND THE BEANSTALK. IN THIS STORY JACK MEETS A BEGGAR WHO GIVES HIM A MAGIC SACK.

RAY HICKS:

He says I'm gonna give you somthin'. He said here's a sack, that if anything gits to botherin' you, jus say "wickedly wack" into this sack.

ROBERT:

Wickedly wack into the sack?

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah well he's got so many of the traditional features of Appalachian dialect. That ah and a hunting and a fishing and the use of the tyre tar and the h before the it and so forth and and it's really neat that you preserved this because Ray recently passed away.

ROBERT:

TODAY FEWER AND FEWER PEOPLE SPEAK LIKE THE LATE RAY HICKS AND HIS WIFE ROSA. THE OLD MOUNTAIN DIALECT MAY BE VANISHING, BUT WHEN WE WENT ASHORE AT A LITTLE PLACE CALLED RABBIT HASH, KENTUCKY, IT SEEMED TO ME THAT THE LOCAL TALK WAS STILL DISTINCTIVE AND VIGOROUS.

ROBERT:

How are you? Hi Dwayne. Robin MacNeil.

WALT WOLFRAM:

WALT WOLFRAM. Pleased to meet you. Tommy Taylor: (singing) Well down the road, road got muddy, stomped my toes, couldn't stand steady up on the hill [unclear] started coming well the [unclear], couldn't stop a-running. Had a peach pie, had peach puddin' but I give it all away to the [unclear] had a goodun'.

WALT WOLFRAM:

So, ya think the language is changing much?

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Well, it is. You know now down home, where I'm from, down in I'm from close to the Tennessee line I say Tennessee and Kentucky both they claim me.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Uh huh.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Tennessee claims I'm from Kentucky and Kentucky claims I'm from Tennessee. And down there they call a sheep, a female sheep, a ewe. I mean a yo. Up here you know they call it a ewe, down there they call it a yo.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Right.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And it's uh, "hey boy, put that car in the grudge." You know, I said "a grudge is some, what you have against somebody." Guy said "no, dad tells me to put the car in the grudge everyday." He said "we talk like that.. y'all".

WALT WOLFRAM:

Is that one of the things you grew up saying?

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Yeah. And and over yander.

WALT WOLFRAM:

And over yander. Right.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And it's a fur piece.

WALT WOLFRAM:

A fur piece, yeah.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And I tell em that it's not...when I go over to Ohio I say it's not a fur piece to Rabbit Hash, it's just three hops and a jump and the Ohio River, and two or three swamps and there you are.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Now you know, you know, just like you say, you know, we'd say you all and up here they'd say yous all. And you know, yous and yos and you all and yo all.

WALT WOLFRAM:

You ever hear a yins?

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Oh yeah, you uns! Oh yes, sir! Oh that's my father was from North Carolina and it was you uns.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah, that's right. In the mountains of North Carolina they say you uns.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And then when they were treat a person you know, do a bad turn for 'em, instead of saying "I wouldn't serve a dog like that." they'd say "I wouldn't sarve a dawg like that."

ROBERT:

Sarve a dawg.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

I wouldn't sarve a dawg like that.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah, yeah.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And fetch, you know.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah, go fetch it.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

And get me a poke to put something in. They don't call it a bag.

WALT WOLFRAM:

Yeah, yeah.

TOMMY TAYLOR:

Yeah, I know all that stuff there. Oh yeah. I was playing up here one night here in the place where they dance, and some lady fell out on the floor, and I said "come hear and I'll pick ya up."
(Fiddle playing)

ROBERT:

You've studied so many different aspects of American speech what would you say is the most important trend in our language now?

WALT WOLFRAM:

I think that one of the most important trends is the fact that we're coming to celebrate and recognize some of the dialect differences as a part of our natural cultural heritage ah rather than simply try to stamp them out and to eradicate them --- is part of culture --- it's part of simply defining themselves --- I think a sort of growing celebration of dialect differences is one of the most encouraging signs that I've seen.

ROBERT:

TODAY THE COUNTRY SPEECH OF APPALACHIA HAS ABSORBED OTHER SOUTHERN DIALECTS AND TRAVELLED THROUGHOUT THE SUNBELT. YOU CAN HEAR THIS INFLUENCE ALL OVER THE USA IN THE LINGO OF TRUCKERS LIKE DAVID SWAIN WITH THEIR CB RADIOS. DAVID'S HANDLE IS "SPANKY." Spanky:

Northbound. You look good up in Franklin up there in 65 is where I started ok.

ROBERT:

Everybody sounds real country when they're talking on the CB. Spanky:

They do. And I, I couldn't tell you why. I mean, I don't even know if I do.

ROBERT:

You do. Yeah, I thought you did when you were talking there. Spanky:

I don't know, it's that CB Slang I guess. I don't know what it is.

ROBERT:

Uh huh. Is that the same all over the country? Spanky:

Uh yeah, pretty much. Everybody pretty much sounds the same way. And I don't know why.

ROBERT:

Spanky, you say you play music on the road, what's your favorite kind of music? Spanky:

Ah, my favorite's country music.

ROBERT:

Yeah? Spanky:

As a matter of fact, I've got a nephew that's in the country music business. Uh Cody. And he lives in Nashville. And to be honest with you, his CD has taken me many miles. Cody's Performance:

Well some things make me fighting mad while I'm motoring along. Like to watch a brand new back hoe tear down a hundred year old farm. It makes me wish that I was rich cause I'd buy up that farm land. Find the folks who were forced to sell and hand it back to them. Now I'm inspired. You better believe it...

ROBERT:

SPANKY'S NEPHEW IS THE COUNTRY SINGER CODY JAMES. CODY LOOKS, SOUNDS AND SINGS PURE COUNTRY. BUT HE AND KENNY HAYES, HIS CO-SONGWRITER, AREN'T EVEN FROM THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY.

ROBERT:

Neither of you is from the real South -- you're originally from Oregon you're from Maryland which is near the South but not in ---- when you do this kind of music do you have to sound country? Cody:

I don't think that you necessarily have to but ... it's real comfortable and when you start doing it like doing it right there's an example it's easier to talk that way than it is to when you start doing it and announcing everything perfectly.

ROBERT:

When you start saying doing it, it sounds funny coming out of your mouth. Kenny:

It sure does. Cody:

It's hard to say. It has character.

ROBERT:

And it's friendly. Cody:

Very much so.

ROBERT:

What do you mean it has character? Cody:

It has character. Uh, I don't know country's just, it's fun to hear. Cody's Performance:

Blue eyes just gleaming...the sweetest thing I've ever seen...

ROBERT:

MUSIC LIKE CODY'S IS PART OF THE POPULAR CULTURE THAT IS MAKING "TALKIN' COUNTRY" THE INFORMAL WAY TO SPEAK AMERICAN. YOU CAN HEAR IT ALMOST ANYWHERE, TURNING ITS APPALACHIAN ORIGINS INTO A NATIONAL TREND. JOHN FOUGHT HAS STUDIED THE 'NEW SOUTH' PHENOMENON – THAT VOGUE FOR SOUTHERN WAYS AND COUNTRY TALK THAT NOW SEEMS TO REACH FARTHER AND FARTHER. John Fought:

For a long time eh the most rapid population growth percentages in the US have been in the inland Southern area, the Sun Belt. This dialect is a very large dialect and its perfectly to be expected that we would see a lot of it. It has probably the largest body of speakers of any of the American dialects now. And this will only grow with time.

ROBERT:

So Southern, inland Southern is now the largest dialect in America and growing? John Fought:

I hope so! [Laughs] But it seems confirmed by the two thousand census.

ROBERT:

BY CONTRAST, THE OTHER STRAND OF SOUTHERN SPEECH, THE DIALECT OF THE COASTAL OR PLANTATION SOUTH, IS LOSING INFLUENCE. IT IS BEING SWEEPED AWAY BY TIME AND CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE MIGRATION OF NORTHERNERS. CITY DWELLERS IN THE DEEP SOUTH ARE EVEN PRONOUNCING THEIR "R'S". BUT HERE IN OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI, WHAT'S CELEBRATED TODAY IS LANGUAGE THAT ENDURES.

ROBERT:

Among the cultural treasures of the South is its literary tradition, and Mississippi can boast two of America's greatest writers, William Faulkner and Eudora Welty. In their recorded voices you can hear the cultivated speech of Mississippi of two generations ago. For instance, this is Eudora Welty reading from her story The Optimist's Daughter. Eudora Welty:

So I was forced to the conclusion, I started seeing behind me. They laughed, a single high note as derisive as a Jay's. "Yes that's disturbing," Dr Cortman rolled forward on his stool. "Lets just have a good look."

ROBERT:

Eudora Welty told me a story about her accent. In the late thirties she attended Columbia University in New York and lived in the women's residence. The woman who ran the residence would give free theater and concert tickets to the students. After a couple of months Eudora went to her and said why did I never get any? And the woman said, "With your accent we didn't think you'd be interested in cultural activities."

ROBERT:

THAT KIND OF PREJUDICE IS STILL ALIVE TODAY, IF MORE GOOD-HUMOURED. THE STANDUP COMEDIAN JEFF FOXWORTHY BASES A LARGE PART OF HIS ACT AROUND IT. HE MUST BE ONTO SOMETHING, BECAUSE WHEREVER HE PLAYS, HE FILLS THE HOUSE. Jeff Foxworthy's Performance:

Speaking of words eh got a few more southern words for you um. First one may-o-naise, manaise a lot of people here tonight. It's kind of a gift they come to me in my sleep I write them down eh. Innuendo. Hey dude, I saw a bird fly in-u-window.

ROBERT:

Do you think northern people think southerners are stupid because of the way they talk?

JEFF FOXWORTHY:

Yes I think so and I think Southerners really don't care that Northern people think that eh. You know I mean some of the, the most intelligent people I've ever known talk like I do. In fact I used to do a joke about that, about you know the Southern accent, I said nobody wants to hear their brain surgeon say, 'Al'ight now what we're gonna do is, saw the top of your head off, root around in there with a stick and see if we can't find that dad burn clot.'

JEFF FOXWORTHY'S PERFORMANCE:

Urinal! I told my brother 'your in a' lot of trouble when Daddy gets home. And last but not least Whichadiddi. Whicchadidcha. Hey you didn't bring your truck 'with you did you?'

ROBERT:

Down the great Mississippi River now ... Ahead are the States where English rubs up against many languages. And speaking American takes on a whole new character.

ROBERT:

WE'RE TEN MILES UP STATE ROUTE 13 FROM EUNACE, LOUISIANA, DRIVING PAST FLOODED RICE PADDIES. WE'RE GOING TO SAMPLE SOME CAJUN. CAJUN IS A DIALECT THAT HAS ONLY EMERGED IN RECENT GENERATIONS BUT HAS BECOME A SOURCE OF FIERCE LOCAL PRIDE. TO HEAR THE SOUND OF AUTHENTIC CAJUN, TURN OFF THE ROAD AT A BIG WATER TOWER THAT SAYS MAMOU. TODAY CAJUN IS AS MUCH TOURIST BAIT AS CRAWFISH PIE OR BOUDIN SAUSAGE.

ROBERT:

Here in Karl's Restaurant which describes itself as the most famous restaurant in Mamou, you can hear English and French and Cajun which is kind of a mixture of the two with other influences. (Cajuns Chatting in Karl's Restaurant)

ROBERT:

WHILE I WAS HANGING OUT IN KARL'S THERE WAS A STEADY STREAM OF PEOPLE ARRIVING AT FRED'S LOUNGE ACROSS THE STREET. FRED'S MOTTO IS *LAISSER LES BON TEMPS ROULER*: LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL. THE LOUNGE HAS BECOME AN INSTITUTION – AS HAS ITS OWNER AUNT, OR TANTE, SUE.

ROBERT:

Tante Sue would you describe what happens here on a Saturday morning? Tante Sue:

The only description I have about Fred's Lounge is we have a wonderful time and I think this this is one of the places that you have the most true feeling of Cajun culture there is. Tante Sue:

We have people coming in at 8 o'clock.... we promote to offer them Bloody Marys, because it's a mild drink and it's very good. Once that band starts playing, they do start drinking

ROBERT:

EVERY SATURDAY IT'S NOT JUST DRINK THAT'S BEING MIXED – BUT LANGUAGE, TOO, AS THE LOCAL RADIO STATION BROADCASTS LIVE FROM FRED'S. (Radio Station Announcement for Jack Miller's BBQ Sauce)

ROBERT:

AMERICAN ENGLISH SMOTHERED IN CAJUN IS WHAT YOU HEAR IN TANTE SUE'S SPEECH. Tante Sue:

We have Fred's Lounge T-shirt with the accordion on the front, which is our regular logo. And when the accordion starts playing in the band, I play my accordion on my T-shirt. And I have a great time, and I don't miss a note. I don't know how to play the accordion, but I don't miss a note on my T-shirt.

ROBERT:

PERHAPS IT'S BEST TO LEAVE BEFORE TANTE SUE GETS TOO CARRIED AWAY WITH HER ACCORDION PLAYING. I'M HEADING OUT OF MAMOU TO THE WEST. I'M ON MY WAY TO THE TEXAS BORDER AND THE NEXT LEG OF MY JOURNEY THROUGH AMERICAN ENGLISH.

ROBERT:

We've just been listening to French here in Louisiana. In fact, this whole area could still be speaking French if Thomas Jefferson hadn't bought almost everything West of here in the Louisiana Purchase. Or, by another turn of history, it could be speaking Spanish, as some Americans still fear it might. But Spanish is only one of the language influences we're going to be looking into as we move across the state of Texas and down to the Mexican border.

ROBERT:

THE TEXAS ACCENT HAS ITS ROOTS HOME ON THE RANGE. YOU CAN HEAR IT ON THE BAR J RANCH NEAR BEESVILLE, WHEN THE YOUNG COWHANDS, SLOWTALKING AND LACONIC, TELL HOW TO ROUND UP CATTLE. Jake Linney:

You just gotta go at 'em kind of slow and talk to them, you can't rush them 'cos they'll go to turn down fences and all that. Like the cattle we worked earlier this morning,---- and we went out there nice and slow and they went straight for the brush. And we – they're probably still out there, --- it depends on how much you work 'em and stuff

COWBOY 2:

Once you break one loose from the herd she's going to be a little bit wilder, a little bit more er – hot headed than the other cattle because she's away from her herd.

ROBERT:

TEXAS SPEECH IS A COMBINATION OF TWO SOUTHERN DIALECTS. SOME OF THOSE WHO SETTLED HERE CAME FROM THE PLANTATION AREAS OF ALABAMA, GEORGIA, AND MISSISSIPPI. OTHERS CAME DOWN FROM APPALACHIA,

TENNESSEE AND KENTUCKY. THE RESULT IS A KIND OF SOUTHERN SPEECH THAT'S DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING ELSE. ADD TO THAT A MIXTURE OF GERMANS, POLES AND CZECHS, WHO IMMIGRATED DIRECTLY TO TEXAS, AND YOU HAVE SOMETHING QUITE DISTINCT. Jake Linney:

Squeeze shoot. Well you got your head gate there, where you can get up there and work on the horns and tag 'em and all that. And uh you can get a brand on em without them moving around and and all that.

COWBOY:

Jake describes right. They're not, we're not hurting the animal. We're just restraining it so we can work on it properly.

ROBERT:

THAT TEXAS ACCENT IS SO CATCHING THAT OUTSIDERS WHO MOVE HERE, LIKE RANCH OWNER LINDA BLACKBURN, CAN'T HELP PICKING UP THAT TWANG.

ROBERT:

You must really love this. Do you?

LINDA BLACKBURN:

Oh, I wouldn't trade it for anything.

LINDA BLACKBURN:

Being out in open, I'm not a house person. I love the horses, dogs, they're working in one of the situation here, and of course the boys, look at them [LAUGHS] wouldn't you like this crew?

ROBERT:

TODAY ONLY ONE PERCENT OF TEXANS RIDE A HORSE TO WORK. THE REST, AS THEY SAY AROUND HERE, "ARE ALL HAT AND NO CATTLE." COWBOY WORDS INCLUDE WRANGLER MAVERICK RUSTLER AND CHUCK WAGON. WHEN WE VISITED HER RANCH, LINDA ORGANISED AN OLD TIME COOK OUT.

ROBERT:

This is all authentic, the way it used to be done? On the...

COWBOY:

Yessir. Pretty much.

ROBERT:

THE WILD WEST AND WESTERN MOVIES HAVE HELPED SPREAD PHRASES LIKE "HOT UNDER THE COLLAR" AND "BITE THE DUST" THAT GO WITH THE COWBOY'S DEADPAN SENSE OF HUMOR. Charles Ellis:

Well the 2 AM call was no fun at all for a rancher who needs his rest, to heck with that thing, just let it ring, Ol' Bud wouldn't leave his warm nest, but Bud's Liz cried maybe somebody's died her voice though uncertain yet warning. Well Liz, Bud said, if somebody's dead they'll still be dead in the morning.

ROBERT:

ONE MAJOR INFLUENCE ON TEXAS TALK COMES FROM SPANISH ORIGINALLY SPOKEN HERE WHEN TEXAS WAS PART OF MEXICO. ON THE BAR J RANCH SOME OF THE BOYS PRACTISING THEIR RODEO SKILLS COME FROM SPANISH SPEAKING FAMILIES THAT HAVE BEEN AMERICAN FOR GENERATIONS, AND FOR WHOM A RANCH IS A ---

TRAVIS GOMEZ:

Say it in Spanish? Rancho

ROBERT:

And what does it mean in Spanish?

TRAVIS GOMEZ:

Basically the same thing it means in English, a place for the cattle.

ROBERT:

Rodeo.

COWBOY:

Rodeo? You know, you get a wild cow, you get a bronckey horse, and COWBOY tries to see how much pride he's got to ride him, or to handle him.

ROBERT:

RODEO, BRONCO, STAMPEDE, CORRAL - LIKE TODAY'S TACO, FAJITA, NACHO AND ENCHILADA, IT ALL COMES FROM SPANISH.

TRAVIS GOMEZ:

Lasso. That's what you throw at the animal to catch it. Bronco, a young horse that's not quite broke. Pinto. The colour of a horse or a bean. Vamos it's means let's go.

ROBERT:

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT TEXAS, YOU THINK ABOUT COWBOYS AND CATTLE. YOU DON'T THINK ABOUT COTTON AND SLAVERY. BUT THAT'S IN THE HISTORY OF THIS DRY, FLAT AND STIFLINGLY HOT EAST-CENTRAL TEXAS THIS HAS BEEN COTTON COUNTRY EVER SINCE THE TIME OF SLAVERY. AFTER SLAVERY WAS ABOLISHED THIS LAND WAS WORKED BY DIRT POOR SHARECROPPERS. I AM MEETING TWO LINGUISTS AT THE COUNTRY STORE IN SPRINGVILLE, A TINY

COMMUNITY SANDWICHED BETWEEN TWO UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD TRACKS. FOR MORE THAN 17 YEARS, GUY BAILEY AND PATRICIA CUKOR-AVILA HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING A REMARKABLE PIECE OF RESEARCH INTO THE LANGUAGE OF LOCAL AFRICAN AMERICANS.

GUY:

How you doing? Welcome to Springville,

ROBERT:

Thank you.

GUY:

Welcome to the train.

PATRICIA:

Welcome to the train, right.

ROBERT:

Do you have these all the time?

GUY:

All the time.

PATRICIA:

Every few minutes.

ROBERT:

FOR GENERATIONS OF SHARECROPPERS, BLACK AND WHITE, THE COUNTRY STORE WAS THE CENTER OF THEIR LIVES. THIS IS WHERE THEY BOUGHT PROVISIONS, STORES AND TOOLS. AND THIS WHERE THEY BORROWED MONEY FROM THE WHITE STORE-OWNER UNTIL THEY SOLD THEIR COTTON. THIS STORE HAS BEEN OWNED BY THE SAME FAMILY FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY. IN MANY WAYS IT'S HARDLY CHANGED AT ALL. IT'S IN A KIND OF TIME WARP. Patricia: Well when I first started out with this project I would, sit out at the general store, inside and um, basically hang out there most of the day, and eh interact with people who came in and talk with them, and not necessarily record right at first um, until I got to know people.

PATRICIA:

Hey stranger.

PATRICIA:

The mail is still delivered at the store there is no home delivery. People often times don't just come to get their mail and leave. They come, get their mail, sit down, open it, sit around and talk.

ROBERT:

SPRINGVILLE IS A FICTIONAL NAME GUY AND PATRICIA GAVE TO THE COMMUNITY SO THAT LOCAL PEOPLE WOULD FEEL RELAXED IN THEIR COMPANY. TO WIN THEIR TRUST, GUY AND PATRICIA ALSO PROMISED THEM THAT THEY WOULD USE PSEUDONYMS.

PATRICIA:

Willy is a lifelong resident of the area, he grew up on one of the farms close to the store. Uh he's always lived out here and uh worked in agriculture his whole life. Uh he's a very good example of what we would call older rural African American uh speech patterns.

GUY:

You told me that when you were a boy you did a lot of hunting and stuff?

WILLY:

Yeah, I hunted a little bit, yes sir.

GUY:

What all'dya hunt?

WILLY:

Armadillo, rabbits, and anything I could catch! (laughs)

GUY:

Is that right? Is the armadillo pretty good to eat?

WILLY:

Yessir, it's good sir.

GUY:

I've never had armadillo. What's it taste like?

WILLY:

Tastes good. Like chicken.

GUY:

Is that right?

WILLY:

Yessir. You cook it right, sir.

GUY:

Is that right? How you cook it?

WILLY:

Well sir, my momma she boiled it. Boiled it. In a pot, you know.

GUY:

Uh huh.

WILLY:

Put some onion rind in, make gravy, fry em.

PATRICIA:

What we've been able to do with this research is to look at how things change over time in a single community.

WILLY:

We've had some hard times in my day. Yessir. We work hard, sir...like my Daddy...

ROBERT:

WILLY'S WAY OF TALKING CAN BE TRACED RIGHT BACK TO THE TIME OF SLAVERY. WE KNOW THIS BECAUSE ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES THIS PART OF TEXAS SO SPECIAL IS A SERIES OF RECORDINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHS MADE HERE IN THE 1930'S AND 40'S.

GUY:

Eh these were pictures that were made by workers for the WPA here in Texas, the top two are eh from former slaves who were from this district, the others are from slaves in other parts of Texas.

ROBERT:

You think of slavery being so long ago, so long in the past.

GUY:

So much of it though was a nineteenth century phenomenon.

ROBERT:

So these people photographed in the late thirties or nineteen forty, thereabouts could actually be the grandchildren or even children of people brought directly from Africa?

GUY:

That's exactly right.

GUY:

Now here are some of the recordings from the Library of Congress with former slaves who were born Texas. Recording 1: (captioned) Born right there and stayed there until I was about nine, ten years old, maybe even more. Stayed right there. We didn't know where to go. Momma never did know where to go. Y'see, after freedom y'know, it's like, just like you turn someone out y'know. Didn't know where to go. They just would've stayed. Recording 2:(captioned) I said I'm 61 or 2 years old and I've never had no trouble in my life. I say I never asked a no one for a nickel but they didn't give it to me in my life. And not a one of them never trusted me.

ROBERT:

What is significant to you in the speech patterns on these recordings?

GUY:

They're very different from current day African American vernacular English. Many of the, the features that are most common eh in, what linguists call a A B E things like in variant 'be', they 'be' working or the deleted, copular eh 'they' working. You don't see as much the invariant 'be' you don't see it at all, hear it at all in the slave tapes.

ROBERT:

AFRICAN AMERICAN SPEECH CHANGED IN THE EPIC MIGRATION OF RURAL SOUTHERN BLACKS TO THE CITIES OF THE NORTH. OVER MANY DECADES UNTIL THE 1970S, SOME 6 MILLION MADE THAT JOURNEY. AND AS ALWAYS WHEN THERE ARE GREAT MOVEMENTS OF PEOPLE THERE ARE ALSO GREAT CHANGES OF LANGUAGE. IN THE CITIES OF THE NORTH, THE RACES MIXED LESS THAN IN THE RURAL SOUTH. INSTEAD, BLACKS AND THEIR LANGUAGE FOUND THEMSELVES ISOLATED IN GHETTOS.

GUY:

In the large cities you had spatial segregation but you also had the formation of of separate communities often with a kind of oppositional culture to uh to the rest of the US. This created uh an ideal context for African American vernacular English to develop along a sort of a separate a separate track.

ROBERT:

WHAT WE HEARD IN DETROIT SHOWS HOW THAT SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES TO THIS DAY. (Athletic Mic League recording)

GUY:

Well I, I think what you can say is that white speech and African American speech, over the last hundred and fifty years or so have developed along different paths, they've had sort of eh independent development, not influencing each other very much at all eh. Um so that their grammars are very different today, probably more different eh than they've ever been. And their phonologies aren't very similar their sound systems aren't very similar either, it's kind of independent development.

ROBERT:

I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SUM UP SPRINGVILLE LIKE THIS. A HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS AGO RURAL BLACKS AND WHITES SOUNDED MORE ALIKE THAN YOU MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT. BUT TODAY WHITES AND INNER CITY BLACKS SOUND MORE DIFFERENT THAN YOU MIGHT HAVE HOPED. AFTER DECADES OF CIVIL RIGHTS ADVANCES, THE IMPLICATIONS ARE PRETTY SOBERING, BECAUSE MORE SEPARATE LANGUAGES MEAN MORE SEPARATE PEOPLES. LATE AFTERNOON. THE END OF A LONG DAY'S DRIVE. I'M HEADING FOR THE HEART OF TEXAS. BUT I COULDN'T RESIST A LITTLE DETOUR WHEN I SAW THIS NAME ON THE MAP.

ROBERT:

Cut and Shoot is just one of a number of place names I jotted down from the map that shows something extravagant and imaginative in the Texas personality. Here's some other names of places... Wink, Telephone, New Deal, Oatmeal, Old Glory, Pandora, Rainbow, Best, Bangs, Birthright, Cash, Deadwood, Grit, Gunbarrel City, Happy, and Joy. The population of Best, incidentally, is one.

ROBERT:

SOMEWHERE AROUND HERE THERE'S A MAN WHO MAKES A GOOD LIVING OUT OF TEXAS TALK AND AN ART OUT OF BEING POLITICALLY INCORRECT. HE STARTED OUT WRITING COUNTRY AND WESTERN SONGS WITH CLEVER LYRICS. NOW HE WRITES DETECTIVE STORIES SET IN TEXAS. HE HAS ALSO WRITTEN A BOOK CALLED TEXAS ETIQUETTE, WHICH INCLUDES A CHAPTER ON TEXAS TALK. HIS NAME IS KINKY FRIEDMAN, BUT ROUND HERE HE'S KNOWN TO ONE AND ALL AS "THE KINKSTER."

ROBERT:

Hello.

KINKY:

Robin.

ROBERT:

Great to meet you.

KINKY:

KINKY the friendly COWBOY.

ROBERT:

Yeah right.

KINKY:

And two great Americans or you're almost an American, anyway.

ROBERT:

I'm an American.

KINKY:

You are an American?

ROBERT:

Yeah. Recently.

ROBERT:

THOUGH KINKY WASN'T BORN IN TEXAS, HE'S BECOME A PROFESSIONAL TEXAN.

KINKY:

Anyway, welcome to Echo Hill.

ROBERT:

Thank you.

KINKY:

Come on in. Always live in a house that's older than you...

ROBERT:

I've never been here before.

KINKY:

Well you haven't missed too much. No, actually you have. it's a very beautiful place, what, what are you looking for in this sort of thing?

ROBERT:

Well we're, we're, were looking for Texas talk.

KINKY:

Are you looking for a man not smoking a cigar?

ROBERT:

No, you can smoke a cigar.

ROBERT:

KINKY LOVES TO WORK THE COLORFUL TEXAN WAY WITH LANGUAGE INTO SONG LYRICS, BOOKS AND ARTICLES.

ROBERT:

This is where you write?

KINKY:

Yeah uh this is my typewriter, this is the last typewriter in Texas.

ROBERT:

Ah ha.

KINKY:

I don't use any computers or the Internet. I think they're the work of Satan.

ROBERT:

Ah ha. What um are you working on right now?

KINKY:

I've just finished a book called "Kill Two Birds and Get Stoned," which is about three people trying to uh shut down a Starbucks in New York City...

ROBERT:

KINKY'S WAY WITH WORDS HAS WON HIM MANY FANS – SOME OF THEM QUITE IMPORTANT.

ROBERT:

Who are your friends here?

KINKY:

Well uh we have uh George Bush. I'm kind of a friend of Presidents these days. And Bill Clinton.

ROBERT:

I see. They're both friends of yours?

KINKY:

Yeah I err I'm kind of like Billie Graham or Jesse Jackson I'm a professional friend of Presidents. My friend Don Imas accuses me of being best friends with Bill Clinton until one millisecond after he was out of office and then jumping to George Bush,

ROBERT:

You're George Bush's favorite author?

KINKY:

Yeah, but George is not that voracious a reader...

ROBERT:

But you um, you suit his attention span?

KINKY:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah he's a, he's a great American.

ROBERT:

THANKS TO KINKY NON TEXANS CAN RELISH TEXAN TERMS LIKE THESE:

“WELL BUTTER MY BUTT AND CALL ME A BISCUIT”: TO MEAN ALRIGHT OR HI.
“CATTY WHOMPUS” FOR SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T FIT OR IS OUT OF LINE.
“DAG BLAME IT, DAG BUM IT, DAG NAB IT” ALL EUPHEMISMS TO AVOID
SWEARING. “LARRUPIN” TASTIER THAN FINGER LICKIN' GOOD. AND “ALL
SWOLE UP” TO MEAN IRRITATED, OR PROUD AND SELF ABSORBED. BUT TO HEAR
TEXAN TALK IN ITS TALLEST FORM, HEAD FOR THE THE STATE CAPITOL IN
AUSTIN. THE LEGISLATURE IS A KIND OF ONE-STOP-SHOP FOR EVERY KIND OF
TEXAS ACCENT. (Walker County Announcements)

ROBERT:

THOUGH TEXANS ARE FAR FROM FORMAL, THIS IS THE ONLY PLACE IN MY
TRAVELS WHERE I HAVE TO WEAR A JACKET AND TIE. I'M HERE TO MEET AN
OLD FRIEND – THAT REDOUBTABLE WRITER, COLUMNIST, COMMENTATOR AND
SCOURGE OF ALL POLITICIANS – PARTICULARLY MALE ONES - MOLLY IVINS.
BECAUSE NO ONE TALKS BETTER ABOUT TEXAS LANGUAGE THAN MOLLY.

MOLLY IVINS:

We like our food spicy and we like our language spicy. This is one of the greatest places in
Texas to hear it properly spoken. You get everything in this House of Representatives from the
East Texas drawl to the West Texas twang eh. We've got GUYS serving in this house who sound
exactly like Boomhauer on King of the Hill, you can barely understand a word they say, 'yo wng,
wng.' [Laughs]

ROBERT:

Um you've described Texan as having a lunatic quality of exaggeration. What is it in the Texas psyche that, that drives that?

MOLLY IVINS:

I think the best explanation for Texas is Texas is just like the rest of the country except more so. Everything here is slightly exaggerated.

MOLLY IVINS:

You get some wonderful expressions. 'Meaner than a skillet full of rattle snakes.' ... 'I'm happy enough to be twins ' um. I have an old friend I camp with who always say 'I don't want to die and go to heaven 'cause it couldn't be better than this'.

MOLLY IVINS:

And Texan properly spoken involves inventing your own metaphors and similes.

ROBERT:

Can you think of some examples?

MOLLY IVINS:

Um the late Bob Bullock eh, our, our like eh was um a great speaker of Texan and he was um one day complaining about some young wipper snapper from the Washington Post who'd been in to interview him. [laughs]. For to explain to me why he didn't like the GUY he said 'Molly his pants were so tight if he'd have farted it would have blowed his boots off.'

ROBERT:

THIS IS THE LYNDON JOHNSON LIBRARY IN AUSTIN. FEW TEXANS HAVE TALKED MORE TEXAN THAN AMERICA'S FIRST PRESIDENT FROM TEXAS. TO ITS CREDIT THE LBJ LIBRARY HASN'T LOST ITS SENSE OF HUMOR. LBJ Robot:

I was thinking about uh a story that occurred down in my own hills of Texas.

ROBERT:

THE REAL LBJ WAS FAMOUS FOR HIS SALTY TURNS OF PHRASE. HE USED TO SAY "HE CAN TELL CHICKEN SH*%! FROM CHICKEN SALAD." DURING THE VIETNAM WAR I PERSONALLY HEARD HIM SAY, "IF I'VE GOT 'EM BY THE SHORT AND CURLIES, THE HEARTS AND MINDS WILL FOLLOW."

ROBERT:

The uninhibited rhetoric and flamboyant style of Texas politics hit Washington with Lyndon Johnson. I began covering politics with Kennedy and Johnson just as television replaced radio as the national sounding board. The new political era brought presidential voices to Washington

from different regional dialects, starting with Kennedy and Johnson. (Swearing in of Kennedy on laptop)

ROBERT:

VOTERS WERE COMFORTABLE WITH JFK'S MASSACHUSETTS RASP. BUT LBJ'S ACCENT WAS ANOTHER MATTER ALTOGETHER. (Swearing in of Johnson on laptop)

ROBERT:

BACK THEN HIS TEXAN ACCENT WAS OPENLY DESPISED. (Swearing in of Carter on laptop)

ROBERT:

EVEN BY THE LATE 70'S JIMMY CARTER'S GEORGIA ACCENT DID HIM NO FAVORS IN WASHINGTON. IT SEEMS TO ME WE'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THEN. THAT FORMER RHODES SCHOLAR BILL CLINTON SAW NO NEED TO LOSE HIS ARKANSAS ACCENT – PARTLY BECAUSE HE COULD CHANGE IT AT WILL. (Swearing in Clinton on laptop) (Swearing in Bush on laptop)

ROBERT:

TODAY, IRONICALLY, PRESIDENT BUSH, A SCION OF THE EAST COAST ESTABLISHMENT, WANTS TO SOUND LIKE A TEXAN.

MOLLY IVINS:

There was a popular intellectual theory uh about twenty years ago that the whole country was becoming more and more alike, it was all covered with interstate highways and Howard Johnson's restaurants and everybody talked more and more alike.

MOLLY IVINS:

You know what's amazing is not the fragility of those cultures it's their hardihood, it's their endurance. I'm amazed by the uh tenacity with which custom and dialect eh endures.

ROBERT:

THE FARTHER SOUTH WE GO, THE STRONGER THE SPANISH INFLUENCE. THE ROAD SIGNS TELL THEIR OWN STORY. ALVARADO, BANDERA, CHICO, DEL RIO, EL PASO, FRISCO, GONZALES, HONDO, NADA, PLATA, REFUGIO, RIO FRIO, SANTA ANA AND SIERRA BLANCA. BY THE TIME I REACH THE TEX-MEX BORDER IN THE EVENING, IT FEELS AS IF WE'RE ALREADY IN MEXICO.

ROBERT:

EVERY MORNING IT'S RUSH HOUR ON THE BRIDGE FROM NUEVO LAREDO IN MEXICO TO LAREDO IN TEXAS. IT WAS SO SNARLED UP ON THE DAY WE MET ALLAN WALL THAT IT WAS EASIER FOR HIM TO PARK ON THE MEXICAN SIDE AND WALK ACROSS TO THE USA. ALLAN'S A LANGUAGE TEACHER WHO IS MARRIED TO A MEXICAN AND LIVES THERE WITH HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.

MANY AMERICANS ARE SO ALARMED BY THE AMOUNT OF SPANISH THEY HEAR THAT THEY WANT ENGLISH TO BE MADE OUR OFFICAL LANGUAGE. ALLAN WALL IS ONE OF THEM.

ALLAN WALL:

It's a great advantage for us to have a common language. It's good for the immigrants--- to learn English it, it opens up the to mainstream of the American society and economy. --- It's also an important part of our common citizenship, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the judicial precedents eh, these are all in English. And I think it's a threat to the, the linguistic unity of our nation because the English language is our common civic language. (Spanish Supermarket Announcement)

ROBERT:

SPANISH IS EVERYWHERE IN LAREDO. IT'S NOT THAT THE SUPERMARKET WORKERS CAN'T OR WON'T SPEAK ENGLISH. IT'S JUST THERE'S NOT MUCH CALL FOR IT. EVEN THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER PUTS OUT EDITIONS IN BOTH SPANISH AND ENGLISH. THE EDITOR IS ROBERT GARCIA.

ROBERT GARCIA:

Look at what's happening to major newspaper in the US they're switching some of their segments to Spanish, because they need to get to those folks and to communicate with those folks.

ROBERT:

For example I will work with both the Spanish and the English, a segment of the newspaper so I'm constantly switching back and forth. You know but I'm used to that, I'm from the area.

ROBERT:

TO SEE JUST HOW FAR THE SPANISH LANGUAGE HAS RE-ASSERTED ITSELF AROUND HERE, I'VE COME TO A LITTLE BORDER TOWN CALLED EL CENIZO, TEXAS. I'D MADE AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET THE MAYOR.

ROBERT:

Good morning.

RECEPTIONIST:

Hello sir, good morning.

ROBERT:

I have an appointment to see the mayor.

RECEPTIONIST:

Yes sir.

ROBERT:

Yeah. Is the mayor here?

RECEPTIONIST:

No sir.

ROBERT:

Did she say anything about, um, our appointment?

RECEPTIONIST:

Ah, no sir. She's at a, um, a very important meeting.

ROBERT:

Very.

RECEPTIONIST:

Yeah.

ROBERT:

So is there somebody else that I could talk to here?

RECEPTIONIST:

Uh, yes with Mr. Hernandez. He's a commissioner.

ROBERT:

A commissioner?

RECEPTIONIST:

Yes sir.

ROBERT:

You're a commissioner, you were just elected commissioner, were you?

NOE HERNANDEZ:

Yeah, that's right.

ROBERT:

When was that, ah?

NOE HERNANDEZ:

In November.

ROBERT:

In November.

NOE HERNANDEZ:

Yeah.

ROBERT:

How many commissioners are there in, ah, El Cenizo?

NOE HERNANDEZ:

We are, right now we are just two.

ROBERT:

Just two commissioners. You're one of two.

NOE HERNANDEZ:

Yeah.

ROBERT:

Um hm. And - and tell us what the, um, the mayor - where is the mayor, she's ..?

NOE HERNANDEZ:

The mayor is right now in (unclear) country for a ..

ROBERT:

In Laredo?

NOE HERNANDEZ:

In Laredo, yeah.

ROBERT:

IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT THE MAYOR AND TOWN COMMISSIONERS WANT TO AVOID CONTROVERSY. UNDER THE PREVIOUS MAYOR THE TOWN PASSED AN ORDINANCE MAKING SPANISH ITS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE. NO INGLES...IN THE BORDER TOWN OF EL CENIZO SPANISH IS IN, ENGLISH IS OUT...BANNING ENGLISH DIVISIVE MEASURE...SPANISH IS OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN TOWN. SUDDENLY EL CENIZO FOUND ITSELF AT THE CENTER OF A NATIONAL FURORE.

ROBERT GARCIA:

It was ugly. They got calls, threats, people telling them you're in America what are you doing speaking Spanish as an official language in your community.

ROBERT:

And they infuriated the US English people, the people who want to make English the official language of the United States.

ROBERT GARCIA:

That also brought on a lot of heat from them.

ROBERT:

Has any other town followed El Cenizo's example on Spanish?

ROBERT GARCIA:

I think a lot of them wanted to, but after the reaction that El Cenizo got they stayed away.

ALLAN WALL:

Mexico would never allow that. We could never take over a town in Mexico, declare English the official language and declare it a, a haven from Mexican immigration law.

ROBERT:

UNDER THAT PREVIOUS MAYOR, EL CENIZO WENT ONE STEP FURTHER. IT PASSED AN ORDINANCE THAT NO TOWN OFFICIAL WAS ALLOWED TO COLLABORATE WITH THE U.S. IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES.

ROBERT:

So this is where this little town ends, in the Rio Grande River, the Rio not very Grande in fact because there isn't much water in it. But through these bushes and across the river is the, um, border with Mexico, so it's a naturally attractive crossing point for illegal immigrants, and this area is heavily patrolled by the border patrol.

ROBERT:

THERE ARE AN ESTIMATED SEVEN MILLION ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN THE USA. SEVEN OUT OF TEN PROBABLY SLIPPED ACROSS THE BORDER WITH MEXICO. THE U.S. BORDER PATROL HAS PUT HUGE RESOURCES INTO STEMMING THAT FLOW. Border Patrol Guard:

The tracks being back on the fence is not good. That means we're not too close behind these GUYs.

ROBERT:

So you come out and find a trail, and then somebody cuts in ahead of you and they use the helicopters to position them. Is that right?

DANNY ROBERTSON:

Correct. Correct. Correct.

ROBERT:

Imagine coming through here at night.

DANNY ROBERTSON:

Oh yeah.

ROBERT:

This is pretty rough country, I mean you'd get your clothes torn up on all these thorns and things.

DANNY ROBERTSON:

Correct.

ROBERT:

It's very – look at all this, it's very sharp. So what proportion of the ones that come across do you think you get?

DANNY ROBERTSON:

Oh, I'd say about 40-50%.

ROBERT:

Uh huh.

DANNY ROBERTSON:

But but overall, the usual, people, I've heard different people say it's 10%.

ROBERT:

Yeah.

ROBERT:

THEN THE BORDER PATROL SAW FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND. THE "ILLEGALS" WERE SPOTTED HUDDLED IN THE SCRUB. A WOMAN PATROL OFFICER MOVED IN TO MAKE THE ARREST. NO ONE RESISTED, NO ONE RAN AWAY. THEY KNEW THEY'D BE SENT BACK TO MEXICO. AND LIKELY AS NOT, THEY'D TRY AGAIN SOON.

ALLAN WALL:

Living in Mexico has given me a different perspective ---- there was a conference a Spanish language congress in, in two thousand and one, and eh the president of Mexico, Vincente Fox, was there, and he made the comment that when the immigrants come here and continue to speak Spanish they are doing their patriotic duty to Mexico. And another speaker there was eh, Carlos Fuentes, who is the, he's probably the, the number one literary figure, living literary figure in Mexico. And he spoke very clearly he said that there is a silent reconquista, a re-conquest of the United States. He didn't even limit it to the Southwest, as many do. He just said of the United States.

ROBERT:

DOES THE LARGE HISPANIC IMMIGRATION – LEGAL AND ILLEGAL -- REALLY THREATEN AMERICAN ENGLISH? OR, LIKE IMMIGRANT GROUPS BEFORE, ARE LATINOS MERGING INTO THE MAINSTREAM? *Bumper and Tease*

NARRATOR:

We'll be right back with more of Do You Speak American?

NARRATOR:

Coming up Girl:

'Sup?

ROBERT:

How do you say it?

NARRATOR:

We'll travel up the West Coast, from LA to Seattle, where knowing how to navigate the terrain... Teacher and Kids:

Excellent translation! (Yay!)

NARRATOR:

Is essential.

STEVE HARVEY:

You do have to be bilingual in this country. You can be very very adapt at slang but you have to be adapt at uh getting getting through a job interview.

NARRATOR:

And look out –

PATRICIA LOPEZ:

La chica sexy!

NARRATOR:

There are some dangerous curves ahead.

PATRICIA LOPEZ:

(Mwah!) Oh no I made him blush!

NARRATOR:

Don't be embarrassed to join us. Coming up, on Do You Speak American?

TEENS:

Word.

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PBS System Cue PBS will return in a moment.

- *Do You Speak American?*