

Dealing With Dialect

Opening of Chapter 1, *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly – Tom's Aunt Polly, she is – and Mary, and the Widow Douglas is all told about in that book, which is mostly a true book, with some stretchers, as I said before.

From “And Some More”¹ by Sandra Cisneros

The Eskimos got thirty different names for snow, I say. I read it in a book.

I got a cousin, Rachel says, she got three different names.

There ain't thirty different kinds of snow, Lucy says. There are two kinds. The clean kind and the dirty kind, clean and dirty. Only two.

There are a million zillion kinds, says Nenny, no two exactly alike. Only how do you remember which one is which?

She got three last names and, let me see, two first names. One in English and one in Spanish...

From *Storming Heaven*² by Denise Giardina

They is many a way to mark a baby while it is still yet in the womb. A fright to its mother will render it nervous and fretful after it is birthed. If a copperhead strikes, a fiery red snake will be stamped on the baby's face or back. And a portentous event will violate a womans entrails, grab a youngun by the ankle and wrench a life out of joint.

From *The Dunne Family* by James T. Farrell

"Holy Saints, Mr. Duffy, you've made the wrong estimation of me!"

They were standing before an ornate mahogany coffin with silver trim. It was a fifteen-hundred-dollar coffin. "I was merely attempting to give you an idea of the range of coffins we offer. I was not trying to sell you this number."

"I gotcha, Mr. Duffy," Dick said, thinking that here was a smooth article if he had ever seen one.

Opening Lines of *Sol and Michael* (novel in process) by Martin Hason

Sarah don't make lemon with hot water no more. She don't fix breakfast with a napkin. She don't bring slippers with helping to put on. Sarah is dead; and Sol has decided he'll be also.

“Sarah?” Married forty eight years; buying together, the night before, a flounder; and in the morning dead? Who's going to cook that fish? And could you eat it by yourself after choosing together? “A waste damn you; get up!”

Leave in the freezer, where it's been for ten months, that fish couldn't be eaten.

It ain't possible to tell how Sol feels, lying in bed watching the window. It wasn't just Sarah's breasts they buried, was also Sol's. And telling ain't the same like getting your body buried. When a stranger sticks you in a hole, and puts dirt on top until you choke, it ain't crazy you kick him.³

¹ Sandra Cisneros, *The House on Mango Street* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989) p. 34.

² Denise Giardina, *Storming Heaven* (New York: Ballantine, 1987), p.3.

³ Martin Hason, from a novel-in-progress, *Sol and Michael*.