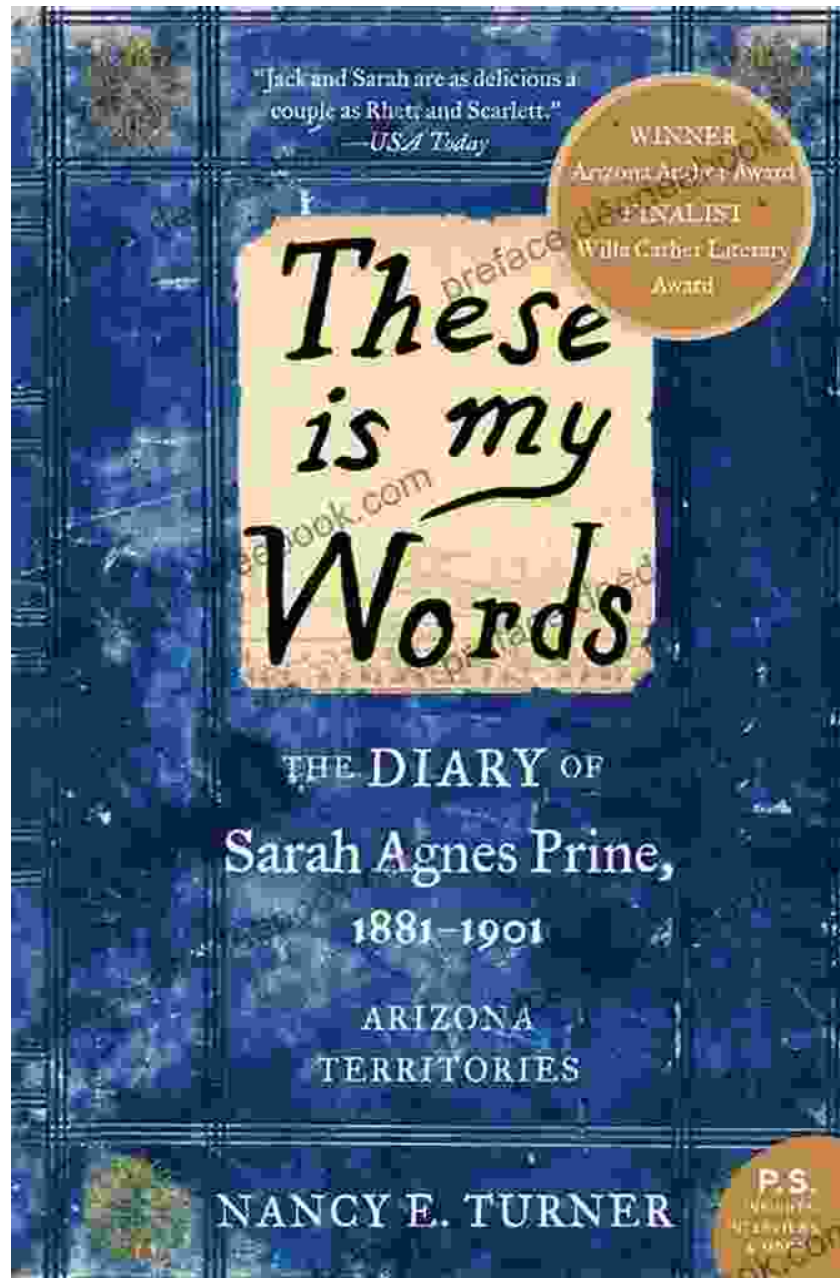
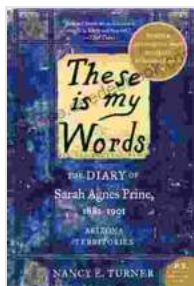


These Is My Words: Exploring the Language of the American South



The American South is a region with a rich and distinct culture, and its language is no exception. The Southern dialect, with its drawling vowels and colorful expressions, is often seen as a symbol of the region's unique

identity. But beyond its stereotypes, the Southern dialect is a complex and fascinating linguistic phenomenon, with a long and rich history.



These Is My Words: The Diary of Sarah Agnes Prine,

1881-1901 by Marcos Viana

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 4280 KB
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Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
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X-Ray	: Enabled
Hardcover	: 376 pages
Item Weight	: 1.55 pounds
Dimensions	: 6.14 x 0.88 x 9.21 inches

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In her book *These Is My Words*, Nancy E. Hartsock explores the language of the American South, from its origins in the 17th and 18th centuries to its present-day usage. Hartsock argues that the Southern dialect is not simply a collection of quaint expressions, but a vibrant and evolving language with its own unique grammar and vocabulary.

This article will provide an overview of Hartsock's book, exploring the history, grammar, and vocabulary of the Southern dialect. We will also discuss the social and cultural significance of the Southern dialect, and its impact on American literature.

The History of the Southern Dialect

The Southern dialect began to develop in the 17th and 18th centuries, as English colonists settled in the American South. These colonists brought with them a variety of regional dialects, which gradually blended together to form the Southern dialect.

The Southern dialect was also influenced by the African slaves who were brought to the South. African slaves brought their own languages to the Americas, and these languages had a significant impact on the development of the Southern dialect. For example, the Southern dialect's use of the word "y'all" is thought to have originated from the African word "y'alluh," which means "all of you."

The Southern dialect continued to develop in the 19th and 20th centuries, as the South became a distinct region with its own unique culture and identity. The Southern dialect was used in literature, music, and film, and it became a symbol of the South's unique way of life.

The Grammar of the Southern Dialect

The Southern dialect has a number of grammatical features that distinguish it from other dialects of American English. These features include:

- The use of the double negative, as in "I don't know nothing."
- The use of the past tense to describe present events, as in "I was fixing to go to the store."
- The use of the present tense to describe past events, as in "I went to the store yesterday."
- The use of the word "y'all" to refer to both singular and plural audiences.

- The use of the word "ain't" as a contraction of "am not," "are not," or "is not."

These grammatical features are not unique to the Southern dialect, but they are used more frequently in the South than in other regions of the United States.

The Vocabulary of the Southern Dialect

The Southern dialect also has a number of unique vocabulary words and expressions. These words and expressions include:

- **Bless your heart:** A term of endearment or sympathy.
- **Fixin' to:** About to.
- **Y'all:** You all.
- **Ain't:** Am not, are not, or is not.
- **Coke:** Any carbonated beverage.
- **Cattywampus:** Askew.
- **Holler:** A yell or shout.
- **Jug:** A large container for liquids.
- **Lace:** To beat.
- **Mighty:** Very.

These words and expressions are not always used exclusively in the South, but they are more common in the South than in other regions of the United States.

The Social and Cultural Significance of the Southern Dialect

The Southern dialect is more than just a way of speaking. It is also a symbol of the South's unique culture and identity. The Southern dialect is used in literature, music, and film, and it is a source of pride for many Southerners.

However, the Southern dialect has also been the subject of prejudice and discrimination. Some people view the Southern dialect as uneducated and unsophisticated. This prejudice has led to discrimination against Southerners in education, employment, and other areas of life.

Despite the prejudice that it has faced, the Southern dialect continues to thrive. It is a vibrant and evolving language that is spoken by millions of people. The Southern dialect is a valuable part of American culture, and it is an important part of the South's unique identity.

The Southern Dialect in American Literature

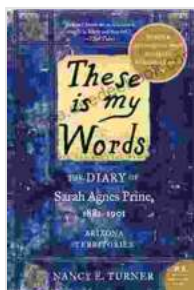
The Southern dialect has been used in American literature for centuries. Some of the most famous American authors, including Mark Twain, William Faulkner, and Flannery O'Connor, have written in the Southern dialect.

The Southern dialect can be used to create a sense of place and atmosphere in literature. It can also be used to develop characters who are believable and authentic. The Southern dialect is a powerful tool that can be used to create great literature.

The Southern dialect is a complex and fascinating linguistic phenomenon. It is a vibrant and evolving language with its own unique grammar, vocabulary, and social and cultural significance. The Southern dialect is a

valuable part of American culture, and it is an important part of the South's unique identity.

Nancy E. Hartsock's book *These Is My Words* is a valuable resource for anyone who is interested in learning more about the Southern dialect. Hartsock's book provides a comprehensive overview of the history, grammar, and vocabulary of the Southern dialect. It also explores the social and cultural significance of the Southern dialect, and its impact on American literature.



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