

It's important to use dialect in her poem as it is ~~celebrating~~ celebrating her heritage and preserving her accent and dialect. Because of this, people are able to appreciate their accent more and learn that it is okay to speak with an accent, opposed to the widespread belief that certain accents are bad and will negatively impact you.

Why do you think it's important for Liz Berry to write in a black country accent?

I think the use of black country dialect in the poem 'homing' instills the significance of subverting language 'wrong and rights' and instead celebrating history and community through the ~~use~~ illumination of classic black country words. The poem connotes to ideas around prejudice towards certain ~~languages~~ accents and even languages globally, and reveals how the existence of accents and languages rely on heritage and community, as oppose to 'main stream' languages such as Spanish which predominantly rely on the economic benefits of a language.

Homing

even when it's present
mourning something

1 For years you kept your accent
in a box beneath the bed,
the lock rusted shut by hours of elocution
how now brown cow

5 the teacher's ruler across your legs.
punishment

We heard it escape sometimes,
a guttural *uh* on the phone to your sister,
soft or *blart* to a taxi driver
unpacking your bags from his boot.

10 I loved its thick drawl, g's that rang.

reaching back to
Clearing your house, the only thing
I wanted was that box, jemmied open
to let years of lost words spill out -
bibble, fittle, tay, wum,

15 vowels ferrous as nails, consonants

you could lick the coal from.
I wanted to swallow them all: the pits,
railways, factories thunking and clanging
the night shift, the red brick

20 back-to-back you were born in.

origins → shaping
I wanted to forge your voice
in my mouth, a blacksmith's furnace;
shout it from the roofs,

send your words, like pigeons,
fluttering for home.

writer's message -

Berry uses her poem as
a subtle contribution
to the radicalism of
the romantics by using
vernacular throughout
the poem as almost a
resistance to standard
and expected literature
but to also celebrate
the ordinary and
belonging found in our
home languages and
accents.

Berry (b. 1980) → final word significance
writing a poem like this resists
the standard celebrating the ordinary

explores themes of linguistic and cultural
suppression.

explores the repression of accent and speech
the elitism of received pronunciation

the way the poem was formed was described
as 'finding itself' reflecting the big idea
of the poem finding roots and going back
links to Wordsworth ordinary life idea.¹³

I think it is important for Berry to use the Black Country dialect in the poem because she shows that you shouldn't be ashamed of your accent and how you speak as everyone speaks and says things differently. She uses 'bibble, fittle, tag, wum,' which is known for being Black country but she doesn't use 'standard english' as she ~~emphasises~~ uses the poem to encourage people to not be ashamed of how they speak.

Berry is proud of her and her family's local identity through their history. She shows this through the knowledge of their background, combatting stigmas with explanation. The Black Country history reflects a handworking generation to fuel a majority of Britain's industrial era.

1) I think it is important to Berry to use Black Country dialect in the poem because it makes it feel more 'common' and 'okay' to be using. If more people use this dialect then we feel more comfortable to speak this way and makes us feel less ashamed/embarrassed of Black Country dialect and reduces the discrimination and prejudice presented when people speak this way. We should all feel comfortable in ourselves and our accents/dialect. ✓

2) We can see that Berry is proud of her background as she names the dialect she uses and begins to feel more comfortable with herself when she states 'I wanted that box', showing she doesn't want to hide this part of herself. ✓