Linguistic Text Analysis of To Kill a Mockingbird

Examples from To Kill a Mockingbird:
“What you want, Lula?” she asked in a tone I had never heard. [Calpurnia]
“I wants to know why you bringin’ white chillun to a n**** church.” [Lula]
“They’s my comp’ny,” said Calpurnia.
Again I thought her voice was strange: she was talking like the rest of them.
“Yeah, an’ I reckon you’s comp’ny at the Finch house durin’ the week.” [Lula]

“Yeah, an’ I reckon you’s comp’ny at the Finch house durin’ the week.” [Lula]

“Then what did you do?” [prosecutor]

“Well, I run around the house to get in, but he ran out the front door just ahead of me. I sawed who he was, all right. I was too distracted about Mayella to run after ‘im. I run in the house and she was lyin’ on the floor squallin’—” [Bob Ewell]

“Why I run for Tate quick as I could. I knowed who it was, all right, lived down yonder in that n****-nest, passed the house every day. Jedge, I’ve asked this county for fifteen years to clean out that nest down yonder, they’re dangerous to live around ‘sides devaluin’ my prop- erty—” [Bob Ewell]

What would the passages be like in Standard English? Make a list of features that are different from Standard English, and state how they would be said in Standard English. Group together (write in the same cell) examples that show the same patterns. Comment on the difference.
An example is done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonstandard feature</th>
<th>Standard English</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I wants to know”</td>
<td>I want to know</td>
<td>In Lula’s speech, the verb ‘want’ has -s for the first person singular (pronoun “I”), which is not present in Standard English. (Standard English has -s only for 3rd person singular he/she/it wants)</td>
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</table>
1. Why do you think the author wrote the passages the way she did? _________________________

2. How many different ways of speaking English can you identify in these passages? Are the patterns you notice in Lula’s and Calpurnia’s speech the same as those in Bob Ewell’s speech? Are they the same as in the narrator’s voice? Give some examples as evidence to support your answer.

________________________________________________________________________________

2. Based on your analysis of the features, can you predict how Lula and Calpurnia would say:

“They’re dangerous”: _______________________________

“Then what did you do?” _______________________________

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