# Language Autobiography:

# Grading Breakdown & Writing Tips

## Grading Criteria (see also the Grading Form)

**Total Points: 100**

*1. Detailed & insightful description of own linguistic interactions (40 points)*

* Detailed description –the “what” of your experience/linguistic interactions (20 points).
* Insighfulness and your *connection* to the experience –the “why” of it (20 points).

*2. References to particular authors & scholarly debates (40 points)*

* 8 points each for reference of two separate course readings, referred to by author (16 points).
* Appropriate/sufficient/correct reference to relevant authors, concepts, & debates (24 points).

*3. Organization of essay and quality of writing (8 points).*

* How well are the following criteria met? *(Well-done = 8; Adequate = 4; Poor = 0).*
* (Well-written) introductory & concluding paragraphs.
* Clear wording and readability, flow from one idea/topic/paragraph to the next.
* No typos, punctuation issues, misspellings, etc.
* Adequately follows protocols (paper is handed in on time, does not go over page limit, etc)

*4. Overall insightfulness of analysis (3 points)*

* How well are the following criteria met?
  + Link autobiographical information (criteria 1) with course material (criteria 2).
  + Quality/insightfulness of conclusions

## Protocols

1. Papers must be written in **12-point font**, **double-spaced, 3-page maximum.**

*What a 3-page maximum means:* I will not penalize you if you need to go beyond three pages to complete a sentence or a paragraph. HOWEVER, if you write not one but several more paragraphs beyond the third page, you will lose points!!!!!

1. Your paper must be submitted in TWO different places. When you click on the “Language Autobiography” link in the course content page of our webcourse, you will notice a link to an “Assignment” tool AND a link to Turnitin.com. You MUST submit your paper to BOTH tools. Please note that if you submit to one and not the other, you run the risk of getting a zero on the assignment.
2. You must use **proper citations**. Although I do not need a Works Cited page (I already know who the authors are) I do need to see you properly cite your authors. For example:
   * Ahearn (Ch. 4) reminds us that the absence of a word in a language does not indicate…
   * … for example, the way bedtime stories are read to the children of Roadville (Heath 2001)…
   * … in contrast, my mother’s sie of the family has always enjoyed puns & other wordplay (Jacobson’s poetic function)…
   * As Kulik (1998) concludes, “language ideologies seem never to be solely about language –they are always entangled clusters of phenomena” (p100).

## Tips!!!!

*Be concise:*  Get to the point. Don’t try to use “big words” or over-explain your point. Less really is more!

* Bad: In this formulation language’s influence on the thought process of an individual can be powerful, such that it becomes the sole determinant of the full spectrum of cognitive and perceptual abilities, baring any additional influence from the culture in which one is embedded.
* Good: In this version, language determines thought, and neither thought nor culture affect language.

*Be explicit.*If I have to search for the connection between your autobiographical event & course material, I may have to assume it is not there.

* “Aspect A of my experience B relates to topic C in that it…”
* “Although one can argue that there is no difference in men’s and women’s speech, I believe that aspect X or my experience Y suggests otherwise because…”

*Ask for help if you need it.* I am *always* happy to review and comment on drafts of papers before you hand them in. Students who hand their work in for review prior to the due date historically do much better on this assignment than those who wait until the due date to hand it in. The earlier you hand your draft in, the more carefully I can review it.