

## LING135 Short Paper #1: Linguistic Autobiography (15 points)

This assignment asks you to reflect on your own experiences with language and society. Thinking about the languages you speak/sign and how they have shaped your identity, write a “linguistic autobiography” that illustrates (some of) your relationship with language(s). To spark some ideas, here are a few questions:

- What language(s) do you identify as a speaker/signer of? What dialects do you identify with?
- What speech communities/social networks/communities of practice do you belong to? How has your language use been affected by these social groups?
- How does the way you use language differ from other people you know? What might account for this?
- How has your language use changed over time?
- Has anyone ever commented on your language use? Was the commentary positive, negative, or neutral?
- What language beliefs/stereotypes were you raised to believe? What language beliefs/stereotypes do you believe now?
- What are your research interests within sociolinguistics? What might account for them?

You do not need to answer all of the questions. This assignment is intentionally open-ended.

### Nuts and Bolts:

You should aim for 3-5 pages, double spaced, with reasonable fonts and margins.<sup>1</sup> The finished paper must be **submitted as a PDF to Moodle by Friday, September 22 at 12:00pm.**

**A note on writing style:** This is an informal paper, and you may choose to write in the style/register/dialect of your choice. Other papers in this class will require you to practice your academic writing (a professional register of the fabled Standard American English (SAE)), but this is not one of them. For now, write however you want (and if you’re most comfortable with SAE, that works too!).

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<sup>1</sup> Typically this is 10-12 point font, 1 inch margins.