Short Paper Instructions: Phenomenon Profile

LING 140: Language in the US

Spring 2024

In this assignment, you will present information about a specific phenomenon in (a variety of) American English, a language indigenous to any part of the US (including current and former overseas territories), or a dialect of a language from another place that is characteristically spoken/signed in some part of the US (Pennsylvania German and Cajun French both work, but German or French in general would not).

For inspiration, you can look at the phenomena of American English presented by the [Yale Grammatical Diversity Project](#) (YGDP). Many subsections of Silver & Miller (1997) also discuss phenomena that would work nicely for this paper, particularly when a subsection is called "[phenomenon] in [language]."

Once you have chosen a phenomenon, do some research on it. The YGDP and Silver & Miller (1997) are both valid sources, but you'll need a bit more–though the sources cited by YGDP and Silver & Miller (1997) certainly count. For non-English languages, a [Scholarly Grammar](#) of the language will likely be helpful. You are encouraged to place this in the typological context of other languages using the [World Atlas of Linguistic Structures](#) (both the chapters and the maps).

Grading Rubric

You will be graded according to the following criteria:

A successful Phenomenon Profile will…

- … follow a clear, organized structure
- … explain who uses(/used) the phenomenon
- … present a description of the phenomenon
- … illustrate the description with examples
- … note whether the phenomenon has any social evaluation (positive or negative)

  For each of these points, the paper will be rated "2" if it succeeds in this area, "1" if it partially succeeds, and "0" if it does not succeed. Rewrites are welcome and re-graded.