

Survey Workshop

The **Language Use and Attitudes in a Global World and in Your Local Context** project will allow you examine your own relationship with English, the variety you speak, and the standard American English variety.

Part of this project involves designing and implementing a survey which will allow you to explore attitudes (or feelings and beliefs about someone or something) related to standard American English. This project will draw on a class survey, collaboratively designed, and individual analysis of data. We will distribute this survey to your fellow LaGuardians.

Each student will pursue one research question that they are interested in that contains two variables – one demographic variable and one attitude variable. For instance, if you are curious whether white students have stronger beliefs about standard English being the “correct” form of English compared to non-white students, you might ask: “What is the relation between race and attitudes toward standard English?” The two underlined phrases represent two variables in this research question, which are race and attitude toward standard English. In your project, you might explore the relation between these two variables.

Background and Demographic Survey Questions

To know some background information on each person who answers our survey, we will ask **demographic questions** to include in it:

- a. Demographics (“What is your age/gender/race/ethnicity/major?”)
- b. Linguistic profile (What languages did you grow up speaking? Do you speak more than one variety of English? Did your parents want you to speak Standard Am English?*)

* Standard American English is the variety treated as the official language and used in public broadcasting, publishing, and education (Yule, 2017). We will include this definition on the actual survey.

To explore attitudes related to standard American English, we will adopt **attitude questions** from an existing study [Metz, M. (2018). Exploring the complexity of high school students’ beliefs about language variation. *Linguistics and Education*, 45, 10-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2018.02.003>].

A typical way in which data about people’s attitudes and beliefs are collected is to present a statement and allow survey respondents to agree or disagree with that statement. Following Metz (2018), we will give six choices of different attitudes, ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” Below is a list of possible question from Metz (2018):

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

1. Standard English is the correct form of English.
2. Other varieties of English are sloppy forms of English.
3. Other varieties of English are inappropriate for school.
4. Standard English is the best language for complex reasoning.
5. To be successful, students should only speak standard English.
6. People who speak standard English are well educated.
7. Teachers think poorly of students who speak other varieties of English.
8. Standard English is necessary for professional settings.

Survey Assignment (due October 27th)

1. Formulate Your Research Question (25%)

Based on the ideas we discussed in class (Writing Workshop), what questions are you interested in surveying about your college peers' attitudes and beliefs about standard American English and other English varieties they speak?

Your task: Formulate your own research question about language variety beliefs and submit it for peer (in class) and instructor review (through this assignment). Make sure to construct a research question that contains two variables – one demographic variable and one attitude variable (see above for an example). Feel free to adopt a question from Metz (2018).

2. Create a Survey Item (25%)

In class, we will collectively generate one complete survey. You will learn how to create survey questions in Google Forms. Each student will contribute one survey item to our class survey. To help you articulate one survey item relevant to your research question, re-read survey questions in Metz (2018).

Your task: Develop one survey item either by either adopting it from Metz (2018) or writing your own statement. Submit it for peer and instructor review. Use Google Forms to create it (email me the link).

A quick introductory video on using Google forms:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ta5cedsNMxA&feature=youtu.be>

3. Submit Your Hypothesis (25%)

Based on class material about regional and social variation in language, what hypotheses do you have about the attitudes of your college peers related to the research question you are asking? What are your educated guesses about the kind of responses you expect given that the survey respondents are your peers at LaGuardia? Use the demographic comparison variable when formulating your hypothesis. Indicate what you think the results will be by race/ethnicity, gender, and/or the respondent's own language.

Your task: What do you believe are the fellow LaGuardians attitudes about standard English? Write a one-two sentence long prediction (hypothesis) about their beliefs based on one demographic variable.

4. Distributing the Survey Link (25%)

You will distribute the Google Forms survey (via URL link) to LaGuardia college peers. The goal is for each of you to recruit 5 participants to take the survey. You should take the survey yourself.

Your task: Send five to seven email messages inviting your college peers to take part in our survey. Use the text of the email I will share or develop your own. The last survey question will ask the respondents to share the name of the peer who sent the link to them. I will keep you posted on how many responses you elicit. As a class, we will invite students from other ELL 101 sections to respond to our class survey.

Numeracy Workshop

The **Language Use and Attitudes in a Global World and in Your Local Context** project will allow you examine your own relationship with English, the variety you speak, and the standard American English variety.

Part of this project involves applying quantitative analysis to the dataset collected via a survey of language beliefs (Survey Assignment). You will analyze the data we collect as class by creating visualizations in the form of tables and graphs (one of each required) and interpret the results in the write-up which will become part of your final research paper.

By completing the data analysis assignment, you will explore language ideologies demonstrated by respondents from a wide range of sociocultural backgrounds. This will help you to frame Standardized American English and its role in education and professional endeavors

Quantitative Analysis

- Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics describe, show, and summarize the basic features of a dataset found in a given study, such as counts, percentages, and averages. They present a summary that describes the data sample and its measurements. It helps analysts to understand the data better.

Look at Table 1 on page 3 in Metz (2018) to see descriptive statistics for the student sample.

- Data visualization

Data visualization is the practice of translating information into a visual context, such as a chart or a graph, to make data easier for the human brain to understand and pull insights from. The main goal of data visualization is to make it easier to identify patterns, trends and outliers in large data sets.

Look at Figure 1 on page 4 in Metz (2018) to see data visualization of their findings.

- Data interpretation

Data interpretation refers to the ability of a person to correctly extract, analyze meaningful information or data from the various data sources such as charts, tables, and graphs.

Look at “Recap of Survey Findings” on page 5 in Metz (2018) for an example of data interpretation in writing.

In class, we will complete the first two steps of the quantitative analysis together. Based on class work, you will submit the Data Analysis Assignment which will become part of the final research paper.

Data Analysis Assignment (due November 17th)

1. Provide Descriptive Statistics: Your Table 1 (25%)

Revisit your research question. Which survey responses would be the most relevant to answering your research question? In class, we will learn to create pivot tables in Google Sheets to display the data related to each of your research questions.

Your task: Summarize the demographic and attitude variables of interest (based on your research question) using descriptive statistics (percentages and averages for each question). The table must be accurately labeled, and you are required to convert the raw numbers from the class survey data (the data related to your questions) to percentages.

Table 1

Example of a bivariate table comparing two variables (Education vs. STEM):

Table 2. Attitudes toward standard English as the “correct” English by major

“Standard English is the correct form of English”	Education	STEM	Total
Agree strongly	20%	10%	15%
Agree	20%	15%	17.5%
Agree slightly	20%	15%	17.5%
Disagree slightly	15%	20%	17.5%
Disagree	10%	20%	15%
Disagree strongly	15%	20%	17.5%
Total Sample Size	50	50	100

Note: These are fabricated data solely for the purposes of illustration.

A quick introductory video on entering survey responses into Google Sheets:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ymKacAIuCpi6smJ9Cks1QZOZxGAk7OJ7/view>

A video on making bivariate tables in Google Sheets and converting raw numbers into percentages:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Cmde2LL1V0okccwysbDv8tsG9pXVev3f/view>

2. Create a Visual Representation: Your Figure 1 (25%)

Explore the relation between one demographic or linguistic variable (e.g., race, age, or home language) and one attitude variable that interests you (e.g., attitude toward the idea that to be successful students should only speak standard English). Data visualization will help you identify patterns in survey responses.

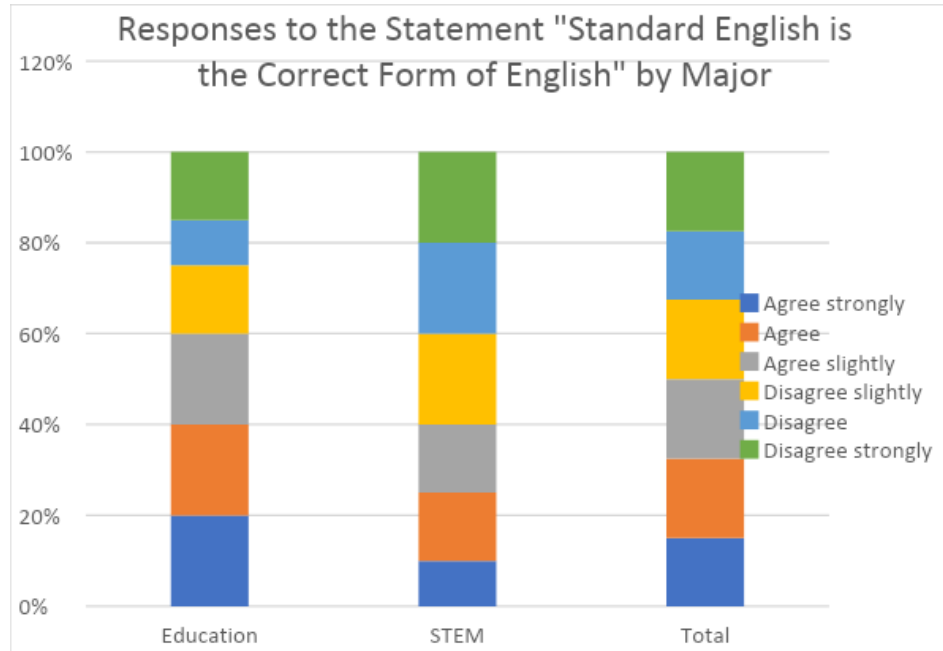
Your task: Create a chart or graph in Google Sheets to display the data related to your research questions in a graphic form. The chart or graph will be added to the descriptive statistics you completed in the previous step. The graph or chart must be accurately labeled and referred to as a figure.

A video on preparing and interpreting stacked bar charts in Google Sheets:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1E74xmDgKZlf52Cpdn_JAPSMz0rihl8QU/view

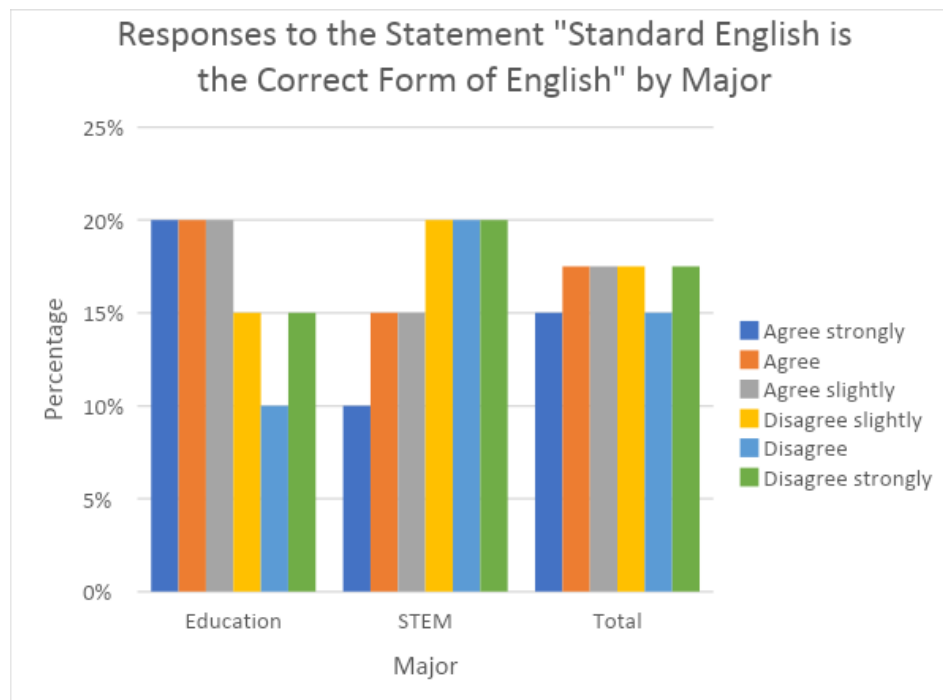
Examples of possible graphic representation of the data in Table 1:

Figure 1. Attitudes toward standard English as the “correct” English by major



Note: These are fabricated data solely for the purposes of illustration.

OR



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3. Data Interpretation (50%)

First, provide your interpretation of the information the numerical data convey. Write one paragraph that describes and interprets the data presented in the table and figure.

For example, for the data in Table 1 and the accompanying chart I would write:

Table 1 shows that 60% of students who major in Education agreed to some extent (strongly, somewhat, or slightly) with the statement that “Standard English is the correct form of English.” In contrast, only 40% of students in STEM fields agreed to any extent (strongly, somewhat, or slightly) with this statement. This suggests that Education majors have stronger language ideology and beliefs about just one variety of English that, in their view, is the proper variety. This feeling is much less pronounced among STEM majors. Students majoring in STEM were less likely to agree with this statement. In fact, 60% of them rejected it. Overall, these results tell us that students majoring in STEM have more positive attitudes towards language variation in English.

Next, explain why you think this result occurred. Please connect your interpretation to at least one thing that we have learned or discussed in class, based on discussions, lectures, and readings. You can also use your personal experience but try to focus mostly on course material. Finally, include whether you were surprised by the results, or they were as you expected.

Example:

These results are surprising to me, personally, as an Education major. They seem counterintuitive on the first glance. Teachers in training typically learn a lot about language which would suggest that they have more awareness about language variety. There is a lot of talk of culturally-appropriate pedagogy in our methods classes. Teachers also learn about multilingualism. However, it seems that they are taken on by the societal language ideology that prioritizes white, middle-class English variety (which happens to enjoy the status of standard American English). The results indicate the feelings of judgment by future teachers and my peers. I’m pleasantly surprised that my peers majoring in STEM do not entertain these feelings to the same extent as the Education majors. Perhaps, because the STEM fields do not put so much value on the accuracy of language they are freer to understand the variation as something naturally present in life.