



Longitudinal sociolinguistic research projects as brands

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Longitudinal sociolinguistic studies



- **panel studies**

- compare language use of same individuals at multiple intervals (Wagner & Buchstaller 2017)
- track **intra-individual** language change in real time

- **trend studies**

- compare language use of community sample at multiple intervals (Sankoff 2013)
- track **community** language change in real time

Challenges of longitudinal studies (Wagner & Tagliamonte 2017)



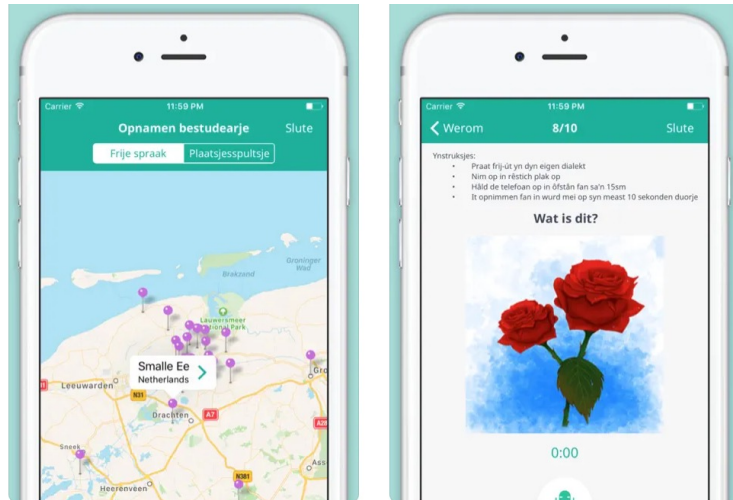
- Require lots of researcher time and resources.
- Participant attrition.
- Interviewer familiarity issues.
- Confounds between temporary style-shifting and actual language change.



Remote methods and self-recording



Lothian Lockdown:
The Lothian Diary
Project



- **Participant self-recording** reduces researcher costs and time, interviewer familiarity, some style-shifting (Hall-Lew & Boyd 2017, Hall-Lew 2022)
- Growing use of all kinds of remote collection via websites, apps, Zoom (Leeman & Hilton 2021, Freeman & De Decker 2021)
 - Accelerated during Covid-19

Remote methods and self-recording



- Make longitudinal projects more feasible!
 - easy to sign up
 - control over when and where to participate
 - use a personal device
- But recruitment and retention are still hard... (Sneller, Wagner & Ye 2022)
- ...so branding can help.



MI Diaries project

APRIL 2020 – PRESENT

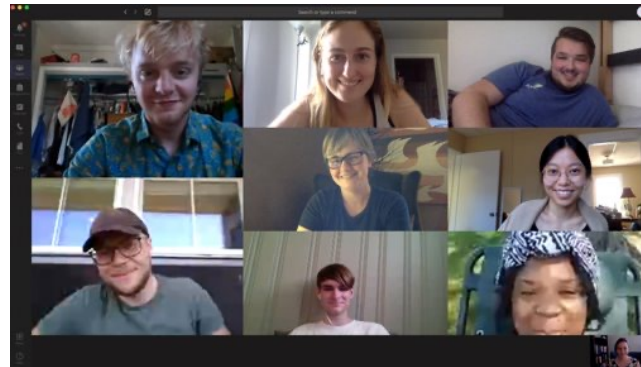
MICHIGAN RESIDENTS AGED 3+



MI Diaries question prompts

July 2, 2020

Have your spending habits changed much since the lockdowns started? Is there anything you're spending more on?



January 1, 2021

Have you ever had a first impression be wrong? How did you realize your first impression was wrong?

September 4, 2020

Do you like cheese? What's your favorite way to eat it?

October 2, 2020

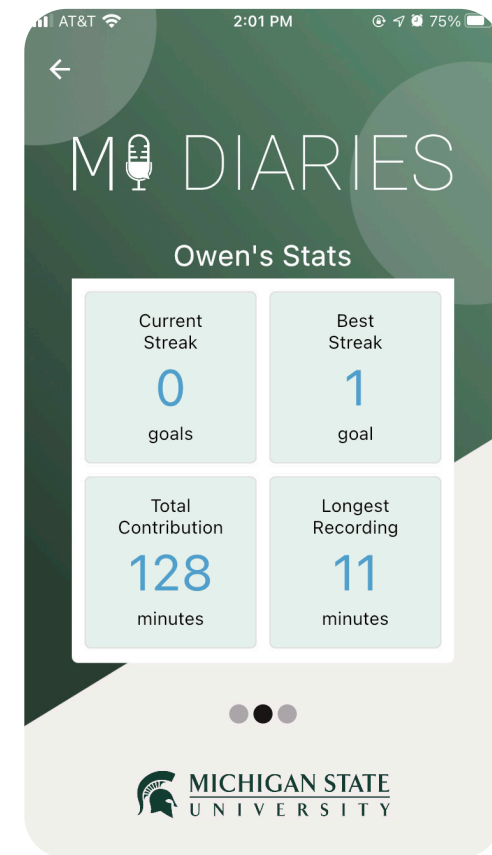
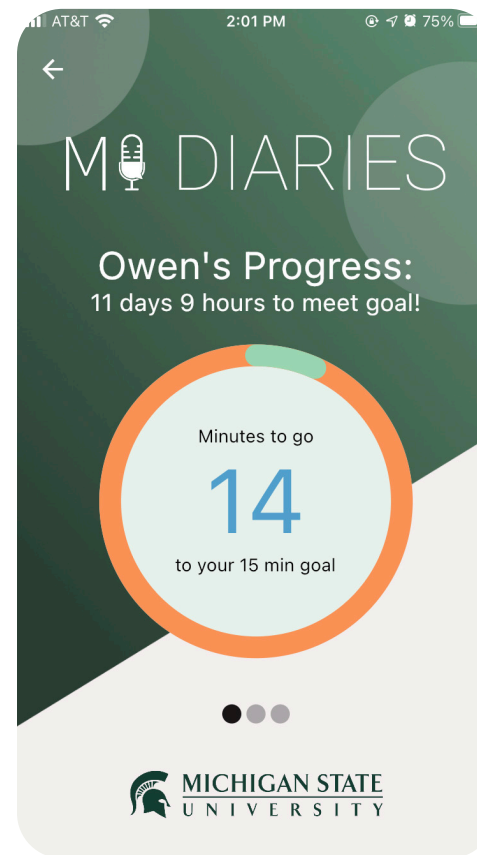
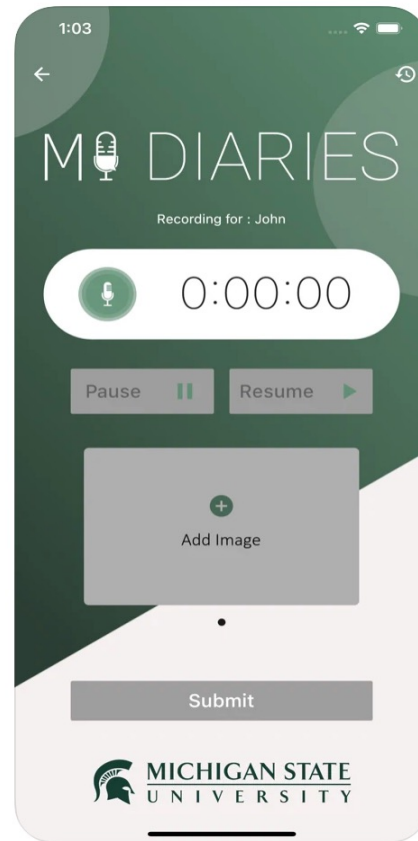
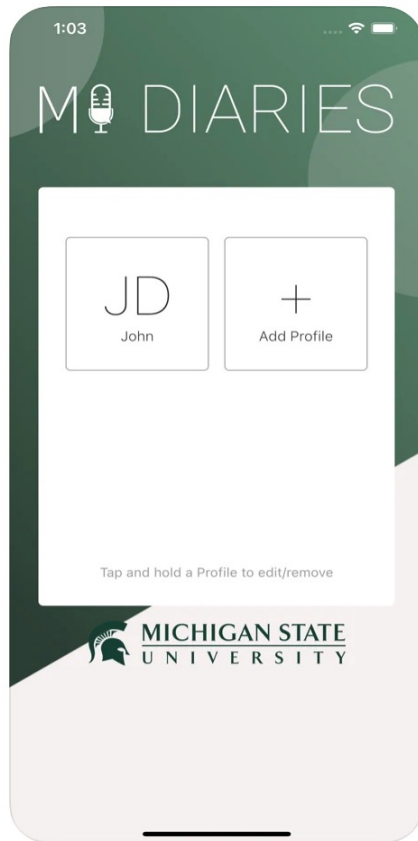
Did you ever get stranded anywhere, either as a kid or as an adult? What happened? How did you get home?

January 8, 2021

Would you rather eat broccoli-flavored ice cream, or a fish-flavored cookie?



MI Diaries mobile app



April 12, 2020

Adult diary



“The shelves with all the paper products were completely empty”

■ **APRIL 12, 2020**

In a way I... I’m glad that it kinda hit me gradually. But I think I was really shocked when I went to Costco and the parking lot was filled, like there was no spot to park. Like you had to wait for a car to back out to get in. And then when I pulled in and got out, there were people and all they had in their carts was toilet paper. And I was just in shock like what is going on and then I went in the store and there was like maybe two carts available and I looked — and this is like 15 minutes after the store opened — and I looked to the back of the, looked to the store and the line to checkout was snaking around the store and I just dropped the cart. You know, just just “I’m out of here this is this is awful.” That was that was the first time I realized this is something — this is bad.



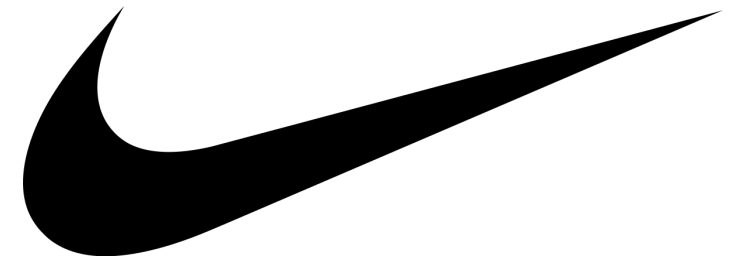


Branding for remote recruitment and retention

Commercial brands



- “a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitor” (Kotler & Keller 2012: 114)





Research projects as non-profit brands

- a brand is a ‘risk-reliever’ for stakeholders (Erdem & Swait 1998)
- non-profit brand: *“one or more tangible elements that symbolize the nonprofit organization's dedication to a unique set of values and its ability to achieve an overall mission”* (Boenig & Becker 2016:184)
- relations between researchers and the public as “managing the trust portfolio” (Borchelt 2008)



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY



MI Diaries project values



Authenticity

To provide participants with a space to share their stories where they can be open and authentic and be heard for who they are.



Trustworthiness

To incorporate a code of professionalism in our work that assures diarists, scholars and the public of the high ethical and scholarly standards that we adhere to.



Mentorship

To encourage students to further their professional development skills through research, project management and engagement with the community state-wide.



Research Longevity

To recognize the historical value of this project by continuing to develop as a research opportunity for Michiganders by Michiganders.



Visual identity

COVID Diaries

About this project

Life in Michigan has changed very quickly for many people over the past few weeks. The MI-COVID-diaries project aims to document what life is like in Michigan during the Coronavirus lockdown and afterwards, as we move back into normal life. We are interested in all aspects of how life is changing for Michiganders, from their daily routines to their language. We are looking for Michiganders who are interested in submitting periodic oral history recordings during this time. The MI-COVID-diaries project is run by the [Sociolinguistics Lab](#) at [Michigan State University](#). To hear from some of our participants this week, click "Listen to our participants" below. To hear stories from previous weeks, you can check out the [archive](#).

Listen to our participants' stories

0:00 / 1:51

I'm an owner-operator of a Veterinary Clinic here. I am considered an essential worker, so I'm still going to work every day. But, at the clinic we're only allowed to do sick animals or chronically ill. Injured. Nothing that's routine. And we're doing everything curbside off so



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MI Diaries

How has your week been? What are you grateful for this week? Tell us your stories.

We are a project documenting changes in the lives and language of people living in Michigan during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.

Across the state, kids, teens, and adults send us 'audio diaries' recorded on their phones or other devices. We send new prompts each week to get the diarists thinking, and they respond! Diarists can receive a gift card every two weeks as a thank you.

The audio diaries will help us to answer some research questions about how and why language changes over time.

Join us! It's easy to become a contributor to MI Diaries.

Sign Up

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORIES!

Contribute to history as an audio diarist with the MI Diaries research project from Michigan State University.

You'll receive a \$5 Amazon gift card for 15 minutes of audio diary every 2 weeks.

Sign up at our website, then get our app!



MI DIARIES - Become a Diarist

About the project:

We're a research project from Michigan State University. We use "audio diaries" (your own recordings) to document how people's lives and language are changing. If you choose, we'll store your diaries (without your name or other identifying information) with the Library of Michigan for future listeners to hear. Anyone living in Michigan can join. Scan our QR code or visit mi-diaries.org to get started!

Submit 15 mins or more of audio diary every two weeks and receive a \$5 Amazon gift card each time!

Get involved:

SIGN UP USING THE LINK ON OUR WEBSITE

DOWNLOAD THE MI DIARIES APP

START RECORDING!



PRIMARY		SECONDARY		SECONDARY		SECONDARY	
HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB
#355F46	53, 95, 70	#7DBC94	125, 188, 148	#FD9357	253, 147, 87	#52A1CE	82, 161, 206
HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB	HEX	RGB
#628F74	98, 143, 116	#9DD8B3	157, 216, 179	#FFAE81	255, 174, 129	#67B9E8	103, 185, 232



This Week's Featured Diaries

Click on a story below to hear from our adult, teen and kid diarists!

* We only share contributions from diarists who have given us permission, and we always remove identifying information.

KID

"OUR SISTER WAS LEANING UP AGAINST THE WATER JETS.... AND SHE GOT STUCK TO IT"

July 3, 2022

"Our sister was leaning up against the water jets.... and she got stuck to it"

"I do a lot of things where not that many women are prominent"

"It was like the opposite of a date going really well."



MI Diaries

February 25 at 12:42 PM · 🌐




This week, we heard from a diarist whose least favorite chore was taking out the garbage in the dark 🌑. I think we all can understand this feeling!

Listen here: <https://mi-diaries.org/2022/02/20/6006/>


You can also find previous submissions in our archives and more information on how to participate in the MI Diaries project on our website, link in our bio.

TEEN DIARY



"The worst chore I've probably ever had to do is taking the garbage out at 12 a.m."

0:23 1:22




MI Diaries

March 1 at 12:30 PM · 🌐



What's the difference between art and science? Or do you think they are two sides of the same coin?

&

Would you rather be a mad scientist or an artistic genius? Why?

We would love to hear your thoughts in the comments 📌



What's the difference between art and science? Or do you think they are two sides of the same coin?

&

Would you rather be a mad scientist or an artistic genius? Why?

Leave it in the comments below!



A brand is more than a logo and a website

- Brands have indexical fields (Silverstein 2003, Eckert 2008)
 - MI Diaries first-order indices e.g. *university, Michigan, story-telling*;
second order indices e.g. *trustworthy, honest, authentic, friendly*
- Brands guide decisions
 - “How should we word this flyer?”
 - “Is it appropriate to partner with X organization?”
- Brands need managers
 - Project external (e.g. university PR team) or project-internal
 - Brands require careful thought, informed nurturing, and regular review



Branding helps community engagement

- Research participants are not the only audience
- Strong branding fosters engagement with the public.
- Furthers broader mission of sociolinguists to educate about linguistic diversity and language science.





Thank you!

NSF #BCS-211995
NEH #HAA-284835

OUR RESEARCH TEAM

MI DIARIES PARTICIPANTS



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HUMANITIES





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US National Endowment for the Humanities HAA-284835-22 (PI: Sneller)
MSU College of Arts and Letters (Sneller & Wagner)
MSU Humanities and Arts Research Program (Sneller)
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- **Alexis Furkioti**, our first MI Diaries brand director.
- **Student team:** especially Adam Barnhardt, Natalie Cruz, Maggie Backus, Lindsay Moore, Kaitlyn Nguyen, Jack Rechsteiner, Mariana Santos Bittencourt de Almeida, Anna Vredevelt, Yongqing Ye, Caroline Zackerman, Emma Dayton.
- **Community partners:** Brian Wibby and Jackelyn Martin at MSU Extension 4-H, Adam Oster at Library of Michigan, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, Klaudia Janek at International Academy, Bloomfield Hills, Frosty Boy Grand Rapids, MSU Outreach & Extension, Caitlyn Stypa and Gillian Streeter at East Lansing Public Library.
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- **Audiences at** GLEAMS 2020, University of Michigan, LSA Annual Meeting 2021, MSU Sociolinguistics Lab, MVC21, MSU DH Locus Forum, MSU Center for Interdisciplinarity, University of Duisberg-Essen Sociolinguistics Lab, CLaRE 5, University of Pittsburgh Linguistics Colloquium.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES





April 12, 2020

Adult diary



“The shelves with all the paper products were completely empty”

■ **APRIL 12, 2020**

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Incentives



\$5 per 15 mins every week
or
'pay it forward'



COVID-19: Save Your Story



Archive



“That is my biggest fear.”

📅 October 31, 2021



“And so he’s like the crossing guard.”

📅 October 31, 2021



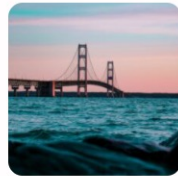
“...And my grandma got so mad at us.”

📅 October 24, 2021



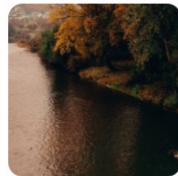
“But I mean, we are the Great Lakes State, right?”

📅 October 31, 2021



“There’s nothing like the Mackinac Bridge.”

📅 October 31, 2021



“It’s this sense of like determined preparation.”

📅 October 24, 2021



“I made sure, of course, to be a full tourist.”

📅 October 31, 2021



“...then the person in front of us turned around and they were like, ‘Oh, are you fans of Marvel?’”

📅 October 24, 2021



“I don’t hear it. I’ve never heard it.”

📅 October 24, 2021



October 28, 2021

Thank you so much to everyone who shared their stories with us this week. We appreciate everyone who took the time to share with us.

Some updates from the team:

- Last week we were thrilled to hear so many thoughts about the places and sounds of the **Midwest**. This week we're moving onto a new region: **New England**.

Voices from the week of October 24

This week we heard lots of wonderful thoughts about the Midwest! Some diarists thought Michigan [shouldn't count](#) as part of the Midwest. Others shared moments when people said they had a [Midwestern accent](#). We were thrilled to hear so many people proudly display their own accents. We also heard from a diarist who shared their love of [canoe trips](#). Last but not least, we heard from a diarist who remembered a time that they got in trouble making cookies because their grandma caught them [snacking on the raw dough](#).

To hear voices from previous weeks, you can check out our [archive](#) pages. To hear our stories from one year ago this week, click [here](#).




East Lansing Public Library

DIARY OF A MICHIGAN *Kid*

EAST LANSING PUBLIC LIBRARY, JULY 8, 2022
2:00PM – 3:30PM IN THE MEETING ROOM

Did you know that historians use diaries as a way to learn more about what life was like in the past? Come and "time travel" with the MI Diaries project team from MSU. Tour some real and fictional diaries. Learn how to prompt kids from many years ago (such as caregivers and grandparents!) to tell stories about their lives. Create questions that you can ask your friends. And make your own audio diary that kids many years in the future might someday listen to! You'll leave with all the tools you need to make diaries that will stand the test of time.

This session is for kids aged 7-12. We invite adult caregivers and friends to join in too!



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