West Virginia University
Eberly College of Arts and Sciences
Department of World Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics

LANG 321

Language Matters

Course Syllabus

Instructor

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Course Description

This course addresses issues regarding language, culture, and "myths," including the facts about language learning, cultural dynamics in relation to the use of language, and current crosscultural issues in the aspect of language as a medium. Language Matters is a 3-credit hour course that has no prerequisites.

Instructional Materials

Required Textbook:
- Brown, S., & Larson-Hall, J. (2012). Second language acquisition myths. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan press.

Additional readings are also required. Either the PDF is uploaded on eCampus, or the link is provided. We will also read chapters from the following sources provided for you on eCampus:
- Brown, S., Attardo, S. & Vigliotti, C. (2014). Understanding language structure, interaction, and variation: An introduction to applied linguistics and sociolinguistics for nonspecialists (3rd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Baldwin, J.R., Means Coleman, R.R., González, A., & Shenoy-Packer, S. (2014). Intercultural communication for everyday life. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course provides an overview of language and culture connections, raising self-awareness regarding values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors and enhancing students' ability to analyze global and cultural interrelationships and interdependencies across place and time. Through readings and assignments, the seemingly simplistic terms "language" and "culture" are unpacked. Topics include fostering intercultural awareness and debunking common myths such

as "women talk too much," "some languages have no grammar," "everyone has an accent except me," and many others.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:
1. describe the deeper meaning of "culture,"
2. analyze cultures as complex systems shaped by relations of power and interdependence,
3. use examples to demonstrate that language is not made up of words alone,
4. choose examples of language use in the media and examine how they show that culture and language are connected,
5. synthesize arguments to debunk common myths about language learning,
6. apply theoretical aspects of culture and language learning to real-world situations,
7. and examine how your own language learning experience relates to common language learning myths.

Course Organization

This course is designed according to modules, and in each module, you will be provided with several tools to help you understand the content:
- Assigned readings
- PowerPoints with narration (and transcription)
- Handouts
- Content Quizzes
- "Language in the media" articles
- "Raise your hand" discussion forum

During the Winter Intersession, the general structure of the course is one module per day (Monday-Saturday). The due dates for module activities are distributed throughout the intersession (see Course Calendar). You are welcome to work ahead but be sure to complete modules in the order in which they are assigned. Within each module you will find the same general formatting: a task checklist of what to complete, the "Raise your hand" discussion board for questions and/or comments about that module, and then resources, readings and assignments for the module. At the end, you will see the module quiz.

I encourage you to examine the eCampus course and assignments early within the semester in case you have any questions or concerns. If you do need assistance, please use the "Raise your hand" discussion board or email me. I am available to meet virtually or face-to-face, if needed.

Course Grading Scheme and Grading Scale

9%   Discussion Posts (at least 3 at 3 points each)

36% Module Quizzes (13 quizzes incl. syllabus quiz at 3 pts each, the lowest score will be dropped)
30% Reflection Papers (2 reflection papers at 15 pts each)
25% Final Project

A+ = 98-100	B+ = 88-89	C+ = 78-79	D+ = 68-69
A = 93-97	B = 83-87	C = 73-77	D = 63-67
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72	D- = 60-62

After the first half of the course, you will receive a mid-semester grade. The mid-semester grade will be based on your level of participation in the online course discussion, the first 8 module quizzes, and the first reflection paper. As such, the mid-semester grade represents 43% of the total course grade. The mid-semester grade does not have any impact on your GPA but will give you a clear idea of your performance in the class up to that point.

Incompletes will be handled according to the University policy on this issue. For further information please see http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/enrollmentandregistration/#Incompletes.

Description of Course Assignments

Discussion Posts (9% of overall course grade):

As this is an online class, we won't have the chance to interact in person, but we will still do everything we can to create a positive, respectful, and encouraging learning community. To do this, we will interact via the course discussion, in which you will share a post at least three times. Your first assignment is a discussion post found in module 1. This virtual introduction gives everyone a chance to see each other's faces and learn a little bit about each other. In your introduction post, please state your name, you major, your year in school, and why you are taking the course. If you like, you are also welcome to state one interesting fact about yourself. Please also include a picture of yourself or an object that is important to you. You may respond to your classmates' introductions, although it's not mandatory. You will see my introduction on this page as well. Make sure to post your introduction on the first day of class.

In addition to your virtual introduction in module 1, you will share at least two more posts in the "Raise your hand" discussion board. This does not have to be in the first module, but rather whenever you have something to share. In your posts, you can ask questions, share something that you have learned, or make a comment about the course content. It is important that your posts are clearly connected to the course content. Each discussion post counts for 3 points, so all three discussion posts count for 9% of the overall grade of this course. Your posts will be graded according to the rubric below.

Grading rubric for discussion posts

Grading criteria	Levels of achievement		
	Meets expectations	Approaches expectations	Does not meet expectations
Content	Discussion post is substantive, thoughtful, and well-developed. (1 pt.)	Post touches on substantial information but does not elaborate or is under-developed. (0.75 pts)	Discussion post is underdeveloped and does not demonstrate effort or insight. (0.5 pts)
Clarity	Ideas and/or questions are clearly communicated and understood. (1 pt.)	Most of what is being communicated can be understood. (0.75 pts)	Little of what is being communicated can be understood. (0.5 pts)
Relevance	Post pertains to course content. (1 pt.)	Parts of the discussion post pertain to course content. (0.75 pts)	Post does not pertain to course content. (0.5 pts)

***If you do not participate in the course discussion, you will receive 0 points for this part of your grade.

Module Quizzes (36% of overall course grade):

Throughout the course, you will take 13 learning module quizzes. The module 1 quiz will assess your understanding of the course syllabus. I have set this quiz to unlimited attempts with no time limit, so please keep taking the syllabus quiz until you reach 100%. I have put a lot of details about the course directly into the syllabus, so reading it carefully and understanding everything about it is crucial in helping you be successful in this course.

For modules 2-13, there are content quizzes connected to the readings. The quizzes cannot be made up, but I will drop the lowest quiz score at the end of the semester. This gives you some flex room if, for whatever reason, you are not able to take a quiz or earn a low score. The content quizzes are composed of 9 questions each, and the questions will be pulled from a question bank. It is fine if you and a friend want to take the quizzes together, but keep in mind that you likely won't have all of the same questions. The time limit for each quiz is 30 minutes, and you will have two attempts to take each quiz (your highest score will be recorded). If you decide to take the quiz a second time, some of your quiz questions will be different from the first attempt. I would encourage you to read the chapter(s) carefully before starting on the quiz, taking notes of main ideas. There are also voiced-over PowerPoints and handouts for each of the readings to help you with the content, and of course, you should review these carefully before taking the

content quiz for any given module. All of the quizzes are available from the beginning of the semester, so you can work ahead, if you like. However, each module quiz will be deactivated at 11:59 pm on the day they are due. In other words, you can work ahead, but you need to make sure that you complete each quiz by the daily deadline.

Reflection Papers (30% of overall course grade):

You will write two reflection papers in this course. These papers give you the opportunity to reflect on, summarize, and apply what you have learned in the learning modules. You will find a list of reflection questions to choose from in modules 5 and 10 on eCampus. The reflection questions found in module 5 (the first reflection assignment) will cover the content from modules 2, 3, 4, and 5. The reflection questions found in module 10 will cover the content from modules 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. You will select only one discussion question for each of the modules covered by the reflection paper. For example, in your first reflection paper you will choose one question pertaining to module 2, one question pertaining to module 3, one question addressing module 4, and one question addressing module 5.

The reflection papers should be between 750-1050 words (2-3 pages, double-spaced), and you will upload the document as a Word file in eCampus. Please proofread carefully and submit a paper commensurate with university-level writing.

Grading rubric for reflection papers

Categories	Pts	Comments
Content (8 points) Has the author addressed at least one of the themes and issues provided for each module? Criteria: 1. Reflection on one discussion question per module 2. Addressing class readings and sources 3. Procedures (fulfilling the specified format requirements)		

Language (5 points) Does the author exhibit a high degree of control over the conventions of written academic discourse and argumentation? For example: • Is the paper well organized with a central concept illustrated by a clear thesis and supporting paragraphs? • Is the paper free of typos? • Is the language used formal and academic? • Does the paper stay within the required word limit?		
Submission (2 points) Is the submission on time?		
Total points		

Final Project (25% of overall course grade):

For the culminating assignment in this class, you have the choice between two projects: The first choice is a data analysis project. Specifically, you will analyze participant responses to a brief Discourse Completion Test (DCT). A DCT generally includes a one-sided role-play for a given situational prompt to elicit responses from the participants. These situational prompts may also vary in accordance with some social variables, such as interlocutors' power difference, social distance, and the degree of imposition (e.g., refusing a teacher's request versus refusing a friend's request).

For this project, you are required to analyze, compare, and contrast the participants' pragmatic competence (and language use) in light of, for example, gender, or nativeness/nonnativeness. The data will be provided for you, so you do not have to collect any data for this project. It will, however, require some extra reading and you may also want to use additional resources to support your data analysis. You will have an extra day to work on this project before the day it is due.

Grading rubric for final project option 1

Categories	Pts	Comments

Content (15 points) Has the author completed the entire task, as described in the task description? Criteria: • Analysis of all themes/issues identified in the DCT data • Using participant information to inform analysis • Addressing class readings and sources • Procedures (fulfilling the specified format requirements)		
Language (5 points) Does the author exhibit a high degree of control over the conventions of written academic discourse and argumentation? For example: • Is the paper well organized with a central concept illustrated by a clear thesis and supporting paragraphs? • Is the paper free of typos? • Is the language used formal and academic? • Does the paper stay within the required word limit?		
Submission (5 points) Is the submission on time?		
Total points		

The second option for the final project is an article review. If you choose this option, you will have to find an article related to any of the topics we have covered throughout this course. This will give you the chance to dive deeper into a topic that is of particular interest to you. The length of the article should be similar to the language in the media articles you have been reading for this course. The sources of the language in the media articles can be a starting point for your search.

Once you have decided on an article, you should study it carefully. Then, you will write a paper that includes the author, title, and source of the article, as well as a paragraph in which you summarize the article in your own words. In the remainder of your paper, you will address these guiding questions:

- How does this article relate to what you have learned in this class? (Refer to specific course materials and concepts we have covered.) ☐ What have you learned from reading this article?

- What do you agree/disagree with? What has surprised you?
- How does your learning from this assignment change how you view language and/or language learning?

Regardless of the option you choose, the overall length of the final paper should be around 1000 words and you should submit your paper in a double-spaced format. More details about this assignment can be found in the learning module titled "Final project" on eCampus.

Grading rubric for final project option 2

Categories	Pts	Comments
Content (15 points) Has the author completed the entire task, as described in the task description? Criteria: - Bibliographic information - Article summary - Addressing each guiding question listed in the task description - Procedures (fulfilling the specified format requirements)		
Language (5 points) Does the author exhibit a high degree of control over the conventions of written academic discourse and argumentation? For example: - Is the paper well organized with a central concept illustrated by a clear thesis and supporting paragraphs? - Is the paper free of typos? - Is the language used formal and academic? - Does the paper stay within the required word limit?		
Submission (5 points) Is the submission on time?		
Total points		

Response Time and Feedback Plan

In online courses I understand the need for instructor availability. To that end, I will check my emails at least twice a day. If you email me with non-urgent concerns, you can expect a response within 18 hours. I will provide feedback on each of your written assignments within 48 hours of the due date. This feedback will be in the form of comments in your submitted paper and the completed rubric that you will receive with your grade for the assignment.

Participation/Netiquette

An online environment is quite different from a face-to-face environment; nonetheless, active participation is required. The participation includes submitting assignments on time, asking clarification questions in a timely manner, and interacting with your classmates in the online modality when required. Although the online class environment simulates more informal contexts (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.), this is a classroom setting, and the appropriate discourse features are expected. In other words, all posts are required to use an academic tone with appropriate language. Please remember that this course represents an academic discourse community, as opposed to a social one. Although this likely goes without saying, please do not use inappropriate language or gestures in any of the material that you share with me or with the class.

Professional Disposition & Personal Responsibility

Respect, responsibility, collaboration, collegiality, and professionalism are key components of this course. Learning happens within a process of open-minded observation and active engagement with others, with texts, and with ideas. Thoughtful analysis and reflection of such engagement, in light of our own self-awareness, will help us to collaboratively construct new knowledge.

Education is something you do for yourself, not something that is done to you. You are expected to demonstrate the dispositions appropriate to enter to the profession based on inclass and out-of-class behaviors and interactions with the instructors and colleagues. These behaviors must be consistent with the American Psychological Association's (APA's) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html#general).

Evidence of Professional Disposition

A disposition is developed over a lifetime and includes the temperament, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. that students exhibit while completing an educational program. The following Professional Disposition Indicators are used during the quantitative and qualitative assessment by the instructor.

- ☐ Self-initiative and self-sufficiency
- ☐ Ability to complete work autonomously
- ☐ Timely submission of assignments
- ☐ Following directions
- ☐ Careful and thorough preparation
- ☐ Organizational skills
- ☐ Attendance, punctuality, and undivided attention during class
- ☐ Civility, diplomacy, and sensitivity to others
- ☐ Willingness to listen to others
- ☐ Thoughtful participation
- ☐ Honesty
- ☐ Enthusiasm for ideas and intellectual curiosity
- ☐ Willingness to objectively consider new ideas
- ☐ Openness to new ideas
- ☐ Positive response to feedback
- ☐ Foresight to predict outcomes and consequences

It is the student's responsibility to take those affirmative steps to demonstrate consistency between these indicators and student's actions. University students are held to the highest level of ethics and are expected to adhere to all of the above standards and to demonstrate behavior that is consistent with those indicators.

Student Responsibilities

- Cheating, including plagiarism, of any kind in the class will not be tolerated. Offenders will suffer strict consequences. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying someone else's work, copying from an outside source without proper documentation, or using an assignment that you have previously used for another class.
- Weekly quizzes cannot be made up. Once a quiz goes offline, you will not be able to take it.
- As a general rule, do NOT ask to submit assignments late. If there is an emergency, you must provide documentation and contact the instructor as soon as possible. If you know ahead of time that a due date will be problematic, contact the instructor as soon as possible. Late work will receive the following penalties: If the work is between 1 minute and 24 hours late, the highest grade you can receive on the assignment is an 85%. After 24 hours, (no work can be turned in after the last day of class) the highest grade you can receive is a 50%.
- Students are expected to be courteous and polite at all times, particularly when using email communications.

Late Assignment and Missed Exam Policy

Institutional Policies: Students are responsible for reviewing policies on inclusivity, academic integrity, incompletes, sale of course materials, sexual misconduct, adverse weather, as well as student evaluation of instruction, and days of special concern/religious holiday statements.

Academic Integrity Statement

The integrity of the classes offered by any academic institution solidifies the foundation of its mission and cannot be sacrificed to expediency, ignorance, or blatant fraud. Therefore, instructors will enforce rigorous standards of academic integrity in all aspects and assignments of their courses. For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see the West Virginia University Academic Standards Policy (http://catalog.wvu.edu/undergraduate/coursecreditstermsclassification). Should you have any questions about possibly improper research citations or references, or any other activity that may be interpreted as an attempt at academic dishonesty, please see your instructor before the assignment is due to discuss the matter.

Inclusivity Statement

The West Virginia University community is committed to creating and fostering a positive learning and working environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in your classes, please advise your instructors and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services. (https://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/)

More information is available at the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (https://diversity.wvu.edu/) as well.

Student Evaluation of Instruction Statement

Effective teaching is a primary mission of West Virginia University. Student evaluation of instruction provides the university and the instructor with feedback about your experiences in the course for review and course improvement. Your participation in the evaluation of course instruction is both strongly encouraged and highly valued. Results are strictly confidential, anonymous, and not available to the instructor until after final grades are released by Admissions and Records. Information about how you can complete this evaluation will provided by your instructor.

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<div align="center">Course Calendar</div>

Week 1			
Day and Topic	Readings/Materials	Assignments due	Notes
Monday, May 9 Module 1: Course introduction	Language in the media: http://www.edudemic.com/languagequiz/	read syllabus, take syllabus quiz, upload virtual introduction, and complete survey	
Tuesday, May 10		University closed	
Wednesday, May 11 Module 2: Age and language learning	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 1 Language in the media: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationopinion/10315238/Arechildren-really-better-at-foreignlanguage-learning.html	module 2 quiz	Last day to drop Summer courses without a W(withdrawal) and with a full refund.
Thursday, May 12 Module 3: Language acquisition through listening or reading	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 3 Language in the media: http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesleadershipforum/2014/04/22/the-bestway-to-learn-a-foreign-language-isthe-opposite-of-the-usual-way/	module 3 quiz	
Friday, May 13 Module 4: Practice makes perfect	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 4 Language in the media: http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/feb/27/musicians-betterlanguage-learners	module 5 quiz, and reflection paper 1 for modules 1-5	
Saturday, May 14 Module 5: Error correction	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 6 Language in the media: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine - 11304255	module 5 quiz, and reflection paper 1 for modules 1-5	
Week 2			
Day and Topic	Activities	Assignments due	Notes

Monday, May 16	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 8 Language in the media: http://www.forbes.com/sites/cherylsn	module 6 quiz	

Module 6: Language acquisition = grammar acquisition	appconner/2014/04/17/how-learningan-additional-language-couldinfluence-your-business/		
Tuesday, May 17 Module 7: Bilingual = speaking two languages perfectly	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 2 Language in the media: http://www.ksl.com/?sid=23704300 and http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/31/science/31conversation.html?_r=2	module 7 quiz	
Wednesday, May 18 Module 8: Learners retain what they are taught	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 5 Language in the media: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/There-can-be-no-nativespeaker-of-English-Linguist/articleshow/31238731.cms	module 8 quiz	
Thursday, May 19 Module 9: IDs and language learning	Brown and Larson-Hall – Myth 7 Language in the media: http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/mar/19/language-learningmotivation-brain-teaching	module 9 quiz	
Friday, May 20 Module 10: Global medias and global cultures	Baldwin, Coleman, Gonzales, ShenoyPacker Chapter 11 (PDF on eCampus) Language in the media: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/06/opinion/sunday/like-degrading-thelanguage-no-way.html?_r=1	module 10 quiz, and reflection paper 2 for modules 6-10	Last day to withdrawal from winter courses (no refund) and a W (withdrawal) on your transcript.
Saturday, May 21 Module 11: Adaptation and intercultural competence	Baldwin, Coleman, Gonzales, ShenoyPacker Chapter 12 (PDF on eCampus) Language in the media: http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/25/travel/irpt-study-abroad/index.html	module 11 quiz	
Week 3			
Day and Topic	Activities	Assignments due	Notes

Monday, May 23 Module 12: Language and gender	Brown, Attardo, and Vigliotti – Chapter 8 (PDF on eCampus) Language in the media: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationopinion/10567876/Arewomen-really-better-at-learninglanguages.html	module 12 quiz	
Tuesday, May 24 Module 13: Language variation	Brown, Attardo, and Vigliotti – Chapter 4 (PDF on eCampus) Language in the media: http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2013/12/20/sunday-review/dialectquiz-map.html?_r=2&	module 13 quiz	

Wednesday, May 25 Workday			eCampus down for updates
Thursday, May 27	Last day of class: final project due		