LING121

Language Myths and Realities

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Linguistics

Contents

Disclaimer

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General Information

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Credit points
3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit introduces students to live and accessible issues about language that arise in everyday life. We explore and debate whether common conceptions about language in the media are just myths or whether they are grounded in sound linguistic argumentation and analysis. Among topics for discussion are whether it is true that some languages are more primitive than others, or harder to learn than others. Why is it hard to learn a second language? Is it true that being bilingual makes you smarter? Do men and women talk differently? Is it true that we judge people by their accent? The unit aims to breakdown stereotypes and to embrace the diversity of language and its use in Australia and across the globe.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.

Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.

Collect data for the purposes of language research.

Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

General Assessment Information

Extensions for Late Work

Where a student knows ON or BEFORE THE DUE DATE that he/she cannot submit the assignment on the due date because of illness or other certified personal difficulties, the student is entitled to ask for an extension for that piece of work. The extension means that no marks will be deducted for lateness. In order to apply for an extension, students need to make an online Disruption to Studies application via ask.mq.edu.au and provide supporting evidence.

Late Submissions

To help students submit their work in a timely fashion, assignment details are available from the first week of the session.

If an extension has not been granted due to certificated medical problems or to 'unavoidable disruption' prior to the day of submission, a late submission will accrue a **deduction of 5% of the total marks available for the assignment for each day past the due date**. Weekends and public holidays are included in this calculation.

Moderation of assessment

All assessment is marked by tutors and is moderated using pre-marking forms of standardisation such as the use of marking rubrics, and post-marking moderation such as sample checking and statistical analysis of the spread of marks to ensure fairness and consistency across the unit.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Reflective Learning Journal	24%	No	weekly from week 2
Short Essay	10%	No	Friday of Week 4
Data Collection and Reporting	33%	No	Monday of Week 7
Major Essay	33%	Yes	Friday of Week 13

Reflective Learning Journal

Due: **weekly from week 2**
Weighting: **24%**

Word limit: 100-200 words each week

Deadline: 5pm on Monday of each week, starting week 2

Submit via iLearn

Task Description: Each week you should enter into your online reflective learning journal the key things you have learned that week, and how this relates to your own experience. Only the teaching team will be able to see what you have written. Your journal entry can reflect on your reading, the lecture content, or the tutorial activity.

Assessment: Your journal entry will be marked primarily for relevance. In other words, that it is a reflection on at least one item of content covered that week in lectures, tutorial or reading. A relevant post is worth one mark. A bonus mark will be awarded for submitting on time (i.e. by 5pm on Monday of each week). No marks will be awarded for an irrelevant entry (i.e. one that is off-topic or does not show any familiarity with the subject matter).

Thus, each on-time, relevant entry will be worth a maximum of two marks. With twelve entries (weeks 2-13), this amounts to 24 marks in all, which translates as 24% of your mark for the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:
  • Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
  • Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.

Short Essay

Due: **Friday of Week 4**
Weighting: **10%**

Word limit: 800 words

Deadline: Friday 24th March 2017 at 5pm

Submit via Turnitin

Task Description: In the week 2 & 3 tutorials, you will work through fact-checking a media article of your choice that makes some assertions about language. Based upon this in-class activity, you should write an 800 word essay that critically evaluates the argument put forth in the article and presents evidence from academic sources that either support or refute the points made.

Assessment: The main focus of the assessment is on the use of evidence to support your critical evaluation. You must appropriately cite at least three relevant academic sources. You will also be given feedback on your academic writing.

On successful completion you will be able to:
  • Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.

• Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Data Collection and Reporting

Due: **Monday of Week 7**
Weighting: **33%**

Word limit: 1200 words

Deadline: Monday 10th April 2017 at 5pm

Submit via Turnitin

Task Description:

The myth that women talk more than men has no experimental support, but it has been shown that there are some differences in language use between the sexes. What linguistic differences (other than accent) can you find between the male and female lecturers in LING121?

For this question, you should use the Echo360 recordings of the lectures that are available on iLearn as your data source. Make sure you analyse speech samples from at least 4 male and 4 female speakers (you will find that there is a roughly equal gender balance in the lecturers for the first 6 weeks!). One way to do this would be to select a five minute stretch of each lecture to use for analysis.

You should write a brief report that describes what you did to collect and/or analyse the data, and present your results using tables/graphs and statistics in order to provide and answer the question.

Assessment: This assignment is assessed in terms of the clarity of the results and description of method as well as the appropriate analysis of data and use of linguistic terminology.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
• Collect data for the purposes of language research.
• Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Major Essay

Due: **Friday of Week 13**
Weighting: **33%**
This is a hurdle assessment task (see assessment policy for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Word limit: 1500 words

Deadline: Friday 9th June 2017 at 5pm

Submit via Turnitin

Task Description: Choose any of the myths covered in the unit and write a 1500 word essay in an appropriate academic register. In your essay, you should fully describe what the myth is, and discuss research that supports or contests it in order to argue a position about the myth. Your argument should be structured with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion and be supported by at least 6 academic sources.

Assessment: This essay is assessed in terms of the clarity of your argument, the structure of the essay, use of sources, academic writing style, and demonstrable knowledge of linguistic topics covered in the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.

- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.

- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Delivery and Resources

LING121 is taught by **2 one-hour lectures** and **1 one-hour tutorial** per week.

Lectures

Lectures begin week 1, and are on **Thursday at 1pm** and **Friday at 11am. They are held in** 23 Wallys Walk (W5A) P.G.Price Theatre

All lectures are recorded using Echo360 and will be available to view on iLearn. However, the recordings are not a substitute for attending the lectures as they will not capture any interactive activities or question and answer sessions fully. You should use the recordings as a revision and study aid, not as a substitute for class attendance.

Tutorials

Tutorials begin week 2.

Each tutorial is based around a key skill that is linked to the assessment tasks. You will usually be asked to do some sort of preparation for each tutorial.

In addition, each week your tutor will select two members of the class to provide a verbal summary of the lectures from the previous week. Be prepared!

Tutorials are your opportunity to ask questions about topics you haven't fully understood, or want to know more about. If you have questions, you should ask them!

Reading

The core texts for the unit are:

Bauer, Laurie, Holmes, Janet, and Warren, Paul. (2006) *Language Matters.* Basingstoke: Palgrave. (BHW)

*Kaplan, Abby. (2016) *Women Talk More than Men … And Other Myths about Language Explained.* Cambridge: CUP.

For each week there will be reading assigned from at least one of these books. Both are available from the Co-op Bookshop and online retailers. Kaplan (2016) is available as an ebook from Macquarie University Library.

Some additional useful texts are:

Bauer, Laurie, and Trudgill, Peter. (1998) *Language Myths*. London: Penguin. (B & T)

*Napoli, Donna Jo, and Schoenfeld, Vera-Lee. (2010) *Language Matters*. (2nd Ed) Oxford: OUP. (N & S)

Other texts may be recommended by individual lecturers as further reading.

Those marked with a * are available as e-books from the library.

Unit Schedule

 The order and title of these topics may be subject to change. The final schedule will appear on iLearn.

Week	Thursday 1pm Lecture	Friday 11am Lecture	Tutorial
1	Introduction (NW) Reading: Brick, Herke & Wong (2016) Ch. 8	Who decides what counts as a word? (ASm)	NO CLASS
2	How many vowels are there in English? (ASz)	Do women and men speak differently? (NW)	Uncovering Myths
3	So babies can make all sounds, right? (TB)	How do new dialects form? (FC)	Fact-checking and Myth-busting

4	Do Eskimos really have 50 words for snow? (DGB)	Are some languages more complex than others? (JB)	Finding Evidence
5	Does being bilingual make you smarter? (CL)	Is sign language a proper language? (DG)	Statistics and Spin
6	How do dyslexic people read? (CL)	What do we say without speaking? (JB)	Presenting Numbers
7	*Hearing/Audiology Topic* (TBC)	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
	MID-SESSION RECESS		
8	How long does it take to learn another language? (IP)	You're bilingual, you can interpret (HS)	Challenging Myths
9	Can machines translate? (HS)	Can computers can truly understand human language? (Guest Lecturer - SH)	Forming an argument
10	Do people have a unique "voice print"? (Guest Lecturer - HF)	Can animals talk to us? (DGB)	Reading for Information
11	Double negatives are Illogical (RT/IG)	Does texting make you illiterate? (DW)	Academic Writing
12	Is learning the correct grammar the most important thing for learning a second language? (PC)	Why are we not supposed to swear? (AL)	Class Debate
13	Conclusion (NW)	NO CLASS	NO CLASS

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit http://students.mq.edu.au/support/

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be

imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Assessment task

- Data Collection and Reporting

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
- Collect data for the purposes of language research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
- Collect data for the purposes of language research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
- Collect data for the purposes of language research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Collect data for the purposes of language research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Effectively argue a position about one of the common myths about language using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should

have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.
- Collect data for the purposes of language research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Major Essay

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Understand how societal perspectives about language do not always align with current linguistic research.

Assessment tasks

- Reflective Learning Journal
- Short Essay
- Major Essay

Changes from Previous Offering

This is a new unit for 2017.