



LING121

Language Myths and Realities

S1 Day 2018

Dept of Linguistics

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	4
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	5
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	6
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	8
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	12

Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit co-convenor

Nick Wilson

nick.wilson@mq.edu.au

Margaret Wood

margaret.wood@mq.edu.au

Unit co-convenor

Joe Blythe

joe.blythe@mq.edu.au

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.

Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.

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

Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard written English discourse.

General Assessment Information

How to apply for a late submission of an assignment

All requests for special consideration, including extensions, must be submitted via [ASK.mq.edu](https://ask.mq.edu.au) and provide suitable supporting documentation

Late Assignment Submission

- Late submissions without an extension will receive a penalty of 5% of the total mark available for the assignment per day
- Late submission of an assignment without an extension will not be permitted after marks have been released to the rest of the class.
- Extensions will only be given in special circumstances, and can be requested by completing the Special Consideration request at ask.mq.edu.au and providing the requisite supporting documentation.
- For more information on Special Consideration, see the university website <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>
- Assignments submitted after the deadline, regardless of the reason, will be marked and returned at a date determined by the unit convenor.

Extensions cannot continue beyond the start of the following semester, and students should be aware that long extensions may impact graduation dates.

Moderation of assessment

Unless described as "peer-evaluated", 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. Final marks are subject to ratification at the Faculty of Human Sciences exam meeting at the end of semester.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Peer reviewed Discussion Task	15%	No	Week 1 and Week 11
Homework Tasks	45%	No	Weeks 3, 5, 7, 10, 13
Major Essay	40%	No	Week 8

Peer reviewed Discussion Task

Due: **Week 1 and Week 11**

Weighting: **15%**

2 part peer reviewed reflection and discussion task. Involves the posting of reflections, questions and replies, which are peer evaluated.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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

Homework Tasks

Due: **Weeks 3, 5, 7, 10, 13**

Weighting: **45%**

Task Description: 5 short tasks to be completed as homework.

1. Words and Meaning: Corpus Analysis Task
2. Theories of Language: Online Quiz
3. Units of Meaning: Online Quiz
4. Comparative Method: proto-language reconstruction task
5. Ancient Writing: Museum treasure hunt

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate some basic theoretical and technical knowledge about some sub-disciplines of linguistics.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Major Essay

Due: **Week 8**

Weighting: **40%**

Word limit: 1500 words

Submit via Turnitin

Task Description: Write a 1000 word essay on the interface between language myths and language reality.

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:

- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities 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 10am** and **Friday at 9am**.

All lectures are recorded and live-streamed 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 discussions 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 1.

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.

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

We will aim to provide alternative texts to help with your independent study of linguistics, and these may be in the form of podcasts and videos, but we will specify specific readings on occasion.

There is no required text for this unit, however you may find the following useful:

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

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

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

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

You should also familiarise yourself with the range of introductory books on linguistics that the library holds.

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

Unit Schedule

Weeks 1-7

Myth/Topic 1: "If I could talk to the animals": The nature of language and how meaning is encoded in communication.

Weeks 8-11

Myth/Topic 2: "In the beginning...": The evolution of language and studying language from an historic perspective.

Weeks 11-13

Myth/Topic 3: "Writing equals language": The development and typology of writing systems.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)

- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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

- Homework Tasks

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.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks

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.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks
- 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.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard

written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks
- 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.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks
- 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

- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.
- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Homework Tasks
- 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

- 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.
- Critically discuss a myth about language in light of linguistic realities using standard written English discourse.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks
- 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.
- Understand how language data is collected for the purpose of linguistic research.
- Apply basic theoretical and technical linguistic knowledge to the analysis of real world language data.

Assessment tasks

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task
- Homework Tasks

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 task

- Peer reviewed Discussion Task

Changes from Previous Offering

Assessment has been changed to include regular homework tasks. (change approved by FSQC)

Minor changes to wording of learning outcomes. (change approved by FSQC)

Focus on historical linguistics and writing systems has been introduced.