APPL912
Language, Learning and Community
S1 External 2015
Dept of Linguistics

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General Information

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Contact via +61 (0)2 9850 8729
C5A501

Margaret Wood
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Credit points
4

Prerequisites
Admission to MApplIng or PGDipAppLing or MApplIngTESOL or MTransInterMApplIngTESOL

Corequisites

Co-badge status

Unit description
This unit is concerned with the study of language and language learning from a social perspective. It provides a historical perspective on the development of social understandings of language, and on the social/cognitivist divide in linguistics in the mid-twentieth century. Language and language learning are studied as collective, interpersonal processes, and the role of the brain in these social processes is also considered. The nature of 'community' is examined from anthropological and sociological perspectives, and the relations between language, learning, and community are explored.

Important Academic Dates
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at https://students.mq.edu.au/important-dates

Learning Outcomes
1. Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
2. Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
3. Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and
group) factors
4. Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
5. Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment One</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Two</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Friday, March 20, 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Three</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Friday, May 1, 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment Four</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Friday, June 12, 5pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assignment One

Due: **Weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12**
Weighting: 5%

Participate in the online discussions on the iLearn site. I will check these discussions every Tuesday.

The goal of these discussions is to provide a structured forum for you to exchange ideas and opinions on the unit content and relevant issues with your fellow students.

The 5% grade is for participation. The content of your contributions is not graded.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
- Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
- Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

Assignment Two

Due: **Friday, March 20, 5pm**
Weighting: 15%
Due 5pm Sydney Time. Task to be posted on APPL912 iLearn site.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated

Assignment Three
Due: **Friday, May 1, 5pm**  
Weighting: **35%**

Due 5pm Sydney Time. Task to be posted on APPL912 iLearn site.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

Assignment Four
Due: **Friday, June 12, 5pm**  
Weighting: **45%**

Due 5pm Sydney Time. Task to be posted on APPL912 iLearn site.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
- Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels
Delivery and Resources

The learning and teaching strategies used in this Unit are face-to-face sessions (for on-campus students); interaction with materials on iLearn; online discussions; and self-study of course readings. On-campus sessions are recorded and made available to distance students. The course lecturer will be contactable through email to answer any queries that might arise.

It is expected that students in this unit will read all set readings, participate in group discussions and go beyond the required readings to follow the academic literature in specific areas of interest to them.

The reading material for this unit spans a variety of disciplines, including Applied Linguistics, Linguistics, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, and Biology. Some of the material will be in areas unfamiliar to many students, and may be challenging.

Unit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part II: Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Language as a social sign system</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Language functioning in context</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nature or nurture, 20th century style</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Language as a Complex Adaptive System</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Language and the brain</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Part III: Learning</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Learning in context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Learning to mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:


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](http://www.mq.edu.au).

Student Support

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

Learning Skills

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

- Workshops
Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:
Learning outcomes

• Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
• Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
• Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
• Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
• Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
• Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
• Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
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PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
• Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors

Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated

Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Explain the historical development of social theories of language and language learning
- Explain the differences between social and cognitive perspectives on language learning
- Identify a range of factors important to the development of language in the individual, including relations between biological (the human body and brain) and social (family and group) factors
- Explain how individual-group relations are linguistically constructed and mediated
- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- Discuss the implications of the social aspects of language learning for language policy at institutional, local, and/or national levels