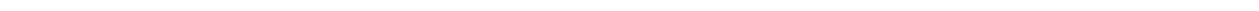


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Language in Human Life: A GE Course Targeting English Language Learners

Gail Shuck
Boise State University





Linguistic Society of America

Advancing the Scientific Study of Language

Taking Linguistics Beyond Linguistics Programs and Departments

Language in Human Life: A Cross-Cultural, English Learner-Friendly GE Course

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Language in Human Life: Three Primary Goals

1. Introduces the “disciplinary lens” of linguistics to the larger campus
2. Supports English language learners (listed as a “cross-cultural” course)
3. Draws on the knowledge and experiences of monolingual and multilingual English users in order to deepen understanding of linguistic issues

Secondary Goal

- Recruit new students in the Linguistics emphasis (and, in the future, new Linguistics minors)

Course Texts

- Bauer, L., Holmes, J., and Warren, P. (2006). Language matters. Hampshire, England, and New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Rickerson, E. M., and Hilton, B. (2012). The 5-minute linguist: Bite-sized essays on language and languages, 2nd ed. London: Equinox Publishing.
- YouTube, excerpts from The Linguists, and other videos
- International Dialects of English Archive

Emphasis on Reflection: Examining Our Own Beliefs

- Pre-/Post-course questionnaire of language beliefs
- Peer feedback, discussion
- Cross-linguistic investigations of socioling. norms
- Dialect mini-surveys (e.g., Harvard Dialect Survey--
<http://www4.uwm.edu/FLL/linguistics/dialect/maps.html>)
- Language Observation Journal
- Attend conference on multilingualism

Some of the course learning outcomes

- Compare your beliefs about language to the positions that linguists usually take.
- Demonstrate an understanding that members of different cultures and/or communities see, interpret, and experience the world differently, have different language structures to express such differences—adaptation of a U. L. O.
- Articulate several social factors in how and why languages vary.
- Explain to non-linguists what linguistics is.

ELL-Friendly Strategies

- Most critical strategy: Draw on multilingual student knowledge and experiences for course content
 - Treats English learners' knowledge as a resource
 - Breaks down the “deficit” model of language proficiency
 - Creates a community of cross-linguistic inquiry

Other ELL-Friendly Strategies

- Model how to listen well and communicate clearly
- Use multiple forms of delivery and assessment
- Support reading (pre-reading, highlighting, etc.)
- Offer multiple opportunities for revision
- Vary the participant structures

During our Round Robin discussion

- Setting up the course as “cross-cultural”
- Conference on Culture, Identity, and Language
- Course assignments and questionnaire
- Cross-cultural courses at other institutions:
 - World Englishes
 - Developmental Writing (Identity and Literacy)
 - Multicultural Rhetorics
- Any textbook or assignment suggestions?



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THANK YOU