

Language, Thought & Action: CMST 4200 (Fall 16)

Professor Brad Hall
Office Hours: T 3:00-4:00 & by appointment
(Or just drop by)

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General Course Objectives

Welcome to Language, Thought and Action. The focus of this class is on how communication, particularly the language we use, is connected to our thoughts and actions. Most of us simply take for granted the language we use as if it were a neutral container for our thoughts and simply a tool to be used in our actions. This class will focus on how language is much more than an innocent bystander as we go about our daily thoughts and actions. Language is a powerful part of what it means to be human, and everything we do and every relationship we have is changed because of it. Taking the time to understand how language, and our use of it, impacts the way we think and act empowers us to make more informed choices. The course integrates a variety of learning methods, including lecture, discussion, small group work, simulations, and videos.

We don't describe the world we see; we see the world we describe. Language has the power to alter perception. We think in words. These words have the power to limit us or to set us free. They can frighten us or evoke our courage. Similarly, the stories we tell ourselves about our own life eventually become our life. We can tell healthy stories or horror stories, the choice is ours. - Dan Baker & Cameron Stauth --- versus --- Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet?

Some of the specific goals of this course include:

1. To explore the relationship between language and the human experience and to better appreciate the important role of language in our perceptions, thoughts, and actions.
2. To increase awareness of our own language habits and their potential effect on ourselves and those around us.
3. To be more critically aware of the communication choices of others (i.e., family, friends, co-workers, advertisers, politicians, and so forth) and how these may influence our decisions and desires.

Required Texts

Online articles listed in CANVAS under files.

Grading

11 quizzes (drop the two worst)	= 90 points (10 each)
5 Connection Papers	= 75 points (15 each)
4 'Teaching Times'	= 20 points (5 each)
Promotion Assignment (due 11/12)	= 20 points
Presentation & Report	= 35 points
Final	= 50 points
Participation	= 30 points (5 from initial "self" paper)
Total	= 320 points

The participation score includes active participation in class discussions and activities. The "self-paper" is a 2-3 page paper (typed and double-spaced) that tells me about you and why you would be a good person to hire. **Due Sept. 6th.**

Quizzes may not be made up. If you are late that day, talk with me after class and you may be able to take part of the quiz at the end of class.

End of semester grades will be assigned based upon the following percentages of the total number of points:

A	= 93 - 100%	C	= 73 - 76.9%
A-	= 90 - 92.9%	C-	= 70 - 72.9%
B+	= 87 - 89.9%	D+	= 65 - 69.9%
B	= 83 - 86.9%	D	= 60 - 64.9%
B-	= 80 - 82.9%	D-	= 55 - 59.9%
C+	= 77 - 79.9%	F	= 54.9% or less

Connection papers (2-3 pages) are **due on the Tuesday of the week on which the readings you discuss are assigned**. Connection papers need to be tied to the readings assigned for the week, but should *not* simply be review papers or personal journals. They should be an illustration of how concepts from the readings connect to your own life and demonstrate how you can use the concepts to think about life events in new or deeper ways. These papers often involve a mix of personal examples and well-reasoned commentary. You need to do five of the twelve possible connection papers. Which you choose is up to you, but I encourage you not to leave all of these to the end. Scores on late papers will be reduced 10% for the first day late and 5% for each additional school day.

Teaching Times are 11+ minute explanations of weekly **class discussion concepts** that you give to an individual not taking this class (sibling, friend, parent, spouse, roommate, etc.). I will need the person's name & phone number and I will periodically call them to see what you have been talking to them about. These must be done during the *following week after* the class discussion. Once more than a week has passed the material may not be used for a teaching time discussion. For a teaching time to count, you **must** let me know in writing on the following class that you have done it for that previous week (no make ups). Any class discussion from Sept. 6 through Nov. 29 may be used for teaching times.

Presentation and Report will consist of a 3 to 4 minute "sticky" presentation and a 5 to 8 page written report. Your presentation and report will be the outcome of a discovery application, which involves you applying three class concepts to better understand one of the following: 1) a particular type of talk or speech act (such as complain, flirt, promise, or reprimand); 2) an identifiable communication situation (such as dinner talk, a sales call, a funeral, or a first date); 3) a named social identity that has expectations for certain types of communication (such as, mother, brother, salesperson, friend, or judge), or 4) specific instances of past communication that impact the way we think and act (such as a series of advertisements, a public debate, popular songs, a conflict between friends). This application may involve observations, interviews, or personal implementations of the principles or concepts. *Your paper will need to explore connections between your speech act/situation/identity or particular example(s) and appropriate concepts from class.* The ability to connect specific examples with general claims or findings will be important for this assignment. **At its core this paper should demonstrate that you have learned course concepts well enough that you can use them to bring insight into a communication event or practice.**

The applications chosen need to be approved by me. The written report for this paper will be written in a study format, including an introduction identifying the purpose of discovery applications, why these applications are worthwhile and a preview of what is in the paper, a short literature/concept review, a methods section explaining how you went about your application and any needed background material, the results, and a final conclusion, noting any implications of what you found for the future. *A key to this assignment is to demonstrate a clear understanding of how concepts from class can be used to provide new understanding of communicative behavior.* Always remember to include both general principles and very specific examples in your discussion. Further information will be given as the semester goes along.

All written material for the report should be typed and double-spaced and will be due Dec. 6th. Be sure to credit all your sources, including the names and phone numbers of any informants. Use APA style format for referencing your sources. Proofread. Appearance/delivery is always part of any presentation.

Students with ADA-documented impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. Accommodations are coordinated through DRC in Room 101 of the University Inn, 7-2444 voice, 7-0740 TTY, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact DRC as early as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

Reading Schedule

Reading assignments should be read before the Monday class period for which they are assigned.

Date	Topic	Reading
Aug. 30	Introduction	Deutsher (optional)
*Sept. 6	Language as Creator	Telushkin-1, O'Brien,
*Sept. 13	Language as Change Agent Q	Pearce, Lutz-2, Wilson, Wood/Stillman
*Sept. 20	Language as Interpreter Q	Hayakawa, Lutz-1,
*Sept. 27	Language as Guide Q	Birk & Birk, Kahneman, Postman
*Oct. 4	Language as Press Agent Q	Haidt, Holtgraves, Buttny
*Oct. 11	Language as Personal Trainer Q	Sanders, Dweck, Sobel & Panas
*Oct. 18	Language as Judge Q	Condon-2, Allport
*Oct. 25	Language as Gendered Q	de Waal, Tannen-2, Wood & Reich
*Nov. 1	Language as Salesperson Q	Heath & Heath, Ogilvy, Luntz (pp.1-28),
*Nov. 8	Language as Politician Q	Jackson & Jamieson, Hinkle,
*Nov. 15	Language as Teacher Q	Hall, Stone, Simmons, Lakoff & Johnson
Nov. 22	Language as a holiday	The symbolic meaning of food
*Nov. 29	Language as Musician Q	Telushkin-2, Johnson, Heath & Heath-2
Dec. 6	Class Presentations & Review	None
Dec. 13	Final Exam (4:30 pm - same room)	

* = Weeks you can do a connection paper

Q = Weeks there will be a quiz

If the class as a whole has a response rate of 80% or above on the IDEA evaluation survey all students will get 2 additional points.