

Language, Thought & Action: CMST 4200 (Fall 17)

Professor Brad Hall
Office Hours: MW 1:30-2:30 & 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

12 quizzes (drop the two worst)	= 100 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	= 30 points
Final	= 50 points
Participation	= 30 points
<i>Total</i>	<i>= 325 points</i>

The participation score includes active participation in class discussions, activities, and 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 Monday of the week on which the readings you discuss in the paper 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 thirteen 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.). You will be teaching the other person the concepts we covered **in** class that week. 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 discussions from Sept. 6 through Nov. 29 may be used for teaching times.

Presentation and Report will consist of a 2 to 3 minute "sticky" presentation and a 6 to 9 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). *All three concepts will be applied to the same topic*. Do not simply try to connect class concepts with obvious examples, such as using advertising techniques to explain a series of ads. Gathering data for these applications may involve observations, interviews, or personal implementation 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 topic for your presentation/report needs to be approved by me. The report will be written in a study format, including an introduction identifying the topic to be studied and the three concepts to be applied to it and your reasoning behind these choices, along with a preview of what is in the paper, a short concept review section, a methods section explaining how you went about researching your applications, your findings, and a final conclusion, noting any implications for the future of what you found. *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 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. 4th. 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. 28-30	What is the big deal about language?	Deutsher (optional)
*Sept. 6	How do words change our world?	Telushkin-1, O'Brien,
*Sept. 11-13	What can we do with words? Q	Pearce, Lutz-2, Wilson,
*Sept. 18-20	How do words position us? Q	Price, Wood/Stillman, Holtgraves, Buttny
*Sept. 25-27	How do words change what we see? Q	Haidt, Birk & Birk, Kahneman, Postman
*Oct. 2-4	Why do words unite and divide? Q	Hayakawa, Lutz-1
*Oct. 9-11	How do words educate us? Q	Sanders, Dweck, Allport
*Oct. 16-18	Why ask why and other mysteries? Q	Grant, Sobel & Panas
*Oct. 23-25	What is the relationship between words and gender? Q	de Waal, Tannen-2, Wood & Reich
*Nov. 30-1	What are fundamental forms of language? Q	Hall, Stone, Simmons, Lakoff & Johnson
*Nov. 6-8	How can we use words to change others? Q	Heath & Heath, Luntz (pp.1-28),
*Nov. 13-15	When should we be wary of words? Q	Jackson & Jamieson, Hinkle,
*Nov. 20	How can we use words to innovate? Q	Heath & Heath-2, Condon-1
*Nov. 27-29	How can words help us connect with Each other? Q	Telushkin-2, Johnson,
Dec. 4-6	Class Presentations & Review	None
Dec. 13	Final Exam (11:30 am - 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.

Some of the possible concepts for the final paper

Five characteristics of symbols

Four reasons symbols are powerful

Slanting (3 Types)

Denotative and Connotative meanings

Description / Inferences/ Evaluation (D.I.E) -three types of statements

Conversational Triplets and their impact on meaning

Implicatures through violation of the four maxims (Q, Q, R, M)

Speech Acts (Direct and Indirect)

Three ways to improve our lives through Speech Acts

Ladders of Abstraction (dangers and benefits or 2 questions to ask about high level abstractions)

Strategic Ambiguity (Impact of / 3 findings)

Three types of "Face" and Face (premises)

Five options for Face related Speech Acts

Three contextual factors for how we decide which to use)

Euphemisms

Social versus Discursive Context

'Can I' or 'Must I' (logics used when we face with new information)

Social accounting process (challenges, accounts, evaluation)

5 Characteristics of categories

Labels as a category and their impact on us

Four misleading effects or logical illusions (Halo, Familiarity, Priming, and Anchoring)

Growth versus Fixed Mindsets

Power of questions

Power of vulnerable communication

Symbolic Interactionism

I versus you statements

Labels of Primary Potency

Power of gratitude

Two blocks to Innovation (creativity)

Five ways to make intensional comments more extensional

Self-fulfilling prophecy

Six Story Types

Metaphors (Entailments, Hiding & Highlighting)

Characteristics of narratives

Story Functions

Gendered Speech (Gender as Culture being intercultural)

Eight gender difference in interaction style

Rapport versus report (Respect or Liking) – Status versus Connection

Political strategies

10 Effective Language tips

Sex/Gender based stereotypes

Sticky Messages

DICE

Advertising Games

Fallacies (informal) poli-logic

Response Styles and Active Listening

Bright Spots

Healing Words