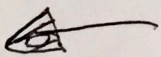


The general subject matter for this essay is **language or language communities**. The source of your information will be what you observe and hear by listening to others. The goal is to do a project based on what our own minds can comprehend from diligent observation, note-taking, and reasoning. The conclusion/result of your experiment is your thesis and should be presented in the opening paragraph in one sentence. **Secondary material should not be brought into this essay. Thus, this is not an essay that needs to be the result of academic texts or online sources.** The research is what you see and how you interpret what you see and hear. However, you may draw from our readings and class discussions. For instance, Rodriguez, Lyiscott, Tan, and others offer ideas on the power of language. It will be up to you to determine what particular focus your essay will take and what meaning you wish to convey to your reader. Do the exploratory writing activities on pages 73-76. These activities will guide you through an analysis of some of the reflections you completed in the first part of your book. Once you determine your focus, you will use the information you have already gathered and additional information you will research to clarify your ideas and provide evidence for the points you wish to make.

If you prefer a more direct prompt, the suggested topics listed below might be helpful to you. Choose one of the following topics to establish a focus and direction.

- X 1) From your observations and conversations, what assumptions and stereotypes do we make about people based on language and behavior? What did you learn from the experiment?
- X 2) Observe and identify a code language on campus, on your job, or in your personal arena. How is language used? Is it effective? Analyze.
- X 3) Have you become keenly aware of code switching? Who utilizes this language? In your observations and conversations, did you find code switching to be an acceptable form of language? What are the risks and bias? Analyze.



- 4) How has social media impacted language use? Write an essay that explains the function of specific terms and phrases. You might examine the importance of acronyms in our culture.
- 5) How has war become part of everyday language? What terms, phrases, and metaphors have worked into the language that you hear daily? Describe how military language shapes the way you and others think. How does this language quietly impact our culture?
- 6) Many times we judge people based on their language. Jamila Lyiscott in "Articulate" challenges us to think differently about "Proper" English versus informal slang. Do various settings/environments call for different languages? What conclusions can you make from your observations and conversations? Analyze your research.
- 7) How is language used as a tool of power? Analyze your observations and conclusions.
- 8) Examine the social pressure to learn English. What have you observed and heard on this subject? Consider the possibilities of living in two worlds. Investigate and write about people who straddle two worlds, cultures, and languages. What are the advantages of learning English? What are the disadvantages? What happens to families when they do not have the same language? While you may have personal knowledge, you should use observations or interviews.
- 9) History reveals that the group with the most power utilizes language to dominate others. Often, they do this by naming, claiming, and erasing. Besides reading articles in our texts, we are reading the novel *Little Bee*. Reflect on the significance of language in *Little Bee*. Explore the possibilities of language offered in one of the earlier chapters. For example, Little Bee claims, "No, it is not the Queen's crown and scepter that rule in your land. It is her grammar and her voice" (2). Language, culture, and identity are intertwined in this novel as in "real" life. What happens to the marginalized groups in society? How can the powerless reverse the situation and regain their voices? You could consider the implications of terms such as "illegals," "refugees," and "asylum seekers." How do specific words cause people to react regarding immigration or other controversial topics? Analyze.
- 10) If these topics are not helpful, then develop your own. However, you must see me to discuss your topic before you begin writing. Come to my office hours.

Your finished essay should consist of strong opening and closing paragraphs. The tone of your essay should be **objective**. However, you may use "I" in one example. The general approach is analytical. This means that you present your material as a detached observer and that you examine the parts of your topic as the parts relate to the whole. Try to be specific, concrete, and descriptive. Use the actual dialogue when appropriate as your examples. Also, you may interview one or more subjects and incorporate parts of it in your writing. Please see me early if you have any questions. **Reminder: The minimum requirement is that you write four full pages. Papers less than four full pages will not be accepted and receive a zero.** Use MLA rules in all your essays. If you experience problems, go to the Writing Center ASAP.

~~Five pages~~ Five pages p. 11