

Language

"To speak another language is to possess another soul" - Charlamagne



Warm up

- What do you think about the quote above?
- How many languages can you speak?
- Do you think it's important for people to learn more than one language? Why/Why not?
- Do you feel like you have a different personality in different languages?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a global language?
- Do you think our global economy could work without a global language?
- Do you think we will stop learning languages in the future and only use translation devices? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of doing this?
- Do you think most of the world will speak English in 100 years?
- If you could speak any other language which language would you choose?



1. The phrases all translate to 'I love you' in English. Match the languages below to the correct phrase

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|----------|---------|
| Portuguese | Greek | Japanese | Dutch |
| Bulgarian | Danish | Punjabi | Finnish |
| Italian | Indonesian | Thai | Turkish |

<i>Phrase</i>	<i>Language</i>
1. Обичам те	Bulgarian
2. Jeg elsker dig	Danish
3. Σ' αγαπώ	Greek
4. 愛しています	Japanese
5. Ik hou van je	Dutch
6. Rakastan sinua	Finnish
7. ฉันรักคุณ	Thai
8. Eu amo-te	Portuguese
9. Ti amo	Italian
10. aku mencintaimu	Indonesian
11. ਮੈਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹਾਂ	Punjabi
12. Seni seviyorum	Turkish



2. Work in pairs or groups and answer the questions below. The group with the most correct answers wins.

1. Include both non-native and native, which language has the most speakers in the world?
 - a. **English**
 - b. Mandarin
 - c. Hindi
2. How many official languages are there in Switzerland?
 - a. 2
 - b. 3
 - c. **4**
3. Dating back at least 3500 BC, the oldest proof of a written language was Sumerian which was found in today's...
 - a. **Iraq**
 - b. Jerusalem
 - c. Egypt
4. How many official languages are there in the European Union?
 - a. 15
 - b. **24**
 - c. 42
5. Which is the most translated book after the Bible?
 - a. **The Little Prince**
 - b. Harry Potter
 - c. Lord of the Rings
6. What was the first language spoken in outer space?
 - a. **Russian**
 - b. English
 - c. Chinese
7. How many words for rain are there in Hawaiian?
 - a. Over 10
 - b. Over 50
 - c. **Over 200**
8. Which language is spoken in Brazil?
 - a. **Portuguese**
 - b. French
 - c. Spanish
9. What was Cleopatra's first Language?
 - a. Latin
 - b. Arabic
 - c. Greek
10. "Cerveza" means beer in which country?
 - a. **Spain**
 - b. Italy
 - c. Brazil



3. You are going to watch a video called “How Language Shapes the Way We Think”. Work in a group or with a partner and discuss the following questions before watching the video.

- What are some differences between English and your native language?
- Does your language use genders for nouns (for example in French the moon is female *la lune* and a hat is masculine *le chapeau*)? If so, do you think that has any effect on how you see the noun?
- What do you think this quote means?

“What’s in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” - Shakespeare



4. The vocabulary below is used in the video¹ you are going to watch. Match the vocabulary on the left to their definitions on the right.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|
| 1. to transmit | d | a. to know where you are in terms of location |
| 2. to exhale | h | b. when something is suggested and not directly said |
| 3. oriented | a | c. When someone recalls a crime they have seen in court |
| 4. a trick | f | d. to move/pass something from one place to another |
| 5. a quirk | e | e. an unusual trait/feature |
| 6. an implication | b | f. a way of doing something to make it easier |
| 7. an eye witness testimony | c | g. to think only of oneself and ignore the feelings of others |
| 8. egocentric | g | h. to breathe out |



5. Watch the first 5m40s of the video and answer the following questions with your class.

1. What unusual idea did Lera Boroditsky transmit to your mind?

A jellyfish waltzing in a library while thinking about quantum mechanics.

2. How do the Kuuk Thaayore people describe where things are?

They use cardinal directions: north, south, east and west.

3. How do the Kuuk Thaayore people greet each other?

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKK7wGAYP6k&t=6s&ab_channel=TED

They say "Which way are you going?" and the answer should be, "North-northeast in the far distance. How about you?"

4. English speaking people lay out timelines from left to right. Hebrew or Arabic people lay out time scales from right to left. Why?

This has to do with writing direction.

5. How do the Kuuk Thaayore people lay out timelines?

When they sat facing south, the organised time from left to right. When they sat facing north, they organised time from right to left. When they sat facing east, time came towards the body. So the pattern is east to west.



6. Watch up to 10m 43s of the [video](#) and answer the following questions.

1. What does Lera Boroditsky refer to as a language trick?

Counting.

2. How do languages differ in how they divide their colour spectrum ?

Some languages have lots of words for colours, some only have a couple words, "light" and "dark". And languages differ in where they put boundaries between colors. So, for example, in English, there's a word for blue that covers all of the colors that you can see on the screen, but in Russian, there isn't a single word. Instead, Russian speakers have to differentiate between light blue, "goluboy," and dark blue, "siniy." So Russians have this lifetime of experience of, in language, distinguishing these two colors. When we test people's ability to perceptually discriminate these colors, what we find is that Russian speakers are faster across this linguistic boundary.

3. Boroditsky discusses 'language quirks' and refers to lots of languages having grammatical genders. What differences did their study between German and Spanish participants show?

If you ask German and Spanish speakers to, say, describe a bridge, like the one here - - "bridge" happens to be grammatically feminine in German, grammatically masculine in Spanish -- German speakers are more likely to say bridges are "beautiful," "elegant" and stereotypically feminine words. Whereas Spanish speakers will be more likely to say they're "strong" or "long," these masculine words.

4. What differences were found between English and Spanish speakers in describing an accident?

In English, it's fine to say, "He broke the vase." In a language like Spanish, you might be more likely to say, "The vase broke," or, "The vase broke itself." If it's an accident, you

wouldn't say that someone did it. In English, quite weirdly, we can even say things like, "I broke my arm."

5. Boroditsky refers to how the results found in question 4 have implications on eye witness testimony. How so?

if you show an English speakers someone breaking a vase, and I say, "He broke the vase," as opposed to "The vase broke," even though you can witness it yourself, you can watch the video, you can watch the crime against the vase, you will punish someone more, you will blame someone more if I just said, "He broke it," as opposed to, "It broke." The language guides our reasoning about events.



7. Optional task: Watch the rest of the video at home.



8. Discuss the following with a partner or in a group.

- a. What part of the video did you find most interesting or surprising?
- b. Do you think it is important for us to safeguard different languages?
- c. Has the video changed your mind on the importance of learning a second language? Do you think being bilingual is a huge advantage?
- d. Do you agree with Lera Boroditsky? Do you think language shapes us?
- e. What did you think of Lera Boroditsky and how she delivered her presentation? Do you think she had a good or a bad delivery? How does she keep her audience's attention? What did you think about her tone?



9. Play the 'Guess the Country' game, your teacher will provide you with the necessary material.