



Introduction to Intercultural Studies: Language and Culture

Explore intercultural communication by understanding the relationship between language and cultural identity.

If your students are completing the whole of this course online and are not participating in the teacher-led lessons based on it, then they can complete useful and engaging activities based on the content covered. You can choose for your students to complete individual tasks by themselves or encourage group work. Though you may have your own ideas about what your students can do with the course content, we've made things easy for you by suggesting some activities that you can submit to your students below. Instructions for the students can be found later in this document.

Individual student tasks taken from the course

Reflection: Students write a 500 word reflection on what they learned from the course, including anything they might do differently now as a result of their learning, and anything additional they found out from their own reading around the topic. They will submit this reflection as a written essay, podcast or video.

Activity: Students attempt the exercise from Step 1.4 (Language and Dialects). At the end of the exercise, students should write a short summary of the difference between a language and a dialect, and a definition of the term 'mutual intelligibility' (they can research this if necessary). They can peer-assess or self-assess using the answers provided, or submit their answers to the teacher.

Research task: Each student should choose a language in decline – they can use the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger to choose if needed (link in See Also section of 2.15) – and write a short essay based on research. The essay should answer the following questions:

- What are the main reasons for the language's decline?
- Have there been any attempts to preserve or revitalise the language?
- Has the community itself tried to halt the decline?
- Have there been any actions by the country's national or local government? What effect has this had?

They should finish the essay by discussing their views on the role of a language in preserving culture and submit the essay to the teacher.

Group tasks based on the course

Research task 1: Groups watch the video in Step 1.6 (Untranslatable concepts) and then research untranslatable concepts (links from Step 1.6 and other sources can be used). Each group should create a poster of untranslatable concepts, including the concept and their attempt at a definition. Students can include drawings and diagrams of the concepts.

Groups share and discuss their posters and the concepts they found with the rest of the class.

Research task 2: In groups, students imagine a situation in which they need to make a request (e.g. they need to ask their boss for time off work). Brainstorm all the ways they can think of making this request, ranking these from the most polite to the least polite they can imagine.

Ask the groups to research Brown and Levinson's theory of 'face' (they can use information in Step 2.7 and their own research). Ask them to identify from the list of requests they made which are oriented to 'positive face' and which are oriented to 'negative face' – if they have no examples, they can add some at this point.

Discussion task: Groups discuss the following question:

- What is the role of language in preserving culture?

Record the discussion in notes or a mind-map and submit to the teacher.

Additional support

You can use the [How to use FutureLearn guide](#) with your students to get them started. There is also a school-facing [Guide to safeguarding and security on FutureLearn](#) if you need it.

Test

You can use the test questions listed in the student instructions below as a short assessment to enable your students to demonstrate what they have learned on the course. The assessment has 15 marks in total.

The questions have been designed to be flexible and open. The questions indicate which steps the answers can be found on. The marks available reflect the likely length and complexity of the answer expected, and how many points they are likely to make. For example, a 5-mark question might reflect a longer, more complex question, or one where they have asked to describe or explain a number of elements. Depending on the level and ability of your students, you can decide how you wish to award the marks so they are appropriate for your class.

Each question suggests which steps the students may wish to return to answer the questions. **You can decide if you want to include this information when you share the assessment with your students.**

Student instructions

Reflection

Write a 500 word reflection of what you have learned from the course. It should include anything you might do differently now because of what you learned, and anything additional you found out in your reading around the topic. Submit this reflection to your teacher as a written essay, podcast or video.

Activity

Work through the exercise from Step 1.4 (Language and Dialects). At the end of the exercise, include:

- a short summary of the difference between a language and a dialect
- a definition of the term 'mutual intelligibility' (you can research this if necessary).

Submit your answers to the teacher.

Research task

Choose a language in decline to research – you can use the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger to choose if needed (link in See Also section of 2.15) – and write a short essay based on your research. The essay should answer the following questions:

- What are the main reasons for the language's decline?
- Have there been any attempts to preserve or revitalise the language?
- Has the community itself tried to halt the decline?
- Have there been any actions by the country's national or local government? What effect has this had?

Finish the essay by writing about your views on the role of a language in preserving culture and submit the essay to your teacher.

Group discussion

In your group, discuss the following question:

- What is the role of language in preserving culture?

Record the discussion either in notes or a mind-map and submit this to your teacher.

Group research task 1

In your groups, watch the video in Step 1.6 (Untranslatable concepts) and then research untranslatable concepts (links from Step 1.6 and other sources can be used). Your group should create a poster of untranslatable concepts, including the concept and your attempt at a definition. You can include drawings and diagrams of the concepts.

Each group will share and discuss their posters and the concepts they found with the rest of the class.

Group research task 2

In your group, imagine a situation in which you need to make a request (for example, you need to ask your boss for time off work). Brainstorm all the ways you can think of making this request, then rank these from the most polite to the least polite you can imagine. Then, research Brown and Levinson's theory of 'face' (you can use information in Step 2.7 and your own research). Identify from your list of requests which are oriented to 'positive face' and which are oriented to 'negative face' – if you have no examples, you can add some at this point.

Test

Complete the assessment questions below to demonstrate your understanding of the course. You can refer back to the course to find the answers or more detail as you need to. You should not however share your answers with other students.

Your answers should be written in full sentences and be appropriately detailed. Make sure you read the questions carefully before starting to answer. Each question shows how many marks are available – use this to guide how much detail or how many points you need to include.

[The questions also indicate where you can start to look to find the answer. You can also include information from other steps if that is relevant.]

1. Give three examples of 'untranslatable concepts'. (3 marks) [Step 1.10]
2. What is the difference between a language and a dialect? Give examples. (3 marks) [Step 1.4]
3. According to Brown and Levinson, what is 'positive face' and 'negative face'? Give examples for each. (6 marks) [Step 2.7]
4. For what reasons might a language decline? (3 marks) [Step 2.11]