

Homework Assignment #5

Due December 8.

The goal of this assignment is to get you to think critically about the question of whether the United States should adopt English as its official language. Using evidence and reasoning, form an opinion about this question. In a clear and well-structured essay of 500 words, explain your opinion and the evidence and process of reasoning that led you to this opinion. (If the concepts of critical thinking, evidence, and reasoning are still a little insecure in your mind, review the discussion in homework assignment #4 or talk to your TA.)

What evidence should you use? The evidence can come from your own experience. It can also come from the lectures deal with this topic and from the reading assignment for this week. (The reading assignment is a chapter from the book *Hold Your Tongue: Bilingualism and the Politics of 'English Only'* by Jessie Crawford. You can find the reading assignment linked through the course website, or go directly to: <http://courses.umass.edu/ling101s/crawford.pdf>.) To get other points of view, you should also consult online sources — googling something like *English official language* will get you plenty.

Regardless of the sources you use, do not plagiarize! Except for material presented in my lectures, which is knowledge that is presumed common to all of us, you must cite any printed or online sources that you use. Do not simply quote from these sources or closely paraphrase; you need to form your own synthesis of what the sources say, and the process of integrating the evidence and reasoning to a conclusion must be your own.

For an entertaining essay arguing that we should ban *English*, look here:
<http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/officialamerican/banenglish/>