



**Department of Spanish Studies, General Linguistics and Literature Theory
University of Alicante**

Undergraduate level

LINGUISTICS 8806

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**Workshop I – How to study linguistics?
Part IV**

Academic year: 2009-2010

STUDENT'S REFLECTIVE LOG QUESTIONS (RLQ)

These logs express your individual's response to the previous reading, will serve as a written record of your individual thinking, and will be used as a basis for group discussion. Please remember that you are expected to keep all completed reflective log assignments throughout the year for documentation of your own learning process.

RLQ 1 – Read the following text carefully (downloadable from <http://www.wmich.edu/languages/sil/what.html#why>) and discuss your thoughts, feelings and reactions to it:

The study of linguistics permits a person to better understand the world around her or him, as this world is constantly being filtered through and organized by language. How do you talk to yourself? To others? How do you organize your day? How do you conceive of your existence and that of others? When you see something interesting or shocking, when you try to remember a fact or setting, express anger or love, you do this through the medium of language. When you read, sing, study, write, chat or daydream, language is at the heart of your experience. The study of linguistics is not just an investigation into words or sounds, but it is the heart of humanity.

The study of linguistics also offers several practical benefits. Teachers of English or other languages can better understand their subject matter; people communicating with others – of their culture or another – can become more effective and persuasive; counsellors and mediators can learn the value of such hidden things as affect or intonation; businessmen and women can better grasp the role language plays in their contacts and communications; historians and politicians can see the role played by language and by people's views of language in past and current events; etc. Understanding that language is a powerful force – and gaining the intellectual tools to go beneath the surface of daily observation – might well build better international friendships and help communities and individuals understand and respect one another more fully.

Finally, linguistics is fun and will make you a more rounded person with interesting things to say at parties. Have you ever wondered why sentences such as, "the friend I came to the party with" are *incorrect* (according to your high school English teacher, at least)? Are you confused by the subjunctive of Spanish or French or by the use of the dative or accusative in German? Do you wonder why so many people learn English, but why so few English speakers learn other languages? All of these are questions that make linguists' hearts stir and, although we might not always have the answers, we definitely enjoy trying to find them.



RLQ 2 – Compare the way you use your first language as related to the way your friends use their first languages. In what ways are your and their linguistic backgrounds different or similar (a linguistic background includes information on the context in which you learned each language you know – at home, in school (including where you studied and the amount of time), living where the language is spoken, etc.)? Then, discuss your issues or concerns regarding language use.

**Are you ready to discuss your answers in the large group?
Do please let me know when you are**