

In this assignment, we're focusing on one of the capacities we have as humans: the ability to create, use and circulate symbols. Specifically, we'll be applying what you've learned about how language works as a *symbolic* system that we use to communicate with others. Although we don't think about it on a daily basis, each and every one of us is involved in linguistic change simply through using (and not using) different words. My favorite example is slang because we actually notice slang words since they change so often AND are often used by specific social or cultural groups--within a specific culture or between cultures even when we ostensibly [speak the same language](#) 🙌.



Matthew McConaughey, Hugh Grant, & Charlie Hunnam Teach You Texan and English Slang | Vanity Fair

In this assignment, we are going to lean into the flexibility and meaning-making capacity we (humans) have and how it's expressed in slang use.

There are **TWO** parts to this assignment:

1. Spend one day in which you pay close attention to your cultural community's language practices and keep track of all the slang words that you hear that day. Then, take a look at your slang inventory and underline ones that you think would be hard for people who speak the same language but are from different cultural communities to fully understand (for example that ones you think your professors wouldn't understand or that might vary regionally).
2. THEN, be a little creative and create **TWO** words. In addition to brand new words, you can create new metaphors about arguments, education, and the self-- a mash-up of words like *hangry*, for example. Maybe we could use a different word to describe

our complex feelings. Or maybe we could re-imagine metaphors like “falling in love.” Anything goes! You will need to provide the following:

- the word and a short definition,
- the word in *two* sentences so we can see it in context!

Need some inspiration??!!

Assignment adapted from Mike Wesch's Word-Weaving assignment.