INTRODUCTION

1. MYTHS ABOUT LANGUAGE IN GENERAL

① Some languages and dialects are better than others. 11
② Grammar usage reflects a person’s moral character. 21
③ Languages and dialects are determined by race. 23
④ Languages have one correct form, and this form should not change. 27

2. MYTHS ABOUT FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

① Parents teach children language, and children learn it through imitation. 39
② “Parentese” slows language development. 46
③ Children benefit from having their language corrected. 49
④ Television aids language development in children. 52

3. MYTHS ABOUT SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

① Recent immigrants to the United States learn English more slowly than previous generations of immigrants. 57
② Young L2 learners should be completely immersed in English. 60
③ Smart people are better second language learners. 64
④ Grammar has no place in second language instruction. 67
⑤ Listening and reading are the easiest skills to acquire in a second language. 70
4. MYTHS ABOUT LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY  

1. Some people do not speak in a dialect.  
2. Declaring English as the official language will unify the country.  
3. Television, movies, and the Internet are aiding in the disappearance of dialects.  

5. MYTHS ABOUT LANGUAGE AND THINKING  

1. Language determines how we think.  
2. Politics, popular culture, and technology are corrupting English by limiting many traditional forms of English.  

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