

# The Power of Language

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We want to know you!

- Name
- Class Standing
- Major
- Are you in BHLP? BOLT?
- What made you choose to come to this workshop?

## “On the Fence” Activity

A mother only refers to a biological parent.

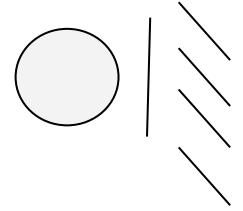
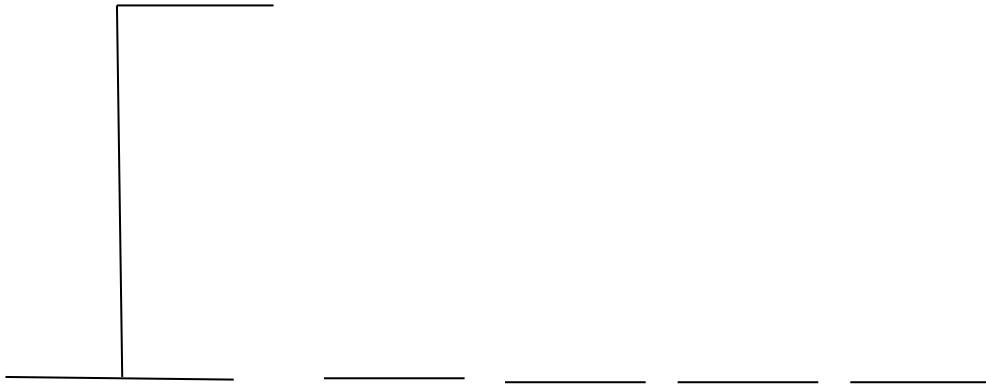
Language is a strong contributor to my identity.

Colloquial speak is apparent in my daily conversations.

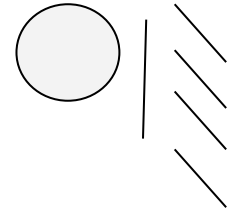
Small words have large impacts.

Belonging is a core desire of the human psyche.

# Hangman Activity



# Hangman Activity



## The 5 Exemplary Practices of Leadership

- Model the Way
- Inspire a Shared Vision
- Challenge the Process
- Enable Others to Act
- Encourage the Heart

Definition of Leadership: Leadership is a relational process of people working together guided by values, to accomplish change, accomplish goals, or to make a difference that will benefit the common good.

## What is Language?

### DEFINING LANGUAGE

**Language** is a verbal and nonverbal form of communication.

**Vernacular** is language of a people or a national language.

**Dialect** is a variety of language and is a characteristic of a particular area, community, or group.

**Colloquialism** is an everyday language used to casually communicate within a group of **shared** identity.

Language is the means through which you **express your identity**.

**Language**

**Vernacular**

**Dialect**

**Colloquial  
Speak**

## Leadership Through Language

- Language allows for
  - a culture and creates unity
  - a basis for effective communication
  - the increase of trust and vulnerability
- Language is not only a reflection of individuals' values, language also shapes them.
- Language impacts how someone acts and perceives themselves.

**→ Small words + small acts = large scale impacts**



## Exemplifying Leadership Through Language

Connection between languages of appreciation and MICEE

- ▣ Expression of gratitude in social settings
- ▣ People exemplify appreciation differently
- ▣ Not everyone speaks the same language of appreciation
- ▣ Forms of appreciation must be catered to individual preference

### **5 LANGUAGES OF APPRECIATION**

- 1) Quality Time
- 2) Words of Affirmation
- 3) Acts of Service
- 4) Gifts
- 5) Physical Touch

How do you see yourself implementing languages of appreciation (love languages)?



# HARLEM 1980'S

# TED Talk: Ronald Murray



# Houses

*Alternative Families for LGBTQIA+ Community*

## The Dual Purpose of Houses

### 1. ALTERNATE FAMILY

- Surrogate families, consisting mostly of Black and latino members of the LGBTQIA+ community
- Provision of shelter and mentorship to individuals kicked out of previous homes
- Relationships and community built within houses replace those of biological families

### 2. BALLROOM COMPETITION TEAM

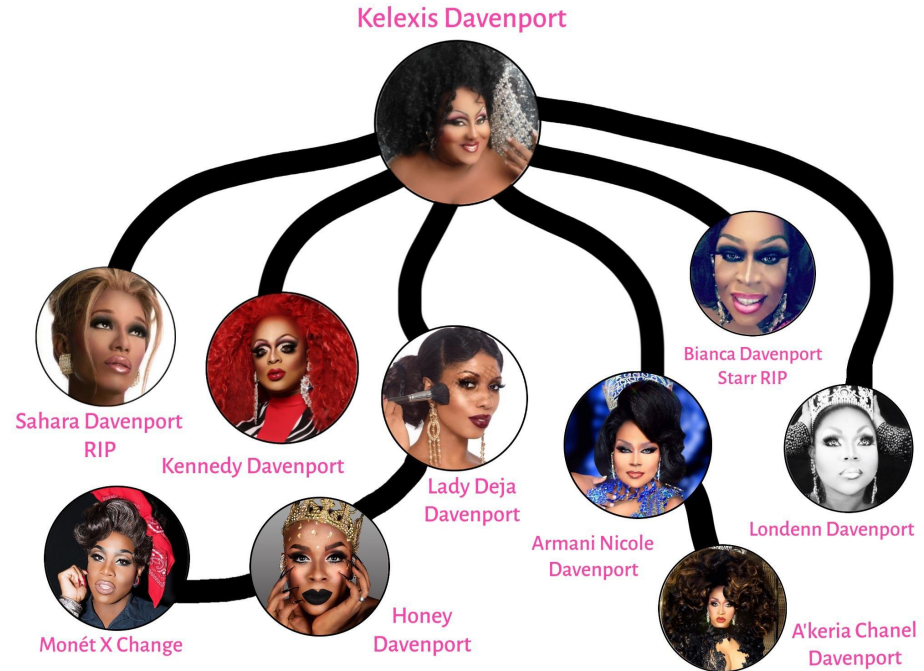
- Ballroom culture is an underground LGBT subculture originating in 1920s New York
- Each house has a name; members take this surname at competitions
- House members compete or “walk” in different events for trophies and prizes
- Glory & infamy

# Mothers

*Parental figures who welcomed the  
LGBTQIA+ Counterculture*

## Family Structure of Houses

- Houses led by “mothers” and/or “fathers” who are older members of the ballroom scene
- They oversee “children” estranged from biological homes
- Deliberate usage of family titles create unity



## Mothers: Leadership through Verbal Language

### CHARACTER TRAITS

- Emotionally intelligent - aware of emotional dynamics and adjust tone accordingly
- Thoughtful and well-reasoned word choice
- Communicate optimism and lead with hope
- Truthful and action-oriented language

### 5 EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
- Challenge the process
- Enable others to act
- Encourage the heart

**Allyship:** “...building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability, with marginalized individuals.” -Sheree Atcheson of Forbes



POSE





1. What happened in this video?
2. What sort of language did Blanca utilize?
3. What MICEE traits did we see Blanca emulate?

# The Ballroom Scene

*Competition Between Houses*

# The Ballroom: Leadership through Nonverbal Language

## EVENT TRAITS

- Individuals are scored based on costume, attitude, vogue skills, and realness
- Voguing consists of five elements: duckwalk, catwalk, hands, floorwork, and spins and dips
- Hip hop fashion and music inspire ballroom language
- Mothers and their children participate, creating unity, and showing support for one another
- Formation of a sense of community and reliability through shared values

## 5 EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
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# The Power of Voguing



## Colloquial Speak in Ballrooms

**Chants:** Clever rhymes and raps used to hype up a performance. Some of the most legendary MCs use a unique mix of references and word play over a house beat to create the soundtrack for the battle.

**Chop:** To be eliminated in a ball as a contestant. Judges will often say “Thank you, but that’s a chop”.

**Ovah:** A variation of “over”. Judges use this term in scoring to describe an excellent competitor.

**Realness:** The ability to blend into a group that’s not your own. For example, if a category for a ball is executive realness, the challenge will be to present your most high class business attire on the runway.

**Snatch:** To win

**Shade:** An underhanded jab that’s slightly insulting and usually an inside joke.

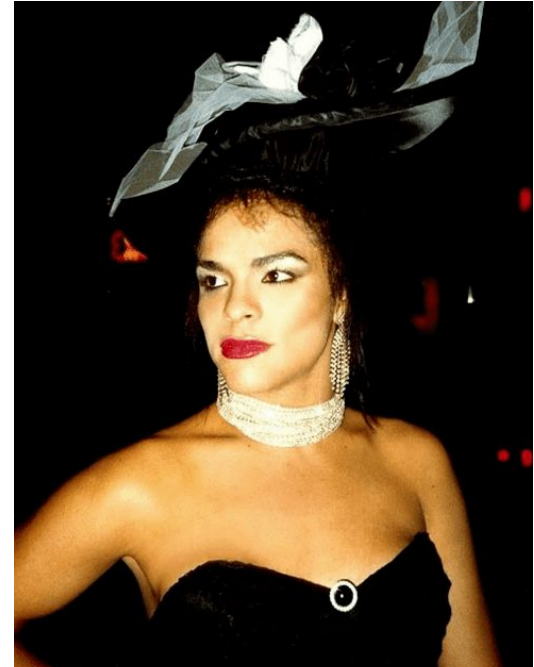
**Turn It:** When a performer stuns the audience with their performance at the ball.

**Slay:** To do something very well



## “Mother” Angie Xtravaganza

- Transgender Puerto Rican teenager assumed the role of house mother in 1983
- Provided solace to rejected and homeless children in NYC through allyship
- House of Xtravaganza is one of the most publicly recognized NYC houses
- Observed childrens’ birthdays, fed them, and taught them about ball culture
- Xtravaganza competed in categories like High Fashion Evening Wear at ballroom competitions
- “...achieving in fantasy what the world had denied her in reality.” -New York Times (1993)





“

*A mother is one who raises a child, not one who  
borns it -Hector Xtravaganza*



# Paris is Burning

*Jennie Livingston's 1990 Documentary:  
Unity of House culture in NYC*

## Painting a Compelling Picture



## Compare and Contrast: The Different Worlds as Depicted in POSE



## Reflection

Consider someone in your life who is a leader.

What MICEE practices do you identify within them?

How can you exemplify those practices to advocate for and amplify the voices of others who hold minoritized identities?

## Bibliography

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