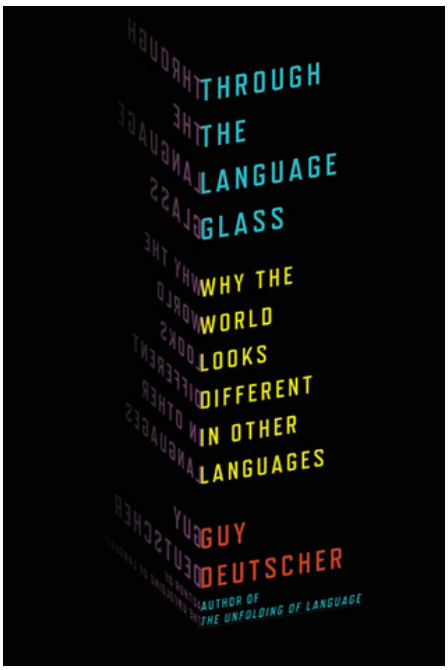

Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages

Guy Deutscher

Download now

Read Online

Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages

Guy Deutscher

Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages Guy Deutscher
A masterpiece of linguistics scholarship, at once erudite and entertaining, confronts the thorny question of how--and whether--culture shapes language and language, culture

Linguistics has long shied away from claiming any link between a language and the culture of its speakers: too much simplistic (even bigoted) chatter about the romance of Italian and the goose-stepping orderliness of German has made serious thinkers wary of the entire subject. But now, acclaimed linguist Guy Deutscher has dared to reopen the issue. Can culture influence language--and vice versa? Can different languages lead their speakers to different thoughts? Could our experience of the world depend on whether our language has a word for "blue"?

Challenging the consensus that the fundaments of language are hard-wired in our genes and thus universal, Deutscher argues that the answer to all these questions is--yes. In thrilling fashion, he takes us from Homer to Darwin, from Yale to the Amazon, from how to name the rainbow to why Russian water--a "she"--becomes a "he" once you dip a tea bag into her, demonstrating that language does in fact reflect culture in ways that are anything but trivial. Audacious, delightful, and field-changing, *Through the Language Glass* is a classic of intellectual discovery.

Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages Details

Date	:	Published August 31st 2010 by Metropolitan Books (first published 2010)
ISBN	:	9780805081954
Author	:	Guy Deutscher
Format	:	Hardcover 304 pages
Genre	:	Nonfiction, Humanities, Language, Linguistics, Science, Psychology

Download Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Differe ...pdf

Read Online Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Diffe ...pdf

Download and Read Free Online Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages Guy Deutscher

From Reader Review Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages for online ebook

Hesham Khaled says

??? ??????"
?? ???? ?????? ???????? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ???????? ?? ??? ???????
??????? ???? ?? ????? ??? ??? ????? ??????? ??? ???? ?????????"

???? ???? ?????? ????? ?????? ???? ??? ??????
???? ??????? ???? ?? ????? ?????? ?? ??? ??????
???? ????? ???? ???????? ??? ?????? ??? ???????

*
?? ????? ???? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ????? ??????? ?? ???????? ???? ??? ????? ?????? ??????? ??? ????????

?? ??????? ?? ??? ?? ???? ?????? ??????? ???? ??? ?? ????? ?? ???? ???? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ???? ???????
????? ???? ????? ???? ?? ????? ??? ???? ?? ?? ??? ????? ?? (?????? ??????? ?????? ?? ?????) = ??? ???? ?????
????? ?? ??????? ??? ??????? ?? ??? ????? ???? ???? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ????? ???????? ??? ?? ???????? ??
??????? ??? ???? ?????? ???? ????? ??????? ??? ???? ???? ?????? ?? ??????? ??????? ????????.
?? ??????? ????????? ?? ????? ??????? ?????? ?? ?? ????? ?????? ?? ??????? ??????? ??? ???? ????? ?? ?????
????? ??????? ?? ??? ????? . . ??????? ???? ?? ???? ?? ???? ?? ???????? ?????? ????????? ???????? ?????? ??
????? ??????: "?????? ????????? ??? ??? ????? ?? ???? ????? ?? ????" . . ?????? ????: ??? ?? ?????? ??? ?????
???? ??? ?? ????????
l'esprit
?????? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????????? ????? ??? ???????? (?? ????? ????????) ?? ????? ??????? ????
??????? ???? ?? ?????????.
??? ?????? ?? ????? ?????? ???? ????? ???????? ??? ????? ????? . .
mind
?? ????????
?????? ????? ???? ?????? ????? ?? ??????? ???????? ?? ???? ??? ??????????.

???? ??????? ?????? ??????? ?? ????? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ??????? ???????? ???? ??????? ??????? ?? ????
????? ??????? ??? ????? ?? ?? ????? ??????? ?????? ???????? ????? ??????? ??? ?? ???? ??????? ????? ????!

???????? ?????????? ?? ??????? ????????? 3 ????? ??????? ?? ??? ? we
??? ?? ??? ???? ??? . . ???? ?? ??? ???? ???? ??? . . ???? ?? ??? ???? ??? ????? ????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ??
??? ??? ??????? ??? ???? ???????? ???????.
?? ????? ??????? ???? ???? ???? ????? ??????? ?? ???? ???????? ??? ???? ??????? ??????????? ??? ?????
????? ?????? ??????? ??? ???? ????? ??? ????? ??? ???????? ??? ?????? ???????? ????? ??????? ?????? ????
??????? ???? ????? ?????? ???????? ??? ??????.

?? ????? ????????? ???? "???" ????? ????? ????? ?????? ??? ????? ????????? ????? ?? ????????? ???? ???
????? ?????? ??????? ????? ???? ?????? ?????????? ?????? ?? ????? ????????? ??????? ??????? . . ?????
??????? ??????? ?? ????? ????? ??????? ?? ?????? ????? ????? ????? ???? ?????? ?? ???????!

*

?? ????? ?? ????? ??????? ???? ??? ???!

?? ???? ?????? ?? ????? ??? 19 ???? ?? ????? ????? ????? ????? ?? ???? ??????? ????????? ???????! . . ???
?????? ???? ?? ?? ??????? ??????? ????? ????? ????? ???????? ?? ?? ???? ???????? ??????!!
??????? ??? ?? -?????? ?????? ???- ???????? ???????? ??????? "????? ?? ??????? ?????? ??????????" . .
???????? ??? ?? ?????? ??? ???? ??? ??? ?? ??? ??????? ??????? ????????? ???? ???? ?? ????? ????? ?? ???
???? ???? ???? ??? . .

???????? ?????? ???? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ??? ????? ????? ?? ???? ??????? ???? ???? ?? ???? ???? :

- ??????? ??? ??????? ??? ?????? ????? ????? ???? ???????? ???????? ??????? ????? ????? ???? ???????
????? ??????? ???? ?????? ? ?????? ??? ????? ?????? ???????? ???????? ??? ???? ??????? ioeis ???? ???
????? ???? -????? ????????? ????? ?????????- ??? ??? ????? ??????? ?? ????? ????? ???? ??????!
- ???? ?????? ?? ????? ????????? ??????? ???? ??????? ???????? ??????? ???? ????? . . ????? ??????!
????????? ???? ?????? ??????? ?? ????? ?????.
- ???? ??????? ??????? ??????? ???? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ??? ????? ?? ??? ?????? ????????? ?? ?? ???? ????????
??? ??? ?????? ?? ???? ???? ?? ?? ??????? ??????? ????? ??????? ??? ???? ???? ??? ???? ?? ?????.
- ??????? ?????? ??????? ??? ????????? ??? ???? ????? ????? ???? . . ????? ??????? ??? ??? ????? ??? ??????
??? ?? ????? ???????.

???? ???????? ??? ?????? ?? ???? ???? ??????? ?????? ???????? ????? ?? ??????? ???? ????? ???????? ??????
?????? ?????? ?? ??????? ???? ???? ??????? ???? . . ???? ???????? ?????? ??????? ???????? ??????? ???
????? ?? ?????? ????? ????? ???? ??? ??????? ??????? ???????!

?? 1867 ??????? ????? ???? ?????? ?? "????? ??????? ??? ?????? ???????? ??????"? ???? ???????? ?????
????? ??? ???? ?? ?????? ??????? ??? ?????? ???????? . . ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ???? ???? ?????? ?????
?????? ??????? ??????? ??? ???? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ?????!? ??????? ??????? ?????? ????? ????? ?? ????
"????" . . ???? ??????? ?????? ????? ????? ?????? ????? ??? ?????? ????? ?????. ???? ????? ????? ???? ?????
??????!

????? ????????? ?? ?????? ??????? ????? ??????? ???? ????? ?????? ????? ????? ??????? ???????? ??? ??????
???????? ??????? ?? ?????? ??????? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????????! . . ??????? ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ?? ???
?????? ?????.

??? ????? ?????? ????? ?? ??????? ??? ?? ?????? ???? ????? ????? ?? ?? ???? ????? ??? ?????? ????? ?? ????
????

?? 1875 ??? ????? ??????? ??????? ???? ?? ???????? ?????? ???? ???????? ????? ?????? ??????? ?? ????? ??
??????? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ??????? ?????? ?????? ???? ???? ???? ???????? ?????? ???? ??????? ????
????? ?????? ?? ?????? ???????? ???????? ??? 266 ???? ????? ??? ???????? ??? 13 ???? ???? ???? ???????
????? ???? ????? ????.
???? ???? ???? ????? ??? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ??????? ?? ???? ?????? ??????? ??????? ????? ???? ???????
????? ???? ??? ????? ???? ???????? ?????? ?? ??????? ??????? ???? ???? ???????? ?????? ????? ??????
??????? ??????? ???? ????? ?????? ???? ??????? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ?????? ????? ???? ????
?? ????? ?? ????? ?????????.
???? ??? ???? ???? ???? ?????? ??????? ??????? ??????? ??????? ??? ?? ???? ????? ??? ????? ?? ?? ??????
???? ?????? ????? ??????? ??? ??? ??????? ?? ??? ?????.

???????? ?????? ?????? ???????? ??? ???? ???????? ??? ???????? ????? 19 . . ??? ?? ???????? ????????
??????? ??? ?????? ??????? ???? ???? 800 ??? ?? 18 ??? ??? ???? ?? ??? ????? ??????.
???? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ??????? ??? ?????? ?? ???? ?????? ??????? ???? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ???? ?????
?? ??????? ???? ???????!

?? ????? ?? ?????? ??????

?? ????? ?????? ?????? ???? ???? ??? ?? ???? ???? ????? ???????? ??????? ?? ???? ?? ??????? ???????????
??????? ??? ???? ????? (????) . . ?? ???? ????? ??????? ?? ?? ????? ?????? ?? ?????? ???????!
???? ???? ??? ?????? ???????? ?? ???? ???? ??????? . . ?? 1878 ????? ??????? ????? ????? ????? ??????? 62
??? ??? ?????? ???????????? ???? ??????? ?????? ???? ??????? ??? 30 ??? ?? ??????? ??????? ???????
???????? ?? ???????? ??? ??????? ??????? ???????? ??? ??? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ???? ????? ??? ???? ????
?????? ?? ???? ??? ?????? ???????? ???? ??? ???? ??? ???? ?????? ??? ?? ??? ????? ???????? ?? ???? ?????
?????? ???? ?????? . . ????? ?? ???? ????? ???? ????????? ??? ??????? ??????? . . ????????? ?? ???????
??????? ???? ???? ????? ??? ??????? ?? ???? ?????? ??????? ????? ??????? ????????? ?????? ??????? ???
????? ???.

???????? ???? ????? ?? ???? ??????? ?? ????? ??????? ??????? ?? ????? ??????? ???????? ??? ???? ??????? ??
???? ?? ???? ????? ???? ?? ????? ?????? ???????? ???? "????" ??????? ?? ??????? ?????? ???????!

???? ???? ????? ?? ???? ???? ??? ????? ?????? ?????? ??????? ?????? ????? ?????? ??????? ??? ??????? ??
1898 ??? ?????? ???? ?? ????? ?????????????? ?????? ???????? ?????? ????? ????? ??????? ??? ????????
?????? ???????? ?????? ??? ????? ????? ????? ??? ?????? ??????? ?????? ???????? . . ????? ????? ??????
?????? ???????? ????? ????? ??? ?????? ???????? ???? ??? ?? ?? ??? ??????? ???? ????? ???? ????? ????? ???
????? ????? ????? ?????? ?????? ???? ??????? ??? ???? ?? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ??????? ??? ??????? = ?????
??????? ??? ??????? ??? ????? ?????? . . ???? ??????? ???? ????? ?????? ??????? ??????? (?????? = ???????
????? ?? ??????? ?????? = ?????????? ?????? = ????????? ???? ????).
???? ??????? ?? ??????? ???? ????? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ???? ????? ???? ?????? ????? ???????? ????
????? ?????? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ???????? ??????? ???? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????? ???? ??????? ???? ?????
????? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? ??????? ??? ??????? ???????? ???????? ???? ??????? ???? ?? ????? ???????!!
?? ???????? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ?? ???????? ?? ??????? ???? ??? ?????? ????????? ?????? ???????
??? ??????? ????? ??? ????? ???? ?? ??????? ?????.

????? ????? ????? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ??????? ??? ????? ???????? ?? ???????? ?? ???? ?? ????? ???? ??? ???
??????? ???????? ?? ????? ???????? ??????? ???? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ????? ????? ?? ??????? ??? ??????
??????? ?????? ????? ??????? ????? ??? ????? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ????? ?????? ?????? ??? ??
????? ??????? ????? ??????? ?? ??? ????.

???? ?? ?? ??? ?? ?????? ??? ???? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ???????? ???????? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?? ????????
???????? ?? ?????? ???????? ???????? ???????? ?????? ??????? ???? ??????? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ?? ???
????? ??????? ??? ?? ??? ????? ???? ????? 21 ???????? ?????? ???? ??????? ???? ??? ??? ??? ????? ????? ??
??????? ???????? ????? ???? ???? ?????? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ??? ?? ???? ??? ?????? ?? ???????
??????? ?????? ???????? ?????? ???? ?????? ???????? ???????? ???????? ??? ???? ??? ???? ???????? ??
??????? ?? ?????? ??? ????? ??????? ???.

???????:
?? ??????? ?????? ?? ??? ???????? ????????? ??????????? ??? ??? ????? ?????? ???????? ???????? ????????
?????? ??? ????? ????? ????????? ?? ????????? ?? ???? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ???? ????? ????????.

?? ??????? ??? ??? ?? ??? ???? ?????...

*

?????? ?????? ??????!

?? ????? ?????? ???????? ?? ????? ????? ??? ????????!

????????? ?? (?? - ??) ???? ???? ????? ????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ??????? ??? ??? ?? ????? ??????!

???????? ???????? :
?? ???????? ??????? ???? ????? ??? ????? ???? ???? ?? ???? (?? ??? ??????? ?? ???????) ???? ?? ?? ??????
????? ??????? ????? ?????? ????? ??? ?????? ???? ????? ??? ?? ??? ?????? = ??? ??????? ???? ????? ?????
???? ???????? ?????? ?????????? (???????????) ???? ???? ??? ?????? = (??????? ??????- ?????? - ??????? -
?????? - ?????????...)? ????? ???? ?? ???? ?? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ?????????? ??????????? ?????? . .
????? ???? ????? ???? ?????? ??????????? ????

???? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ???? ???? ????? ???? ?????? ?????? ? ???? ?? ?????? ????? ?? ?? ????? ?????? ??? ?????
??? ???? ????? ????? ???? ?? ??? ????????? ?????????? ?? (???? ??????) ??? ??????? ??? ????? ???? ????? ???
????? ???? ?????? ????? ??????? ?? ?? ??????? ??? ???? ?????? ?? ??????? ????? ?????? ????? ????????? ????
???? ???? ??????? ???? ????? ????? ???? ??????.
??????? ?? ?????? ?????? ????? ??? ??? ????????? ?? ?????? ???????? ?? ????????!

?? ??? 1915 ????? ????? ???? ????? ?? ????? ???? ?? 15 ??? ???? ??????? ???? ??????? ??? ???? ?????
??????!
??? ?? ?????? ??? ????? = ???? ????????? ?? ??????? ?????? ??? ??????? ????????? ??????? ?????? ?????????
??????? ????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ??? ???? ?????????? ????????? ???????? ?? ????? ???? ???? ?????
??????? ??????? ??????? ????? ???????? ?????.
?? ????????? ??? ???? ????? ???? ?????? ?????? ????? ???? ??? ????? ?????????? ???????? ??? ?? ??????
????????? ???????????
??? ????????? ?????????? ???? ????? ??????? ???? ?????? ?? ??????? = ??????? ?? ????????? ???? ????? ??
????????? ????? ?????? ?? ???????? ???? ????????? ???? ???? ?????? ?????? ??? ??????? ?????? ??????
??????...

??? ?????? ????? ?????? ??? ???? ?????? ?? ??????? ???? ?? ?????? ??????? ???? ?????? ??????? ?? ?? ??
???? ?? ????? - ????? ?? ??????

??????? ?? ??????? ??????? ?? ????????? ?????? ?? ????????? ???? ????? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ?????? ???
???????? ??????? ??????? ??????? ?? ????????? ?????? ?? ????????? ???? ????? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ??????
??? ???????.

?????? ?????? ?? ????????? ?? ?? ???? ?????? ????? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ??????? . . ???? ??? ???? ???????!
?? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ???? ?? ????? ???? ?????? ??????? "el- der".

??? ??????? ?? ??? ????? ????????? ???????? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ???? ????? ???????:

???? ????????? ?????? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ??? ??????? ?????????? ?????????? ???? ?????? ??????????
?????? ?? ??????? ?????????? ???? ?????? ???? ????? ??????? ?? ????????? ??? ???????? ??????? ?????
??????? ????? ??????? ?????? ??? ??????? ???????? ?? ?????? ???????? ????? ?????? ????? ????? ?????

?????? ??????? ???????? ?????? ????? ????? ?????? ????? ??????!

???????? ?????? ??? ??? ???????? ????? ????? ???? ???? ?????? ??? ??? ??????? ????? ?? ??????? ?????? ???? ??????? ????? ????? ???????? ??? ???? = ??? ?????? ????????? ??????? ????? ???? ??????? ??????? ?? ????? ?????? ???? ??????? ??????? . .
??????? ??????? ????? ??????? ????? ?? ????? ?????? ?????? ??? ??? ??????? ????? ???? ?? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ?? ????? ?? ????????? ??????? ??????? ???? ???? ?????? ????? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ????? ????????? ????????!

??????? ????? ????? ????? ???? ??????? ???? ????? ?? ??? ??????? ??????? ??? ????????? ???? ???? ????? ????? ?????? ??????? ????? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ?? ????? . . ?????? ??? ??????? ???? (o) ???? ???? ??? ?????? ?????? ????? ????? ???? (A) ???? ???? ??? ?????? . . ????? ??????? ??? ???????? ????? ????? ????? ?? ???? ???? ????? ???? ?????? ???? ??????? ???! . . ????? ??????? ?? ????????? ????? ??????? ???? ?????? ??? ??????? ???????? ???? (o) ????? ?????? ??? ??????? ???????? ???? (A) ??? ????? ?? ??? ????? ????????? ?????? ??????? ????? ????????? ?????? ??????? ???? ????? ?????? ?? ??????? ?????? ????? ????? ??? ????????? ???????? ?????? ??? ?? ??? ???????.
???? ????????? ?????? ???? ?????? ???? ????? ??????? ?????? ?? ??????? ?????????? ?????????? ???? ??????? ?? ???? ????? ?????? ????? ????? ?? 24 ???? ???? ???? ??? ??? ??? ???? ???? ????? ????? ??????? ?? ??????? = ??????? ?? ????????? ?????? ???? ???? ??????? ???? ??????? ???? ???? ?????? ?? ??? ????? ???? ??????? ?????? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ??????? (?? ?????) ????? ????? ???? ?? ?????? ???? ?????? . . ????? ??? ???? ???? ??? ??????? -??????- ???? ????? ????? ??? ???????.

??????? ??????? ????? ??? ?? ??? ???? ???? ?? ?????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ??????? ??????? ???????? ?????? ??????? ?? ??????? (?? ???) ??????? ?????? ????? ?????? ????? ???? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ????? ????? ?? ???????? ???? ?????? ???? ????? ???????? ???????? ????? ?????? ??? ???? ??? ????? ??????? ??? ?????? ?? ???????? ????? ???????? ????? ?? ?????? ????? ??? ?????? ????? ????? ?? ??? ?? ????!!
?? ?????? ??????????? ????? ????? ??? ?? ???? ???? ????? ?? ????? ???? ????? ?????? ??????? ??? ??? ???? ???? ?????!

?? ??????? ?????? ?????? ??? ???? ????? ??????? . . ??????? ???????? ????? ???? ?? ???? ????? ?? ????? ?????????? ???? ?????? ?? ????? (????? ?????) ??????? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ?????? ???? ?? ???? ???? ????? ?? (???? ????? ??????? ???????)??????? ???????? (????? ???????) ?? ??? ????? ?? ?? ??? (??????) ?? ??????? ????? ???? ???????? ????? ???? ?????????? ????? ?????? ??? ??? ???? ?? ??????? ??? ??? ??????? ???????!

*
?????

????? ?????? ????? ?????-???? ??????? ??)????? ?????(? ?? ???? ?????? ????????? ?????? ?? ????? ?????? ?? ???? ???? ???? ?? ??? ????? ?? ????? ?? ???? ????? ?? (???? ????(????? ????? ???? ??? ????? ????? -?? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ???? ????? ???????- ??? (???? ?????) ? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ??? ????? ??? ??????? ???? ?? ?????? ?? ???? ?????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ???? ??? ??? ????? ????? ???????? ???? ?????!!
???? ?????? ?? ??????? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ??????? ??? ????? ????? ??????? ????? ?????? ????????? ???????? ???? ?? ??????? ????? ??????? ?????? ?? ????? ??????? ?? ?? ????? ???? . . ???? ?????? ?????-???? ??? ????? ???? ??????? ??????? ?? 1983 ??? ?? ???? ?? 600 ???? ????????? ??????? ???????? ?? ??? ??????. ??? ?????? ??? ????? ????? ????-???????? ??? ????? ????? ??? ????? ??? ??? ????? ????? ??????? ??? ???? ??? ????? ??? ??????? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ????? ??? ??????? ?? ????? ??????? ???? ?????? ??????? ?????? ?? ??????? ?? ????? ??????????? ?? ???? ??? ??????? ??? ??????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ?????? ??? ???????? ????? ??????? ??? ??????? ???? ?? ????? ?????? ??? 3 ????? ?????? (??? ?? ??? - ???? ?? ??? ?????? ??? - ??

?????? ??? ?????) ???? ?????? ??? ??????? ?? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ???? ??????? ?? ????? ?? ???? ?? ????.
???????? ??????? ????? ???? ????? ????? ??? ????? ??? ????? ????? ??? ???????? ???? ?????? ???????
??????? ?????? ????? ?????? ?? ??????? ????.
??? ?????? ????? ??????? ?????????? ????????? ??? ??????? egocentic ???? ?? ??????? ???? (???? ???? ????
????) ????? ???? ???? ????? ???? ????? ??????? ?????? ????? ????? ?????? ??? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?????
????? ????? ?? ?? ???? ????? ?????? -???? ??????- ????????? ???? ????? ???? ???? ?????? ???? ????????
?????? ??? (?????? ???????) ?? (?????? ???????) . . ???? ????????? ??????? ????? ????? ????? ?? ???? ?????
????? ???????!! . .
??????? ?????? ?????? ???? ??????? ?????? ?? ??????? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ??
- ????? ??????
- ?????????? ?? ?????
- ??????? ??????
??????? ????? ?? ????? ??? ?????? ???????? ??????? ???? ???? ???? ??? ???? ???? ?? ????? ???? ???? ???
???? ?? ???? ?? ??????? ???????? ???? ???? ??? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ????? ?????? ????? ????? ??? ???????
?????? ?? ??? ??? ???? ???? ????? ??? . . ???? ???? ??????? ???? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ???? ?????? ????? ???
??????? ???????? ???? ??? ?? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ???????? ?????? ??????? ??? ????????
??????? ??? ?? ?????????.

Marawan Awad says

????? ?? ???? ??? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ???????? ? ????? ???????? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ??????? ???????? ????
?? ???? ? ?? ???? ?? ???!

??? ???? ??? ???? ???? ????? ?? 2015?!
?? ??? 45 ???? ...

- ????? ?? ??? ?????? ? ???? ?????? "?? ???? ????? ?????" ??? ??? ?? ????? ???? ???? ???? ??????? ?? ??? ???
?????? ?????? ...

??? ?????? ????? ??? ?? ?? ??????? ??????? ? ???????? ? ??????????? ?? ????? ?????? ???????? ?? ?????? ??
????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ??????? ?
?? ?????? ???? ???? ????? ?? ???????? ? ?? ??????? ????? ?? ???? ?????? (????? ?? ????? ??????? ? ??????? ?
???????) ???

?????? ?????? ???? ???????? ?????? ??? ?????? ???? ????? ???? ???? ??? ?????? ?????? :
1- ???????? ?? ??? ????????? ? ??? ??????? ?????
2- ???????? (??????? ??????? ? ???????) ??? ??? ? ????
3- ????? ???????

?????? ??? ???? ???? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ????? ????? ?? ???? ????? ?????? ? ?? ???? ????? ????? ??????
??? ?????? ...
???? ???? ?? ???? ?? ??????? ??? ?????? ? ?????? .... ?? ???? ???? ?????? ??? ????? ????? ? ???? ????? ???
????? ?? ??????? ?? ????? ??? ????? ????? ?? ???? ??? ??????? ??? ??????? ??????? ? ?????? ? ??????? ?

???? ???? ?? ???? ?????? ? ?????? ? ?????? ? ?????! ? ???? ?? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ? ?????? ? ????? ? ????? ....
? ????? ???? .... ???? ??? ???? ?????? ? ????? ????? ???? ???????? ? ????? ????? ? ?? ?????? ????? ????
???????? ????? ???? .... ??? ???? ??? ????? ? ????? ?? ?? ?????? ????? !

????? ???? ???? ??????? ?? ??? ???? "???" ????? ?????? ??? ??? ? ???? (??? ?????) ????? ????? ???? ??????? ????? ????? ??? ???? ? ???? ? ??? !
? ????? ???? ?? ??? ??? ??? ??????? ???? (????) .... ?? ??? ???? ??? ??? ????? ??????? ? ??????? ???? !

???? ??? ?????? ???? ??? ?????? ....

Salma says

???? ?? ??????? ??? ????? ? ????? ?? ????? ???????... ? ?? ???? ?? ????... ???? ??????? ?? ????? ????? ?????? ????? ?????? ?? ????? ??????? ???? ???????? ?? ?????? ?? ???? ????? ?????????... ??? ???? ??? ?? ???? ??? ???? ????? ? ??????? ?? ??????? ??????? ???????? ???????? ? ???????? ?? ????? ????? ??????? ????? ?????? ???? ??? ?????? (??? ????? ?????? ???? ???? ?????? ?????? ????? ?????) ???? ??? ???? ????? ????? ???? ???????... ???? ???? ???? ??? ????? ?????? ? ????? ? ???????... ???? ???? ????? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ? ?????? ? ?????? ?????? ????? ?? ??????... ? ???? ???? ????? ?? ???? ?? ????... ??????? ???? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?? ???? ?? ???????? ????? ? ???? ????? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ???????? ?? ?? ??? ???? ???? ??????? ????! ? ??? ????? ?? ???????? ???? ?? ????? ?????????? ????? ?????? ?? ???? ??????? ?? ??????? ?????? ????????? ???????? ??????? ?? ??? ? ???? ? ???? ? ???? ???? ?? ?????? ?????? ???????? ? ?????? ? ????? ? ??????! ? ??? ????? ???????? ?? ???????? ???? ???? ????? ??????? ????? ?? ??????? ?? ???? ????? ?? ??? ???????? ??? ???? ??????? ?? ??????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ???? ????? ??? ??? ??????? ???????? ?? ????????? ?? ??????? ?? ?????? ? ????? ??? ????? ?? ????? ????????! ? ????? ???? ?????...?
?????? ?????? ??? ??????? ?? ?????? ???? ????? ?? ??????? ?? ???????? ?? ????? ????? ?? ???? ???? ??????? ??? ????? ????? ????? ?? ????? ???? ????? ??? ???????? ? ???? ??? ??? ??? ?????? ???? ?? ???????? ???????? ???????? ???? ???? ??????? "??? ?????"? ?? ??? ???? ??? ???? ?? ????? ??? ???????? ??????? ??????? ???????... ? ??? ?? ???? ????? ??? ??? ???? ???? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ????? ?????? ??????? ?????? ??? ??? ??????? ????? ?? ?????...?
?? ???? ?? ?????? ????? ????? ?? ?????? ?????: "?????????? ???????? ? ?? ????? ????? ?? ????? ????? ? ?? ???????? ?????? ?????? ? ?????? ??? ???????? ???????? ? ?????? ??????? ???? ??? ?? ???? ?? ??????? ??????? ????? ?????."?256
???? ???? ?? ?????? ??? ??? ????...?

? ??? ????? ?? ??????? ?? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ?? ????? ?? ?? ?? ??? ?? ????? ?? ??????? ? ??? ???? ?????? ?? ?????? ????? ?? ?? ?????? ????? ?????? ??????? ?? ???? ????????? ??? ???????? ?? ???? ????? ??? ????????? ??? ??? ??????? ?? ?????????... ???? ????? ??? ?? ??????? "?????? ?????? ????"? ??? ?????????? ??? ?????? ???????? ?? ??? ??? ?????? ?? ??????? ??? ??????? ????? ????... ???? ??????? ???? ??? ??????? ??? ??????? ???? ?? ??? ?????? ????? ??... ?? ??? ??? ????? ?????????? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ???? ?? ????? ????? ??? ????? ???? ???? ?????? ?? ??? ??... ?? ??? ?????? ???? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ???? ????????... ??? ??? ?? ???? ?? ?????? ?????? ????? ?? ??????? ?? ??? ??????? ? ????? ??? ?? ?????? ???? ?? ?????? ??????... ? ???? ??? ????? ???? ?????? ????? ?? ??????? ??? ???? ?????? ??? ?????? ?? ????? ?? ?? ??? ????? ???? "?????? ?????"? ? ???? ?? ??? ????? ???? ?????? ??? ???? ????? ????? ???? ????? ??? ??? ??? ?????... ??? ??? ???? ??? ??????? ?? ????????? ???????? ?????? ???? ? ???? ??? ??????? ??????? ?????...?
"?? ??? ????? ?????? ???????? ?? ??? ???????? ????? ???????? ???? ??? ???? ?? ????? ?? ??? ????????? ?? ???? ?? ???? ????? ????????? ???? ???? ?? ??? ??? ???????? ???????. ????? ???? ??? ?? ??? ???????? ???????? ????? ????? ?? ?????? ???? ????? ??? ?? ??????? ?????? ?????? ????? ?????? ? ???????? ??? ????? ????? ????? ???? ?? ??????? ? ??????? ?? ??????? ?????? ?? ??? ???????? ???????" ?173

?????? ??? ?????? ?? ??????? ????? ?? ????: ?

??? ???? ????? ?? ???? ?????? {? ?? ????? ?????? ??????? ? ??????? ?? ?? ??? ????? ????????}? ? ??????? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ????? ?? ????? ?? ?????? ????? ?? ????? ?????????... ??? ??? ???? ?????? ????? ???? ?????? ????? ??? ????? ?? ????? ?? ???? ?? ??? ??? ?????????? ? ??????? ?????? ??? ??? ????? ?????? ?????? ? ????? ????? ???? ???? ?? ???? ???????? ?? ??? ??????? ???? ????? ???? ???????? ?? ??????? ??? ??????... ?
:(
-
??? ?? ???????? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ??? ??????? ???????? ??? ????? ?????? ???? ???? ???????? ???? ?? ??? ????? ??? ???? ??? ??? ?????? ??? ??????? ????? ?????? ?? ?????? ??????? ?? ??? ?????? ???????? ?????? ????? ????? ??????? ???... ???? ?????... ??? ??? ?????? ?? ???? ???? ?????? ??? ????? ??????? ?? ????? ???? ??????? ???????? ?? ?????? ? ???? ??????? ??????? ? ???? ?? ??? ???????? ??????? ??????? ? ???? ??? ???? ??? ?? ??? ??????? ?????? **"??? ?? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ?? ????? ???????? ???? ????? ??????? ??????? ?? ??????? ???????? [...] ???? ????? ????? ???? ???? ??? ?????? ????? ?? ?????? ????? ??? ??????? ? ??????? ? ????? ???????? ?? ?? ???????? ??????? ??? ?? ?????????. ? ?? ????? ?????? ???????? ?? ??? ????? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ????????? ?? ?? ???? ???????"** **?257**
??? ??????? ? ????? ?? ?? ???? ??????? ??????? ????... ?
-
? ??? ?????? ????? ???? ??? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ??? ?????? ??? ??????? ?? ?? ???????? ?????? ???? ???? ??? ??? ???? ??????? ?? ??? ?? ???????? ?? ???????? ???... ?????? ????? ? ??????... ???? ????? ??? ??????? ?? ???? ?????? ? ???????? ????? ??????? ??? ??? ?????? ? ??? ?? ???? ?? ?????? ???? ?????... ???? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ??????? ? ?????? ? ?????? ??????? ?? ???? ????? ???? ? ??? ????? ????? ??? ????? ?????? ? ?? ????? ???????? ???????? ??????????? ???????? ???? ???? ?? ????? ?????? ???... ?? ???? ????? ??????? ????? ??? ??????? ?? ?? ?????? ??? ??????? ?? ???? ???????? ??? ?? ??? ??????? ? ??? ???????? ?????? ???????? ??????? ? ???????... ? ?? ???? ?????? ? ????? ?? ?? ???? ? ???? ???????... ????? ???? ??? ????? ?? ???????? ??? ?? ???? ?????? ???... ? ?? ????? ?????? ?? ??????... ???? ??? ?? ????? ??????? ???? ?????? ? ???? ????????? ??????? ? ????? ?????????? ??? ???? ??????? ??????... ? ???? ????? ???????... ? ???? ?????? ?????? ???? ???? ???? ??????? ??? ? ??????? ? ???? ???????? ?? ??? ??????? ?????? ??????? ??? ?? ?? ?????? ???? ?? ??? ????? ??????... ??? ?? ?????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ??? ?? ????? ?? ??? ???? ?? ??? ???? ???? ??? ????????? ? ??? ??? ?????? ???? ????? ????? ???? ????????...?

?? ???? ???? ???? ?????? ????????... ? ??? ??? ??? ????? {???? ???? ???? ????} ? ??????? ?? ???????... ????? ?? ???? ???? ????? ?????? ?? ???? ?? ????? ? ????? ????????... ? ???? ??? ????? ??? ??? ?????? ? ???? ?? ????? ???????? ? ??????? ???? ??? ?????????? ? ???????? ???????? ??? ????? ?? ??????... ? ??? ??? ???? ?? ?? ??????? ?? ??????? ???? ????? ??? ?? ????? ?? ?? ????? ?? ???? ???? ? ?? ?? ????? ????? ???? ????? ?? ??????? ??????? ??? ????? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ?? ?? ?????? ??????? ?????? ??? ??????? ? ?????? ??????... ? ??? ??? ????? ??? ????? ??? ??????? ??????? ??????? ?? ????? ?? ??? ??????? ???????? ?? ??????? ????? ????? ??? ???? ????? ? ?? ??? ??? ????? ????? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ???...?

???? ?? ???? ???? ? ????? ???? ?? ?? ??? ????... ? ????? ?? ???? ???? ???? ??? ??? ???????...?

????
17 ????
2016

Lena Tumasyan says

As a native Russian speaker, I always felt different from Americans. I've always wondered if the language i was brought up with altered my thinking in ways Americans weren't. I was hoping to get the answer in this book and I was really disappointed.

The book started out strong, showing how 3 different languages defined "culture" in different ways (French being most romantic and German being most brutal). But then once I started reading the book, it never really delved deeply into the subject of how language affects thought or behavior. The intro and reviews (it was recommended on New York Times) made it sound like a book about language affecting thought. IT wasn't.

I liked Deutchers' writing style. He was easy to read and funny. I liked his use of many examples, and then defining the examples to make it REALLY easy to understand. However, he NEVER really defined how A Language makes ONE society's thought be different from another's. He talked a little bit how a language FORCES one to pay attention and speak in a specific way. I really loved his example of how some cultures only have N S E W directions instead of front, back, left right. I understand what he said. I liked his analysis on "how can all language be equally complex? they cant." But i wish there were more examples like that.

More than half of the book (waaay too much) was devoted to how different societies define colors. For example, how many cultures only have one word for green and blue. Maybe it's just that many studies haven't been done on language and culture. I don't know. Then he devoted a TINY section of the book to sex of objects, but not enough.

This book should have been titled "Culture and Color." I would have been less let down if he JUST focused on color (he did so for more than half the book) and talk about other stuff (sex of objects, directions) in another book. "Through the Language Glass" was interesting, and well researched, but not what the book intro claimed to be about.

Jade says

I suppose I hold linguists to a higher standard than civilians regarding their word choice and articulation of ideas. After all, if there's one category of people who should know about the power of words, it's this one. Which is why I'm so disappointed by this book.

The book is called *Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*. When you're done with it, you would expect to know why, according to the author, the world... looks different... in other languages. And while one or two chapters towards the end of the book attempt to tackle this question, they only offer evidence relating to a few areas, namely colour, gender and geographical orientation. Things that aren't exactly secrets, that most people who have heard about languages will already know vary from one to another.

The bulk of the book is mainly concerned in history and anecdotes. The history of the study of colour perception takes up most of the first half of the book. While interesting in itself, it has little to do with language and with the purported thesis of the book. Reading digression after digression gets infuriating. I'm tempted to say this book needs an editor, but if it *was* properly edited, it would be reduced by eighty percent, so...

Of course most people must have enjoyed Deutscher's rambles. The reason I didn't, apart from the fact that, well, he doesn't stick to his thesis, is that I hated his narrative voice. To me, the idea that you can write a

book about languages, including endangered aboriginal languages, without once using the words "racism," "colonialism" or "imperialism" -- or mentioning these ideas -- is simply outlandish. See for instance page 193: "Together with Guugu Yimithirr, hundreds of other 'tropical languages' are going to the wall, dispersed by the onward march of civilisation." I'd call what's happening to aboriginal languages in Australia a lot of things, but "dispersed by the onward march of civilisation" isn't one of them.

Deutscher's unwillingness to address the reason why most linguists nowadays are adamant that all languages are equally complex does him a disservice too. No one is pretending that all languages have clause subordination. No one is pretending that language complexity is measurable at all. What people are saying is that all languages allow people to express the same complex ideas -- a kind of refutation of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, if you will. Which is Deutscher's thesis, too, so why not come out and say that Sapir-Whorf relies on racism and imperialism, and that the idea that all languages are equally complex is an attempt to push back against that?

But then again, the fact that Deutscher chooses to use such words as "savage" and "primitive" to describe certain societies or languages kind of provides the answer to that. He is a linguist. He knows that words are not contained by their etymologies, and he knows how those words have been used, and in whose mouths. Yet not only does he use them, he never justifies his use of them.

All in all, the best bits in this book are the ones about the study of colour perception. I wish Deutscher had written a book about that instead. The bits that are actually about what the book says it's about aren't that juicy, and if you're interested in languages you've probably heard about them already. (Many languages have genders! It doesn't mean that French speakers think knives are men and forks are women!) This book could also have benefited from a rudimentary knowledge of translation studies. It's one thing to speak several languages, but another completely to be able to translate to and from them -- otherwise all bilinguals would be translators. Authors such as Meschonnic or Berman have already thought, a *lot*, about most of the implicit questions in this book. It's a shame that while most translators and translation theorists know quite a lot about linguistics, most linguists know virtually nothing about translation theory.

Jan Rice says

--from the BrainyQuote Facebook page

Nature or nurture?

In the mid-19th century, William Gladstone, eminent British statesman and, in view of how we think of politicians nowadays, improbable source of scientific erudition, noted through his Homeric studies that the ancients didn't see color as we do. Wine-dark sea! And not only that, but violet sea, violet wool on sheep, and violet iron. And green--chlôros--for yes, sprouts--but twigs? Cyclops' club? Honey?

Poetic license, scoffed his naysayers, but the patterns turned out to be too consistent for that. He was on to something. But what? Were the ancients color-blind? Working just before the Darwinian revolution, Gladstone thought--everyone did--that acquired traits were handed down. As in, the giraffe stretches its neck reaching for the choicest foliage, ergo its children have longer necks. Gladstone thought that only over the last millennium had our literal eye for color developed to its lofty modern level.

It seems ancient texts from other cultures likewise vary from the colors we see. The next improbable thinker was philologist Lazarus Geiger, an Orthodox Jew whose 1867 presentation to the Assembly of German Naturalists and Physicians focused on blue and yellow as universally late-developing color concepts and on red as the first (after black and white). He was also the first to discriminate between what we *say* and what we *see*. But influenced by the new Darwinian science, he thought anatomical evolution of the eye accounted for the facts. Although clues to the contrary were cropping up, this savant died mid-career so wasn't around to pursue them.

With emerging anthropological studies, it was only natural for Western European man (that yardstick by which all humanity is to be judged, right?) to be deemed the pinnacle of evolution, while newly discovered and studied "primitive races" had yet to reach our level. Ah, evolution, and, oh, the race science of the late 19th and early 20th century!

With the crashing and burning of the biological approach and the triumph of culture, such interpretations fell from grace. Anything that smacked of the notion that "savages" were inferior to "civilized people" was viewed with distaste and, in fact, forgotten. For example, *"(i)n America, it was now being explicitly proclaimed as a tenet of anthropological science that culture was the only admissible factor in explaining mental differences between ethnic groups"* (p. 81). So, regarding color, the powers-that-were said that how a culture "chose" to speak of color was entirely arbitrary.

But what about the discoveries of a universal order in the emergence of color names? Along came a 1969 rediscovery of what had been forgotten. Once again the pendulum swings and upsets the applecart.

When the dust has settled it seems that cultures *do* have freedom in naming divisions of the color spectrum--within constraints. The anatomy of the eye isn't the issue, but rather the importance of color to us, which accompanies our ability to separate colors from their objects, and that accelerates when we start to use dyes and paints. We find names for what we find it important to talk about. First comes red, the color of blood, and always the first color named. Next, green and yellow--what's fresh? And what's ripe? Blue comes last.

Biology vs. culture.

It always seems that the way *we* do things is only right and "natural." Only by widening our horizons can we glimpse that our habits are just that--habits, not nature; one way but not universal. Color is the first ground the author tills to make us see that. At the end of the book he has included an appendix on color vision. Did you know that only primates developed trichromatic vision?

> "(W)ith only a little exaggeration, one could say our trichromatic color vision is a device invented by certain fruiting trees in order to propagate themselves." In particular, it seems that our trichromatic color vision evolved together with a certain class of tropical trees that bear fruit too large to be taken by birds and that are yellow or orange when ripe. The tree offers a color signal that is visible to the monkey against the masking foliage of the forests, and in return the monkey either spits out the undamaged seed at a distance or defecates it together with fertilizer. In short, monkeys are to colored fruit what bees are to flowers. (p. 247)

That'll put us in our place!

The author's overall thesis is that language does affect how we see the world. In the bad old days of

perceived Western European biological superiority, it was commonly believed that various languages--usually the observer's own--permitted the most sublime expression, where as more limited (read, primitive) languages--those of others--constrained what could be said and, worse, what could be thought. Subsequently it became clear that whatever the idiosyncrasies of particular languages, people could understand and could express various concepts. So, again, it fell out of favor to think that languages affect how their speakers experience the world. The prevalent view these days is that there is no such cultural effect, i.e., no such differences between cultures. The author mines two other areas in addition to color to show that our native tongue does "color" our view of the world: directionality and gender.

Although we know the cardinal directions and can give directions in those terms, we think it only natural that we usually speak with ourselves as the reference point, as when we say "left" and "right," or "in front of" or "behind" me. Well, languages have been discovered in which people don't do that; they think entirely in terms of "east," "west," "north," and "south." Although that seems "unnatural," even impossible to us, they do it with ease. In fact, by practicing it as they learn to speak, they "install" that way of thinking just as readily as we do our way of thinking of directionality. In Daniel Kahneman's terms, it becomes part of their "fast" (intuitive) thinking that they do "naturally" without even having to think about it.

In the above *Family Circus* comic from May 21, 2014, the little girl has caught on to using herself as a reference point but apparently not to our culture's excluding of the cardinal directions.

The other linguistic area into which the author delves is gender. Some languages make us express whether things are "feminine" or "masculine." But *gender* originally meant "type" and not "sex." There are languages in which "gender" depends on animacy (animate vs. inanimate) instead of sex, and there are languages that have more than two genders, for example humans, size, collectives, liquids, etc.!

The upshot of how languages affect our experience is contained in the following:

> SINCE THERE IS NO EVIDENCE that any language forbids its speakers to think anything, we must look in an entirely different direction to discover how our mother tongue really does shape our experience of the world. Some 50 years ago, the renowned linguist Roman Jakobson pointed out a crucial fact about differences between languages in a pithy maxim: “Languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey.” This maxim offers us the key to unlocking the real force of the mother tongue: if different languages influence our minds in different ways, this is not because of what our language allows us to think but rather because of what it habitually obliges us to think about.

The above quotation comes from the author's 2010 article in the *New York Times* Sunday Magazine. Ever since I read that article, I've wanted to read this book. Then, some time ago, I spotted the hardback remaindered in *Daedalus*, and now I'm happy that I have read it!

This author, like the psychologist Daniel Kahneman with whose work I'm enamoured, offers us a chance to get outside our own heads. That's just about the most fantastic thing we can do. I have now (applause, please) had a half-hour (don't laugh) introduction to Kant's thinking. I have a glimmer that Kant was speaking of the a priori structures of our thought, which we cannot get out of and which govern all that we experience. Today's cognitive scientists, analogously, point to what our thinking is evolutionarily programmed with and what gets programmed in so deeply through overlearning and habit that it may as well be innate. And yet,

and yet--sometimes we can get a glimpse over the walls, into what another person sees and thinks!

This author, Guy Deutscher, is somewhat self-deprecating. He is overly modest about what we can learn from psychological experimentation, believing that only when we can watch as our brains work will we really "know." He sometimes does not express the full import of what it means to *see*. Consequently his conclusions can seem underwhelming, as per this *Guardian* article:

> Of these three examples, only the first felt significant. The ability to know which way is north at all times, even in the dark, is an extraordinary skill that has useful applications. The other two examples showed, if anything, that language barely has an effect on perception since the experiments seemed overly contrived and the results slight.

What has happened that the book's significance doesn't come through as it should? Perhaps the meandering of the narrative throws the reader off the track--if the reader doesn't realize the author is like a detective pursuing his leads historically. But I think the main culprit is that the author downplays his findings. Look at all the past figures he enumerates who drew erroneous conclusions! Deutscher especially doesn't want to be like the mid-20th century linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf whose name is mud today. He made a lot of radical and since-disproved claims about what limitations various languages impose on their speakers. So Deutscher says that each alleged impact of language must be individually demonstrated. He discounts the role of inference, and yet I think that in science deduction and induction work together.

Deutscher, being overly hesitant about the implications of his findings, would never have used the picture I have added at the first of this review. He would never say, as Daniel Kahneman does in *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (about the impact of various subliminal experiences on behavior):

> The idea you should focus on, however, is that disbelief is not an option. The results are not made up, nor are they statistical flukes. You have no choice but to accept that the major conclusion of these studies are true. More important, you must accept that they are true about you.... You do not believe that these results apply to you because they correspond to nothing in your subjective experience. But your subjective experience consists largely of the story that your System 2 tells itself about what is going on. Priming phenomena arise in System 1, and you have no conscious access to them.

Ah, well. Deutscher is being modest and observing scientific caution, for which the casual reader may not be prepared, and I think maybe he is underestimating what can be learned from psychological as opposed to neuroanatomical findings. I tend to see his results, though, in the light of many other cognitive findings about the impact of our "programming," so I'm prepared to be more impressed.

One other point: Deutscher's big point is that culture, via language, is impacting us--culture, as opposed to nature. I'm not quite sure the distinction between nature and nurture is as clear as he makes it. Some evolutionary scientists think nowadays that biological evolution and culture interact. It used to be believed we humans haven't biologically evolved in 50,000 years. But many scientists today think evolution is still going on. Some change is mediated through culture, and then some individuals are better able to adapt to that cultural change and get their genes into the next generation. For example, the ability to benefit from dairy

products. Culturally, some northern Europeans found dairy products to be a major food source in areas where the climate limited other food sources. So those who had a mutation that allowed them to digest it survived and out-bred the lactose intolerant. That's my rather simplistic rendition of how nature could interact with nurture, an example Jonathan Haidt uses in *The Righteous Mind*.

·Karen· says

This is what I call Having a Really Good Time. Yes, I know, but then some people go ice-fishing. For fun. So, if (like me) you are a language geek and have a fairly quiet life, then this might be your idea of a high old time too. Because Guy Deutscher manages that most demanding combination. On one hand, he is an academic linguist, which you might assume would mean he uses phrases like pro-drop parameter or boundary conditions or declarative sentences or funny words like morpheme or evidentiality (haha). But on the other hand his writing style is playful, lucid, engaging and irresistibly amusing. Yes, it's true, there is such a thing as an entertaining linguist.

Deutscher takes up the slightly disreputable idea that language may have some influence on our thought patterns. This is the baby that was thrown out with the bathwater when Benjamin Lee Whorf's notion that language determines our picture of reality was rejected as fanciful. Whorf made some rather presumptuous assumptions, claiming that language constrained our minds and prevented us from being able to understand certain concepts. If a language has no future tense, for example, then its speakers would not have any grasp of the notion of future time. Laughable really, but it was a theory that had currency for years. Once that theory had crashed, it became unfashionable to even think about the possibility that thought patterns might be influenced by language, but Deutscher examines how different languages force their speakers to pay attention to certain aspects of reality. One of the most impressive examples is the Australian Aboriginal language Guugu Yimithirr, from north Queensland. Guugu Yimithirr does not use words like “left” or “right,” “in front of” or “behind,” to describe the position of objects. Whenever we would use the egocentric system, the Guugu Yimithirr rely on cardinal directions. If they want you to move over on the car seat to make room, they’ll say “move a bit to the east.” To tell you where exactly they left something in your house, they’ll say, “I left it on the southern edge of the western table.” Or they would warn you to “look out for that big ant just north of your foot.” Even when shown a film on television, they gave descriptions of it based on the orientation of the screen. If the television was facing north, and a man on the screen was approaching, they said that he was “coming northward.” As one might expect, this necessity of specifying geographic directions all of the time means that the speakers of this language (and there are others in the world that are similar) have to develop an unfailing sense of orientation. Which of course they do, being able to 'feel' where north and south, east and west are in the same way as we feel where behind is. Actually, it saves the trouble you get with rotation when you use the egocentric right and left - no more would you need to ask "your left or mine?" East is east.

Deutscher is cautious about leaping to any other conclusion than saying that language can develop a certain habit of mind, and speculating that there *may* be correlated influences on such things as memory or learning. But further than that he will not go, as the evidence is just not available yet, despite some fantastically ingenious testing methods to explore cognitive faculties. I do find that ingenuity amazing, but Deutscher points out in his epilogue that the ingenuity required is a sign of weakness: it is needed because we know so little about how the brain works. "Were we not profoundly ignorant, we would not need to rely on roundabout methods of gleaning information from measures such as reaction speed to various contrived tasks." True enough, I suppose. But I'm impressed none the less.

Madeleine says

I finished this book, like, two weeks ago, right when my job's special breed of life-consuming crazy was bearing down on me with an animalistic rabidity. Let's see what I remembered about it, aside from the fact that it was generously packed with treats that made my inner word-nerd dance oh-so-whitely with joy.

First of all, the author's first language is Yiddish. Seeing as I know far more native-tongue butchers of English than I do folks who can finesse the language like they're trying to get into its pants on the first date, it always disproportionately impresses me when a non-native speaker can so thoroughly rock this notoriously tricky tongue. Every well-executed pun (my ultimate linguistic guilty pleasure, for sure), every beautifully rendered lengthy sentence, every GRE-worthy word did something extra-special to my brain because I just couldn't get over how flawless and stunning Deutscher's English is. There are people who can write literately and there are people who should be getting paid to write because they're so bloody good at it: Betcha can't guess where I think the author fits on that spectrum.

The book begins with a lengthy examination of how color names and thresholds vary across languages. The strangeness of Homer's color vocabulary in "The Odyssey" ("wine-dark sea" being the jumping-off point here), possible biological mutations of the eye over a couple millennia, different cultures' attitudes toward the importance of naming hues, and how red always seems to be the first proper color to be saddled with a name are just a few of the topics explored in the book's first half. Since the influence that language and culture have on each other is apparently a concept in its respectable infancy (being the victim of red herrings, faulty conclusions and plain ol' stereotyping had reduced the line of thinking to rather embarrassing lows), it seems like using color-naming conventions as a primary example was the best way to go; however, had I not come to this book with a background in art and color theory (waning as they may be), I probably would have gone cross-eyed many times before yelling at the book to get to the bloody point already.

In exploring a topic as broad as cultural variations, even confining them to their linguistic mirrors leaves room for numerous forays into surprise discoveries. The failure of translations -- when, for example, one language employs gender nomenclature in ways the other doesn't -- was especially interesting to me. Realizing how a passage can be so packed with implications and inherent musicality in its original tongue but so flat and uninspired in another left me with a whole new respect for the difficulties of translating an entire work, especially once this book offered up snippets indicating that knowing a language is only half of truly understanding its place as a living, malleable part of society.

There were other things that tickled me enough to hastily scribble a few now-nonsensically truncated notes to myself, like how this book didn't focus on just the more popular Germanic and Romance languages, as quite a few tribal tongues received considerable attention. A number of languages seemed to reflect a less-than-modern view of women (I'll be damned if I can think of any examples right now). And it seems as though Latin has been key in uncovering cultural differences, though I could have told you that as a high-school freshman, thanks to my then-textbook's inclusion of "plagosa" (which means "fond of whipping") in its back-of-the-book dictionary.

David says

The first foreign language I learned to complete fluency was German - after five years of high school German I spent a year at a German boys' boarding school. At the end of that year I was completely fluent, but noticed an odd phenomenon, that I felt like a slightly different person when I spoke German than when speaking English. Since then I've also learned Spanish to a high degree of fluency, and the same observation holds. In both cases, the main difference that I perceive has to do with humor, and the way the language I'm speaking affects my sense of humor. So I've always been interested in the extent to which language affects thought. The notion that it does is what linguists refer to as the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis*. Belief in Sapir-Whorf reached its peak in the first half of the 20th century, but since then the notion that language affects cognition has been discredited by almost all mainstream linguists.

In "Through the Language Glass" Guy Deutscher mounts a careful, very limited defence of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. He considers three major areas - the link between language and color perception, how different languages deal with spatial orientation, and the phenomenon of differences in noun genders across different languages. His examination of the link between language and color perception is extensive and thought-provoking - he traces the development of linguistic theory on color perception from British prime minister Gladstone's commentary on the relative paucity of color terms in Homer's work, through the Berlin-Kay model (stating essentially that languages all tend to split up the color spectrum in similar ways) through very recent experiments suggesting that the existence of a particular color distinction in a language (e.g. the existence of separate terms in Russian for light and dark blue) affects the brain's ability to perceive that distinction. Deutscher's account of the evolution of linguistic theory about color perception is a tour de force of scientific writing for a general audience - it is both crystal clear and a pleasure to read.

Two factors contributed to my eventual disappointment with this book. The first is that, even after Deutscher's careful, eloquent, persuasive analysis, one's final reaction has to be a regretful "So what?" In the end, it all seems to amount to little of practical importance.

The second disappointment pertained only to the experience of reading this book on an Amazon Kindle. Reference is made throughout to a "color insert" which evidently contained several color wheels as well as up to a dozen color illustrations. This feature was completely absent from the Kindle edition, which had a severe adverse effect on the overall experience of reading this book. Obviously, this point is relevant only if you are contemplating reading the Kindle version - DON'T!

Geoffrey Fox says

This digressive examination of whether and, if so, how a speaker's language structures his/her thoughts contains two interesting arguments bundled with amusing anecdotes about odd languages and linguists. Some of the descriptions of non-Western languages, and even of Western languages (English among them) at earlier stages of development, show truly surprising ways of putting together information, such as numbers of tenses, whether person and time of action are included in verb or noun or in separate words (as in modern English), and even the number of sounds available to speakers. Current consensus: No language is a prison of thought; the speaker of any language can find a way to express any idea, even if s/he has to invent or borrow new vocabulary for some of it. But some languages oblige the speaker to give information that is optional in other languages. The handiest example is the English pronouns; if I'm speaking of a person, I can't say "it" visited me, I have to let you know whether the person was "he" or "she". If we're speaking Turkish (or any of many other languages with unsexed pronouns), I can leave the sex of the person ambiguous if I choose — or add something if I want to let you know.

The first of the two interesting arguments is about the language of color. As William Gladstone discovered in his monumental study of Homer, there are no color references beyond "black" (meaning dark), "white" or light, and red in the Odyssey or Iliad. (I had had no idea that the politician Gladstone, before becoming PM, had been such an important scholar). The sea or sky are never described as blue, the word sometimes translated as "green" is really much vaguer (could be yellow, or could just mean "ripe"). Later research revealed that no ancient language, or modern language of preliterate simple societies, has a developed vocabulary for all the colors that you or I would see and name and that surround them in their environment. Gladstone and generations of later linguists assumed there was something wrong with primitive and ancient people's color vision. But no: Deutscher reports all the tests that have shown that even people who have no names for many color tones can see them perfectly well if they need to. They don't think of the sky as "blue" because it does not seem to them to be an object, just a vast emptiness, and as people become more aware of different colors blue is always (so far in all the studies) the last to be named, because it just doesn't appear much in their environment (except that empty sky). We today are far more sensitive to colors than our ancestors because of all the colored objects on the market and in our household and on our computer screens etc. For people a few centuries back, distinguishing between bright and dark and red (because of blood, symbolizing life) was quite enough.

The second argument is more amusing though less important: How assigning gender to inanimate objects affects, but only slightly, the way people perceive them. The German "die Brucke" is described as female, graceful, delicate, etc., the Spanish "el puente" as male, big, sturdy, the English "bridge" is simply a thing with no preconception about its delicacy or strength. But all three words refer to the same object. The sexual connotations of dish, spoon, sea, etc. are faint and of little consequence to most speakers in ordinary life, but can add flavor to the poetry in those languages that have not (as in English) lost their genders.

Nikki says

I can understand people who feel that Through the Language Glass didn't quite fulfill its promise. The subtitle might be more accurately, "*does* the world look different in other languages?" And the answer *is* yes, but in a limited way that won't be satisfying to those who want the answer to be an unequivocal yes. People feel that the world *is* different (for them) in different languages, and even that *they* are different in other languages, but there just isn't the scientific data to back those feelings up.

(For me, and this is a brief digression, I do suspect that those who "feel different" when they speak other languages aren't taking into account context. For example, say you speak Hebrew with your family and English in school. You *are* a different person in those two contexts, but not because of the language you speak. You're adapting yourself to the situation, including the language. I suspect that even years after that division is so clear, where you might speak Hebrew to someone in the workplace, the associations remain.)

Anyway, I found the book itself a bit dense and prone to repetition, but overall, very interesting. I loved the discussion of the issue of colour in Homer's work, as it's something that inevitably came up when discussing his epithets in class. Why "wine-dark sea"? How could the sea look like wine? And this book has the answer.

It's fairly conservative in its conclusions, not going beyond the available data -- and mocking rather people who did go beyond their data -- and explaining everything at some length rather than packing in various new ideas. It does include a lot of examples and interesting facts about various languages, like languages which don't use egocentric directions but always geographical ones. I would've been interested in a bit more on gendered language, but it doesn't seem as if the work has been done there, yet. It also gives some credit for

ideas that were ahead of their time, even if they were founded on shaky principles, which was interesting.

Ultimately, Deutscher explains why early assumptions that language affects the way we perceive the world were wrong -- but then goes on to explain that that instinctive feeling isn't wrong in itself.

David says

This is a fascinating book about how culture shapes language, and how language shapes our view of reality. Guy Deutscher is a linguist, and he separates out in some detail, the facts of this subject from fiction.

Because, there is a lot of "fiction". Much of what we have heard about how language shapes our world-view is false. Nietzsche's line that "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" is absolutely false. A true statement would be "Languages differ in what they must convey, not in what they may convey." In other words, languages force their speakers to use certain words in describing concepts, but languages do not constrain their speakers from discussing concepts.

The fact that a language lacks a word that describes some concept, does not mean that its speakers are unaware of that concept. It just means, probably, that the concept is either not too important in that culture, or that it is so all-encompassing that it does not require a special word.

The first half of the book discusses the language mirror--that is, how language mirrors its culture. The second part discusses the language lens--how language shapes the world-view of its speakers.

The book starts out with a description of a big study by the prime minister of England, William Gladstone, of the works of Homer. in one chapter, he shows that the ancient Greeks did not use words that describe most colors. They used words for "black" and "white", and rarely "red" or other colors. He concluded that the ancient Greeks were color-blind, and that over the course of millennia, evolution changed human vision.

Gladstone was originally criticized for his outrageous theory--but in a sense, he was right on the mark. The ancient Greeks did not have words for all the colors, and it was evolution--cultural evolution--that gradually brought more color words into the Greek vocabulary. And it wasn't just the ancient Greeks. Many contemporary languages in remote corners of the globe also have few words for colors.

It used to be thought that the complexity of a language mirrors the complexity of its society. It is virtually impossible to objectively measure the overall complexity of a language. But the complexity of certain aspects of a language are measurable. For example, the morphological complexity of a language (the complexity of individual words) is *inversely correlated* with the size of population that speaks it. This is rather surprising, and the author can only speculate on the reasons. One amazing example is given, in the language of the Matses, a small tribe on the Amazon. Their verbs are incredibly complex. They have four past-tense forms of verbs that describe how far back in time an action took place. But *in addition*, verbs must also describe "evidentiality". The verb must describe how the speaker learned of the action. Does the verb express a direct experience (something the speaker saw with his own eyes), or something inferred, something conjectured, or hearsay? *Each and every verb* must describe all this detail, in a single word!

I found the language lens to be absolutely fascinating. It is very difficult for linguists or psychologists to isolate some aspect of a person's world-view, and to say that it is not only correlated with, but *caused by* some aspect of his language. But, this has been done definitively in three areas; spatial concepts, gender, and

color. For example, in English (and most European languages, I think), there are both ego-centric (up, down, in front, behind, left, right) and geo-centric (North, South, East, West) descriptors. But, some languages only have ego-centric desriptors, while others have only geo-centric words. Ego-centric descriptors are mostly useful in urban areas, such as when you need to give someone directions (go up the elevator to the 5th floor, turn right, pass two doors and take the corridor on the left). In the countryside, geo-centric descriptions might sometimes be more useful (the river running to the south of the lake). The tribes that speak languages that only have geo-centric descriptions learn from a very early age to set up an internal compass. This compass works regardless of visibility conditions; it works in a dense forest, in swamps, sand dunes, and in caves. Only if your transport the speaker of such a language by airplane does he lose his sense of direction. It's hard to imagine, that such a person will never say "the cow to my left" but instead would say "the cow to the north of me".

Occasionally this book seems a bit repetitive. But it is a fine example of scientific digging for subtle answers to important questions.

Betsy says

I really enjoyed this book, even though, or maybe because, it was not at all what I expected. I was expecting a kind of language survey detailing the ways in which various languages differ from each other that might possibly be related to culture. For example, the rather overplayed number of different words Inuit has for snow. I did not expect a very well written argument against some of the widely accepted tenets of linguistic theory, such as the Chomsky/Pinker belief that language is an inborn instinct not affected by environment or culture or that all languages are equally complex. Instead, Deutscher demonstrates both ways in which culture influences language -- the "language mirror" -- and how language influences culture -- the "language lens".

I'm not sure he entirely makes the case for his positions. Although his examples are detailed and well demonstrated, there are relatively few of them. However, I got the impression he was not expecting to totally overturn linguistic thought, but instead to reanimate a discussion that had been unfairly discontinued. I felt like what he was really objecting to were the absolutes of previous theory. Deutscher says that language is more complex than we thought, or than linguistic scholars thought. He doesn't specifically deny the existence of a language instinct, but says that there's a lot more to it than that.

Deutscher's writing style is very relaxed, almost colloquial. A thought provoking and very enjoyable read.

????????? ???? says

????? ???? ?? ???? ????? ?????! ????? ?? ????? ??? ????? ??????? ????????.
???? ??? ????? ???? ???? ??????? ????????? ?????????? ???? ?????? ???? ??? ???.
?? ????? ??? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ??????? ??? ????? ????????. ???? ????? ???????? ??????? (???????)?! ??
???????? ??????? ?????? ???????? ?? ????? "????" ??? ???? ?????? ??????? ?? ?? "???? ???" ???? ??????? ??
?????? ????????!
?????? ?????? ?? ???? ????? ??? ??? ????????? ???????? ?????????? ?? ???? ?????? ????? ??? ??????? ??????
?? ????? ?????? ??? ???????? ???? ????????? ??????? ????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ?????? ?? ????? ???????
???????? ??????? ????? ??????! ???????? –??????- ??? ????? ?????? ?????????? ??????? fMRI ?? ???? ?????

?????? ????????.
???? ?????? ??????? ?????? ?? ????? ????? ????? ??? ???? ??????????? ????????? ?????????? ???????? ???????? ????? ??????? (?????? ?????? ??? ???????)? ?????? ???? ?? ????? ????? ??????? ???? ???? ?? ????? ??????? ?? ????? ???????.
?? ?????? ????? ?? ??????? ?????????? ???????? ??????? ?????? ???????? ?? ????????? ??? ?????? ?????? ????????. ??? ?????? ???? ?? ????? ??????? ?????? (??????) ??? ?????? ??? ??? ???? ????? ???? ??????? ???? ???? ?????? ??? ????? ?????? ??? ????????!
???? ?????? ?????? ??????? ?? ?????? ????? ?????? ?? ??????? ???? ?????? ??????? ?????? ?????. ??????? ???? ???? ??????? ?????? ?? ??? ???????? ??? ????? ???? ???????? ???????? ???? ???????.
???? ???? ?????? ???? ??????? ???? ???? ??? ????? ???? ?? ???? ????? ??????? ?????? ????? ??? ??????? ?????? ????? ???? ???????? ???? ????? ?? ??????? ?????? ??? ??????? ????????? (?.???? ?????)? ?????? ??? ??? ??? ??? ?????? ????? (unfolding language) ????? ???? ?????? ?? ???? ????? ?? ????? ??? ??????? ???? ??????.

Margitte says

BLURB
A masterpiece of linguistics scholarship, at once erudite and entertaining, confronts the thorny question of how-and whether-culture shapes language and language, culture.

Linguistics has long shied away from claiming any link between a language and the culture of its speakers: too much simplistic (even bigoted) chatter about the romance of Italian and the goose-stepping orderliness of German has made serious thinkers wary of the entire subject. But now, acclaimed linguist Guy Deutscher has dared to reopen the issue. Can culture influence language-and vice versa? Can different languages lead their speakers to different thoughts? Could our experience of the world depend on whether our language has a word for "blue"?

Challenging the consensus that the fundaments of language are hard-wired in our genes and thus universal, Deutscher argues that the answer to all these questions is-yes. In thrilling fashion, he takes us from Homer to Darwin, from Yale to the Amazon, from how to name the rainbow to why Russian water-a "she"-becomes a "he" once you dip a tea bag into her, demonstrating that language does in fact reflect culture in ways that are anything but trivial. Audacious, delightful, and field-changing, Through the Language Glass is a classic of intellectual discovery.

COMMENTS

This book must be read in context of the global languages. There are more than seven thousand languages spoken in the world, of which one hundred and six languages have been committed to writing, and only seventy-eight have a literature of their own. Standard written English has at least one and a half million words, with past and present meanings of the words known because they have been recorded in writing, the average oral dialect, especially in African countries, has only a few thousand words with no means of knowing possible previous meanings of those words.

The different cultural needs of these three thousand plus languages can explain why some have many words for one object, and others simply do not have a need for a thesaurus of possibilities which can explain the

intention or meaning.

However, in the 1800s it was this phenomenon that baffled the intellectuals. What people see, and what they report, is two very different things. Add evolution to it, and the scientists had their research cut out for them. All research, whether it was through philology or anthropology, was based on western civilization as the control/reference group - or yardstick, if you will. In today's world, this notion has largely been modified to allow scientists a more open-minded and respectful approach to the world and its people. Thank goodness for that!

This book starts out with a highly interesting chapter on color in the context of language. I got so excited, I wanted to quote the entire chapter in the review! Of course I saved you this ordeal !
:-)

> “There are four tongues worthy of the world’s use,” says the Talmud: “Greek for song, Latin for war, Syriac for lamentation, and Hebrew for ordinary speech.” Other authorities have been no less decided in their judgment on what different languages are good for. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, king of Spain, archduke of Austria, and master of several European tongues, professed to speaking “Spanish to God, Italian to women, French to men, and German to my horse.”
>
> "European languages pinched their verbal philosophical tool kit from Latin, which in turn lifted it wholesale from Greek.

The debate around color was set off by Right Honorable William Ewart Gladstone who published his *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* in London, March, 1858. Seventeen hundred pages covering three volumes, with a range of topics, from the geography of the *Odyssey* to Homer's sense of beauty; from the position of women in Homeric society, to the moral character of Helen. Tucked away in the last volume was the curious and seemingly marginal theme of "Homer's perception and use of color."

Gladstone's theories and studies, as discussed in this book, had me curious enough to get my copy of Homer out and add it to the re-read list. This time around it will get a lot more attention than thirty years ago in school, that's for sure.

" Gladstone's conundrum will launch a thousand ships of learning, have a profound effect on the development of at least three academic disciplines, and trigger a war over the control of language between nature and culture that after 150 years shows not sign of abating."

Gladstone got the intellectuals shocked, stupefied and then rallying when he finally declared that ancient populations were colorblind! That was his conclusion after meticulously discussing the absence of color, or limited knowledge there of, in Homer's poems.

You can either read the book yourself, or indulge in this spoiler to convince you to read it, in case you hesitate! The debate set off numerous scientific research project all over the world to determine why color did not have a presence in ancient literature, including the Bible.(view spoiler)

(hide spoiler)]

I found this book entertaining and highly informative, with an academic flair to it. The research is impressive.

So many languages are disappearing from the world's radar, due to lack of development. Languages can only develop when a need for new words arises. Academic/ intellectual, development is mostly the starting point for new words and terminology to service a language in a local community, especially when westernization of local cultures is concerned. An ignorance of ancient old traditions within non-western societies lead to an attitude of superiority over these misunderstood, and highly developed cultures. The printed word also inspires the development of a language.

The author, Guy Deutscher, touches lightly on these issues, but provide a wealth of information in understanding these differences and how far we have come in understanding each other's worlds of words. He discusses how our mother tongue can affect how we think and how we perceive our world. He does not indulge in 'groundless twaddle' of any kind.

So by the way, Latin is not only the basis of many European languages. It is also, surprisingly, the secret ingredient in many African languages. A less-known wonder of my continent. You only discover it when you read books about the history of languages, although this one did not mention it.

I loved this book. It has enriched my world considerably. Confession: in my own language I have no problem expressing myself exactly how I want, of course, but in another language, I become a 'clueless primitive', battling a thesaurus of possibilities.

So be it.

This book is obviously recommended to the philologist-buffs among us! But for language lovers, without the academic itch, like me, it is a pleasure to read as well. The author was true to his promise indeed!
