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# The 5 Minute Linguist: Bite-Sized Essays On Language And Languages



## Synopsis

The Five-Minute Linguist has been a popular introduction to the subject of language because it is succinct, clear, accurate, -- and fun to read. Now in its second edition, updated and expanded, the book has been warmly received by readers across the globe because it offers quick and reliable answers to questions about language that most of us have, such as: How many languages are there? What was the first language? What causes foreign accents? Are dialects dying? The book is the work of experts, authoritative and full of facts, but not technical or aimed at an audience of scholars. It is used by beginning students of linguistics and anthropology, and has broad appeal for general readers, people who read for enjoyment as well as knowledge. It has a conversational style that feels more like a series of fireside chats than a college textbook, because it started life as a series of five-minute radio broadcasts. Its chapters are short, suitable for browsing or reading on the run. But although it is intentionally light in tone, the book is full of up-to-date information, written by a cross-section of leading linguists in the U.S. and abroad. The second edition of the book was produced under the sponsorship of the Linguistic Society of America and the (U.S.) National Museum of Language.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for the first edition: 'What a gift to those who love language and those who are simply curious about it. Leading experts each tackle an intriguing question, and explain it in straightforward, delightful prose. Read it from cover to cover or keep it by your bed to dip into for endless fascination.' --Deborah Tannen, Professor of Linguistics, Georgetown University, and author of You

Just Don't Understand 'This is a marvelous collection of informative, provocative and stimulating essays. The topics that were selected are both timely, and timeless, and the essays are sure to pique the curiosity of a broad range of readers. The material is accessible and the suggestions for further reading are wonderful pointers to additional exploration. This collection certainly has my five-star recommendation.' --G. Richard Tucker, Paul Mellon University Professor of Applied Linguistics, Carnegie Mellon University'Book and Web site are excellent supplements for introduction to linguistics courses, recommended for language majors, and attractive to language aficionados and mavens. Essential.' --Choice'An excellent, very accessible, and extremely easy-and fun-to-read introduction to some of the basic questions (and misconceptions) regarding language, language learning, and linguistics. The book clearly meets the editors intended goals; with each essay, the reader is engaged in a five-minute, light and informal conversation about the passionate topic of language.' --Linguist List 23.4805, November 2012'Book and Web site are excellent supplements for introduction to linguistics courses, recommended for language majors, and attractive to language aficionados and mavens. Essential.' --Choice

E. M. Rickerson has a Ph.D from the University of California at Berkeley and is Director Emeritus of the award-winning language program at the College of Charleston (S.C.). Formerly a language program director in the U.S. government, he now consults on the development and improvement of language programs at the university level. In 2005 Dr. Rickerson created a radio series on languages ('Talkin About Talk' ), which was broadcast on public and college radio stations -- and on which The 5 Minute Linguist was based. Barry Hilton is a freelance writer/editor and independent scholar living in Maine. He was a member of the editorial board that reviewed the radio scripts on which The 5 Minute Linguist was based. He has travelled and lived in both Europe and Asia, making professional use of Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, French, and German in a variety of jobs. He describes himself as an 'armchair philologist and recovering polyglot'.

Whether you are a amateur linguist or a professional linguist, educator, professor, or scholar this book will have something for you. Like have you ever wondered why it is so hard to learn chinese from scratch? Why sometimes spanish, french, and portuguese sound similar? How man languages different lanuages are spoken here in the U.S? How many different dialects of english there are here in the U.S?

This book is actually a large number of different essays by different authors, differing in quality. But

many of them are good, and the fact that one can just dip into the book at random and read something that interests you without trying to read it from cover to cover is a good thing. This is not a real textbook of linguistics, but you can learn a lot by reading the various essays.

It's simply one of the best books on languages. A real page-turner.

Fun articles and essays about linguistics, but they are often a tad dated, and for an actual linguist they don't provide much substance. Nonetheless, an entertaining read for people new to ling or wanting to find out more about the field and the cool stuff we study.

Great required summer reading

This essays are concise and straight to the point. They answer many frequent questions about languages in an easy to understand fashion. Linguistics is usually boring for many students but this book makes it fun.

Fascinating and easy to read text. Not dull at all!

Gift from person's wish list. Was pleased.

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