

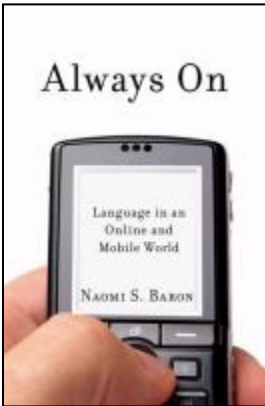
## In Other Words – A Reading List

In partnership with [Intersection for the Arts' group exhibition](#) that looks at language and its capacity to convene and separate, clarify and confuse, inspire and discourage, San Francisco Public Library has created a book list featuring a selection of classic, offbeat and interesting books about language. All titles are available at the library.

### See the exhibition at:

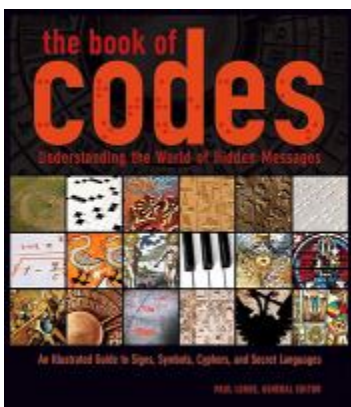
Intersection for the Arts, 925 Mission Street, #109, San Francisco, CA 94103

<http://theintersection.org>



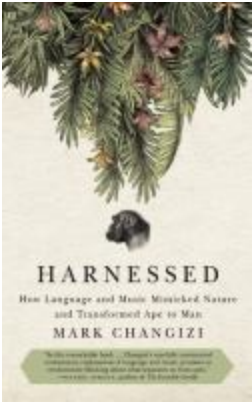
[\*Always On: Language in an Online and Mobile World\*](#) by Naomi S. Baron.

Baron explores how online and mobile technologies—including instant messaging, cell phones, multitasking, Facebook, blogs, and wikis—are profoundly influencing how we read and write, speak and listen, but not in the ways we might suppose. A troubling trend, according to Baron, is the myriad ways in which we block incoming IMs, camouflage ourselves on Facebook, and use ring tones or caller ID to screen incoming calls on our mobile phones. Our ability to decide who to talk to, she argues, is likely to be among the most lasting influences that information technology has upon the ways we communicate with one another.



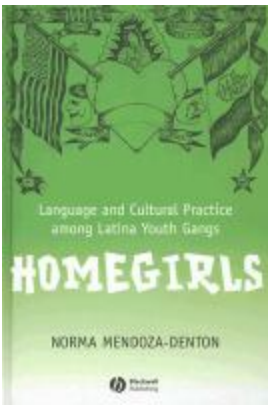
[\*The Book of Codes: Understanding the World of Hidden Messages\*](#) by Paul Lunde

The art of the code—code making and code breaking—remains shrouded in mystery and seems locked away in the murky realms of military intelligence, spies, and secret services. Yet codes affect virtually every area of our lives, providing security, protecting identity, and enabling us to connect via the Internet across global boundaries. This lavishly illustrated encyclopedia surveys the history and development of code making and code breaking in all areas of culture and society—from hieroglyphs and runes to DNA, the Zodiac Killer, *The Da Vinci Code*, graffiti, and beyond.



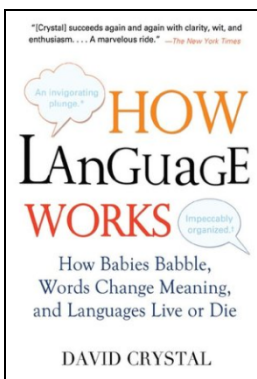
[\*Harnessed: How Language and Music Mimicked Nature and Transformed Ape to Man\*](#) by Mark Changizi

In *Harnessed*, cognitive scientist Mark Changizi demonstrates that human speech has been very specifically “designed” to harness the sounds of nature, sounds we’ve evolved over millions of years to readily understand. Long before humans evolved, mammals learned to interpret the sounds of nature to understand both threats and opportunities. Our speech—regardless of language—is very clearly based on the sounds of nature. Even more fascinating, Changizi shows that music itself is based on natural sounds. Music—seemingly one of the most human of inventions—is literally built on sounds and patterns of sound that have existed since the beginning of time.



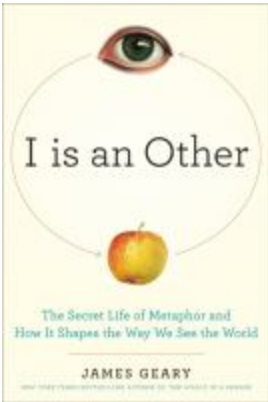
[\*Homegirls: Language and Cultural Practice among Latina Youth Gangs\*](#) by Norma Mendoza-Denton.

Mendoza-Denton reports findings from a linguistic ethnographic study of the Norteña/Sureña (North/South) girl gangs at a junior high in the suburbs of the San Francisco Bay area. Based on fieldwork conducted in the mid-1990s, the text explores the ways that the girls use speech, bodily practices, and symbolic exchanges to signal their gang affiliations and ideologies as members of either the bilingual, English-speaking and Americanized Norte girl gang or as the Mexican or Latin American- oriented, Spanish-speaking Sur girl gang. The study examines language variation and change, as well as social and cultural practices regarding dress, make-up, and music.



[\*How Language Works: How Babies Babble, Words Change Meaning, and Languages Live or Die\*](#) by David Crystal

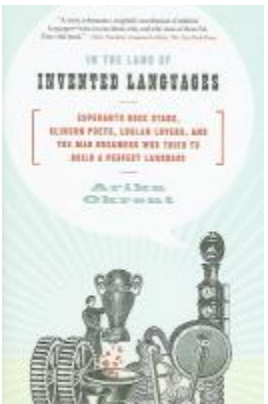
In the author's own words, "*How Language Works* is not about music, cookery, or sex. But it is about how we talk about music, cookery, and sex-or, indeed, anything at all." Language is so fundamental to everyday life that we take it for granted. But as David Crystal makes clear, language is an extremely powerful tool that defines the human species. He moves effortlessly from big subjects like the origins of languages, how children learn to speak, and how conversation works to subtle but revealing points such as how email differs from both speech and writing in important ways, how language reveals a person's social status, and how we decide whether a word is rude or polite.



[\*I is an Other: The Secret Life of Metaphor and How it Shapes the Way We See the World\*](#) by

James Geary

From President Obama’s political rhetoric to the bursting of the housing bubble, from conversations to commercials, Geary shows that every aspect of our day-to-day experience is molded by metaphor. Geary takes readers from Aristotle’s investigation of metaphor right up to the latest neuroscientific insights into how metaphor works in the brain. Witty, persuasive, and original, *I Is an Other* explores metaphor’s effects on financial decision making, effective advertising, leadership, learning, and more.



[\*In the Land of Invented Languages: Esperanto Rock Stars, Klingon Poets, Loglan Lovers, and the Mad Dreamers Who Tried to Build a Perfect Language\*](#) by Arika Okrent

In this original new addition to the booming category of language books , author Arika Okrent tells the fascinating and highly entertaining history of man's enduring quest to build a better language. Peopled with charming eccentrics and exasperating megalomaniacs, the land of invented languages is a place where you can recite the Lord's Prayer in John Wilkins's Philosophical Language, say your wedding vows in Loglan, and read Alice's Adventures in Wonderland in Lojban.



[\*The Language of Graphic Design: An Illustrated Handbook for Understanding Fundamental Design Principles\*](#) by Richard Poulin

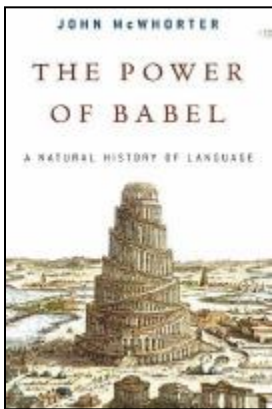
For anyone trying to communicate in a new language, one has to first gain a complete understanding of its fundamentals; the ABC's of that language—definitions, functions, and usage. *The Language of Graphic Design* provides graphic design students and practitioners with an in-depth understanding of the fundamental elements and principles of their language-graphic design—what they are, why they are important, and how to use them effectively. By examining both student and professional work, this comprehensive handbook is a more meaningful, memorable, and inspiring reference tool for novice design

students, as well as young designers starting their careers.



[On Language](#) by Noam Chomsky

Described by the *New York Times* as "arguably the most important intellectual alive," Noam Chomsky is known throughout the world for his highly influential writings on language and politics. Featuring two of Chomsky's most popular and enduring books in one omnibus volume, *On Language* contains some of the noted linguist and political critic's most informal and accessible work to date, making it an ideal introduction to his thought.



[The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language](#) by John McWhorter

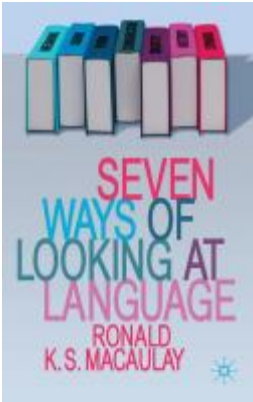
There are approximately 6,000 languages on earth today, the descendants of the tongue first spoken by homo sapiens some 150,000 years ago. How did they all develop? What happened to the first language? In this irreverent romp through territory too often claimed by stodgy grammarians, McWhorter ranges across linguistic theory, geography, history, and pop culture to tell the fascinating story of how thousands of very different languages have evolved from a single, original source in a natural process similar to biological evolution.



[Say Hello!](#) by Rachel Isadora

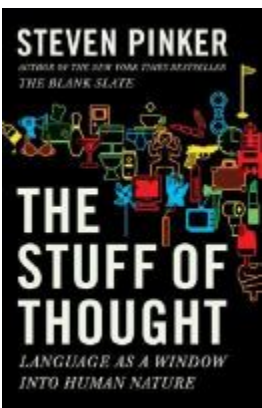
Carmelita loves to greet everyone in her colorful neighborhood. There are people from so many different cultures! They all like to say hello too, so now Carmelita can say hello in Spanish, English, French, Japanese, and many other languages. Caldecott Honor winner Rachel Isadora's eye-catching collages are full of kid-friendly details like colorful storefronts, pigeons and an ice cream truck, making Carmelita's neighborhood fun to explore. Emphasizing the rich diversity of America's neighborhoods, this simple portrait of a child's day provides a great introduction to

the joy of language.



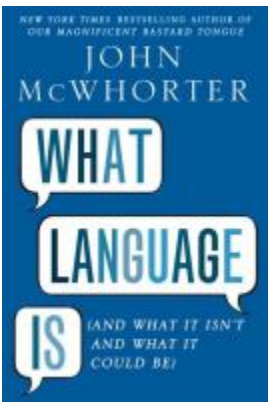
[\*Seven Ways of Looking at Language\*](#) by Ronald K.S. Macaulay.

From the publication of Noam Chomsky's revolutionary *Syntactic Structures* in 1957, to the counter-revolutions that followed, linguistics has seen many fashions over the years. With new ideas and discoveries constantly challenging the ways we look at language, Macaulay provides a brief and lively introduction to some of the different approaches linguists have taken to the study of language in all its complexity. A helpful glossary, as well as detailed suggestions for further reading, makes this the ideal starting point for anyone wishing to learn about the study of language.



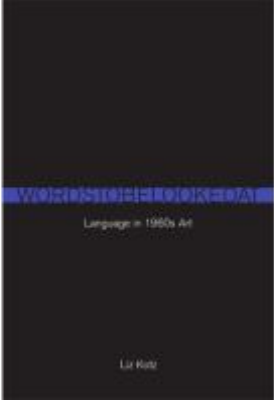
[\*The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature\*](#) by Steven Pinker

What does swearing reveal about our emotions? Why does innuendo disclose something about relationships? Pinker reveals how our use of prepositions and tenses taps into peculiarly human concepts of space and time, and how our nouns and verbs speak to our notions of matter. Even the names we give our babies have important things to say about our relations to our children and to society. With his signature wit and style, Pinker takes on scientific questions like whether language affects thought, as well as forays into everyday life—why is bulk e-mail called spam and how do romantic comedies get such mileage out of the ambiguities of dating?



[\*What Language Is \(And What It Isn't and What It Could Be\)\*](#) by John McWhorter.

From vanishing languages spoken by a few hundred people to major tongues like Chinese, with copious revelations about the hodgepodge nature of English, McWhorter shows readers how to see and hear languages as a linguist does. Packed with Big Ideas about language alongside wonderful trivia, *What Language Is* explains how languages across the globe originate, evolve, multiply, and divide. Raising provocative questions about what qualifies as a language (so-called slang does have structured grammar), McWhorter also takes readers on a journey through time and place to deliver a feast of facts about the wonders of human linguistic expression.



[Words to Be Looked At: Language in 1960s Art](#) by Liz Kotz

Language has been a primary element in visual art since the 1960s—in the form of printed texts, painted signs, words on the wall, recorded speech, and more. In *Words to Be Looked At*, Liz Kotz traces this practice to its beginnings, examining works of visual art, poetry, and experimental music created in and around New York City from 1958 to 1968. In many of these works, language has been reduced to an object nearly emptied of meaning.