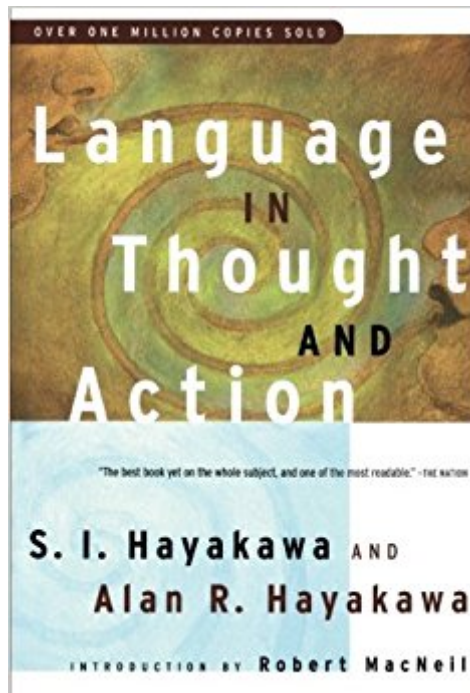




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Language In Thought And Action: Fifth Edition



Synopsis

In an era when communication has become increasingly diverse and complex, this classic work on semantics—now fully revised and updated—distills the relationship between language and those who use it. Renowned professor and former U.S. Senator S. I. Hayakawa discusses the role of language in human life, the many functions of language, and how language—sometimes without our knowing—shapes our thinking in this engaging and highly respected book. Provocative and erudite, it examines the relationship between language and racial and religious prejudice; the nature and dangers of advertising from a linguistic point of view; and, in an additional chapter called “The Empty Eye,” the content, form, and hidden message of television, from situation comedies to news coverage to political advertising.

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Customer Reviews

Born in Montreal, Robert MacNeil grew up in Halifax, attended Dalhousie University and graduated from Carleton in Ottawa. After early work as a CBC announcer, he was a journalist for forty years with Reuters News Agency, NBC News and the BBC, culminating in twenty years as Executive Editor of the MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour on PBS. His bestselling novel, *Burden of Desire*, won rave reviews in Canada and the U.S. He is also the author of two other novels, *The Voyage* and *Breaking News*; three memoirs, *The Right Place at the Right Time*, *Wordstruck*, and *Looking For My Country*; and co-author of *The Story of English* and its sequel, *Do You Speak American?* He divides his time between New York and Nova Scotia.

Language in Thought and Action (5th edition) is a wonderful book. I have two copies (thought my first one was lost, bought another because I need it for regular reference) and I have recommended it often to others. In reading reviews here, I noticed that many miss the earlier editions of this book, feeling that something has been lost in translation in the latest edition. I was curious and wondered if I could ever find an older edition in order to see for myself. It appears that the Kindle version here IS the original text. I'm very happy to have access to it for comparison purposes. And what a price! (I feared that buying a physical copy of a first edition at a used book store might set me back a pretty penny.) That said, be aware that the books are significantly different. Just alerting any first-time buyer to select with care. Another note: I love the introduction to the 5th edition by Robert MacNeil (of MacNeil/Lehrer fame) but this listing erroneously gives his biography information as that of the "author". That is confusing to say the least! Dear : please correct.

This is what the World Needs -awareness. What is reality? What is "out there/in here?" And what belongs to the World of Words? The "map in our heads" should fit the "territory," i.e. the world/life. To understand this is to live a better "sane" life.

I needed this book for class but it's actually a great book on communication that I would recommend to anyone

The preface of the book says it was written in "response to the dangers of propaganda", especially Adolph Hitler's. So the book is very much not propaganda. The author prefers to be slow, dull, and thoughtful rather than passionate, engaging and vacant. The book hammers home that language is like a map which, if it's good, reflects reality. Propaganda tries to build a map that is self-consistent and appears good, but is really wrong. The author shows the ways bad "maps" are built and how to not fall for one. The book is worth its price for Chapter 1. This is an attack on the premise that life is a jungle and that we all need to fight each other to survive. The author does a magnificent job of saying that not every animal fights itself to survive and that humans are at our best when we cooperate, for we can do little on our own and even less if we tear each other apart. I'm giving it four stars, because it was a slow read to read and I feel that the author erred too much on the side of dryness in order to show the book was not propaganda. Although I understand why he did. That said, it is a good and informative book.

For me, this book is near-scriptural because it packs so much truth into such a small space. This book will help you understand how you think and how you use language, and why people talk past each other and disagree about important topics. It explains in entertaining detail many of the fallacies and traps we all fall prey to, and some of the conditions of modern life that make them more pervasive. This is one of those books that will make you wonder how you could live so long without realizing such important and simple things. If you want to examine your own thinking and root out errors--if you want to inject additional rationality into your political beliefs--if you want to raise your immunity to advertising and misleading propaganda--or if you want to write and think more precisely, this book is invaluable.

This book provides an excellent overview of general semantics. Hayakawa's examples and illustrations are very good. The book is easy to read. It may lead some readers to think about such things as overgeneralizing, avoiding snap judgments, and being careful in expression.

I loved this book. It gives thought to the use of words and ideas. I love it and will keep it as a reference.

I read an earlier version of this book in 1975; this book completely changed how I looked at communicating with other people. The authors focus on how to be accurate and informative and how not to unintentionally confuse people with whom you are communicating.

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