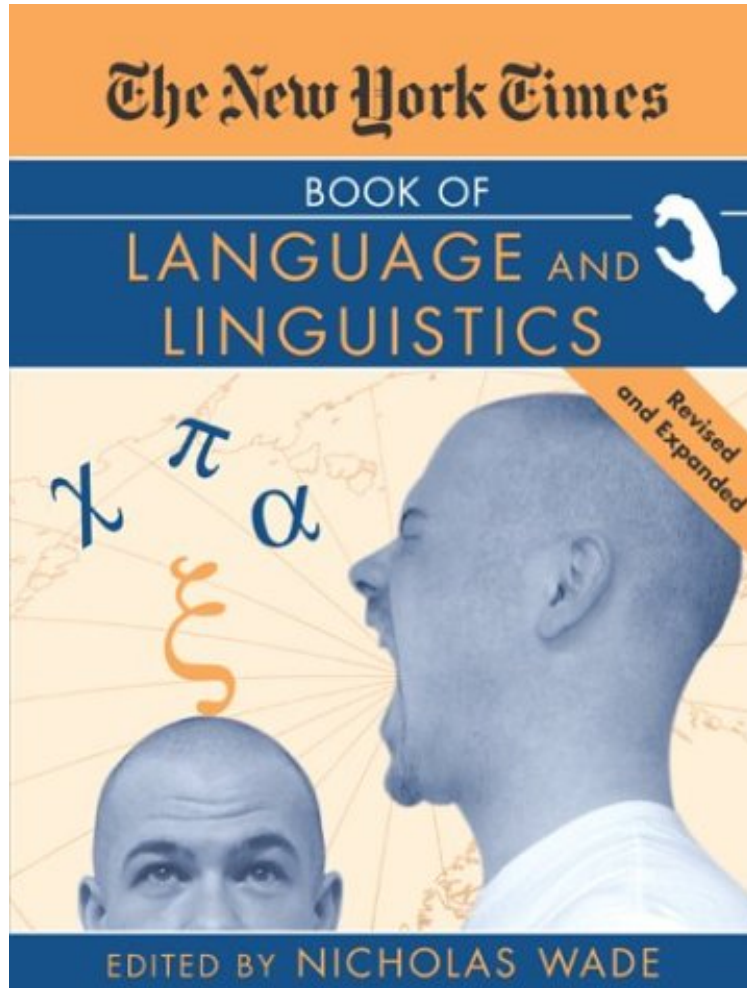


The New York Times Book of Language and Linguistics

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From Brand: Lyons Press : The New York Times Book of Language and Linguistics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The New York Times Book of Language and Linguistics:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A hasty cut paste effortBy Colin E ManningThis book contains articles and stories from the New York Times that deal with Linguistics. This book might have made an interesting overview or introduction to the field had it been more rigorously compiled. Articles frequently refer to research recently published, but no references are provided that might allow the reader to follow up the reports. Phrases like "in this month's 'Nature'" are useless if neither the date of the NY Times article, nor the publication it references are provided.6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Interesting Questions, Partial AnswersBy Louis N. GruberThe book is a collection of essays from the 1990s, covering a range of subjects--from Nostratic theory to how

babies learn language to whether language is hard-wired in the brain. How did the human animal populate the globe--by conquest or by farming? And when chimpanzees talk to us--using various symbolic methods--are they really talking? Did the Neanderthals speak? And did all human languages derive from a single, primordial language? This book will not give you the answers to any of these questions. What it does offer is a tantalizing glimpse into many of these questions and the controversies that swirl around them. What the book lacks is a passion for any of these ideas. So and so says this; the critics say that. To be sure, there is a fine line in such a presentation between getting too technical and not being technical enough--leaving the reader with a vague impression of a complex subject. Unfortunately the essays in this book tend to be excessively balanced, hence superficial. If you know a little bit about some of the controversies raging in the linguistic field; and if you would like to learn just a little bit more-- well, this may be the book for you. Reviewed by Louis N. Gruber.

In the latest book in the series, editor Nicholas Wade and several award-winning New York Times journalists explore the mysterious roots of language. Their coverage ranges from the efforts to chronicle ancient languages to the examination of fossil records to determine whether Neanderthals had language, and around the evolutionary bend to the study of chimpanzees and their ability to "talk" using sign boards to convey fear, hunger, and their deceptive sense of humor. Chapters expound upon: "The History of Language"; "Archaeology and Language," which includes the findings in the Tarim Basin of China that reveal remains of Caucasian mummies dating from 2,000 to 600 B.C., and their written language; "Language in Other Species," in which the subsonic songs of female African elephants are detected traveling up to two miles through the ground to announce herd movement and mating possibilities, and the rich rhyming schemes of the seasonal songs of humpback whales are described; "Language and Learning"; "Language and the Brain"; and finally "Language and Society," which addresses contemporary concerns of our own multilingual nation. With detailed illustrations that appeared in the original articles, and insightful introductions to each chapter by Nicholas Wade, this book is sure to fascinate anyone who has an interest in language and culture.