

Rachel McEnroe
Brooker Prize Essay and Bibliography
"Language Addiction"

"You read that book like *Seventeen* magazine," my mom said. I was sitting on my bed, holding my pet rabbit, and reading Andrew Dalby's *Dictionary of Languages*, just like I did every other day freshman year of high school after finishing my homework. The book had appeared in my room a year earlier, when I was studying for the National Geographic Bee, since it contained maps showing how different languages were distributed. The maps weren't what caught my attention in this book though; the hundreds of languages described were. I had just started learning Russian and Arabic after a middle school language diet of French and Latin and was fascinated by the variety of languages in the world. Many articles included small section on scripts, cultural notes, or small vocabulary samples.

Within a year I was learning bits and pieces of any language I encountered: Chinese at school, Farsi from my grandparents' neighbors, Vietnamese from my aunt, Japanese at a community college and, of course, any language I could find a book on. All the books my parents had randomly bought at library discard sales— a Ukrainian grammar, a Dutch teach-yourself-book — found their way in to my room and my collection. I received a dictionary of ancient languages for Christmas, but I always returned to my first dictionary of languages. Its binding cracked.

Junior year of high school, I discovered the existence of linguistics and the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad. I was thrilled; I had always been a highly competitive person, and here was a competition where I could use my love of various languages. The first problem I solved resembled the articles of my dictionary: comparing the numbers one through ten of multiple languages, all but one of them related. I solved it and was hooked. I registered for the competition.

After participating and doing well, I started accumulating linguistics books for non-linguists as well. My parents would get me books of this kind for years.

I started the college applications process and looked for universities which taught a wide variety of languages. I also visited bookstores when visiting colleges and bought language books wherever I could find them. A Vietnamese textbook from Georgetown University's bookstore. A book on languages of the Pacific islands from Schoenhof's in Boston. Schoenhof's was a gold mine for books written in other languages as well; I acquired a copy of *The Little Prince* in Arabic there. I found a book of Arabic verbs in the Seminary Co-op.

While studying for the NACLO, my second year, I discovered Ethnologue, a website with articles on every language that existed. Finally, something that could replace my *Dictionary of Languages*, which I had nearly memorized by this point. If my rabbit could read, she would have memorized it too, as she was my constant companion. And there was a print version! I asked for, and received it as a gift that year.

I came to college and took second-year Russian my first year. Whenever I

wanted to relax, I went to the language corner of the Seminary Co-op, to buy or to browse. I didn't venture beyond that corner into the rest of the store for months—how could it be any better?! I bought a small book on Jabem, a language in New Guinea so obscure my dictionary didn't mention it, and a Welsh grammar, that year, and later books on Syriac, Ugaritic (an ancient language of the Middle East, taught at UChicago), Efate (a language of Vanuatu, a country in the Pacific Ocean), among others.

I hadn't brought any language books to school first year, for fear of damaging them, but I was restless without them. Learning languages and learning about languages had become a core part of my identity and I felt like a partial person without them. *Ethnologue* came back to school with me second year, and my *Dictionary of Languages* followed.

My family adopted two guinea pigs second year and I named one of them Twi, a language of Ghana that I had learned about in my dictionary, and fallen in love with the sound of the name. My mom special-ordered books on Twi for me from Schoenhof's for the holidays. One of my other language-themed presents was a box of 18 Lonely Planet language dictionaries.

Second year was also the year I discovered the language section in Powell's and became a regular customer. Since then, I have bought books on Hausa, Chamorro (spoken in Guam), Bugotu, Welsh, Hungarian, Nahuatl, Lakota, Sanskrit, Yoeme, Tibetan, and most recently, less than a month ago, Hawaiian and Yoruba dictionaries and a Catalan teach-yourself book.

When my father visited me this past summer, we went to bookstores throughout Chicago. I was hunting for language books, I found a Lithuanian grammar in The Armadillo's Pillow on the North Side, a set of books on Aramaic in Amaranth Books, in Evanston. This was also when I found the Nahuatl and Lakota books at Powell's.

My love of books about languages has also extended to a love of books in languages I have learned fairly well and even those I know absolutely nothing of. I am a physics/math major, and for Christmas I found seven of the ten books of Landau's *Course of Theoretical Physics*, in the original Russian on Abebooks. They took months to ship here from Russia, and occupy a special shelf in my physics bookcase. I also accumulated books in Arabic and Farsi from UChicago library discard sales, and books in languages I don't speak, such as a book of math papers in Czech.

My collection at the moment is fairly heavy on language dictionaries, as opposed to grammars, since they have been easier to find. I intend to increase my collection of grammars, and am particularly interested in endangered and obscure languages. I have relatively few books on languages of Africa and the Americas, which I would like to increase. In terms of concrete plans, I will continue to periodically check Powell's and the Seminary Co-op for language books, as well as the Regenstein discard sales, whenever they begin again. My father and I intend to drive 3 hours from my family's home near Dallas, Texas to the Oklahoma University Press, where I hope to find books on Native American languages. I also am on the hunt for my books on Korean, especially grammars, since I started learning Korean through the library's Mango subscription recently.

Bibliography

Core collection: Dictionaries of Languages

Dalby, Andrew. *Dictionary of Languages*. New York, 2004. Condition: good, although with cracked spine and dented corners from heavy use

This was the book that started it all.

Katzner, Kenneth. *The Languages of the World*. London: Routledge Reference, 1977. Condition: Good.

I don't remember where I acquired this book, but I remember hoping that it would be like a second Dictionary of Languages, and being disappointed.

Ed. Lewis, M. Paul. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. 16th Edition. Dallas: SIL International, 2009. Condition: good, slight damage to dust jacket

This is my second most loved language book, guaranteed to keep me entertained for hours.

Lynch, John. *Pacific Languages: An introduction*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998. Condition: Like new.

Parlett, D. S. *A Short Dictionary of Languages*. London: The English Universities Press, 1967. Condition: Good.

Ed. Woodward, Roger D. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the World's Ancient Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Second printing, 2008. Condition: New, except for slight damage to dust jacket.

This is the ancient language counterpart to Dalby's Dictionary of Languages, although it is highly technical, where that book was intended for the interested layperson. Someday I hope to understand enough about linguistics to fluently read this book as I read Dalby's.

Seven Language Dictionary. Avenel, NJ: Gramercy books, 1978. Condition: Good, slight damage to dust jacket.

Core Collection: Single-language Grammars and Dictionaries(alphabetized by language)

Scheindlin, Raymond P. *501 Arabic Verbs*. Barron's Foreign Language Guides. Hauppauge, NY: Barrons, 2007. Condition: Like new.

The very first book I bought at the seminary Co-op

Ed. Franz Rosenthal. *An Aramaic Handbook*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1967. Condition: Good This is a four volume set that I bought this past summer at Amaranth Books in Evanston. They had very few language books, but these were a great find.

Ivens, W.G. *Bugotu-English, English-Bugotu Concise Dictionary: A Language of the Solomon Islands*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1998. Condition: Like New.

Topping, Dold M. and Pedro M. Ogo. *Spoken Chamorro with Grammatical Notes and Glossary*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980. Condition: Like new.

Chang, Tsung-Ch'ien and Richard C. Rudolph. *Literary Chinese by the Inductive Method*. Volume 1. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1938. Third Impression, 2967. Condition: Fair.

Naughton, James. *Czech: An Essential Grammar*. London: Routledge, 2005. Condition: Like New.

Quist, Gerdi and Dennis Strik. *Teach yourself Beginner's Dutch*. London: Hodden and Stoughton, 2003. Condition: Good.

Thieberger, Nicholas. *A Grammar of South Efate: An Oceanic Language of Vanuatu*. Oceanic Linguistics Special Publication No. 33. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006. Condition: New

Dehghani, Yavar. *Persian-English English-Persian Learner's Dictionary*. Bethesda, Maryland: IBEX Publishers, 2008. Condition: Good.

Mohajer, Simin, Mahvash Shahegh and Farima Mostowfi. *Learning Persian: Book One*. Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 2007.

Thackston, W. M. *An Introduction to Persian*. Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 1993. Condition: Like New.

Whitney, Arthur H. *Teach Yourself Finnish*. Bungay, UK: Hodder and Stoughton, 1956. Sixth printing 1984. Condition: Fair.

Pukui, Mary Kawena and Samuel H. Elbert. *Hawaiian Dictionary: Hawaiian-English, English-Hawaiian*. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1971. 3rd edition. Condition: Fair, dust jacket is damaged, but no markings inside

Newman, Paul. *The Hausa Language: An Encyclopedic Reference Grammar*. Yale Language Series. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. Condition: Like new.

This is a monster of a book that I bought at Powell's in February 2014, while on a date with my then-boyfriend. The list price was 80 dollars, but I bought it, in excellent condition, for 12.50.

Pessin, Deborah. *The Aleph-Bet Story Book*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946. Condition: Poor. This is technically my very first language book. One of my earliest memories (age 4) is my grandmother teaching me the Hebrew alphabet from this book. It didn't stick and I never got any further than the alphabet, but someday I will go back to seriously study Hebrew. Unfortunately, my four year old self was not that careful with her books...

Alapi, Krisztina. *Hungarian: Hippocrene Handy Extra Dictionary*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1994. Condition: Good

Bradshaw, Joel and Fransisc Czobor. *Otto Dempwolff's Grammar of the Jabem Language in New Guinea*. Oceanic Linguistics Special Publications No. 32. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. Condition: Like New.

Lee, Heejin. *Your First 100 Words in Korean*. Chicago: Passport books, 2001. Condition: Good.

Lee, Jeyseon and Kangjin. *Korean Dictionary and Phrasebook*. NYC: Hippocrene Books, 2005. Condition: Like New.

Shin, Sunjeong. *Read and Speak Korean for Beginners*. NYC: McGraw-Hill, 2008. Condition: Good. Both my mother and I bought a copy of this, so I actually own two copies.

The National Institute of the Korean Language. *Speaking Korean for Beginners*. Elizabeth, NJ: Hollyn, 2006. Condition: Like new, with CD.

Amindarov, Aziz. *Kurdish Dictionary*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1994. Condition: Like New.

White Hat, Albert, Sr. *Reading and Writing the Lakota Language*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 1999. Condition: New.

Dambriunas, Leonardas, Antanas Klimas and William R. Schmalstieg. *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian*. Brooklyn, NY: Franciscan Fathers, 1966. Third edition: 1980. Condition: Poor.

Harawira, K.T. *Beginner's Maori*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 1997. Condition: Good.

Lockhart, James. *Nahuatl as Written: Lessons in Older Written Nahuatl, with Copious Examples and Texts*. Stanford University Press: Stanford, 2001. Condition: New

Norwegian in Three Months. Hugo's Simplified System. London: Hugo's Language Books Ltd, 1958. Condition: poor, water damage.

Ed. Tripathi, B. K. and K.M. Patnaik. *Oxford English-English-Oriya Dictionary*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004. Condition: Good, slight damage to dust jacket

Kaipio, Claire. 201 Polish Verbs. New York: Barron's Educational Series, 1977. Condition: Fair, ex-library.

Matthews, W. K. *Russian Historical Grammar*. London: University of London: The Athlone Press, 1960. Condition: Fair, pages very yellowed.

Turkevich, John and Ludmilla B. *Russian for the Scientist*. Princeton, NJ: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1959. 3rd Printing, April 1960. Condition: Poor, lots of writing in the book.

Whitney, William Dwight, *Sanskrit Grammar*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003. Reprint. Condition: New

Dale, D. *A Basic English Shona Dictionary*. Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1997. 8th printing. Condition: New.

Thackston, W.M. *Introduction to Syriac*. Bethesda, Maryland: IBEX Publishers, 1999. Condition: New.

Campbell, Stuart and Chuan Shaveevongs. *The Fundamentals of the Thai Language*. First Edition Copyright 1957. No publisher given, only distributors for different countries. Condition: Good.

Robertson, Richard G. *Robertson's Practical English-Thai Dictionary*. Rutland, VT: Tuttle Language Library, 1969. Printed in Singapore. Condition: Like New.

Smyth, David. *Thai: An Essential Grammar*. London: Routledge, 2002. I own the fourth 2008 printing. Condition: Like New.

Jasche, H.A. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2003. Contion: Good

Bodomo, Adams, Charles Marfo, and Lauren Hall-Lew. *Let's Speak Twi: A Proficiency Course in Akan Language and Culture*. Stanford: Center for the Study of Language and Information, 2010. Condition: New

Awde, Nicholas, William Dirks, and Amandurdy Amandurdyev. *Turkmen Dictionary and Phrasebook*. New York: Hippocrene Books, 2005. Condition: Good.

Redden, James E. *Twi Basic Course*. Madison, CT: Foreign Service Institute, Department of State, no year given. Condition: New. This is a typewritten manuscript that appears to have been reprinted recently. This was

part of a special order from Schoenhof's that took a year to come in. The spine of the book says "Twi Basic Corse".

Schniedwind, William M. and Joel H. Hunt. *A Primer on Ugaritic: Language, Culture, and Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Humesky, Assya. *Modern Ukrainian*. Edmonton, Canada: Candian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1980. Condition: Fair, ex-library.

Ngo, Binh Nhu. *Elementary Vietnamese, Revised Edition*. Rutland, Vermont: Tuttle Language Library, 1999. Condition: Like new.

Nguyen, Dinh-Hoa. *Speak Vietnamese*. Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co. Publishers, 1966. Condition: Good

King, Gareth. *Colloquial Welsh: A Complete Language Course*. London: Routledge, 1995. Condition: Good, but no missing cassettes it originally came with

King, Gareth. *Modern Welsh: A Comprehensive Grammar*. London: Routledge, 2003. Condition: Like New.

Ed. Lewis, Edwin C. *Teach Yourself: Welsh Dictionary*. London: McGraw-Hill Companies, 2003. Condition: Good.

Shaul, David L. *Yoeme-English, English-Yoeme Standard Dictionary: A Language of the Yaqui Tribe in the American Southwest and Northern Mexico*. New York City: Hippocrene Books, 1999. Condition: Like New.

Fakinlede, Kayode J. *Yoruba: Modern Practical Dictionary*. New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 2003. 3rd Printing. Condition: Fair, appears to have been crushed at some point

Subcollection:Books in Russian

Landua, L.D. and E.M. Lifshitz. *Teoreticheskay Fizika*. Volumes 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10. Moscow: Fizmatlit, 2008.

These books are the standard graduate textbooks in physics. They were originally written in the 1950s and '60s and are known for their elegant and concise style and, of course, their difficulty. I am still searching for volumes 1, 2, and 6. Valious, Anneta. *Soutache Weaving* (Original:). Moscow: AST-PRESS, 2012.

I am a jewelry designer and soutache embroidery is a particular technique that became very popular several years ago in the American beading world. It has been popular for much longer in Europe, and Anneta Valious is an accomplished artist, who wrote a crafting book on soutache. I received this book, signed by the author, as a Chanukah gift in 2012.

Voskoboinikov, V. *Zhizn' Zamechatel'nix Detei*. Moscow: ONIKS, 2005.

Condition: Like New.

This was a gift from my high school Russian teacher, Lyudmila, to me right before I left for college. It is a children's book on the lives of exceptional historical figures, as children. Lyudmila has essentially been another grandmother to me and leaving the Language School was far far harder than leaving my high school or hometown. I was so proud of myself when I could at last read this book.

Dictionary of Foreign Words for Schoolchildren. (Original:Slovar' innostran-nix slov dlya shkolnikov) Yekaterinburg: U-Factoria, 2007. Condition: Like New.

This is another gift from my high school Russian teacher.

Subcollection: Books in and about Arabic

The majority of books in this collection are ones that I picked up for free to be reading material once my Arabic is good enough to read entire books. Since my Arabic is still a long way away from that point, I am unsure of bibliographic information for all of these books.

"Abd Al-Naser, Walid. *Iran: A study of culture and nation*. Cairo: Dar Al-shuruuq, 1997. Condition: Good.

Aous, Joseph E., Elabbas Benmamoun, and Lina Choueiri. *The Syntax of Arabic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Condition: Like New.

Brustad, Kristen E. *The Syntax of Spoken Arabic: A comparative study of Moroccan, Egyptian, Syrian, and Kuwaiti Dialects*. Washington, D.C: George Washington Press, 2000. Condition: Like New.

Ed. Ali Farghaly. *Arabic Computational Linguistics*. Stanford: CSLI Studies in Computational Linguistics, 2010. Condition: Like new.

Kalila wa Dimna. 1996. Condition: Good.

This was a gift from one of my high school Arabic teachers. It is a collection of fables with animal protagonists that were originally written in Hindi and were translated into Persian and then Arabic centuries ago by Ibn al-Muqaffa. The first real Arabic texts I read were stories from this book.

Sarkees, Isasaan. "Al-Adab wa Al-Dowlah." (Trans. The literature and the nation). Beirut, 1977 Condition: Good, library discard

Owens, Jonathan. *A Linguistic History of Arabic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Condition: Like new.

Subcollection: Books in and about Farsi

Behrang, Samad, *The Little Black Fish*. Trans. Hooshang Amuzegar. Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 1996. Condition: Like New. Note: This

is a bilingual book.

Habibian, Simin K. *1001 Persian-English Proverbs*. 3rd Ed. Bethesda, MD: IBEX Publishers, 1995. Condition: Like New.

Second and Third Grade textbooks from Iran.

Subcollection: Books about Languages and Linguistics

Hitchings, Henry. *The Secret Life of Words*. New York City: Faber, Straus, and Giroux: 2008. Condition: Like New.

McWhorter, John. *The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001. Condition: Like New

Ostler, Nicholas. *Empires of the World: A Language History of the World*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005. Condition: Like New.

Speake, Jennifer. *Oxford Dictionary of Foreign Words and Phrases*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. Condition: Good, ex-library.

Pinker, Steven. *The Language Instinct*. New York City: Harper Perennial, 1994. Condition: Like New.

Subcollection: Miscellaneous

Hinz, Walther. *The Lost World of Elam: Re-creation of a Vanished Civilization*. Trans, Jennifer Barnes. New York: New York University Press, 1973. Condition: Good, slight damage to dust jacket

This and the next entry were the textbooks for a class I took at the Oriental Institute as a first year on Elam. I signed up for the class to learn about the writing system, one of the very earliest known, but learned so much about Elam, a civilization that I had not even known existed and archaeology practices, as well. These aren't really language books, but I did take the class and buy the books as a result of my interest in languages.

Schmandt-Besserat. *Before Writing: From Counting to Cuneiform*. Volume 1. Austin: University of Texas Press, Austin: 1992. Condition: Good, slight damage to dust jacket

Russian-Chinese-English Chemical and Technical Dictionary. London: Scientific Information Consultants, 1965. Condition: Good. This is a book that I had initially checked out of the UChicago library and was so fascinated by that I decided to buy my own. My copy used to belong to the U.S. Army, which is appropriate for a book that is such a product of the Cold War.