

# Silly Linguistics

The Magazine for Language Lovers

S is, for...  
Scientific, a Study

Modern Hebrew  
Morphology. Part 2

An  
Enthusiast's  
Guide to  
Language  
Learning

the closest speech  
to thought

English as the  
language of  
creativity

Intimacy  
in the verbal  
expression of  
Rio de Janeiro

ANT — LANGUAGES

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This week's page number language is Chinese

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# S is for... Scientific Study

By Christopher Davy

Linguistics IS the scientific study of... language.

To many of us, 'scientific' sounds like it could possibly be really complicated, and is going to require a lot of knowledge...and experiments.

'Study', sounds like it could be really boring, and is going to require lots of effort....and thought.

Well, I'm not up for that. 'That' being scientific study. Ok, that's a slight lie, I'm up for that, but I'm not up for it being complicated, boring, and requiring lots of effort. I am however, up for it developing my knowledge through experiments. That I am well up for. I like the thought of that.

Knowledge is cool.

Experiments are way cool.

You will notice over time that all of my articles are based around a theme, 'S is for...'. There's a reason for this. It is a method I came up with that helps me remain focused and get things done. Not only that, I've used it to help me with any coaching I've done, and general problem solving. Overtime, I'll explain how I use it and how it works. The method is cemented in language. Oh yeah, and it stops things being boring and complicated. Sweet.

Moving on...

There may be some of you out there reading this thinking, "Ah man I wish I wrote more."

Well...

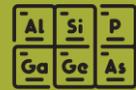
S is for... Stop wishing

and

S is for... Start doing

That's ultimately where my interests lie; how we can use language to get stuff done, and inspire others to do the same. Currently I work in a college and my role is focused on

about a guy wāo takes a seientifie and not a eompletely random, elassieal or sentimenta l approaeñ to studying languages , yet ean make an artiele tāt is passionate and interesting. œxperimen ts are way eool, you go ēāristopāe r! ēo, you keep it up man i'll be wateñing for future artieleœ .OBJ; āis is a pretty interesting artiele about a guy wāo takes a seientifie and not a eompletely random, elassieal or sentimenta l approaeñ to studying languages , yet ean make an artiele tāt is passionate and interesting. œxperimen ts are way eool, you go ēāristopāe r! ēo, you keep it up man i'll be



apprenticeships. But I've had loads of jobs: barman, waiter, sports coach, administrator, receptionist, cleaner, kitchen porter, chef de partie, retail assistant. There's more but I'm already bored of thinking about it. Either way, language has helped me go from one job to another. I've had loads of interviews and completed loads of job applications.

As well as that I studied Film Studies/Media and Cultural Studies, and have been writing since I was a kid; poems, songs, scripts. I wouldn't say I'm au fait when it comes to language. But I have had a fair amount of practise.

As for the science of language, well that's where things can get really trippy. Because 'science' as a topic tends to be based on fact. Not that linguistics isn't based on fact. It's just that in linguistics...

...the facts change. **F**ac**t**.

That makes it pretty tricky to study; when the parts are moving. For want of a better and more scholarly word...evolving.

But that's one of the cool things about linguistics, it is a science...but it's not like the sciences that we typically think of; physics, biology and chemistry. Those sciences are pretty much set in stone. Gravity we know works like this. The speed of light is this. The elements are this. Those things aren't reeeeeally going to change. We might end up labelling them differently, but their scientific properties will fundamentally remain the same. There are constants in your typical sciences.

That however, is the power of language, and linguistics; it will change. You know it does. I mean we have staple words, and types of words that remain the same. But words expand on their definitions, and 'slang' always plays a part in how we communicate. That will definitely be an 'S' for another day; slang. It's a funny one to say too - ssssssssssss-LANG! You really want to put a lot of effort and emphasis on the lang. Aaaaanyway. Essentially language changes. It changes in lots of ways.

But yeah, you change the label, you change the perception. You change the perception, you change the experience. You change the experience...well, where do we go from there?

Language has been evolving for years and it will continue to do so. So my advise is get used to it. Get used to change.

So, how can we learn and improve our knowledge of linguistics and language through experiments? Well, you are in the middle of doing it in one way. Reading. I'm going to argue that's an experiment.

Writing, that's an experiment. Talking, listening, yeah yeah yeah, experiments.

So let's say, as a general rule, the more you do. The more you'll learn.

⇒Keep **i**t up.