

# Language and culture

Cultural Aspects of English-speaking countries

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The limits of my language means the  
limits of my world.

— *Ludwig Wittgenstein* —

AZ QUOTES



Language is neither reactionary nor  
progressive; it is quite simply fascist;  
for fascism does not prevent  
speech, it compels speech.

— *Roland Barthes* —

AZ QUOTES

# Humpty Dumpty

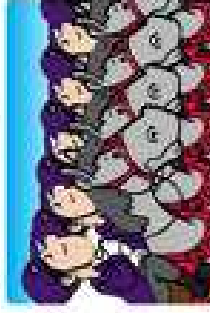
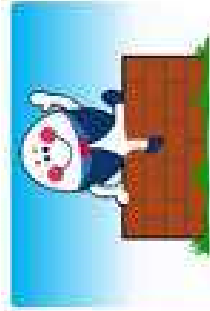
Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

All the king's horses and

all the king's men,

Couldn't put Humpty together again.



# How languages differ

- English – ‘sat’
- Indonesian – ‘sit’ – no verb form to mark tense
- Russian – ‘sat’ also has to indicate gender and if sitting was completed or not.
- Turkish – ‘sat’ has to indicate how you acquired information (saw or heard about?)

Do speakers of different languages understand, perceive and remember experiences in different ways?

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black dress, stands in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, a large, leafless tree with a thick trunk and many bare branches stands against a pale, overcast sky. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

*To have another language is to possess a  
second soul.*

*- Charlemagne*

[www.wishaherd.com](http://www.wishaherd.com)

How do we think about  
fundamental aspects of  
existence:

space?

time?

causality?

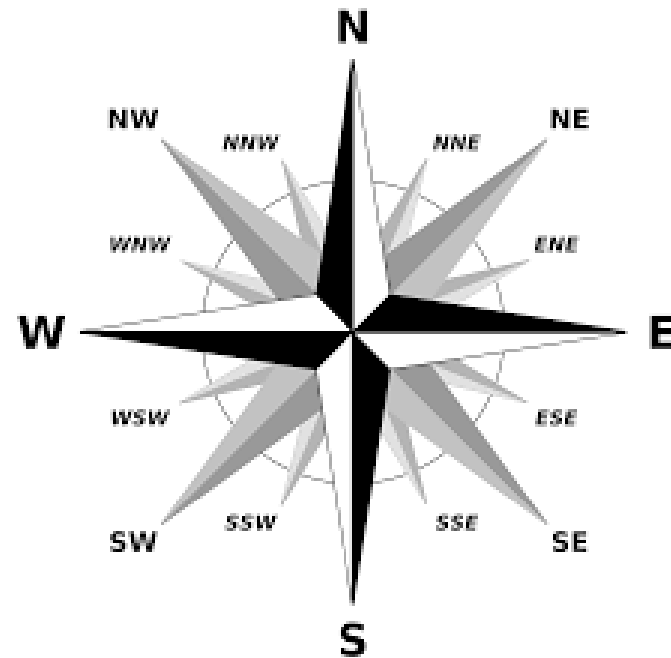


# Pormpuraaw



# In Pormpuraaw

- There's an ant on your southeast leg.



A: Where are you going?

B: A long way to the south-southwest.



# Experiment

- Arrange pictures according to temporal order
- People tested facing north, south, east, west



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# Results

Time arranged from east to west

- Facing south: LEFT → RIGHT
- Facing north: RIGHT → LEFT
- Facing east: TOWARDS THE BODY
- Facing west: AWAY FROM THE BODY

PAST TIME



**Mandarin**



FUTURE TIME

FUTURE TIME



**Aymara**



PAST TIME

# Wardrobe malfunction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npF1lkKEM9o>

Fausey, C.M. and Boroditsky, L., 2010. Subtle linguistic cues influence perceived blame and financial liability. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 17(5), pp.644-650.

## Agentive Report

Justin Timberlake and Janet Jackson performed during the 2004 Super Bowl Half-time Show. Toward the end of the song, Timberlake followed Jackson across the stage and stood beside her. As they sang the last line, Timberlake reached across the front of Jackson's body. In this final dance move, **he unfastened a snap and tore part of the bodice! He slid the cover right off Jackson's chest!** This incident made for a lot of controversy.

## Nonagentive Report

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Language is the road map of a culture.  
It tells you where its people come from and  
where they are going.

Walt Whitman