

What is a language? – Matthew Reynolds  
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Quotations and references

1. ‘There are few generally accepted rules or criteria for deciding when two ways of speaking should be regarded as being the same language and when they should be seen as two separate ones.’  
Tore Janson, *Speak: A Short History of Languages* (OUP, 2011), pp. 23-4.
2. ‘The idea of a language as a discrete entity was a concept devised by European philologists’ and, quoting G. A. Grierson: ‘“it thus follows that, while the dialect-names in the following pages have been taken from the indigenous nomenclature, nearly all the language-names have had to be invented by Europeans.”’ Robert J. C. Young, ‘That Which is Casually Called a Language’, *PMLA*, 131 (2016), 1207-21 (pp. 1208, 1216).
3. ‘The codification of languages is not so much a process of writing down what already exists as it is a process of *reducing* languages to writing ... the notion of [a] “language” does not refer to any real object ... the effects of repeated construction and reconstruction ... these inventions have a reality for the people who deal with them.’ Alastair Pennycook, ‘The Myth of English as an International Language’, *Disinventing and Reinventing Languages*, edited by Sinfree Makoni and Alastair Pennycook (Multilingual Matters, 2006), pp. 90-115 (pp. 92, 98).
4. Naoki Sakai, *Translation and Subjectivity: on ‘Japan’ and Cultural Nationalism* (University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Lydia H. Liu, *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity – China, 1900-1937* (Stanford University Press, 1995).
5. “What a pity it is he isn’t a prig!”  
“Ah!” said Master Charles Bates; “he don’t know what’s good for him.”  
The Dodger sighed again, and resumed his pipe: as did Charley Bates. They both smoked, for some seconds, in silence.  
“I suppose you don’t even know what a prig is?” said the Dodger mournfully.  
“I think I know that,” replied Oliver, looking up. “It’s a the—; you’re one, are you not?” inquired Oliver, checking himself.  
Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, Chapter 18
6. ‘The kind of language training that would disclose the irreducible hybridity of all languages.’  
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (Columbia University Press, 2003), p. 9.
7. ‘Astonishing as it may seem, language has not been a category of analysis in the now vast academic literature on globalization.’ Mary Louise Pratt, ‘Comparative Literature and the Global Languagescape’, *A Companion to Comparative Literature*, edited by Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 273-95 (p. 274).
8. ‘We aim to recover and understand the literary practices and dynamics within multilingual regional societies.’ Karima Laachir, Sara Marzagora, Francesca Orsini, ‘Multilingual Locals and Significant Geographies: for a Ground-up and Located Approach to World Literature’, *Modern Languages Open*, (1), p.19. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.3828/mlo.v0i0.190>.
9. Nacqui sub Iulio, ancor che fosse tardi,  
e vissi a Roma sotto ’l buono Augusto ... Dante, *Inferno* I