How the Languages We Speak Shape the Ways We Think

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Do people who speak different languages think differently? Do languages merely express thoughts, or do they secretly shape the very thoughts we wish to express? Are some thoughts unthinkable without language? Why do we think the way we do? Why does the world appear to us the way it does? Humans communicate with one another using 7,000 or so different languages, and each language differs from the next in innumerable ways. At stake are basic questions all of us have about ourselves, human nature, and reality. I will discuss research conducted around the world and focus on how language shapes the way we think about color, space, time, causality, and agency.