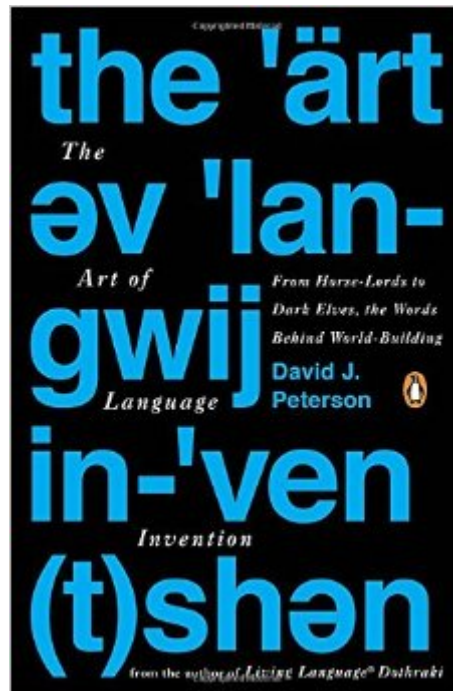


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# The Art Of Language Invention: From Horse-Lords To Dark Elves, The Words Behind World-Building



## Synopsis

An insider's tour through the construction of invented languages from the bestselling author and creator of languages for the HBO series *Game of Thrones* and the Syfy series *Defiance*. From master language creator David J. Peterson comes a creative guide to language construction for sci-fi and fantasy fans, writers, game creators, and language lovers. Peterson offers a captivating overview of language creation, covering its history from Tolkien's creations and Klingon to today's thriving global community of conlangers. He provides the essential tools necessary for inventing and evolving new languages, using examples from a variety of languages including his own creations, punctuated with references to everything from *Star Wars* to Michael Jackson. Along the way, behind-the-scenes stories lift the curtain on how he built languages like Dothraki for HBO's *Game of Thrones* and Shifumi for Marvel's *Thor: The Dark World*, and an included phrasebook will start fans speaking Peterson's constructed languages. *The Art of Language Invention* is an inside look at a fascinating culture and an engaging entry into a flourishing art form—and it might be the most fun you'll ever have with linguistics.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Have you ever wanted to invent your own language? No, neither have I. But if you love to learn about language and languages, *The Art of Language Invention* might put a different spin on the way you look at the subject. David Peterson explains in scholarly detail just what goes into inventing a language. He describes the people who invent languages for fun, and they are an enthusiastically

geeky bunch. They strictly apply the rules of language, as we know them, to constructed languages (conlangs). They don't necessarily expect or want people to speak these new languages, the way Zamenhof wanted Esperanto to bring people together. For most of the conlangers, it's a cerebral exercise, like a game of chess or a SimCity community. There is even a small market for invented languages for TV and movie stories. Peterson's introduction and first chapter takes you into this world, but after that, it's a college level linguistics course, explaining how grammar and orthography, etc. work and how to apply it all to invented languages. This was a little deeper than I wanted to go, but the case studies that he sprinkles throughout describing how he solved various linguistic problems in creating languages, were quite interesting. He finishes up with a quick chapter on how to get involved in the conlang community and the job prospects for such skills (dim). (Thanks to Penguin First Reads for a digital review copy.)

I got more than I bargained for with this book. While I have learned how Mr. Peterson wrote the Dothraki language for Game of Thrones; I have also learned a lot more about how everyone can read and use the same word in many different contexts. In addition, that there are so many ways to use your vocal range to produce a variety of different pronunciations and sounds. Which if you are a singer or an actor, I am sure you already know how to do the vocal exercises. Yes, I agree that this book does read like a text book but a very intriguing and informative book. I did not think I would like reading this book as much as I did. Also, the Case Studies that were featured in this book I found to be interesting and like added bonuses. Geared with this additional knowledge, I will now be watching movies, television shows, and books with more of a critical eye on the language used.

This book is amazing! I have been world building for sometime now with the intent of creating several languages that will develop within it. While I had what I thought were the fundamentals to get me started this book is the lighthouse indicating I was soon going to crash, but also is showing me the direction I should be headed (imagine a large neon arrow posted next to the lighthouse). This is spectacular and I cannot wait to finish my first reading and begin my second (this time with notetaking)!

If you've ever thought about creating a language, but didn't know where to start, or you were intimidated or overwhelmed by the masses of terminology or 'denseness' of other books, start here. If you've been creating languages for decades and just need a fresh perspective, a good laugh, or some commiseration, check this out. If you're a linguistics

student struggling with the basics, and your Intro to Linguistics reading is so dry you can't choke it down, this could easily pass as a funny, entertaining, and fairly complete Linguistics 101 textbook, with some conlanging on the side.

THE ART OF LANGUAGE INVENTION is a thorough, funny introduction to the basics of creating a language. Apparently, making a new language involves a lot more than making a word list or alphabet. Who knew? I tend to geek out over learning how things are done, and I learned a lot reading this book. I swear I learned something on every page. The author gives information on a ton of topics, such as the different types of oral sounds, how grammar plays a role, and even a quick primer on font creation. There's also sections on how language evolves in different ways and why that's important, morphology, and thinking about how aliens might speak. I had no idea just how much work and creativity goes into language creation, nor did I know that there are communities of people who create languages for fun. THE ART OF LANGUAGE INVENTION really could be a textbook. It is a bit dense at times, but I'm just a layperson, not a linguist or beginning conlanger. To keep things from getting too dense, the author includes case studies on how he created languages for shows such as Game of Thrones and Defiance. I could see those sections being super interesting for fans of those shows, since it really was cool to see how he evolved Dothraki from a few words in the books to a real language. Lastly, the author has a humorous writing style, and he uses jokes and pop culture references to make his examples easy to understand. I'd recommend THE ART OF LANGUAGE INVENTION for fans who want to know more about Dothraki, Castithan, Irathient, or any of the other languages created by the author; people who want to dip their toes into creating a new language; or even sci-fi/fantasy writers, because just thinking about how a language might evolve could help with worldbuilding. Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

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