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The Languages of the World

Kenneth Katzner, Kirk Miller
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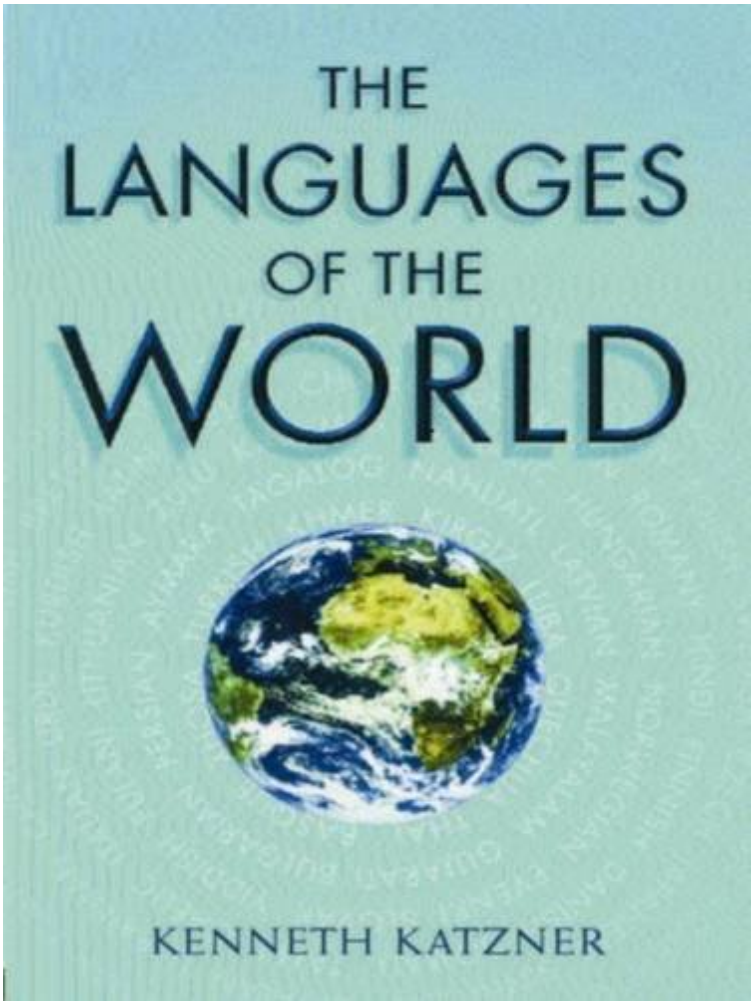

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#5552641 in Books 2002-05-10Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.25 x 6.25 x 1.00l, 1.56 #File Name: 041525003X400 pages | File size: 57.Mb

Kenneth Katzner, Kirk Miller : The Languages of the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Languages of the World:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Labor of Love That Needs EditingBy A Reviewer"The Languages of the World" was obviously a labor of love on the part of its author, the late Kenneth Katzner. I first bought the Second Edition several years ago, and was fascinated by the tidbits of information that it offered up. However, the Third Edition (published just a year before Katzner's death) has some shortcomings and outright mistakes in it that I hope some future editor of a Fourth Edition might address. One example of a shortcoming is that Katzner often leaves plenty of blank space after many of his entries--space that could well be used to give a more detailed description of the language in question, such as grammatical structure. And one example of an outright mistake that I caught was that the author writes that the "double-s" () in German was abolished in a spelling reform of the year 1998. In fact, this

particular letter is still used, but the spelling reform has decreed that it should only be used when the preceding vowel is long. Therefore, it is no longer used in the word "dass" ("that," in the sense of "He said that..."), but it is still used in words like Strae (street) and "Auerdem" ("Besides that,..."). That said, if a future editor does put out a Fourth Edition, he/she could correct some of Katzner's errors and add more detailed information in the individual entries. All in all though, "The Languages of the World" is a wonderful introduction to its eponymous subject for the lay reader; and my biggest regret is that Kenneth Katzner is no longer with us.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Summary for the Non-SpecialistBy Readz AlotAs a person who has long been fascinated by languages and the way they work, I ask myself why I waited so long to buy this book. (Maybe because it's fairly costly for the page count?)It's a very fun (if you like that sort of thing) summary of around 200 langauges from around the world, ranging from the well known [French, English, Spanish] to the obscure [Avar, Faroese]. I will admit that until I picked this up, I had NO idea how many languages were spoken in the former Soviet Union.While the book is generally VERY well done, I would have liked to see a few things handled differently.1. Actual translations (rather than adapted translations) of the poetry, to give the reader a better sense of the structure and flow of the language and the sorts of words used.2. Transliterations of non-Roman alphabet languages -- again, to give the reader a better sense of how the language actually sounds.3. (Especially for the more obscure languages ...) some discussion of printing and publishing in these languages. How many books/newspapers are published each year in, say, Maltese or Nenets, as compared to English or French.Despite these minor flaws, highly recommended.11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Very good for basic knowledge despite a few errors.By Eric AndrewI own both the second and third editions of this book, and I can attest that the improvements in the third edition make this volume far more valuable than before. Katzner now provides far more general information about language families that should satisfy the curiosity of someone not in this field. Also, the individual language entries were updated. I especially value the language map.My two main gripes with the book are: 1) there isn't enough information about individual languages, especially those with non-Roman character sets; and 2) there are some errors that need to be corrected. One of the most glaring errors that I noticed within 3 minutes of opening the new edition is Katzner's remark that the (eszet) character was totally eliminated from the German language in the 1998 spelling reform. This is undeniably false.

This third edition of Kenneth Katzner's best-selling guide to languages is essential reading for language enthusiasts everywhere. Written with the non-specialist in mind, its user-friendly style and layout, delightful original passages, and exotic scripts, will continue to fascinate the reader. This new edition has been thoroughly revised to include more languages, more countries, and up-to-date data on populations.Features include:*information on nearly 600 languages*individual descriptions of 200 languages, with sample passages and English translations*concise notes on where each language is spoken, its history, alphabet and pronunciation*coverage of every country in the world, its main language and speaker numbers*an introduction to language families

'A reference tool for all linguists as well as a collector's item for those in allied fields, enabling even an amateur to identify foreign scripts with ease and satisfaction ... to be recommended.' - Modern Language 'A wholly fascinating mini-kaleidoscope indicating the largely diverse variety of the world's main languages and their scripts and of their cultures.' - The Good Book GuideAbout the AuthorPrior to his recent retirement, Kenneth Katzner worked for the US government and also served as an editor on a number of international encyclopedias and English dictionaries. He is also author of a large English-Russian/Russian-English Dictionary.