Professor Lera Boroditsky Presents How Language Shapes The Way We Think

Lera Boroditsky is a cognitive scientist and professor in the fields of language and cognition. She is one of the main contributors to the theory of "linguistic relativity", which is the theory that the structure of a language can influence its speakers' world view.

Lera was born in Belarus, and her family emigrated to the US when she was 12 years old. She learned English as her 4th language, which contributed to her deep interest in linguistics as a science.

This video is a TED Talk presentation with some complex vocabulary and ideas. Answer the questions below with a summary of points that Lera Boroditsky makes.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKK7wGAYP6k

Vocabulary to check before answering the questions:

to exhale - To breathe out.
hisses and puffs - Explosive bursts of breath
to waltz - Can mean either to dance, or also to act/walk in a very casual way
a quirk - A strange (but often positive) aspect of something
implications - Consequences
to hone - To improve something gradually over a period of time

1. **(00:00-00:50)** What are the physical stages which are taking place in order for Lera Boroditsky to transmit complicated thoughts to us?

2. **(00:50-01:23)** What idea has does Lera Boroditsky put into our minds, and what adjective does she use to describe the idea?

3. **(01:23-02:14)** What point is the presenter trying to make when she gives quotes from Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne and writer William Shakespeare?

4. **(02:14-03:13)** What is an interesting feature of the Kuuk Thaayorre language?

5. **(03:13-03:31)** What is the advantage for people who speak languages with this feature?

6. **(03:31-03:53)** What was one common misconception about humans?

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7. **(04:38-05:33)** How did speakers of Kuuk Thaayorre arrange photos of Lera Boroditsky's grandfather?

8. **(05:33-05:51)** Why is time "chasing" Lera Boroditsky, and what adjective does she use to comment on this?

9. **(06:20-06:51)** What adjectives are German speakers more likely to use to describe bridges, what adjectives are Spanish speakers more likely to use to describe bridges and why?

10. **(08:59-09:41)** How do English and Spanish differ in the way that they describe accidents?

11. **(09:49-10:55)** What are English speakers and Spanish speakers more likely to remember about an accident, and what consequences could this have?

BONUS QUESTION: (12:28-12:54) What are the exact words that Lera Boroditsky uses in these 26 seconds?

12. **(12:54-13:35)** What 2 pieces of bad news does the presenter give at the end of the presentation?