READERS REVIEWS ON AMAZON PAGE OF SECOND EDITION OF *The Speaking Self: Language Lore and English Usage* **(2017)**

CSP66 [alias Tony Jappy]

5.0 out of 5 stars **A very serious but often hilarious study of contemporary American English usage**

May 14, 2017

Format: Paperback

The second edition of Michael Shapiro's book, The Speaking Self, continues in a considerably expanded form the purpose and analyses of the first. In our days of the multimillion-token corpora that afford linguists macroscopic distributions of language phenomena this book stands out as a unique contribution to modern linguistics by offering a microscopic analysis of a host of examples of the interrelationship of language and society to be found in mainly contemporary American English. Drawn from the posts on a weblog, the analyses are thematically organized in chapters. Each topic is accompanied by glossaries which make the content available not only to the specialist but also to the honnête homme (and femme) wishing to understand the riches and the vagaries of the language and its uses that they share with their fellows. The sections are always authoritative, sometimes acerbic in tone but never hectoring, and the final chapter on linguistic change is a model for all students of linguistics. The Speaking Self is recommended reading for students, researchers and academics, but should appeal to non-specialists interested in the language they speak and write.

Jeff G[oodman]

5 stars **A Classic in the Art and Science of Language Usage**

October 21, 2017

Format: Paperback

Michael Shapiro's "The Speaking Self: Language Lore and English Usage, now in a beautifully expanded second edition by Springer International Publishing, has carved an esteemed place as a landmark work of contemporary linguistics and language usage. Based on a collection of widely read and critically acclaimed blog posts from the eminent linguist Michael Shapiro, The Speaking Self is a masterful and compelling set of self-contained essays on current American speech and writing. It is engaging for both professional linguists, which I am not, and for the non-scholar who finds language usage a fascinating subject for observation and contemplation.

Mr. Shapiro applies his unmatched observations of contemporary linguistic usage with a master scholar's understanding of the roots and nuances of such diverse topics as "The Jazzification of Music Terminology, to "Stammering as a cultural Datum, to "The Genius of the Mot Juste."

Compelling, witty, acerbic, and profound, the essays take the reader on an unforgettable journey. The book contains an abundant wealth of fascinating subjects combined with Mr. Shapiro's illuminating insights into the nature of language. Mr. Shapiro's book surely is destined to become a classic.

Vincent Colapietro

***5.0 out of 5 stars* At the heart of this book is the love of a humanist-scientist for language**

October 7, 2017

Format: Paperback

The author writes about language with the rigor of a scientist, the erudition of a scholar, and more than the touch of a poet. The prose is for the most part immediately accessible and, when it is not, the author has the ability to explain technical terms in a clear, engaging manner. He does so just at the point where the reader wants a term defined or clarified. He moreover has a knack for finding illuminating and interesting examples. In reading this book, the thoughtful reader will acquire a more informed, critical, and imaginative relationship to both the most commonplace expressions and the hidden but important features language, as only a linguist who has devoted his life to exploring the opacities, intricacies, and magic of language can do. Though this is not a manual for writers, it richly supplements such reference works. The romance and drama of speaking are in the foreground, while countless important details about how language works are brought into sharp focus. At the heart of this book is the love of a humanist-scientist for language. Anyone who shares that love or simply has an interest in language will delight in the lore and facts about usage so carefully assembled and displayed by Michael Shapiro.