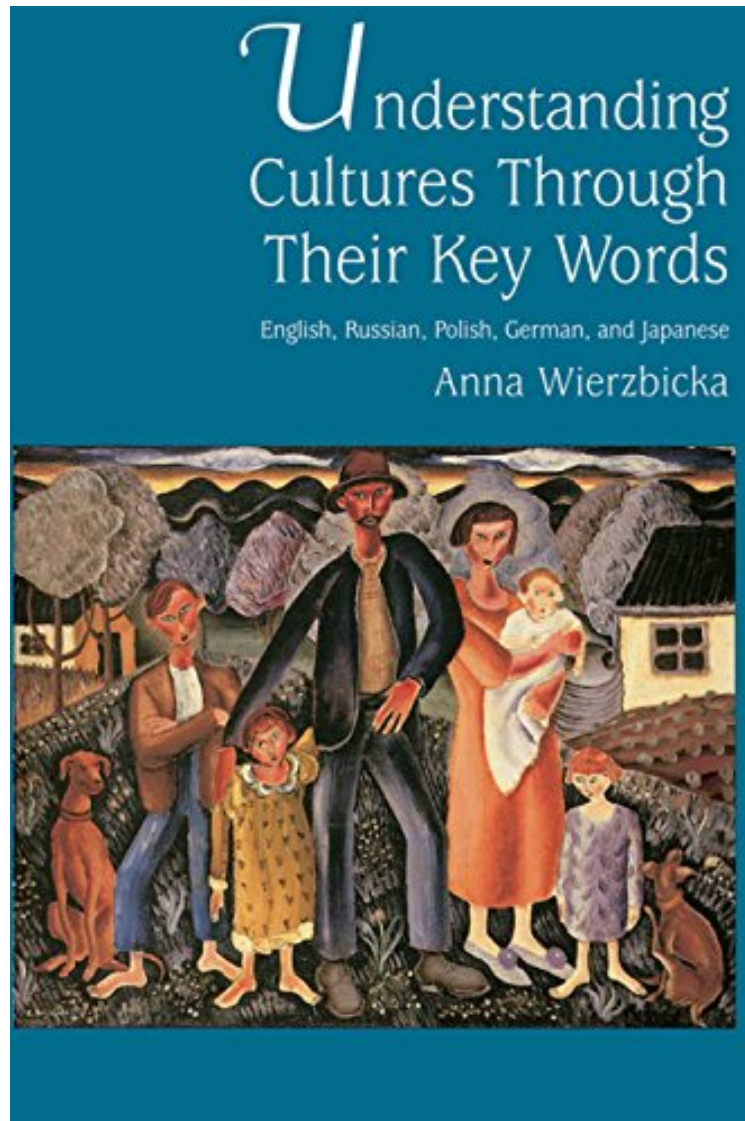


[PDF] Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese (Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics)

Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese (Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics)

Von Anna Wierzbicka

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Von Anna Wierzbicka : Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian, Polish, German, and Japanese (Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Understanding Cultures through Their Key Words: English, Russian,

Polish, German, and Japanese (Oxford Studies in Anthropological Linguistics):

Kundenrezensionen
Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen
1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.
Wierzbicka's academic fluff chokes meanings.
Von Ein Kunde
I read this book for an anthropology class at a western private university. I have to say that while Wierzbicka's domination of different languages is impressive, her "fluffy" explanations of the key words in the book tend to bore the reader, thus leaving him/her more confused about the meanings of the key words than before. Furthermore, her findings tend to undermine her own premise that a culture's key words cannot be understood except by understanding the culture itself. No one person can claim to explain--as she does--what certain words mean within their cultural realm without having been immersed totally in that culture (usually born and raised). Thus, one is lead to believe that even she doesn't understand the "key words" totally, and her credibility is therefore undermined. I wouldn't recommend the book to anyone with less than a Ph.D. in Linguistics.
1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Fascinating stuff.
Von Ein Kunde
Contrary to the previous reviewer's opinion, I found this book fascinating. I don't have a Ph.D. in linguistics either. Her claim is *not* that one cannot understand the key words of a culture without being immersed in the culture, only that one cannot understand the key words of a culture by means of simplistic translations or definitions. She attempts to provide careful and precise definitions, given in what she calls the "Natural Semantic Metalanguage" -- an extremely restricted vocabulary consisting of words that, as far as she has been able to tell via research, have equivalents in every natural language. I don't buy all of her "Natural Semantic Metalanguage" theories (for which see her other book *Semantics: Primes and Universals*) but it sure is a useful tool for the job she's doing here.

Kurzbeschreibung
This book develops the dual themes that languages can differ widely in their vocabularies, and are also sensitive indices to the cultures to which they belong. Wierzbicka seeks to demonstrate that every language has "key concepts," expressed in "key words," which reflect the core values of a given culture. She shows that cultures can be revealingly studied, compared, and explained to outsiders through their key concepts, and that the analytical framework necessary for this purpose is provided by the "natural semantic metalanguage," based on lexical universals, that the author and colleagues have developed on the basis of wide-ranging cross-linguistic investigations. Appealing to anthropologists, psychologists, and philosophers as well as linguists, this book demonstrates that cultural patterns can be studied in a verifiable, rigorous, and non-speculative way, on the basis of empirical evidence and in a coherent theoretical framework.
Pressestimmen
Weissbort and Eysteinson's collection is nothing less than magnificent - both in terms of its size and of its scope. * Ida Klitgard, *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, Vol. 14:2

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