**What difference does (or can) acquiring the vocabulary of the virtues and vices make to people old enough to be interested in self-improvement/being good?**

Rosalind Hursthouse

Sophia Vasalou has a very interesting paper in the *Journal of Ethics* (2012 pp 67-87) called “Educating Virtue  as a Mastery of Language”, which highlights the fact (I take it is a fact) that, introduced into *really* ordinary practical discourse and thought, the virtue vocabulary tends to sound artificial, inappropriate, disproportionately grave and weighty. She pinpointed for me exactly what is so *odd*  about contemporary virtue ethics for people who are not soaked in it, and why this matters, something I had never recognised clearly before .

Vasalou winds up arguing that the actual use of the virtue/vice terms in such thought "may" be what each grown up individual needs for their moral self-education (I don't know what to make of the 'may'.) I'm very tempted by the claim that it *does*, which would mean that the answer to my question would be 'It's a jolly good way of improving yourself morally - assuming of course that that's what you want to do.'  But I haven’t yet found any experimental stuff that does more than suggest much more than that it *might* be a good way, and I really would like something stronger.