

Technology On Language And Writing

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Abstract: *IT revolution has revamped the present civilization totally. This storm has overturned the style of life all over the world totally and drastically. This paper quickly glances through the observations about how technological advance can be correlated to language or more precisely the system of writing. The contention is that the system of writing which originated from symbols, expanded into fully-fledged language with rules regarding spelling, grammar and vocabulary is now in a stage of going back.*

Keywords: *Technology, Fragmentation, Synchronic, Asynchronic, symbols, Modern English*

Introduction

Human race has been witnessing changes in all spheres of life since existence of mankind. All these changes create an awareness to learn, invent and perfect everything, which ultimately results in the development of humanity. Language has been playing a vital role in all such advancements. The human society needs language for communication between its members as well as with other societies. As language makes it possible for individuals to live in a society, language can be regarded as a social activity rather than a means of communication. So the changes and advancements in the society will be reflected in the languages too.

Different languages all over the world have followed different paths with specific landmarks; but our central concern here is the English language for various reasons. First of all English has acquired the status of the one and only global language. Secondly our operations here are basically centered around the English language. Thirdly English is the language of technology and, our studies related to second language learning centre around the English language.

Evolution of Writing

As we know language is manifested in two forms: speech and writing. Writing has this advantage over speech: it allows human knowledge to transcend time and space. Much research has been done all over the world to know more and more about the origins and evolution of language as a communication system. Present day language experts are of the view that spending time on the

subject is a futile attempt as there is very little evidence. Writing must have evolved out of speech when man found it essential to communicate at a distance and also record things. Anyway we know that language and technology did not have their origins all on a sudden. It is generally believed that the growth of language can be compared to the growth of material culture. With the advancement of time one can notice acceleration in the rate of change over language parallel to that of material culture.

Writing is the fulfillment of man's need to express his thought, preserve his thought, and suggest his thought. Available evidence shows that writing began in the form of pictographic symbols. Each pictogram is a direct image of the object it represents. There is a non arbitrary relationship between the form and the meaning of the symbol. After this, it was the time of the ideographic symbols each symbol standing for a whole range of ideas. Next, the cuneiform writing was formed by the Sumerians by making wedge shaped marks on clay using reed. The crude technology of reed and clay gradually evolved in to brush and leather or papyrus. That is how the Egyptian hieroglyphic writing arose around 3000BC. The limited number of signs used by the Sumerians sometime between 4000 and 3000BC became conventionalized and remote from the original objects. Slowly, the pictograms evolved in to linguistic symbols standing for sounds. This is a very revolutionary step in the development of the writing system, The English alphabet, in fact, has been traced back to the Latin, Greek and finally the Egyptian hieroglyphic.

As far as English is concerned, the Old English and Middle English, full of inflections, developed in to modern English with a steadily enlarging vocabulary and standardized grammar and spelling. The invention of the Printing press and other scientific discoveries led to more of intermingling among people. If the Renaissance and the next two centuries were the period of the expanding lexicon, the post war period was that of the fragmenting lexicon. In the twentieth century lit is the inadequacy and arbitrariness of language which is mostly spoken about. Structuralist principles and Derrida's Deconstruction theory have gone a long way in augmenting the view that language is inadequate to express deeper thoughts and that multiplicity of meanings is a barrier to mutual communication. Fragmentation of language set in as the most significant trait of the latter decades of the twentieth century.

Language and Technology

The language traits of the twenty first century are the vanishing of dialects, homogenization of language, simplification of language, shortened words, and the use of symbols on larger scale. Modern man who spends a large part of his time in the company of the computers and cellular phones is capable of communicating with people near and far using text messages and the simplified suggestions and symbols that appear in front of us on the screen. Interactivity has become the order of

the day through asynchronous and synchronous communication systems available with latest technologies.

If in the earlier periods, we sent letters taking extreme care about the format and the formal or informal style to be maintained, things are much changed in the present day scenario. Technology has drastically changed man's concepts of communication and relationships. Without going in for a highly ornate or literary style, a person can express his emotions to his girl-friend living far away making use of emotion charged smileys, emojis and short text messages. There is no confusion at all as to the full meaning of the brief messages. These animated smileys and emojis often carry the emotions and feelings better than words can do.

Conclusion

This doesn't mean that technology is going to have disastrous effects on language; rather it is a part of an inevitable change over the course of time. In fact language experts like David Crystal who have done real serious work on internet related language change do not believe that the internet and e-mail are affecting the nature of the written language in general. According to him, it is only while sending the emails that the informal style and abbreviated forms remain. In fact, when the printing press was invented the 15th century, there was a lot of hue and cry and many people thought it as the intervention of the Satan to defile the word of God. The printing technology stayed on, making language more accessible to people and thus democratizing it. The fact remains that we cannot predict language change; only when the change has happened we realize it.

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