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INFLUENCE OF GESTURES ON EXPANDING THE VOCABULARY BASE OF LANGUAGES

ВЛИЯНИЕ ЖЕСТОВ НА РАСШИРЕНИЕ СЛОВАРНОЙ БАЗЫ ЯЗЫКОВ

Abstract:

This article is devoted to studying the effect of using gestures on the emergence of new words in the languages. Gestures are often used by people to emphasize the meaning of some points of the verbal speech or to express feelings and emotions, which can't be expressed by words. From this point, new words start to appear in the language, which are more descriptive and meaningful to their predecessors. Cultures that use more nonverbal forms of communication tend to have bigger dictionary bases, or even if they have small dictionary bases, they will have several words which don't have any equivalent in other languages. There is always a tendency for the language to improve and enrich its vocabulary base. Countries that have a huge population, tend to have bigger language bases, where numerous factors affect the expansion of the language. Such factors include the use of gestures, which plays a role in easing the communication in crowded cities. Bigger language bases mean more literacy, and accordingly more literacy means advancement in different branches of life sciences and human sciences.

Keywords: gestures, language emergence, linguistics, non-verbal communication, cultures, different, human sciences

Аннотация:

Данная статья посвящена изучению влияния использования жестов на появление новых слов в языках. Жесты часто используются людьми для того, чтобы подчеркнуть значение некоторых моментов вербальной речи, или для выражения чувств и эмоций, которые не могут быть выражены словами. С этого момента в языке начинают появляться новые слова, более описательные и значимые по сравнению со своими предшественниками. Культуры, которые используют больше невербальных форм общения, как правило, имеют большую словарную базу, или даже если у них небольшая словарная база, в них будет несколько слов, которые не имеют отношения к другим языкам. Всегда существует тенденция к совершенствованию и обогащению словарной базы языка. Страны с огромным населением, как правило, имеют большую языковую базу, где на распространение языка влияет множество факторов. К таким факторам относится использование жестов, что играет роль в облегчении общения в многолюдных городах. Большая языковая база означает большую грамотность, а, соответственно, большая грамотность означает прогресс в различных областях наук о жизни и гуманитарных науках.

Ключевые слова: жесты, рождение языка, лингвистика, невербальная коммуникация

Introduction

The busy everyday life and the overpopulation in some cities has led to the emergence of different types of kinesics, including but not limited to gestures. Gestures are a way through which people can communicate with each other without the necessity for verbal speech. Where people use gestures to express literally everything, their feelings, emotions and needs. Gestures are considered to be complementary, i.e., give additional meaning to the person's verbal speech.

The use of gestures has contributed to the emergence of new words that are more meaningful than their original predecessors, adding the value of the gesture to the main value of the word, to create one or more new words that are more descriptive. Some of these words can be considered slang, while a number of these words can be considered a literary language.

How languages are created

Languages can define thoughts on an infinite number of topics such as the weather, science, the future, or the past. Languages are used not to only deliver information, but to seek information and to give commands. Unlike the animal communication system, it can express negation [1]. Each language contains vocabulary of thousands of words, formed from different speech sounds. Speakers can form a limitless number of phrases and sentences by combining words, and adding prefixes and suffixes, and the general meaning of the sentence is based on the words used in it. What is still more noteworthy is that every typical child can learn the whole language system, including the vocabulary and grammar just from hearing others use it in their everyday life dialogues, or from how the parents communicate with each other at home [2].

All the languages present nowadays, have thousands of words that could be used to express anything, or show negation as well. Languages change gradually over time due to culture changes or due to the presence of foreigners who speak another language in the same country. However, the construction, architecture and significant power of language are constant [3].

A question here arises about how the characteristics of human language got their start. Presumably, it couldn't have been a couple of cavemen who decided to form a language, since to do so, they would have had to have a language to start with. Researchers suspect that the language characteristics evolved in stages, perhaps through millions of years, through a sequence of hominid lines. During earlier stages, sounds would have been used to designate a vast range of objects and actions in the surrounding environment, and people would be able to formulate new

vocabulary to discuss new things. To achieve a larger vocabulary base, a significant advance would have been the capability to 'digitalize' signals into sequences of distinct speech sounds - consonants and vowels - rather than unstructured calls. That requires changes in the way how the brain manages the vocal tract and perhaps in the way the brain deciphers auditory signals [4]. A communication system of single signals was developed. A next probable step would be the ability to combine several words to create a message constructed of the meanings of its parts. This is still not as complex as modern language. In fact, we do find such 'protolanguage' in two-year-old children, in the beginning efforts of adults learning a foreign language, and in so-called 'pidgins', the systems cobbled together by adult speakers of disparate languages when they need to communicate with each other for trade or other sorts of cooperation. This has led some researchers to propose that the system of 'protolanguage' is still present in modern human brains, hidden under the modern system except when the latter is impaired or not yet developed [5]. However, since written language is only 6000 years old, all these remain theories and logical assumptions, and there is no written evidence of languages before that date that can answer this question. [6]

There is no evidence about when this all happened, but it is believed to have started somewhere near 100,000 years ago, that's when we started to discover some artifacts and evidence of civilization. Since then, there has been a constant increase of the brain abilities due to the intellectual advantages that the languages offer, as the ability to maintain an oral history over generations [4]. Since the word bases of the languages were very limited, it is thought gestures have played a decent role in forming new words and the expansion of the vocabulary base.

Gestures are a form of kinesics and one type of non-linguistic forms of communication, they give the sentence more meaning, and express the state of the speaker. They are divided into three main parts, which are adaptors, emblems, and illustrators [7]. Adaptors are movements of some type of motion or even a touch that expresses the state of feeling of the speaker, for example a person waving his hands rapidly after a touching a hot pot, indicates that s/he got burnt and feels pain. Where emblems and illustrators are basically the same, and the main difference lies in the globality of emblems, as they mostly have an agreed-on meaning, while illustrators are more local and might not be internationally known. Emblems and illustrators can be in the form of raising a thumb [8] to show agreement or showing a thumb down to indicate disagreement [9].

“Depending on the type of the culture, land, territory or even weather, people can tend to use more or less verbal communication between each other. For example, smaller villages which have few people, tend to use verbal forms of communication more than populous cities, since in smaller villages there is a lack of noise, factors of disturbance or barriers between the people and each other.” [10]

Gestures give a complementary meaning to the spoken words and help to emphasize some points of the sentence and give a better representation of the speaker's emotions and feelings, as well as keeping a good contact with the listeners and retaining the attentiveness [11][12].

Discussion

Ultimately scholars do not have any reliable information about the actual origin of any particular language. Nevertheless, W. von Humboldt, rejecting hypotheses in the spirit of the 18th century, argued, “Language cannot arise otherwise than immediately and suddenly” [13].

This means that language started to form itself based on the need of people to communicate and express their ideas, as well as preserve information from the past. Unlike the human communication systems, animals use a different way to communicate with each other and

express immediate issues or dangers. If we took chimpanzees for instance, their communication has counterparts in the human kinesics. Animals use patterns of calls, where the meanings of such patterns are not made up of the meanings of the parts. Even some attempts to teach them some form of human language, while fascinating, have produced only fundamental results. Thus the characteristics of human language are unique in the natural world [2].

A related question is what aspects of language are unique to language and what aspects just draw on other human abilities not shared with other primates. This issue is particularly controversial. Some researchers claim that everything in language is built out of other human abilities: the ability for vocal imitation, the ability to memorize vast amounts of information (both needed for learning words), the desire to communicate, the understanding of others' intentions and beliefs, and the ability to cooperate [4].

The formation of languages continues up to the "state of stability", where after reaching that state, a fundamental change in the language system is no longer possible: "a language has a certain limit of completeness of organization, where, after reaching, neither its organic structure nor its structure undergoes any changes ..." [13].

One of the theories say that languages have the same origin, and only then they started to evolve and make it to different countries, forming different languages having the same base. For instance, there are similarities between English language and Japanese, which can't be a coincidence, since these two languages don't use the same alphabet and have different grammar structures. There are some theories that Japanese and English most likely must have the same linguistic source. There are supporting examples like "mō" which means "more", "sō" which means "so", "nai", which means not. This can be applied to various pairs of languages. Another example in Thai language: "fii" in Thai means "fire", "taii" in Thai means "tire", and "rhim" in Thai means "rim". [6]

The ideas of evolutionism, functionalism, structuralism, interacting with each other, are transformed into ideas of the formation of ambiguous and diverse relations within the language system itself and external influence on it, the relationship between the existence of a language and the existence of society, into ideas of searching for the meaning of language [14]. Eventually, languages evolved to form a systematic way of communication for humans. Where the use of gestures contributed to enrichen the vocabulary bases, for instance, a person says to his friend "come here", this being said without a gesture, doesn't show any state of feeling, but the same sentence accompanied by a rapid hand wave, will indicate "come here urgently". Starting from this point, new words started to emerge, to express a long sentence in one word, "hurry" carry the same meaning as "come here urgently".

The development of language systems has certain patterns since it is due to some universality of human thinking. However, any changes in the language are also associated with random, occasional phenomena [15]. Gestures are widely used in many everyday life aspects, in cafes, restaurants, transport, etc. thus emergence of new words that are based on the gestures being used just happens automatically when the speaker realizes that his words aren't enough expressive and lack the intended description. Such new words have vastly affected the fluency of poetry and other forms of literature, giving the language more vitality. Where language is such an open system that has a probabilistic development factor, it reflects the complexity of the real world [16].

Conclusion

It is interesting how the gestures and use of kinesics evolved throughout the years, to be used in different purposes, starting from simple tasks like showing agreement or disagreement, to more complicated tasks like explaining a whole situation without the need to use any kind of verbal speech, just the body language and the gesture or the illustration [10]. Where

communication is a very complex process, including the accumulation, processing, storage, transmission of information in space and time, as well as the process of influencing and forming the response of the addressee [15]. Countries which have a huge population tend to have bigger language bases, where a lot of factors affect the expansion of the language. Such factors include the use of gestures, which plays a role in easing the communication in crowded cities. Bigger language bases mean more literacy, which leads into advancement in different life and human sciences.

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