

Man, Language and Communication through Time

Hombre, Lenguaje y Comunicación a través del Tiempo

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Abstract

The man's development is directly linked to the development of language; his relationship implies a transaction of knowledge, ideas and concepts that modify the society in which he is a part. This paper gives a vision of the evolution of language through time, the importance of communication in the modern world and the acquisition of a second language (English) as a tool to face the advances and implications of globalization.

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Likewise, there are concepts about the relevance of language in terms of economic, cultural, social, symbolic and linguistic capital and how these issues determine the progress of a community in the educational field.

Key Words. *Language, development, communication, capital, education.*

Resumen

El desarrollo del hombre está directamente ligado al desarrollo del lenguaje, su relación implica una transacción de saberes, ideas y conceptos que modifican la sociedad de la cual hace parte; el presente escrito da una visión de la evolución del lenguaje a través del tiempo, la importancia de la comunicación en el mundo moderno y la adquisición de un segundo idioma (inglés) como herramienta para enfrentar los avances e implicaciones de la globalización.

Igualmente, se abordan conceptos pertinentes a la relevancia del lenguaje en términos de capital económico, cultural, social, simbólico y lingüístico y de cómo estos temas determinan el progreso de una comunidad en el campo educativo.

Palabras Clave. *Lenguaje, desarrollo, comunicación, capital, educación.*

Introduction

The human development along time has been kinked with communication, from ancient times, man created his own symbols to communicate each other. McWhorter (2004) stated that the languages are in constant change depending of the man's needs and evolution. Thus, there are

changes in the sounds, intonation according to the regions, mix of words among different languages, inclusion of new vocabulary because the invention of new objects or devices, the tendencies of the society as well as the technology produce new terms.

The language is the principal mean of communication, at the beginning, it was accompanied by gestures, it was born in the human community as a tool to live in group, it became in oral communication full of sounds and meaning. Jackendoff (2006) argues that researchers used to point out that language starts as a sign language; next, it switches to verbal modality, abandoning gestures. Hence, the evolution of languages helped the man to develop variety of skills because it permitted him to share information, move from one place to another, work together in common projects in benefit of the social group, among others.

Subsequently, the written language was born, it started with the painting of symbols on caves, objects that later became in source of study for archaeologies in order to analyze and evidence the antiquity of the towns. About it, Kulczycki (2011) says that the emergency of writing, the transition from oral to writing, changed the perceptions of time and space and also the social organization. Likewise, Olson (2009) reported: “The first visual signs tended to be symbols of deities, treated as objects of veneration, their form determined by resemblance or similarity to the thing represented” (p. 8). In this way, writing becomes more than a mean of communication; it contributes an instrument to build the heritage of humanity because it involves their culture, customs and traditions. Many archeologists think that writing has been the most important invention in human history due to its relevance in people’s development and evolution.

In fact, the writing process is a tool that people have used during a long time in order to transmit knowledge from generation to generation, it is an instrument that promotes knowledge acquisition and permits the development of towns in the different fields for example culture, technology, religion, science, politics, education, and others.

Likewise, it is important to highlight that there are variety of languages, some of them have aspects in common depending of the proximity of their towns, others are totally different because they are separated by long distances; Damerow (2006) asserts that writing is as developed skill, in fact, it changes form culture to culture, depending on thew background. Thus, the variety of languages around the world represent the people's development, also their capacity to communicate and exchange information, the written legacy makes part of customs and traditions, it is the main source of history to give testimony of the humanity for future generations.

Similarly, according to recent studies, there are about 7097 languages that are spoken today. The English is one of the most important around the world; for this reason, it is taught in many schools and universities in Latin America and in many countries, but what is the best way to learn English?, there are many studies and researches about it, Guerrero (2010) states that there are different ways to learn English, for example, in many countries, including to Colombia, people think that the only way to learn this language is with native speakers, but it is really a myth; another one is that the British English is the purest language, but that is also false because, as professor Guerrero(2010) says, "The perfect

English does not exist”. Each one of us speaks the English in a particular way; maybe, we do not have a perfect pronunciation or our listening is not the best, but if we think, the Americans or the British people neither speak a perfect Spanish; so, it is the best way of explain the linguistic capital, because each culture has a particular language, but also, every culture has a different way to speak another language.

Another important aspect to consider in daily communication is the capacity people have to communicate not matter of the context they are, for example in a foreign country; persons are able to use mimics or gestures to interact each other as well as their way to survive. The communication system is very useful in all environments including education, because it allows supporting mute people in their academic life. Muchemwa (2013) states that nonverbal cues are useful tools for teaching or communicating foreign languages. In fact, teachers cannot ignore this type of communication because this is part of their job; the educational systems have the responsibility to include enough elements that respond the students’ needs.

Regardless of the type of communication, language teachers have been presented in this field, they are part of those processes, they are involved in the creation and incorporation efficient strategies that contribute to improve people’s language acquisition, including children, young people and adults; nonverbal communication is crucial in education, not only in languages acquisition but also on all areas of knowledge; it is inherent to human beings and part of their daily life activities.

What does the economic, cultural, social, symbolic, and linguistic capital mean in the field of education? the academic community is conscious about the links between these sectors and education; thus, it is not a lie that the economy of a country guides and governs the fate of education and in many situations, it is treated as a business no as a matter to build a community with ethics and values it requires. Professor Guerrero (2010) does a huge analysis about these aspects and how they have a close relation with the Colombian education.

First of all, *the economic capital* refers to the earnings or the money a person or company has; it could be the most important capital because in current times, apparently, the money (coins, credit cards, currency, etc.) commands many sectors of human life.

In this sense, the economic capital also affects education because this is the source of human capital, from child people are educated to be hired in companies or create their own business and these are inherent to the economic capital. In many aspects, education depends on the economic capital; for example public educational institutions depends on the budget provided by the government and the private institutions must generate their own incomes that allow them to survive in the market; another important aspect is the management that the managers do of the capital; in many cases institutions have broken due to the bad experience in leading institutions or because of corruption inside them, affecting students in first place and also the development and progress of the society.

Second, *the cultural capital* involves aspects like the knowledge about different matters, it can be material or not; for example, art, paintings, murals, literary works, sculptures, education, human skills, heritage, traditions, ways of government, religions and also the language; all of them make part of the human evolution and development, their represent the testimony of human beings. Besides, what determines that these issues are cultural capital is what they represent for the environment they are found. Rubingh (2017) argues that the environment or the context is intrinsically linked with the worth of thinks.

Likewise, language plays a very important role in the cultural capital, especially in matters related to written and oral works, keeping in mind that the language represents the testimony of man and it survives through years and centuries. The necessity to cultivate the cultural capital of language has been cared by institutions like *La Real Academia de la lengua Española* which is the maximum organ in this matter; additionally, these are some other organizations like the *Fundéu* (Fundación Española Urgente), the *Institute Cervantes* and the *Fundación San Millán de Cogolla*; thus their labor is focused to ensure the conservation of this language, watch for the conservation and good use of the language; moreover, they are on the outlook for adding new words and expressions, for example technicalities or those expressions that due to the high use in a region, make part of the daily life communication.

Similarly, *the social capital* involves the capital, the cash, the assets of companies, the contributions of the partners of a company, the cost of a company; it can be represented in money or goods. In the capitalist world where

we live, this capital is relevant to demonstrate power; what is the role of English in the capital world? in fact, some decades ago, the English speaking countries (países angloparlantes) have been dedicated to convince population all over the world that this language is almost indispensable for having a high purchasing level because this is the language of business.

In what way is English the language of business? thus, many countries have accepted this language as a big power because it permits the flow of money and business around the world; this language became a very important mean of communication to import and export goods and services, it contributes to be in touch with people all over the world, it is required to obtain the latest information.

In this sense, many companies and education entities are requiring from their employees to demonstrate language proficiency in English. About it, Guerrero (2010) states that the incorporation of articles to the world of business gives them a special value in the world of money. Hence, the need and the hurry to get the social power has produced the necessity to acquire this language and be certified as part of the requirements, to be qualified as a good prospect to work in a company, thus, if you are not certificated with a high level of English, you could not be hired in a company.

On the other hand, international exams are not cheap, and the enterprises which are applying these tests are doing a good business with people who require these certifications as a requirement to work; another similar situation is happening with schools and universities which ask their students to have a

certification in a foreign language; thus, there is a lot of money around the politics and requirements to have domain in foreign languages.

The symbolic capital, according to the sociology and anthropology, is referred to the sources which are available for a person or entity; it is also represented in the bases of prestige and honor; for the war heroes, politicians, community leaders, human rights defenders, among others. According to Rehfeld (2008) another example shows the social position of actors who are defined by their position according to the symbolic capital. Additionally, Bourdieu (1985) stated that the symbolic capital is seen as form an economic perpective, as well as form the cultural capital. Thus, it is created by man and conserved through time in the different social groups around the world as part of their daily life.

The linguistic capital is connected to the domain of languages; it is the product of the prolonged exposition of people to the language; it requires the intervention of two entities: the transmitter and receiver, they are the responsible to interchange messages that become in communication; thus, this is a factor that contributes to the development of towns, the spread of the knowledge and the interaction among communities.

Las lenguas están en contacto permanente mediante la producción, la difusión y la enseñanza de los conocimientos entre los agentes móviles. Representa la suma de estos contactos y su potencial dinámico favorece

que el conocimiento de uno se propague, haciendo crecer el conocimiento del otro. (Chardenet, 2012, P. 2)

The linguistic capital is developed in the different contexts of the human communication, it depends on the people's needs in terms of interaction; in fact, this capital satisfies a social function because it was born as the result to exchange information and the life in group; its success depends on the purpose to allow people live and grow organized as a community which has many benefits, for example working together in the obtaining of common goods and services.

The official language is also called linguistic capital due to its possibility people have to interact and feel domain and ownership for the property in a specific region. Besides, this capital is a tool to stand out in the markets around the world; in this sense, it contributes to economy of a country; when a person learns another language, he or she is building linguistic capital and at the same time is helping in the development of the regions.

The linguistic capital must be motivated from school and universities; now it makes sense why educational institutions constantly motivate learning different languages. It opens door to the population, especially to young people, who have all the energy to travel, know foreign cultures, do business, and look for new opportunities that improve their life style. Ginsburgh, Ortuño-Otín and Weber, (2006) remark that the substitution of languages is imperfect, people think that there are a lot of benefits when the languages are native. We also understand

that the benefits of learning a language are correlated the linguistic proximity of individuals.

Nowadays, the new competences of workers imply that people develop skills for working with the systems of information and also to domain other languages; in the European contexts it is very common that people speak two or three languages, but in the Latin American community it becomes more difficult due to the remoteness of countries who speak another language; in spite of that, lately, there has been a great interest for governments to motivate people learn other languages, specially English due to its importance for business around the world. Trimnell (2005) proposes aspects such as hve more posibilidadie to have a job, have more rieds, develop cognitive skills, and interchange cultural information as well as information, for entertainment, among others.

Besides, in these times, the use of global communication through internet has created different needs in people; the most important are the domain of computers and the use of different languages apart of the mother tongue. The reasons Trimnell (2005) missioned before are some of the most important and we can evidence in daily life. Additionally, it is necessary to learn another language because people are members of a global world, people want to live with consciousness of the existence of multiple cultures around the world and each one has things to share and help to the development of human beings. Technological advances emerge as a help in the educational field, taking into account that they must be selected by teachers to let students explore websites, links and internet with learning purposes. It is a truth that students are surrounded