

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN LANGUAGE CHANGE

Aysel Soltanova

Baku Engineering University, English Language Department, Asoltanova@beu.edu.az
Baku, Azerbaijan

Introduction

As a means of communication, language changes constantly in terms of a variety of factors. One of the factors affecting the spoken and written language change is doubtlessly media, which, oddly, have not been taken into consideration up to now. The thesis concentrates on the impact of media and TV on children and their speech the outcome of which might lead to the emergence of hybridity in language and further language change.

As we know, language changes continuously and adapts itself to the realities of ever-changing world. As is known there are a great deal of extra-linguistic and intro-linguistic factors fostering the alteration and adaptation processes respectively. From 1960th, the emergence of the internet attracted the attention of researchers worldwide; however, thorough investigation of the issue remains in wait in Azerbaijan. The term Netspeak¹ is defined as a new variety of online language as a consequence of which hybridity of a written and spoken varieties based on individual features is formed.

For the research of this thesis, I mainly focused on exploratory research method and dived into the works of prominent linguists. The works written by David Crystal “Language and internet” and Peter Trudgill (1986,1988) are some of them. According to Trudgill language change occurs only in the process of diffusion which requires geographical contact in the process of face to face communication between people. According to Trudgill as television and media do not actively, involved in face-to-face interaction the impact of it on language change is not open to discussion respectively. Milroy (1985) thought that media and television contact increase awareness without promoting the adoption of newly acquired features. On the contrary, Williams and Kerswill (1999) made a research on the youth exposure to TV and its impacts on youngsters’ mind. German linguist Brandt (1984;1972) writes that with no argument broadcasting has an impact on people’s language and communication. He mentioned that TV broadcasting in German is a principal factor in changes on lexical and grammatical patterns which is in progress in Austrian German.

Nowadays so many people are watching TV that its impacts on their social behaviors cannot be ignored. According to researches done by Joseph Klapper in his book named (1960) “Mass media: their impact on children and family” he showed that television is acting as a contributory factor, being is closely related with other factors. Brazilian sociolinguist Ana Maria Carvalho conducted survey among Uruguayan Portuguese informants and came to conclusion that the people exposed to Brazilian Portuguese TV broadcasting, without being so enthusiastic in using the Brazilian features in their language, imitate the television language spontaneously².

Based on the interview by Azerbaijan child psychologist, the major factor affecting bilingualism and a lack of vocabulary among children is television. As they spend on average 4 hours in front of TV and the reality of lacking quality child programs and cartoons in native language, make parents find other alternative TV channels either in Russian or in Turkish languages. Children left alone with TV channels start produce “broken” native language. As they produce just the phrases they heard without getting into contact with native peers, and without having chance to use them in communication process, they develop into “broken” bilinguals³.

Moreover, media has an undeniable impact on formation of hybrid words as well as phrases not only in Azerbaijan but also in all around the world. The news related to the delimitation and demarcation of state boundaries were presented to Azerbaijani readers in this way “*Kommunikasiyalar razılaşıdırılıb, demarkasiya və delimitasiya prosesi bitib*”⁴. The news contains the sentence with hybrid words as “demarcation” and “delimitation”. English suffixes and stems of “demark” and “delimit” joined with Azerbaijani endings “a si ya”. As a consequence, the hybrid words were introduced to society officially, which further will lead to the common utilization of the words mentioned.

Moreover, the interview from 7 families whose children spend on average 4-5 hours a day in front of TV by watching cartoons in Russian or Turkish depending on parents’ second language preferences I came to conclusion that children switch from one language to another on a frequent basis in the process of communication due to lacking vocabulary in both languages. The ages of children were between 3-6 years. As two of them were 3 years old and they even couldn’t explain the reason of switches. To the question “which language do you prefer?” their answers were either “both of them” or the “TV language”. If we analyze the table, it is obvious that at early ages they are able neither to distinguish the languages fully, nor speak any one of them fluently which further might cause some psychological as well as socio-communicational problems that should not be taken for granted. As they grow older, they become differentiate and make options more reasonably and put their native language in second place. Table below illustrates the variables and the result of the interview.

Age	Number of words switched	Language preference
3	2 words in 1 sentence	Both of them
3	2 words in 1 sentence	Both of them
4	2-3 words in one sentence and the structural changes in native language.	Both of them
4	2-3 words in one sentence and the structural changes in native language.	Both of them
5	3 and more words in one sentence, ending of the words adapted to the imitated language.	TV language

5	3 and more words in one sentence, ending of the words adapted to the imitated language.	TV language
6	Almost all words in TV language	TV language

To sum up, in the ever-changing world, the influence of language contact extra linguistic factors, technological advancements have the roles to play in the language change. Some researchers' views were somehow contra dictionary in terms of the impacts of media and TV on language spoken by both adults and children. As a result of exploratory and interview methods of researches regarding the Azerbaijani society I came to conclusion that, the shifts in media announcements or on informative papers should be evaluated positively in terms of vocabulary enrichment and integration as well as modernity. On the other hand, child exposure to the TV language without communication partners may result in the emergence of broken languages, which may further lead to psychological concerns.

References.

1. The influence of social media in language change: Changes in vocabulary. Andrea Vilariño Ferreiro Titor: Belén Méndez Naya Curso Académico: 2018/2019
2. Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics, edited by Carmen Llamas, Louise Mullany, Peter Stockwell, page 143
3. <https://alpaninfo.com/televiziya-internet-telefon-v%C9%99-s-usaqlarda-nitqin-inkisafinamane-olur/>
4. News source: <https://sherg.az/gundem/179514>