

Review Article

**The Decline of Language Loyalty in the Age of Audiovisual Nearness:
A Socio-linguistic Approach**

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Keywords: language loyalty, social media, audiovisual, nearness, communication, socio-linguistics.

Summary:

This article investigates the decline of language loyalty in the age of audiovisual nearness. It is a socio-linguistic review of previous literature related to language disloyalty. It reviews the current theoretical efforts on the impact of audiovisual nearness created by social media and language loyalty. The descriptive design is used. The argument behind this review is that the audiovisual nearness provided by social media negatively affects language loyalty. This article concludes that the current theoretical efforts have paid much attention to the relationship between the audiovisual nearness and language loyalty. Such efforts have highlighted the fact that the social media platforms have provided unprecedented nearness that provoke individuals to become disloyal to their own mother tongues.

Introduction

The current audiovisual nearness, which has been provided by social media, is an important subject of modern and contemporary research. Much specifically, the effect of this type of nearness on different aspects of human life, including communication and language use, has been the concern of many scholars who attempted to know the extent to which audiovisual nearness affects language loyalty.

Furthermore, social media language reflects that users' word usage is far more dynamic and variable than is typically captured in standard sense inventories. This indicates that social media users become disloyal to their mother tongues as they tend to use the type of language being used on social media.

The Decline of Language Loyalty

Language, as a human phenomenon, can positively or negatively be affected through human interaction. In this respect, many researchers have been concerned about the idea of language loyalty. These researchers are aware of the fact that people, through audiovisual communication provided by social media, might become disloyal to their mother tongues. That is, through their frequent exposure to other languages, people may get fascinated by foreign languages at the expense of their mother tongues. They may also use foreign languages to chat with foreigners. The point is not to criticize the use of foreign languages since it is a good human characteristic. Rather, it is to stress the importance of being loyal to one's own language, thus ensuring its usage and continuity.

The decline of language loyalty is referred to as language disloyalty, a term denoting a linguistic phenomenon that ultimately brings about the decline and even death of a language. This phenomenon happens when speakers forsake or deny their own language. Therefore, one's attitude towards his/her mother tongue decides the degree of language loyalty. It is an inseparable part of each individual's identity. Language represents each individual's personal identity in connection to the social group to which one belongs. The term language attitude is described as a term used for the feelings people have about their own language or the language(s) of others, these may be positive or negative.

The terms language loyalty and language disloyalty are frequently adopted in socio-linguistics to indicate a concern, or the absence of concern, respectively, for preserving language use, or the language's traditional form, especially when language faces threat of death.

In this context, Areiza (2004) states that language loyalty is an attitude that ultimately stems from contact between languages. This phenomenon brings about linguistic conflict. It is a process which is almost emotional; a psychological reaction that involves the tendency to preserve the language .

Some scholars view language loyalty as speakers' positive attitude towards their native language. This ultimately leads them as well as their communities so as to effectively maintain the language use as well as to transmit it to the next generations, thus bringing about a language subsistence instead of creating a change language .

Language loyalty is viewed as an attitude. It is the outcome of language contact. In this case, the speaker maintains all the features of their language without being influenced by the variation that comes into contact. Many other studies were done globally. For example, some studies were conducted in Latin America with the indigenous languages like Aymara .

Much significantly, language disloyalty indicates a phenomenon that causes the decline of a language. This process happens when speakers stop using their native language. Moreover, this phenomenon may happen when two languages with different status co – exist. This process is called diglossia. In this case, the language that is associated with power, money, culture, and prestige becomes a truly fearsome opponent to the “lesser” language .

Current Theoretical Efforts on Language Disloyalty

'Language loyalty' denotes efforts made by a speech community so as to maintain its own language .This definition suggests human efforts that bring about preservation, use and continuity of the native language. This point has provoked researchers to examine the reality of language loyalty in different communities. In this respect, Veettil et al. (2020) examined the existing language maintenance status as well as language shift . Its population included all the Keralites living in Oman. The researchers used the term language shift to indicate a degree of language

disloyalty. The study analyses the most significant factors that ultimately affect language shift and language maintenance. Much attention is paid to highlighting the domains in which language maintenance is ultimately facilitated. These include the Keralite parents' attitudes towards their first language, their initiatives, as well as religious and cultural organizations. They also include the educational institutions' role in promoting language maintenance. Semi-structured interviews as well as observation of the participants are used as research tools. The results reflect that while parents are loyal to their mother tongue, their children are disloyal to their own language. They neglect their mother tongue and tend to use foreign languages especially in their online communication. But the study concludes that language disloyalty is a temporary phenomenon, and the participants have the tendency to use their mother tongue since they are strongly attached to their native language. Moreover, the participants, as a result of being in a foreign land, acquire languages other than their mother tongue, thus forming a multilingual society. Much significantly, the results made it obvious that language disloyalty can gradually bring about linguistic. In this case, individuals may experience a state of alienation from culture..

In a similar context, Karnasuriya & Pereira (2021) investigate the current trends towards language disloyalty. Their study is applied on Sinhalese people. It reflects that language loyalty for the Sinhala language is the basis of a mass political movement which results in making Sinhala as the official language. Therefore, this loyalty brought about an unprecedented language revival though it later caused many complexities, leading to civil war. Much significantly, the results reflect that Sinhalese people are disloyal to their native language. Interestingly, it is the same language for which they have fought throughout history, paying high social, political as well as economic costs to defend, preserve and develop .

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مقال مراجعة موضوع

تراجع الولاء اللغوي في عصر التقارب السمعي البصري: نهج اجتماعي - لغوي

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الكلمات المفتاحية: الولاء اللغوي. وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. السمعي البصري. التقارب. التواصل. اللغويات الاجتماعية

الملخص

تبحث هذه المقالة تراجع الولاء اللغوي في عصر التقارب السمعي البصري. وهي مراجعة اجتماعية لغوية للأدبيات السابقة التي لها صلة بعدم الولاء اللغوي. تستعرض هذه المقالة الجهود النظرية الحالية حول تأثير التقارب السمعي البصري الذي انشأ من قبل وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والولاء اللغوي. تم استخدام الأسلوب الوصفي في هذه المقالة. إن المناقشة التي تستند إليها هذه المراجعة هي أن التقارب السمعي البصري الذي توفره وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي يؤثر سلباً على الولاء اللغوي. تخلص هذه المقالة إلى أن الجهود النظرية الحالية قد أولت اهتماماً كبيراً للعلاقة بين التقارب السمعي البصري والولاء اللغوي. وقد سلطت هذه الجهود الضوء على حقيقة أن منصات التواصل الاجتماعي وفرت تقارباً غير مسبوق يحث الأفراد ليصبحوا غير موالين للغاتهم الأم.