

The linguistic foundations of the mediatization of communities in digital culture

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ABSTRACT

This article argues that the information age reveals a new, hitherto unknown dimension of the community-building role of linguistic communication. This new linguistic structure, based on the convergence of different ways of using language, creates conditions for the synthesis of different forms of communities. We are increasingly witnessing a specific semantic change accompanying semiotic globalization that affects the structure, grammar, and vocabulary of increasingly stratified and group languages. As this study tries to highlight, this process involves a convergence of language use patterns between different communities in the sense of the convergence of imagery as a feature of electronic communication. This imagery acts as a global requirement for written and spoken expressions in national languages, thus pushing the language-use patterns of each community towards a single imagery of meaning. The study aims to point out that the specific linguistic world of electronic communications is the basis for the synthesis of the social forms associated with these uses of language through the semantic, grammatical, and stylistic convergence of oral and written language. The frequent alternation or combined use of technologies that presuppose literacy and orality can lead to the emergence of physical-virtual hybrid communities—the network society—in the spirit of this global linguistic culture that is becoming visual. The emergence of these new physical-virtual hybrid communities presupposes the emergence of a language based on the interaction of new communication technologies, which will leave its mark on the development of all national languages and is no longer confined to the world of e-mail and SMS.

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Introduction

In the age of mediated communities, the unanimous acceptance of the possibility of community choice based on the efficient and rapid flow of information, shared interests, openness, and trust becomes a community-forming factor. Mediated hybrid communities function as social networks of people using old and new means of mediated communication, experienced as a kind of trust process. The Internet and mobile phone users, by repeatedly crossing the boundaries of virtual and physical communication situations and the communities that feed off them, also make their own community relations mediated by communication processes. These communal relations are not organized in a sharply separated virtual and physical sphere but form the identities of the members of the communities as part of a social network that encompasses both virtual and physical relations. For individuals who seek to understand themselves through their various interacting roles in the community, this social network, which functions as a community, is already the framework for self-understanding. In this virtual-physical, hybrid interpretative framework, he processes the reactions of others to him and his communicative roles, making them an element of his self-image. The perception of his social role is already made in this relational system, and the experience of belonging to a group becomes a source of action in this relational network.

At the same time, the mediatization of community relations would be inconceivable without the specific use of language linked to new communication technologies. In other words, the information age reveals a new, hitherto unknown dimension of

the community-building role of linguistic communication. This new linguistic structure, based on the convergence of different ways of using language, creates conditions for the synthesis of different forms of communities. We are increasingly witnessing a specific semantic change accompanying semiotic globalization that affects the structure, grammar, and vocabulary of increasingly stratified and group languages. This process involves a convergence of language use patterns between different communities in the sense of the convergence of imagery as a feature of electronic communication. This imagery acts as a global requirement for written and spoken expressions in national languages, thus pushing the language-use patterns of each community towards a single imagery of meaning.

The figurative linguistic world of electronically mediated communication is the basis for the synthesis of the social forms associated with these uses of language through the semantic, grammatical, and stylistic convergence of oral and written language. The frequent alternation or combined use of technologies that presuppose literacy and orality can lead to the emergence of physical-virtual hybrid communities -the network society- in the spirit of this global linguistic culture that is becoming visual. The emergence of these new physical-virtual hybrid communities presupposes the emergence of a language based on the interaction of new communication technologies, which will leave its mark on the development of all national languages and is no longer confined to the world of e-mail and SMS.

This dual convergence accompanying the mediatization of community relations would be unthinkable without the convergences in language use that ensure the rapid and continuous interoperability between different communicative communities, the communicative conditions for the effective exchange of information, the shared interest, openness, and trust-based community choice of the Internet and mobile phone user. In this study, I distinguish between the two basic levels of convergence in language use. At the first level of convergence of language use modes, two basic forms of convergence of oral and written language use are achieved: convergence of language use based on the close integration of spoken language and image and convergence of language use based on the close integration of text and image. The former is the medium of what is known as "secondary orality" a communication technology primarily associated with television (Ong, 1982), while the latter is the medium of what David Crystal (2004, 2019) calls "Netspeak", the medium of Internet users. Although assuming different forms of interaction between image and language, both media lay the foundations for the convergence of the grammatical and semantic worlds of written and spoken language use and, at the same time, for the strengthening of different layer and group languages and their gradual gain over literary language.

Thus, the emerging linguistic structure is the language of the network society, which is becoming capable of representing and operating increasingly complex social relations and roles through its specific imagery. In the following, therefore, I want to shed light on the characteristics of this imagery. I seek to answer the question of how imagery can become the primary point of connection between "secondary orality" which assumes the continuous interaction of image and speech, and "Netspeak" based on the powerful interaction of image and text. Considering the possible answers to this question, I would also like to highlight the fact that this interaction, realized in the spirit of imagery, increasingly points in the direction of the development of a language structure that can realize the unprecedented unity

of oral and written communication language in the medium of everyday communication.

Language and community in the information age

The virtual-physical distinction is becoming less tenable in relation to the social bonds that are emerging in the information age. Communities that were considered virtual in earlier eras of mediated communication began to function as real communities with social capital, rendering the virtual-physical distinction meaningless in defining the basic forms of community. Newly emerging community identities and bonds are now captured in terms of a global-local rather than a virtual-real conceptual dichotomy. As with the emergence of virtual communities, the foundations of this process must be sought through changes in meaning and grammar in the language of community building.

The new community-building language of electronic communication developed in two stages. The first stage was the emergence of a new type of spoken language using telephone, radio, and television, which, alongside print, became increasingly important in the process of everyday information exchange. This new type of literacy was the first clear and unquestionable sign of the birth of a postliterate culture that rejected the dominance of literacy. This new medium, which Walter J. Ong called "secondary orality", left powerful traces in language and thought (Ong, 1982). It undoubtedly marked the birth of a new, community-building language that bore the hallmarks of both pre-literacy, the so-called "primary orality", and literacy. This new medium, which presupposed a convergence of the verbal and written forms, also became the basis for new forms of community and community bonds; its use increasingly contributed to the blurring of the boundaries between virtual and physical communities.

While the emergence of "secondary orality" brought about a convergence between the verbal and the written, the communication culture of the second phase of the development of the language of electronic communication has seen the emergence of a new language as a result of this convergence. With the widespread use of the Internet and mobile communications, multimedia, or what Michael Heim calls "hypermedia" (Heim, 1998), which has become an essential element of everyday communication, is accelerating the convergence of the verbal and the written, through its own specific pictorial language, and making it the basis of a new linguistic structure. However, the new linguistic world that is being born is not simply a mixture of oral and written languages. This language is more than a mixture of the characteristics of two ancient communication technologies, or, to use Naomi Baron's metaphor, a "centaur" of orality and literacy (Baron, 2000). It presupposes the existence of a new medium that creates conditions for the rapid and efficient exchange of large amounts of information through the unprecedented interaction of images, sounds, and written words in the context of the Internet and mobile communication (Baron, 2015). The language of communication, mediated by computers and mobile phones, is becoming a third medium, distinct from both spoken and traditional written words, and the dominant means of everyday communication and the driving force behind the convergence of spoken and written words. This new medium, which David Crystal calls "Netspeak" in his comprehensive work *Language and the Internet*, could thus become the

basis of a new communication technology, distinct from both spoken and written language, because of its specific multimedia character (Crystal, 2004, 2019).

The medium of the Internet and mobile communication is therefore a language that combines the characteristics of oral, written, and multimedia language mediated by new technologies to define our everyday communication processes and, in turn, our perceptions and expectations of the function of language. At the same time, we must not forget the “secondary orality” kept alive by radio, television and telephone, which is not replaced by “Netspeak” but is complemented by new possibilities. “Secondary orality” is image and speech, while “Netspeak” involves the continuous interaction of image and text. In other words, imagery is the primary interface between these two media. It is through this imagery that “secondary orality” and “Netspeak” can interact continuously in a multichannel communication environment based on the use of different communication technologies. This interaction is increasingly pointing towards the emergence of a linguistic structure that can bring about an unprecedented unity of oral and written communication language in the context of everyday communication.

Thus, the emerging linguistic structure is the language of the network society, which is becoming capable of representing and operating increasingly complex social relations and roles through its specific imagery. In the following, I will shed light on the characteristics of this plasticity. I seek to answer the question of how the language of electronically mediated communication can become a community-building language in the age of network society. In doing so, I first address the fundamental problem of how conceptual representations of communicative situations influence our conceptual world, such as our notions of community or society.

The multimedia world of new communication technologies opens up new dimensions of the role of communication in shaping language and communities. Its emergence and spread have a profound impact on the way we use language, the way we think, and the way we interact with others. In addition to changing our sense of self and our conceptions of society and community, it is also becoming the basis for new forms of community by creating new types of community bonds.

I will argue further that the new forms of community that are emerging in the age of electronic communication are the fruit of double convergence. As Castells claims, the use of new media, such as the Internet and mobile phones in particular, is leading to an unprecedented synthesis of virtual and physical communities through the mediation of social relations and roles. On the other hand, as Meyrowitz points out in his theory of “globalities”, by reinforcing local ties in a stream of global trends, communities organized in new media spaces reinforce local ties, electronic communication also provides a basis for the convergence of global and local forms of community (Meyrowitz, 2005). The hybrid communities that emerge as a result of this dual virtual-physical and global-local convergence imply complex, malleable, multilayered community identities, changing our notions of fixed, stable identities linked to traditional community forms.

This dual convergence accompanying the mediatization of community relations would be unthinkable without the convergences in language use that ensure the rapid and continuous interoperability between different communicative communities, the communicative conditions for the effective exchange of information, the shared interest, openness, and trust-based community choice of the Internet and mobile phone users. In the

following, I distinguish between the two basic levels of convergence in language use. At the first level of convergence of language use modes, two basic forms of convergence of oral and written language use are achieved: convergence of language use based on the close integration of spoken language and image and convergence of language use based on the close integration of text and image. The former is the medium of what is known as “secondary orality” a communication technology primarily associated with television, while the latter is the medium of what Crystal calls “Netspeak”, the medium of Internet users. Although assuming different forms of interaction between image and language, both media lay the foundations for the convergence of the grammatical and semantic worlds of written and spoken language use and, at the same time, for the strengthening of different layer and group languages and their gradual gain over literary language.

This second level of linguistic convergence, which facilitates the emergence of new forms of community, creates a tangible integration of spoken and written language and images, both grammatically and semantically. The simultaneous complementary transmission of written and spoken language and image has become an inescapable phenomenon of everyday communication and, as such, naturally leaves a tangible mark on everyday language use. The result of this transmission is a language that, in accordance with the expectations of Robert E. Horn's *Visual Language*, can transcend the limits of literacy and captures the increasing complexity of cognitive reality (Horn, 1999). In what follows, I highlight the convergences in language use that reinforce the interrelationship between the logic of word- and picture-language functions in the practice of multimedia communication, leading to the emergence of hitherto unknown patterns of linguistic creativity in written and spoken language.

The iconic revolution that is changing the practice of everyday communication has led to the emergence of a linguistic structure that combines verbal and visual tools in a formal and semantic manner. The graphic possibilities offered by software in recent decades have given birth to a new type of visuality that opens up unprecedented forms of creativity in everyday language use. Today's computer and mobile phone applications offer technological conditions for easy image creation, allowing the possibility of visual communication to become commonplace and creative combinations of linguistic and visual codes for language users who are increasingly at home in the world of images. In the linguistic world of new technologies, creativity is not only an everyday experience but also a criterion for effective communication. The addition of a pictorial dimension to verbal communication contributes to more effective exchange of information in everyday life through the use of new linguistic creativity tools. However, what is the importance of the visual dimension in everyday communications?

As Ludwig Wittgenstein, who reflects on the relationship between the logic of the functions of language and imagery, points out, pictorial symbols play a decisive role in our thought process (Wittgenstein, 1969). The reason for this, according to Wittgenstein, is that although words, like pictures, are embedded in life forms, our words are predominantly conventional in their meaning; in essence, pictures are natural concrete carriers of meaning. Thinking is a process comparable to drawing pictures, Wittgenstein argues, in which the picture, which functions as a more direct language, plays a greater role than the language of words. Such an interpretation of the relationship between visual and verbal language is, of course, by no means a unique philosophical experiment today (Szécsi, 2021). Following in the foot-

steps of Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell, and Henry H. Price, an increasing number of philosophers are defending the position that visual images play an essential role in rational thought (Russell 1986). Rudolf Arnheim, Robert Horn, Antonio R. Damasio, Merlin Donald, Georges Lakoff, John Kulvickzi, Kristóf Nyíri from different disciplines, draw attention to the inherently pictorial character of human thinking and the important role of visual communication in everyday information exchange (Arnheim, 1979; Horn, 1999; Damasio, 2006; Donald, 1991; Lakoff, 2008; Kulvicki, 2010; Nyíri 2003, 2011). As Nyíri argues, if human thought is inherently figurative, and if our linguistic memories are stored in a figurative medium and are re-translated into language through figurative mediation, then our theory of transmission must address the specificities of figurative transmission (Nyíri, 2003, 2011). The media convergences that accompany the expansion of new communication technologies lead to convergences in language use, whereby the transmission of spoken and visual language intensifies and becomes a dominant element of everyday communication. This, of course, significantly increases the role of linguistic creativity in everyday communication, which includes multimedia information exchange (Szécsi, 2013, 2021).

It is probably the realization of this development that has prompted an increasing number of contemporary authors to look at linguistic creativity as a phenomenon of everyday language use, rather than as a privilege of people with special skills and knowledge¹. There is no doubt that the "democratization" of the concept of linguistic creativity is gaining new momentum in the context of multimedia communication. Language games, abbreviations, humor, and image-word combinations, which are becoming increasingly common tools with the use of new communication technologies, encourage applied linguists to look at everyday language users as creative designers of linguistic meaning. For this reason, there is growing interest in a more dynamic model of the interactional functions of creativity, which may shed light on the dialogical nature of everyday creativity.

At the heart of this dynamic model is linguistic creativity, as the ability to use language in a context-sensitive way, enabling senders to create new meanings whenever and wherever they are needed. Creative language can have many functions in everyday speech. Roland Carter and Michael J. McCarthy highlight the following: illuminating the content of a message in a new way; making discourse witty or humorous; highlighting the meaning being communicated; displaying a particular attitude; expressing a negative, hostile attitude; making the speaker's identity more obvious; playing with linguistic forms to entertain others; closing one segment of speech and starting another; or simply 'oiling' the discourse (Carter-McCarthy, 2004). According to Carter and McCarthy, these functions presuppose two basic levels of creative interaction: on the one hand, the presentational use of figures of speech (e.g., overt displays of metaphorical ingenuity, use of puns, idioms, conscious departures from expected idiomatic formulas), and on the other hand, less identifiable, perhaps only semi-conscious repetitions at first sight (e.g., parallels, echoes, repetition of word combinations expressing emotional closeness). Janet Maybin and Joan Swann's research shows that these two levels of creative interaction are regularly found among Internet users, who often use metaphors, repetition, recontextualization, and genre blending

to convey solidarity, critical stances, or even social attitudes (Maybin-Swann, 2007).

Thus, the openness with which the mind receives new meanings, transpositions of names, and metaphors, born as a result of everyday linguistic creativity, is indicative of the inherently figurative nature of thinking. For, as Dawn G. Blasko and Cynthia M. Connine point out, new metaphors are understood and received by the same linguistic mechanisms as old ones; that is, their interpretation does not require more mental work (Blasko-Connine, 1993). McGlone emphasizes that metaphorical meanings -whether they are the result of new extensions of meaning- are understood as automatically as literal ones (Glucksberg-McGlone, 1999). This inherently pictorial way of thinking is liberated by the increasing role of multimedia in everyday information exchange, which offers new frameworks for linguistic creativity in terms of both form and meaning. The combination of a dynamic, highly metaphorical language with images not only increases the efficiency of information exchange, but also has a stronger and more direct impact on emotions than text alone by creating conditions for more intense communication and mutual identification between communicating parties. The emergence and spread of a new language of communication is the result of a conscious choice made by a man who, faced with the limitations of the written language, believes that by using it, he can effectively engage with an increasingly rapid and globalized flow of information and express more clearly the conceptual contexts or emotions that determine his daily life to the members of a local community.

Linguistic convergences in the new media space

The convergence of language use, which results in new patterns of linguistic creativity and is achieved in the spirit of multimediality, is thus the fruit of the multichannel everyday exchange of information and, more precisely, the media convergence that accompanies it. The process of media convergence is the consequence of the emergence and widespread use of new media, especially the Internet, which in both broad and narrow terms means the convergence of media used to satisfy the growing hunger for information. In a broader sense, this convergence takes place at the level of basic communication technologies, with the linguistic and stylistic boundaries between the oral, written, and multimedia communication processes of people reading newspapers, listening to the radio, watching television, browsing the multimedia of the Internet, or using their mobile phones becoming increasingly blurred, with the inevitable convergence of oral, written, and multimedia communication. In a narrower sense, media convergence is the phenomenon of media convergence in the world of mass communication, whereby traditional media (written press, radio, television) are increasingly merging into a single medium through multimedia associated with internet communication. The phenomenon of media convergence, in both the broader and narrower sense, is therefore based on the constant and intense interaction between speech, text, and images, linked to the use of new technologies (Internet and mobile phones). This implies both a convergence of the specific features of verbal, written, and visual communication (e.g., SMS, MMS, e-mail) and the simultaneous transmission of different media genres (e.g., films, television, radio, and written press embedded in Internet content). Although the phenomenon

¹ See on this point Tannen (1989) and Carter (2004).

of media convergence in the broader sense has already begun with the emergence of radio and television and the emergence of 'secondary literacies,' the process gains momentum with the spread of internet and mobile communication in the narrower sense, i.e., the convergence of mass media genres, and the expansion of internet content, and becomes the basis for a comprehensive convergence of language use with the emergence of "Netspeak". This convergence of language use goes beyond the convergence of language use modes and styles specific to each mass media and the emergence of a journalistic language that can be used effectively on several mass media channels at the same time. Its essence can only be understood if it is approached from the perspective of two essential aspects of media convergence, as a result of the interaction between "secondary orality" and "Netspeak". This overall linguistic change is also a precondition for effective multichannel communication.

This overall linguistic change is based on the convergence of language use forms characteristic of both spoken and written languages, which leaves serious grammatical and semantic traces in the language, both through the "secondary orality" associated with the use of radio and television, and through the "Netspeak", which is unfolding in the context of multimedia communication technologies that presuppose the simultaneous, complementary transmission of text, speech, and images. There are many concrete signs of this in everyday language use. Think, for example, of contact texts that, although written down, are closer to spoken language. The grammatical and stylistic features of e-mail, SMS or MMS messages show signs of a peculiar form of verbalism in the guise of literacy.

However, these grammatical and stylistic devices, which are characteristic of the verbal, are more consciously incorporated into texts to sometimes express complex meanings than in the case of purely oral utterances. In the course of written communication, the sender is able, despite any time constraints, to review the formulated words and reflect on the recorded linguistic constructions. The elements that characterize oral communication can thus have a serious stylistic meaning and value; by using them, the person who is formulating the message indicates that he or she accepts and intends to apply the rules of a linguistic community organized around SMS, MMS, and e-mail communication. In other words, he avoids complex sentence structures, longer words, and abstract expressions, for example, not only because electronic messaging imposes serious time constraints and thus reproduces, to some extent, the characteristics of oral communication, but also because he wishes to clarify his membership in a community that accepts certain forms of language use and that this membership is the result of a conscious choice.

The linguistic habits adopted in this manner have a strong impact on everyday language use. Verbalism, smuggled under the guise of literacy, leaves its mark on written communication, leading to the convergence of oral and written language use discussed earlier. As a result, the boundaries between oral and written communication are becoming increasingly blurred and the semantic and grammatical foundations of a new language of communication are being laid.

The emergence and spread of the new language of communication is the result of a conscious choice made by people who are familiar with the linguistic and conceptual possibilities offered by literacy, believing that by using this language, they can effectively engage with the increasingly rapid and globalized flow of information and express more clearly the conceptual contexts or emotions that determine their daily lives to the members of a local community. The language of communication in

the electronic media space thus integrates certain features of oral and written language. This is also the basis of its specific pictorial character, which has important semantic and syntactic features.

Perhaps the most important of these is the increasing use of linguistic elements whose meaning can encompass a wide range of conceptual contexts, condensed into conceptually unanalyzed "images." However, this imagery, reinforced by the interaction of "secondary orality" and "Netspeak", not only simplifies but also further nuances our linguistic world, which can thus become a means of exploring new conceptual contexts and, by amplifying the effects of semiotic globalization, contribute to the acceleration of global information flows.

However, what is the pictorial nature of new forms of language use? What grammatical, vocabulary and semantic changes in the language indicate the emergence of a new colloquialism resulting from the interaction of "secondary orality" and "Netspeak"? In answering these questions, let us first of all make it clear that, whether 'secondary or 'net-speak' is the medium of convergence between spoken and written language, the new forms of language use embody a third variety of language, distinct from both oral and written language. This is also pointed out by Crystal, who, in defining "Netspeak", emphasizes that although the new language associated with Internet use is essentially a written language reminiscent of the language of orality, "Netspeak" cannot be identified with either spoken or written language in itself, since it has the characteristics of both (Crystal, 2004, 2019). As I pointed out in the previous chapter, however, Crystal does not conceive of "Netspeak" as simply a set of specificities of spoken and written languages, but as a completely new medium. In other words, rather than seeing "Netspeak" as a kind of "centaur" of verbal-written language, he agrees with those authors who approach the new language that has evolved in the medium of computer use as a distinct language in its own right, distinct from both spoken and written language. These authors include, for example, Marilyn Deegan, who argue that the linguistic changes associated with the properties of electronic texts (plasticity, intertextuality, etc.) combine with the characteristics of both spoken and written language to make "Netspeak" an essentially autonomous "third medium" (Deegan, 2000).

The result of this convergence in language use, which has led to the birth of a new medium, is the visualization of language, which has its own semantic and grammatical characteristics. From a semantic point of view, this newly evolving language becomes figurative primarily because its vocabulary contains an increasing number of elements referring to complex conceptual relations, whose range of meanings is not based on conceptual relations named as a result of reflection but covers a wide range of conceptual relations not directly reflected in the language. In other words, a specific metaphorical language is being born, which is more intended to "show", to capture the world in images, to use this Wittgensteinian turn of phrase, than to analyze and dissect it by means of new categories and concepts. By using it, the sender seeks to "see", to "make sense of", rather than to define and analyze conceptual relations. The intention of the language user strongly reminds us of the intentions of preachers, poets, and philosophers in non-literate cultures, with the difference, as Ong emphasizes, that this is the result of a conscious choice of language in the age of electronic media, by which the man of the age of "secondary orality" and "Netspeak" seeks to embed already discovered conceptual relations in a system of even more complex relations, by making the relations thus discovered perceptible and graspable in terms of a

wide range of meanings, without breaking up the complex relations. This process naturally entails simplification of grammatical structures. The use of these complex expressions renders the use of more complex grammatical structures, such as multiple subordinate clauses, which develop based on conceptual analysis.

This condensation of meanings leads to the emergence of new linguistic elements, but also to the different uses of existing ones. The range of meanings for some of our expressions is widening, encompassing new conceptual relationships. This also increases the complexity of the conceptual network of relations that comprise the concept of a signifier and represent essentially different communicative situations. The fruit of this process is also a change in our concept of the community, which is becoming more complex. This concept has crystallized as a result of previous analyses, and has become the object of various communicative actions. As a result, the meaning of the word 'community' itself has been narrowed down to a specific set of conceptual relations.

However, these conceptual relations, within the framework of the already mentioned figurative language of the man who watches television, uses the Internet, and communicates by mobile phone, do not become elements of a more complex conceptual domain of associative images through new logical analysis. The reason for this is that the man of the culture of "secondary literacy" and "Netspeak" does not want to break down the concept of community, which is becoming more complex with the increase in the number of communication situations and the emergence of new communication possibilities, by means of the method of analysis rooted in the culture of literacy, but to represent it in its complexity. As a semantic consequence of this endeavor, the meaning of the word "community" encompasses more conceptual nodes than before, that is, the term becomes figurative. In other words, new communication technologies mediate and amplify changes in meaning, making the concept of community more complex. In particular, they enrich the meaning of our concept by conceptualizing the communicative situations associated with the use of new media.

At the same time, there are also a number of vocabulary and grammatical signs of the plasticization of language, which can be seen in both oral and written language use through the convergence of language use, leading to the emergence of a new spoken language.

- i) One of these signs is the increasing use of meaning-focused word combinations, mainly evoking a world of new technologies (e.g., *cyberspace*, *cyberculture*, *webmail*, *webmaster*). These terms, which have been created and used mainly in the context of "Netspeak", are effective tools for condensing meanings that can represent and communicate hitherto unknown conceptual domains. However, regardless of the use of compound words drawn from the specific vocabulary of "Netspeak", the increasing use of meaning-focused word combinations in spoken and written language is a sign of the visualization of language.
- ii) The increasing number of abbreviations, abbreviations acronyms, and acronyms, both written and spoken, and acronyms of mainly Anglo-Saxon origin and often related to information technology (e.g., *FAQ*= *frequently asked question*, *HTML*= *hypertext markup language*, *asap*= *as soon as possible*, *afaik*= *as far as I know*), are also indicative of the figurative nature of language. These abbreviations, abbreviations, and acronyms are currently mainly associated with the world of "Netspeak" but the increasing use of these

types of language elements was already a noticeable phenomenon in the era of radio and television, i.e., "secondary literacy."

- iii) Perhaps the most striking phenomenon concerning the literacy associated with "Netspeak" and indicative of the visualization of language is the proliferation of writing combining punctuation with pictorial elements, emoticons, emoticons, and numerals (for example. *In addition to the fact that the acceleration of daily information exchange makes the use of such devices increasingly justified and accepted, this spelling is also a sign of the generalization of linguistic thinking, which is susceptible to the condensation of pictorial meaning.*
- iv) The generalization of grammatical features that were previously specific to primarily oral communication processes is also a sign of language use that is susceptible to meaning condensation. This includes the simplification of the sentence structures used in everyday communication, such as the tendency, now commonplace, and affecting both oral and written language, to replace multiple complex, subordinate sentence structures with more easily processed subordinate clauses, which are more in line with the requirements of figurative language.

Conclusions

The above semantic and grammatical developments suggest that in the context of multichannel electronic communication, a new language is emerging that, through underlying convergences in language use, may be able to effectively process and exchange the increasing amount of information that is being processed on a daily basis. This language, which progressively breaks down the boundaries between oral, written, and electronic communication situations, also blurs the boundaries between the communities that are organized around each communication situation. In this way, the convergence of language use linked to the use of new communication technologies is laying the foundation for a process of mediatization of different forms of community for the emergence of new types of hybrid communities. In other words, the convergence of different forms of community would be inconceivable without convergences in language use that give rise to new spoken language. In fact, it is safe to say that the linguistic structure resulting from these convergences is a precondition for the dissolution of the boundaries between traditional social categories and community forms. It is both a condition for effective global communication and thus for a global perspective that consolidates a new communitarianism and a pillar of local communities strengthened by informed choices.

In this renewed language-using environment, the role of language in maintaining and strengthening community cohesion has become increasingly apparent. This is a particularly important development because this role, which could be seen as the original function of language, has increasingly faded in the shadow of the oral-written bilingualism that characterizes text-based societies. With the emergence and spread of literacy, the linguistic world specific to individual communities and groups, organized primarily in the medium of oral communication, has been strongly eclipsed by the use of a standard language, which is seen as the only correct one and is essentially specific to written communication. However, as members of small communities continued to share and exchange the information they

considered important orally, the language use patterns specific to these communities persisted in text-based societies. Members of these communities, despite feeling that their own language use was 'out of place' in relation to the official language, stuck to it. This was mainly because, despite external rules reflecting social values, they still considered and still consider their own language customs, which were a sign of their local traditions and thus reinforced community cohesion, to be the norm. This phenomenon is particularly noticeable in communities with strong social networks, such as rural or suburban communities, where the authority of informal language variants has become a symbol of community identity.

In the new communicative space created by the use of electronic media, the weight of standard language varieties is increasingly diminishing, and the importance of language usage patterns that characterize individual communities and groups and strengthen community cohesion is increasing. In addition to literacy, which is dominated by formal varieties, new communication technologies are increasingly being used to promote the use of non-bound languages preferred by people who phone, text, send MMS, or e-mail messages to each other and who find it more efficient for everyday information exchange.

The expansion of new language use patterns thus contributes significantly to the rapid changes in community roles associated with multichannel communication, the convergence of different community languages and communication situations, and the blurring of community boundaries, that is, the mediatization of communities. This phenomenon highlights the deep-rooted problem. Namely, the hybrid, mediatized nature of community relations generated by digital communication stems from the specific self-image and identity of community members. The narratives mediated by the media are embedded in the system of autobiographical narratives of regular media consumers, which contributes to the formation of a specific, relational self and a malleable identity based on it. The foundations of relational reading are laid in the new media space, of which the media stories internalized by individuals form an integral part. I want to address the essential aspects of this process.

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