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Introduction to Language and Technology

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**Abstract**

**I've always been passionate about writing stories and journaling down my thoughts. I'm pleased to have the chance to share my fascinating journey of orality, literacy, and technology. Orality means thought and verbal expression in communities where the technologies of literacy are unfamiliar to most people. My journey will date back to rural Bangladesh where I spent eight years of my life and it is where literacy, orality, and technology were introduced to me. I am forever grateful for what was taught to me and what was passed down to me from my family, my peers, and my instructors because it certainly developed my character and personality.**

 Literacy was first introduced to me at the age of five. I don't recall the exact age, however, I am aware that it was introduced to me at a very early age. Since my mother was a primary school teacher in Bangladesh, she was very devoted to academic success and literacy. Her goal was for me to not only succeed in my studies but also to become educated in literacy. I recall her schooling my basic math skills at a young age and encouraging me to read every night to acquire higher grades in school. I am from Bangladesh which is located in South Asia. It is an agricultural country filled with green trees, fresh food, various types of animals, heavy rain, and mud. I recall the streets being filled with mud. I also recollect walking to school with her in the vicious rainy season and reciting poetry. She would be in the middle between my brother and me, reading traditional stories while we fell asleep. However, my culture has its own importance in literacy due to the various genre of stories that teach people more about this world and the lessons we learn as we experience life. One of the most famous authors in the world was born and raised there. He is known as Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore literature had a great impact on me growing up because it was important to my mother. As a child, I had to recite his poetry for school events and learn the traditional dances that swayed along his poetry. As I would progress for my performances, I remember the glow in my mother's eyes from watching me. I could tell she was very proud of who I was becoming. My mother worked very deeply to educate us in various subjects while maintaining a job and living alone with two children and I am forever indebted to her.

Orality was also introduced to me ever since I was born. Orality can be defined as stories being passed down from generation to generation. However, there is numerous amounts of genre in which these stories are passed down. One example of stories that are passed down can be in the form of teaching the newer generation about topics like culture or religion. This is an example of an oral epic, which was indicated in the passage called Orality and Literacy: From The Savage Mind to Ways with Words. “the oral epic- such as the Iliad, and the odyssey in their original forms was a form of contrived and memorized speech through which the culture passed down its values and knowledge” (P.723, Gee). This supports my story. I was essentially introduced to Islamic beliefs through orality.  I come from a Muslim family where Islamic beliefs were passed down to me since my first breath. The moment I was handed over to my father by the doctor, he recited the “azaan” which is a call for prayer, in my ears. It symbolized that I was a Muslim child born into a Muslim family. This is a belief that is practiced by all Muslims and it was taught by our prophet from ancient times. Growing up my parents hired an “imam” which is known as a religious teacher, for me to learn basic Arabic skills and to learn to pray to God. My imam has verbally passed down many Islamic stories to me for instance regarding the afterlife from the way we should behave as Muslims to enter paradise after death. I carry those beliefs to this day and I am proud to have those beliefs. I believe those beliefs assist me to get through depressive days and keep me centered. I also practiced memorizing and reciting many Islamic “surahs” which are known as prayers/words from Allah, when I was younger. The sacred Scripture of Islam has been passed down from generation to generation from the beginning of humankind and it still lives with us today. I recite those surahs every day. I am delighted that those were passed on to me through orality.

Technology is constantly growing as we progress from year to year, and it is revolutionizing the world. Without technology, I don’t think humans can survive today. It has changed my life personally and made my life easier along with the lives of people around this world. People around me had technology that was new around that time. I have lived and seen the progress of technology since I was a child. I recollect my older brother buying his very first laptop and being all thrilled about it. I recall spending days with my brother playing games on his laptop. Then I arrived in America at the beginning of 2009 and America was much more progressive and advanced compared to Bangladesh. America has been a dream for me since I was a little girl. I dreamt of coming here and living my dream life. At the beginning of my journey, it was very complicated for me and my parents. Well, my dad has lived here longer than us therefore he was used to the culture and modern era. However, I was unaware of the culture and language. I didn't have a lot of knowledge of the language. I wasn't very good at English writing or reading in a new language. I spent eight years of my life learning different languages such as Bangla and Arabic and all of a sudden, I had to learn a new language at the age of 8. I didn't pay much attention to English at the first stage of my life. I concentrated on various things such as Islamic knowledge, math skills, and Bangla. It was very difficult for me to catch up with other kids and increase my literacy skills. However, with proper help and support, I made it through elementary, middle, and high school. Many new technologies were introduced to me throughout the years. New York is a city filled with advanced technology. I was fascinated to ride the train around the city and was impressed with the underground train service. At first, I didn't think it was possible to have an underground train station. I was also introduced to many electric services such as rice cookers, laundry machines, etc. It was difficult to get used to those new changes in the beginning. However, I made it through, and it made my life so much easier. I saw my peers in school carry around walkmans with headphones over their heads listening to music. I saw students with Gameboy colors, playing games in the palm of their hands. This was really new to me and I knew my life would change drastically. Technology lives with us and grows with us therefore it is our environment. I am glad I have enhanced my skills with technology throughout the years and I'm proud of myself. I hope to achieve higher education in technology after graduation. I hope to learn coding languages to challenge myself and obtain the necessary detail skills. Learning to program is completely different and much more intense compared to seeing the small appliances back in the early 2000s. We watched manual cars grow into automated cars that drive on their own due to the vast growth in technology. We don’t know what's coming next, flying cars?

Literature, orality, and technology are very important aspects of our life and everyone has their own experiences in these topics. It certainly helps develop character in person because it has such a big influence on us and our growth. I am thankful that I was introduced to literature, orality, and technology in my own way which helped me grow and learn about myself. My stories are meaningful to me and I will always remember them.

Reference

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