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Communication Design Theory

Whenever I think about language, I usually just think about speaking, writing, listening, and understanding what people are trying to tell me. But I never really ever think about language, itself. The words, the sounds it makes, or even how words sound like they do. As the author states, “Language is speech less speaking. It is the whole set of linguistic habits which allow an individual to understand and to be understood” (Saussure 77). Language is a form of sounds that are used together to create words, so we can be able to understand each other. However, language doesn’t necessarily mean communication. Communication and language are similar but also different. Communication is mainly focused on sending and receiving messages. But with communication, it can be done in multiple different ways. It can be done, in person, through images, with technology, and even through design. In design, language plays a big role and factor into the design, and can greatly improve, or ruin it, depending on how it's used. A simple set of text can communicate with it's viewers, in multiple different ways.

In the ancient times, many people have different ways of counting, each with their own way of grouping and keeping score. Which led to multiple different number systems, back during those times. One example of this is the letter X. As the author says about X, “is not only a phonetic letter but a sign in it's own right, serving as a record or “index” of events; X stands for a signature, or X signals an act of selection or an act of deletion” (Miller 26). This symbol, X, can

not be used as a number but also as a way of design. X can mean more than just a letter in terms of design, and can even break barriers in terms of language.

One interesting thing that Lupton Miller says is about Otto Neurath and his theory. Otto Neurath's theory is called logical positivism. Logical positivism is about bringing two opposite into one, which are rationalism and empiricism. According to Lupton Miller, he says that "logical positivists attempted to analyze language into a minimal set of direct experiences, claiming that all languages can be reduced to a core of observations, such as big, small, up, down, red, or black" (Miller 42). Otto Neurath wanted to take language, and to reduce it to only "core of observations". If something was big, he wanted it to be represented big. I thought that this can be a fun and interesting design strategy for designers and clients. An example of this can be when KFC releases their new spicy chicken wings. One of the ads they had for their ad campaign was of a race car with fire behind it. However, the fire was the spicy chicken wings. This was to show just how hot the wings were, that they can be used as fire. I thought this was a fun idea, and kind of funny too. Designers can use these strategies to their advantages in order to help them reach their target audience or help them gain more information for a project.

Over the years, there have been several ways of keeping count, long with numbers number systems. Along with these number systems, also came symbols and iconography. These symbols and icons were used by Sumerians around 8000 BC to record business transactions. Sumerians used these symbols, or tokens, as a way to tell their sellers how much. Then. "The shapes of tokens were impressed into a clay container, one sign for each token" (Miller 27). They were able to use tokens as a graphic communication. This later evolved into numbers and soon became a way to communicate with consumers in a graphic way.