How the internet is changing the world

By Chemory Gunko

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I don't know if you've ever had the experience of engaging with something that was written in, say the 1300s? If you haven't, go take a look a [here](#). And then [here](#).

In the first example, if you go down the left of the page and click on one of the links (sorry really tried to simplify it), you'll be able to see a middle & modern English example side by side.

The second link takes you to a jpeg of handwriting in English.

Yip, not sure I believe it either. The point of my illustration though, is that language evolves, sometimes rapidly in fact.

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The internet is our contribution to language

Language pretty much defines everything we do - especially what we do online. Search happens because of words, code is words. What we use the internet to do is to distribute and absorb words, whether that distribution is audio, video, written or graphic designed.

In our lives, language helps us bond. You see this at a macro level with couples and families that develop their own vocabulary. It happens at a larger level with communities that develop their own accents, their own take on the language dynamic, utilisation of vocabulary and more.

To a degree, the jargon you speak inside your company is its own unique language that bonds you together.

The internet has created a new way for us to form communities

As a result, we bond.

So we start to form a language bond within these communities. However, because the utilisation of these communication tools and technologies is so incredibly pervasive, these simplifications of language get passed along quickly.

That's creating a global societal change.

Sorry Grammar Nazis

The Grammar Nazis aren't gonna like this, but spelling is going to devolve to a degree. Most of the tricks we use in online comms are designed to abbreviate and shorten what it is we're wanting to communicate.

This happens for a number of reasons...
...we lose a lot of time to communicating on devices with other people
...time is already of the essence nowadays
...typing is somehow sometimes more difficult than writing is at times and sometimes takes longer, especially on mobile devices (Whose fingers are that small anyway?)
...we make a lot of autocorrect mistakes
...it's difficult to type properly when you're unlocking the door, carrying groceries and stopping the dog from getting out
...we're constantly rushing to get more done in less time, so digital comms abbreviations help us save time

So yes, basically we make a lot of typos and then we find out easier ways to type those words. If it really makes sense and it's obvious, well you'll start using it with everyone else on your contact list now won't you?

If it's good, it'll go viral quickly. Grammar Nazis, be prepared. You're not going to stop the spread of this.

It's also why...

English will become the universal language

Most of the media we produce nowadays is in English. From music to blockbuster movies to internet videos - so much of the internet happens in English. So much so that English has kind of become the second language du jour in most places.

That trend is not gonna change anytime soon. It's going to be even further reinforced in fact, by the fact that so much code is written in English.

The actual language used in the vocabulary of code is English.

English has also become the language most forums and international sites appear in.

So that English thread is going to keep growing because coders appear all over the world. It doesn't matter what language they start out speaking, English will find its way into their life.

As a result...

People will start raising their children English

In the space of just 20 years, it's already happened in South Africa. You see black & Afrikaans families choosing to school

their kids in English, or they employ a bilingual household.

This trend will continue to grow as more and more people travel internationally, emigrate and do business online. It'll become commonplace to teach your children English by default, until eventually people decide there's little to no need for their conversational mother tongue.

This will serve another need...

Advancing technology

Because most people will now have English as a mother tongue, or perhaps even perhaps as part of a dual mother tongue setup, the learning curve for coding will decrease, because so much of the vocabulary is English.

I think we can all agree that technology isn't going anywhere anytime soon.

It will however advance and grow, and for as long as there are advancements in technology, we will need coders of a sort.

The demand for skills in the technology/engineering sector will constantly grow as we push ourselves further and further in our advancements and achievements as a society.

That's not all folks...

The internet is changing our world in other ways too. Aside from being the historian and chronicler of our time, the internet is also making handwriting redundant.

As a result, they've removed cursive from the school curriculum in some schools already - modern kids can survive comfortably printing.

As we develop further, I can easily see that handwriting will become more and redundant because of autocomplete, until maybe, in the not too-far distant future, we can have that paperless society we keep talking about.

Big advertising is our art

The last way that the internet is changing us as a society is by giving us access to adverts.

Every generation has had its bards and artists - people who chronicle the culture of their time through the parodies, plays, songs and pieces of art they leave behind.

In our culture of sound bites, consumerism and instant gratification, does it surprise you that glossy 30-second snippets that idolise our favourite celebrities and brands are the art pieces of our time?

We live in a very consumer-driven society... why wouldn't they be? And if you really need proof, just look at all the ads we watch on YouTube, email to each other, share on social media and even help go viral.

The internet is shaping the world in ways we cannot even begin to imagine.

We definitely live in interesting times.

ABOUT CHEMORY GUNKO

Chemory Gunko is a seasoned Creative Director, a certified NLP Practitioner, Ericksonian Hypnotherapy Practitioner, Energy ReSourcing Practitioner & Life Coach, among others. She works as a marketing consultant and provides copywriting, SEO, graphic design and Joomla! website services.
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