

Writing, Creating and Knowledge in a Digital Medias and New Technologies Society (some problems and critics relative to old and new languages)

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Technologies and writing

All forms of expression, all languages, can now be produced or processed by digitalization. Thus writing as I intend it is affected, and creation along with it. Bernard Stiegler; the French philosopher of technology, says that computing can be considered a new form of writing. It is therefore necessary to understand the way these technologies function, how technè and logos are linked, what their logic is, and how we can use this new alphabet. The problem of data process languages is the one of double language.

The data process, by its digital component, creates a separation between the support and the surface: the programme that transmits the processed information and these data, is not from the same field of language. For example, a data process program of text or image keeps from discreetly being a numerical system.

So, we have to do with a concomitant, double language, but from which the logic and the meaning are different and autonomous. The informationnal paradigm of each of them has got its own system. Their adjustment into the data process system is only a technological one, and not a semantic one. And there is no direct transparency for the computer user. It is a double language that acts as an internal way to the computer.

This situation is completely different from analogical technologies, which do not create the forms by themselves, but which record them and reveal them, or reproduce them, for example photography, cinema, recorder. Concerning the new technonologies, the internal process to make out signs, or the formal traces, is another of their specific aspects. This potentiality situates the signs, or the forms, into an own referential system. And this is at the interconnexion of the handling of the bits and its results that will be generated by the digital system.

Therefore, we can affirm that in computing and the digital, languages are juxtaposed — functionally,

technically, and semiotically. Data is processed by programs, meaning thousand year-old representation systems grouped together with recent computer languages, and language-machines. How does their logic coincide? What makes sense or sensation? Is it possible to control these anachronisms? Does the machine's functionalism dissect or reduce the symbolic power of anterior languages? How can we work within these constraints?

So, the role of artists and authors is important, and I think it has to be close to the technological conception. In the situation and at the time of digital media, we have to consider the technical support of the writing in the relationship with the symbolic forms. It is necessary to elaborate a structure in order to create a specific and open system of writing. Thus, we have to pay attention to the history of writing systems and to look at its evolutions and changes. We have also to integrate in our minds that writing, I repeat again, has now a multimedia dimension. The physical possibilities of the material, and the digital, are some elements that have to go both with the writing, because they build the formal aspects, the representation, and, the meaning.

In this way, my position is not only an aesthetic critique, but is an input for a cultural politic in the field of the technologies and digital media, included in a communication and information society.

Heterogeneity of languages and social link

“In the postmodern era, sciences and technologies bring new languages that add to old ones.” Another point is what Jean-Francois Lyotard had already termed in 1979 “the heterogeneity of languages” in computerized societies; it is what constitutes postmodern knowledge. New languages add to old ones. But, of course, nobody speaks all these languages, and there is no universal meta-language, and so, no universal knowledge. J.F Lyotard also considered that in a society in which communication has more and more place, and has become more evident,

the language aspect gets a new lease of life. He thought that the social link is emerging from language, and that the society to come has to practice with this element.

With NITC and the internet network moving into the time of globalization, consider this situation: is it possible to invent and create forms and ways to communicate, keeping alive the social link? Which kind of society can emerge from it? The technological link does not make the social link right away.

We have to organize the exchanges, their wording, and the structuring of the discourse, in order to continue to communicate. A new diagram of communication has to be thought, a new composition of the exchanges written. It means that we have to create new forms of sociability.

Since we are confronted with this diversity of languages, perhaps we must make them homogenous. In this sense, rendering something homogenous entails producing meaning from these heterogeneous fragments. It is a work of writing, created from polymorphic materials, and keeping symbolic wealth of each of them. We have to combine these fragments of wording and discourse in order to give birth to new forms of communication, new representation systems, and new ideas.

What Jean-Francois Lyotard called the social pragmatism is the ideology to see the appearance of a new wording: for an emancipation of the knowledge, for the preservation of cultural diversity, and facing to the simplification and standardization of messages by marketing and capitalist merchandising.

The struggle against the communication and information society power and hegemony can go by what Jean-François Lyotard named “the paralogy of the inventors”. He also said that a dialectic of languages particles is what refines our sensibilities and our differences.

According to that, cultural communities, singular attitudes and also artists’ work seem to be a failure to globalization of knowledge. In effect, it would be one of

the stakes about the production and access to information, communication and knowledge at the time of global network: a diversity of cultural, historical, forms and levels of languages and symbolic representations that cross and respond in a “game of languages”, instead of an information highway with a unique sense. That is the way to find or keep the social link, in the movement of the spirit life and the creation. This is also a form of communication that makes participating society in its multitude, in the sense of what is exchanged and how it represents itself, instead of being considered as a consumer of informational products.

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After having worked in cultural journalism, she is currently working as an author, using different mediums of communication of language (radio, books, theater, audiovisual, multimedia...), and in questioning their function experimenting with creation that is specific to each. She collaborates with artists from different disciplines, in France and elsewhere (Japan, Italy, Morocco, Russia). She publishes some texts in poetry reviews, participates in festivals reading poetry, working with directors in theater, writing and interpreting her texts for sonorous creations, is invited to collective projects using electronic and digital technologies, and participates in colloquiums with forms of writing-NTIC as their theme. By founding the association Alphetville in 2000, she has created a place of reflection around the rapport between language and the media, and tries to articulate the practice and theory by dialoguing with the artists, researchers and cultural operators involved (www.alphetville.org). In 2005, she has directed and edited the collective book “New medias, new languages, new writings” and, in 2008, she collaborates to the publication of another collective book called “The poetics of the digital.”